

Budweiser Clydesdales head to downtown Davis

Enterprise staff

UC Davis has some special houseguests again — 10 Budweiser Clydesdales who are staying the week at its barn.

This afternoon, the team and wagon will go from the Horse Barn on La Rue Road to downtown Davis for three stops. Froggy's Bar & Grill, 826 Second St., is first, at

about 5:30 p.m.; then comes Woodstock's Pizza, 219 G St.; and finally de Vere's Irish Pub, 217 E St.

The team then will make its way to The Pavilion on campus, arriving between 6:45 and 7 p.m. and staying until 7:30, during the intermission of the Aggie basketball doubleheader. (The women play the University of San Francisco at

5 p.m. and the men play University of the Pacific at 7:30 p.m.).

At each stop, the Budweiser crew working in conjunction with Sacramento-area distributor Markstein Beverage Co. will deliver a case of Budweiser in celebration of the end of Prohibition 94 years ago this week.

Budweiser introduced its Kelli Davis, Horse Barn manager,

Clydesdale team and beer wagon that same year as the states considered the 21st amendment to the Constitution to repeal Prohibition. With 48 states at the time, ratification required the approval of 36 of them, and it was Utah that put the repeal effort over the finish line on Dec. 5, 1933.

reported that the "Clydes" arrived last Wednesday and, since then, UCD veterinarians examined the animals and a Budweiser farrier gave the horses new shoes.

"Mornings are usually the best chance to see the horses out of their stalls being exercised on our hot walker, although it is not a set schedule," Davis said.



Bill Gainer and Anna Marie will perform Thursday's Poetry Night Reading Series

COURTESY PHOTO



Hear Gainer, Marie at Poetry Night on Thursday

Special to The Enterprise

The Poetry Night Reading Series will feature poets Bill Gainer and Anna Marie performing at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7, at the John Natsoulas Gallery, 521 First St. in downtown Davis.

Gainer is a storyteller, humorist, poet and a maker of mysterious things. He earned his bachelor's degree from St. Mary's College and his MPA from the University of San Francisco. He is the publisher of the PEN Award-winning R.L. Crow Publications and is the ongoing host of Red Alice's Poetry Emporium in Sacramento.

Internationally published, Gainer is known for the openness of his confessional

poetry and is recognized as one of the founding contributors to the modern movement of "After Hours Poetry."

"My poetry is written with an economy of words," he says. "I believe that the strongest way for poetry to achieve its goal, to express an emotion or feeling, is through the minimal poem."

Marie is a Sacramento spoken-word poet, author and visual artist. She has featured at many of Northern California's finest venues, such as Mahogany Poetry Series, Luna's Cafe, The Guild Theatre and the Crocker Art Museum.

The topics of her poems range from the political to the domestic, uplifting and empowering women with

words of understanding and wisdom.

The recipient of many poetry prizes, Marie is the 2012 Love Jones champion, placing second at the same event in 2017. Her books "Tablespoons of Tears" and "A Poet's Handbag" are available online at Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com.

Community members are invited to arrive early to sign up for a spot on the open mic that will follow the readings by the featured poets. Bring poems, short stories and songs. Performers with instruments are especially welcomed.

Participants will be asked to limit their performances to five minutes or two items, whichever is shorter.

School trustees to pass the gavel

By Jeff Hudson
Enterprise staff writer

The Davis school board will pick a new president and vice president for the coming year, and hear another staff update on the school district's budget, when the trustees meet in open session at 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7. The meeting is in the Community Chambers at Davis City Hall, 23 Russell Blvd.

The annual organization and election of officers will come early on the agenda. Board President Barbara Archer will be recognized for her work during the past year and, according to long-standing custom, board Vice President Tom Adams will be elevated to serve as president.

A new vice president will be selected, who will take the gavel next December. The meeting also will include an announcement of committee and subcommittee assignments for the five trustees during the coming year.

There is only one other item on the action agenda — another budget update, which will review the district's sources of funding. Seventy-nine percent of the budget comes from the state, 11 percent from the local Measure H parcel tax, 5 percent from federal sources and another 5 percent from other local sources.

Trustees also will review how the district spends its general fund money — 88 percent goes to employee compensation, 9 percent to operating costs and 3 percent to books and supplies.

The budget update also will offer a look at "what if" scenarios that could impact future budgets, including a possible recession — and consequent reduction in state funding — and the projected impact of changes in federal tax laws concerning state funding for schools.

The report will touch on rising pension costs (due to state mandates), and other

projected increases in district spending.

Chief Budget Officer Bruce Colby is also expected to restate a point that he has raised at several school board meetings: that the school district "must use caution in spending down one-time reserves for ongoing activities and must eliminate deficit spending to avoid fiscal distress in future years."

The board also will be asked to approve a memo of understanding with EMC Research Inc. to conduct surveys and opinion research regarding a possible local school parcel tax measure that would fund employee compensation, in the event that the board decides to study that option.

Thursday's meeting will be carried live on Davis cable Channel 17, and as streaming video via Davis Media Access.

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On graduation rates

As college list-making goes into full swing for juniors, I thought I would shed some light on the oft-quoted, fan-favorite statistic for assessing institutions of higher education: college graduation rates.

Why is so much attention focused on this data point? Well, it can be a relatively straightforward way to compare colleges' effectiveness.

Similar to an ROI (return on investment) for measuring a baseball player's ability to contribute to team wins, college graduation rates are sometimes considered a proxy for quality. They are also a sizable component of what goes into the US News and World Report's calculation to rank colleges — 22.5 percent is graduation and retention rates.

So yes, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with this information. But realize that college graduation rates do not tell the whole story about the success or failure of a college to help its students graduate on time with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful after they earn their degree.

As with any statistic, it is important to be a critical consumer.

First, let's be specific about what a college graduation rate is. One of the most commonly referenced college graduation rates for four-year colleges and universities is the six-year rate (sad, isn't it?), defined as the percentage of a school's first-time, first-year undergraduate students who complete their program within 150 percent of the published time for the program. This rate is what the College Scorecard and College Navigator websites use.

The four-year rate — which is the same basic definition but for students who complete their program in four years — is used by US News and World Report.

Pomona College tops the four-year graduation rate at 92 percent, while University of Virginia, which is the highest-ranked public university, ranks at 88 percent.

Among other schools that are popular with Davis students, the four-year graduation rates are: Claremont McKenna, 86 percent; Santa Clara, 82 percent; UC Berkeley, 76 percent; UC San Diego, 59 percent; UC Davis, 55 percent; University of Oregon, 50 percent; and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, 48 percent. For a complete list, visit www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/highest-grad-rate.

As one would expect, the rankings for six-year graduation rates follow a similar pattern: selective private colleges top the list, followed by selective public universities with less selective colleges lower down on the list.

That the more selective colleges have higher graduation rates should not be surprising. Inherent in the construction of graduation rates calculations is a self-selection bias — high-achieving students who gain admission to highly selective schools tend to be more likely to be motivated and able to graduate on time.

What are other factors that can help lead

to a high graduation rate? Ease of getting classes and guidance/support with selecting and completing courses are also key components.

On the flip side, here are aspects that can diminish graduation rates, some more transparent than others:

- Credits lost in transfer;
- Remediation sequences that do not work;
- Students take too few credits per semester to finish on time;
- Students change their majors too often; and
- More part-time or non-tenure-track faculty.

Putting too much stock in graduation rates as a means to understanding a college's effectiveness can be misleading due to the nature of how the data are collected and constructed. For instance, we don't know how the same student would have fared at a different college. Does the college make the student, or is it the other way around?

Another difficulty is that the way graduation rates are defined leaves out the ever-increasing numbers of part-time students and students who switch colleges or return as adults. These students are not considered in the current calculation since they aren't full-time students who started at that particular university.

Further complicating graduation rates figures is that many highly selective colleges may not have a student population that is as inclusive and diverse as other colleges. Consider that Pomona has 18 percent of its students on Pell Grants (federal financial aid awards for low-income families) whereas UC Irvine has 39 percent. It's not an apples-to-apples comparison.

Graduation rates can be improved by lowering standards and thus making graduation easier to achieve, but, of course, this is not the desired result in terms of trying to understand quality.

However, even with all of these concerns, graduation rates are still useful as one of several elements to analyze when coming up with a college list that is a good fit.

Other key criteria are strength of academic programs, size, location, weather, price, campus activities and type of student body, to name a few. How much weight to give graduation rates in this analysis is a personal decision that is up to the individual student and his or her family.

To sum up, just remember that the college-list making process is non-linear, iterative and highly inefficient, but it's still worth investing time to increase the chances of success. So go ahead and check out those graduation-rate rankings, just don't get too caught up in them.

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of *The Right College For You*. Her column is published monthly. Reach her at jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org, or visit www.therightcollegeforyou.org



JENNIFER BORENSTEIN COLLEGE CORNER

Stuff a Bus!
FOOD DRIVE

SATURDAY
DECEMBER
9TH
9AM - 3PM

Nugget Market
1414 E Covell Blvd. Davis, CA 95616

Unitrans and Nugget Market are partnering to donate food to the Yolo Food Bank and UC Davis' Pantry. Stop by, donate non-perishable food items, and win free prizes like Unitrans 10-ride tickets and Nugget gift cards! With your help, we can make this holiday season a little better for the less fortunate in our community!

DAVIS LEGACY WINTER ACADEMY

December 8th-February 9th
Fridays at Playfields Turf

DATES: Fridays, December 8th, 15th & 22nd
January 12th, 19th & 26th
February 2nd & 9th

TIMES: 5pm-6pm (Players born in 2010 or 2011)
6pm-7pm (Players born in 2008 or 2009)

WHERE: Playfields Turf
2500 Research Park Dr., Davis, CA

COST: \$95 (FREE for current Legacy 08 and 09 players. Includes 8 training sessions, a Davis Legacy team t-shirt, and US Club insurance.)

The Davis Legacy Soccer Winter Academy offers an 8-week skills-based program that gives boys and girls the opportunity to receive professional coaching in a positive, fun, and encouraging environment.

The Academy is led by members of our very own State, National, and International licensed coaching staff that work day after day developing soccer players of all ages.

To Register visit <http://davislegacysoccer.org/academy/>

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