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FIRES BURN AS PG&E IMPLEMENTS MASS OUTAGES

by James Wilde

Largest intentional blackout in California
history keeps millions without power while
the state burns

SEE BLACKOUT PAGE 3



Photo by Matthew Bartleson

How Humboldt State University handled a second power outage

After two Public Safety Power Outages within two weeks of each other, HSU and students share how they spent their time during the blackouts

by James Wilde

After Humboldt County's first Public Safety Power Shutoff, students and staff at Humboldt State University were better prepared when the latest outage hit the county the night of Saturday, Oct. 26.

Marine biology sophomore Tyler Nagle spent his Sunday at a beach in Trinidad with friends.

"I went to the beach, got a campfire going, roasted some s'mores and looked at the stars," Nagle said.

While Nagle said he's learned how to prepare for these outages, he did have concerns about the outages' impact on classes.

"I definitely think this has taken a hit on my learning,"

Nagle said. "But I hope these will be more few and far in between."

Vice President for Administration and Finance and HSU Emergency Operations Center Director Douglas Dawes said it's too early to make any calls about how the outages will affect the semester's class schedule, but he said HSU will be in touch with its academic accreditor.

Otherwise, Dawes said he's proud of the way the campus has handled the outages.

"There have been some hiccups, but we're getting through it," Dawes said.

Dawes said one generator failed over the weekend, but Facilities Management quickly moved around generators to keep providing power to the most essential buildings on campus including

the Jolly Giant Commons, Student Recreations Center and residence halls.

"They've been champions," Dawes said. "Our facilities team has been keeping everything together."

Daniel Valencia, a sophomore kinesiology major, normally works at The Depot. During the outage, Valencia helped out at The J. When not working, Valencia said he enjoyed his hobbies.

"I picked up skating more," Valencia said. "And I've been looking into hobbies like reading and painting."

Zane Eddy, a master's student in the environmental science and management program, came from an undergraduate program at the University of Oregon.

SEE OUTAGES ■ PAGE 4



Photo by James Wilde

Kinesiology sophomore Daniel Valencia at the J dining hall on Oct. 29. Valencia normally works at The Depot, but has been helping out at the J during the outages.

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ANDROMEDA MCNELIS

DELIVERY DRIVERS:
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DEIDRE PIKE

SALES MANAGERS:
WEST MODAFFERI
NONIE WALLACE







CONTRIBUTORS:
ALBERTO MURO
THOMAS LAL
MICHAEL ESTRADA
JAMES WILDE
JERAME SAUNDERS
MATTHEW BARTELSON
RACHEL MARTY
JEN KELLY


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BLACKOUT

FROM PAGE 1

Over two million people across Northern California were without power from Oct. 26 to Oct. 28. Pacific Gas & Electric worked to restore power to as many customers as possible while preparing for a third potential Public Power Safety Shutoff. After multiple inconsistent reports from PG&E, the utility finally announced on Oct. 29 that Humboldt County would not be de-energized for a third consecutive PSPS.

While Humboldt County recovers from a second PSPS and a third outage scare, fires continue to burn across the state.

The Kincade Fire, a 75,415 acre fire in northern Sonoma County, was only 15% contained as of Oct. 29 at 3:30 p.m. Located just northwest of Santa Rosa, the Kincade Fire has forced more than 156,000 people to evacuate, including the towns of Windsor and Healdsburg. Thirty thousand people were allowed to return home on Oct. 28.

There are no casualties or missing persons reported as of yet, but 90,000 structures are at risk. Firefighters from as far south as Pasadena and as far north as Oregon have reported to the scene to try and stop the fire from pushing west across Highway 101.

PG&E's third statewide shutoff was an unprecedented intentional blackout, and the largest intentional blackout in California history, according to the Los Angeles Times. The utility's goal



A car zooms by as stop lights flash on H and 7th Street during the Oct. 26 Public Safety Power Shutoff in Eureka, California.

Photo by Deija Zavala

was to prevent high winds—which reached upwards of 100 miles per hour in some parts of Sonoma County—from sparking wildfires.

In a PG&E press conference on Saturday, CEO and President of the utility company—but not the entire corporation—Andy Vesey said the company's goal is safety.

“Right now we have a big, historic event coming at us,” Vesey said. “We have two and a half million customers being impacted. There's a real threat to public safety and that's why we're doing this.”

Yet, across the nation, media outlets are questioning PG&E's shutoffs.

Articles from Time, The Nation and ProPublica have claimed that PG&E's shutoffs

may not actually reduce wildfire risk. The shutoffs could prevent debris from sparking fires from electrical wires, but that is not the only cause of wildfires. Abraham Lustgarten for ProPublica points to cigarettes, barbecues, generators (which are used extensively during shutoffs) and cars as other common fire starters.

“The blackouts solved nothing, of course,” Lustgarten writes. “De-energizing the electrical grid is a bludgeon: imprecise, with enormous potential for collateral damage as people deal with a darkened world. It doesn't even eliminate fire risk.”

To Lustgarten's point, a structure fire on the east side of the Arcata Plaza erupted Sunday afternoon, caused by a generator at the Big Blue Cafe,

according to reporting by the Times Standard. While firefighters contained the blaze and no injuries were reported, initial estimates for the damages are as high as \$2 million.

In some instances, it seems the shut offs weren't implemented in time to prevent electrical lines from sparking fires. PG&E admitted that it registered a failed jumper cable at one of its transmission towers near the possible ignition point of the Kincade Fire right before the fire began. The area of the fire was set for a Public Safety Power Shutoff, but it didn't begin until 28 minutes after the fire started.

The outages have pressed some government officials to speak out against the corporation and its tactics. California

Governor Gavin Newsom called out PG&E for greed and mismanagement in a press conference on Thursday.

“It's more than just climate change,” Newsom said. “It's about the failure of capitalism to address climate change. It's about decades of mismanagement. It's a story about greed.”

Vermont Senator and Presidential Candidate Bernie Sanders tweeted that it was time to think about public ownership of utilities.

Amidst the outages, PG&E's stock has plummeted to all-time lows. On Oct. 26, Governor Newsom encouraged Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway to buy PG&E.

In the Saturday press conference, Vesey declined to entertain questions about PG&E's tainted image. Vesey said those discussions can come later as they will focus on the public's safety for now.

“No matter how much we focus on the past, it will not help us at all today or tomorrow,” Vesey said. “We take lessons learned, we take actions, we put in our programs and we work responsibly.”

For now, California is under a statewide declaration of emergency by Governor Newsom, who has promised to hold PG&E accountable.

“We will hold them to an account that they've never been held to in the past,” Newsom said in a press conference. “We will do everything in our power to restructure PG&E so it is a completely different entity when they get out of bankruptcy by June 30th of next year.”

OUTAGES

FROM PAGE 1

Eddy said he was surprised by the outages.

“It's really odd having these power outages,” Eddy said.

Eddy spent his free time going to Clam Beach and picking chanterelle mushrooms. Eddy said he believes the outages will make people understand their dependence on others for power.

“We're part of a larger system and we're part of a larger environment,” Eddy said.

While preparing for the outages on Friday, Interim Vice President of Enrollment Management Jason Meriwether echoed Dawes and said he was proud of how HSU handled the first outage.

“That was a positive thing that we responded to the power outage in that way,” Meriwether said. “Now, in my opinion, that's how it should always be and that's how it will be. But I think students were happy to know we took that approach.”

Dawes said HSU served 4,400 meals on Sunday. While he admitted that HSU incurred some significant costs in diesel and food, he said a percentage of those costs can be covered by disaster funds.

On Tuesday, HSU uploaded a response page for students wondering why classes are canceled during the outage. The page noted concerns over safety, non-functioning technology and a focus on personal wellbeing. The page also explained why it takes time to reopen campus even once power is restored.

“It takes a great deal of time to safely re-open the campus, including powering down and disconnecting generators, resetting locks, and ensuring fire suppression



The line seen from outside at the J dining hall at Humboldt State University on the night of Oct. 28.

Photo by James Wilde

systems are working,” HSU's post said.

As of Tuesday afternoon, HSU classes are set to resume on Thursday, Oct. 31.

In the future, Dawes said HSU will likely look toward generating more of its own power.

“Having more generation for the campus would be a huge help,” Dawes said. “So we'll be looking into doing that.”

For now, Dawes wanted to thank staff, faculty and students for restoring his faith and hope in humanity.

“We've got really good students that want to provide for others,” Dawes said. “And staff that really care about providing for students as well.”



Marine biology sophomore Tyler Nagle at the J dining hall on Oct. 29. Nagle said he went to the beach and enjoyed some s'mores during the outage.

Photo by James Wilde

BLACKOUT PREP

Don't get left out in the dark, here's a list of what to have ready for a blackout

by Lumberjack Staff

In early October, Humboldt County residents trailed around the block at gas stations hoping to fill up their tanks and stripped local grocery stores of food, water and battery operated lights. The Public Safety Power Shutoff made us realize how often we take electricity for granted, and how we use power for most of our daily activities. Simple

tasks like cooking, cleaning, eating, working and watching television all require some form of electricity. Some locals were fortunate enough to have gas-operated stoves to make and warm food, but most of the LJ staff didn't. Many of us rent apartments or live on campus and have electric stoves, so something as simple as warming a can of beans was

nearly impossible. With the lights out, it felt like we time traveled back to the 1800s. The usual ways of entertainment were off the table, and when we went shopping in preparation most of us didn't consider buying board games or downloading movies to a laptop. When it came down to sitting in a dark room with nothing to do we made a pact that the

next time we would be better prepared. Having a bag prepped for extreme situations could be lifesaving, and with a little forward thinking, your bag could be ready in minutes. While all of these items are helpful and important, it's vital to try and stay calm when the outage hits. Extreme situations can cause mass chaos, and it often becomes

more dangerous and stressful than it needs to be. Check our website for updates, sign up for Humboldt County alerts to stay in the know and remember to only call 9-1-1 in emergency situations. **Here some items we think you should grab from the store or make sure you have before the power outage.**

FLASHLIGHTS AND BATTERIES

An obvious choice, but oil or battery-operated lanterns work great, too.

CASH AND GASOLINE

When the electricity is down, systems are down. This generally means that stores –if open– can't take cards because they have no way of

charging them. This can also include gas stations. We recommend filling up and taking out some cash just in case you need to buy something or drive during the blackout.

FIRST AID KIT

You may already have one hanging around. If so, check the kit to make sure it's well-stocked and move it to a central place in your home. Communicate the new location with any family or roommates so it's accessible for any who may need it.

WATER

You need a minimum of one gallon of water per day per person. We recommend having even more and making an effort to conserve. During the initial PSPS, the City of Arcata urged residents to minimize sewer use and conserve water to the best of their ability. That's a good rule of thumb, and especially smart if the power outage last longer than before.

ICE You'll need lots of ice if you're interested in trying to save any of the food that was already in your fridge or freezer. We also recommend moving expensive perishables to the freezer and using gallon baggies filled with water as makeshift ice packs to help keep food cold. A cooler filled with ice is also a great option. If you have the money and the storage space, buying a cooler for emergencies like these and any future camping trips could really come in handy.

PLAYING CARDS

Whether it's just of cards could most handy. Playing cards great way to pass the a regular deck of moving into heavier, Uno or Monopoly on your

AND BOARD GAMES

you or a group, a deck definitely come in or boardgames is a time. We recommend cards to start before emotional games like that could take a toll relationships.

CANDLES AND MATCHES/ LIGHTERS

This is Humboldt, so we wouldn't be surprised if most people had a lighter on hand or nearby, but if you don't you should look into easy means of lighting candles (or that oil lamp) to have some light once the sun goes down.

CANNED GOODS

Think of foods you wouldn't mind eating cold. There's no need to buy something that will make you gag when you're trying to stay fed.

A FRENCH PRESS AND SOME PRE GROUND COFFEE



If you're a coffee drinker then we would highly recommend grinding some coffee today. Your future self will thank you. Thankfully a French press doesn't require electricity, but it does require hot water. If you have an electric stove, instant coffee may be your best bet to get that caffeine fix.

FRUIT

Apples, bananas and oranges are just a few options. Fruit doesn't need to be refrigerated and it can help keep your blood sugar up as well as making sure you have some daily fiber, potassium and vitamin C.

NON-PERISHABLE SNACKS

Crackers and chips make an easy snacks but they don't replace an actual meal. If you have means of warming up water, we recommend grabbing some potato flakes and pasta to keep that stomach from grumbling.

APPLESAUCE, PUDDING AND FRUIT CUPS

Your pick. But if the power's out for a while you might get sick of Saltines and canned corn. To keep your mood up, give yourself a treat with a chocolate pudding, or enjoy a sweet, but semi-healthy snack with an applesauce or fruit cup.

BEEF JERKY AND GRANOLA BARS

For all you meat eaters, jerky a great way to keep your protein levels up if you despise cold beans. Granola bars are also great. They're convenient and versatile, and depending on the bar, they can be a good source of fiber and protein.

SLEEPING BAGS AND BLANKETS

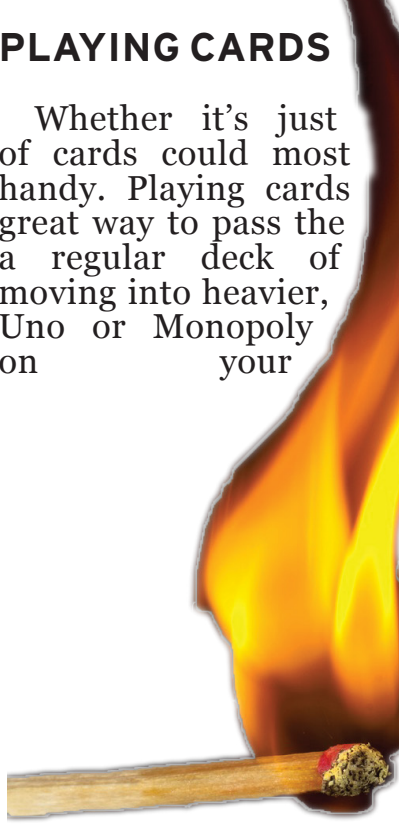
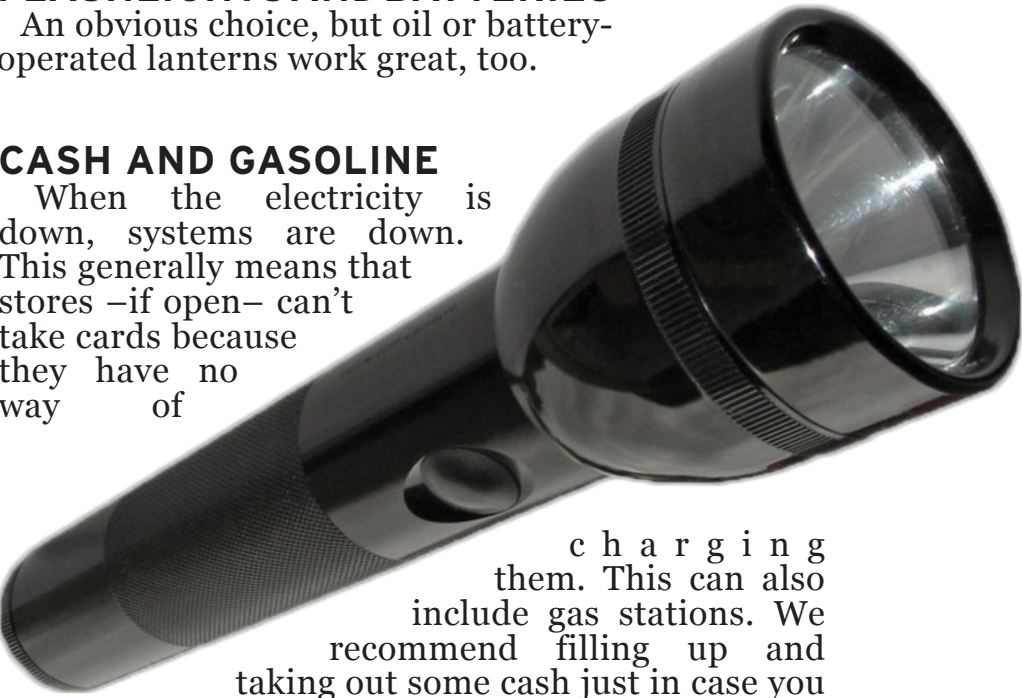
It may not be the coldest time of the year, but if you're used to having your electric heat on, then you're in for a wake up call. Sleeping bags and blankets, as well as sweats, long socks, hoodies and beanies will help you stay warm while your heater can't. It's also good practice if you're looking for ways to lower that pesky PG&E bill.

AN EMERGENCY RADIO

If you're lucky, you'll never need to use one, but having a weather radio on hand can be lifesaving. Radios can help you find hot coffee, hot food, shelter or even a place to charge your phone. Some weather radios even double-up as lights and backup chargers.

PORTABLE CHARGERS

These are a great investment. We recommend having one fully charged at all times. If anything happens you can make sure your phone doesn't lose its battery. If cell towers are active or have backup generators during a blackout, having enough phone battery to call family or friends to keep them updated



After three consecutive blackouts, are there alternative energy options?

Solar micro-grids, local offshore wind farms or more well maintained power lines may be the answer

by Collin Slavey

Public Safety Power Shutoff, blackouts could aid the push toward renewable energy. Solar micro-grids, local offshore wind farms or more well maintained power lines could be the answer to back-to-back outages.

Pacific Gas and Electric Company’s PSPS events are triggered by environmental conditions that threaten parts of their power grid. For example, a third consecutive power shutoff was originally scheduled for Tuesday morning, but changing weather patterns pushed back the timing. On Tuesday at 5:22 p.m. the county was removed from the PSPS affected counties list.

“Due to diminished weather conditions, Humboldt County is no longer in the scope for a Public Safety Power Shutoff tonight and power will remain on,” said Humboldt OES in an email alert. “There are still communities without power but PG&E advises they hope to have those areas re-energized tonight.”

The nature of the power grid in Northern California renders Arcata and Eureka subject to power outages if other areas of the grid are at risk. The energy used in Northern Humboldt is imported through transmission lines to the Eureka Humboldt Bay Generating Plant, where it’s amplified for local use. If energy stops flowing

through the lines to Humboldt, there is no source of energy and therefore, no electricity.

Terra-Gen, a Manhattan-based wind power company, has proposed a wind generation project for the Monument and Bear River Ridges that could provide nearly half of Humboldt’s energy. A panel discussion on the project will be held Nov. 6 at 5:30 p.m. in Founders Hall 118.

“Anticipated project features include a significant contribution to North Coast renewable energy generation and to California’s clean energy mandate,” the panel flyer says.

According to Terra-Gen, benefits of the project could include the creation of local green jobs and Humboldt Bay development. However, some local community members see the project as more consequential than not.

The proposed area of development, Monument and Bear River Ridges, sit on Wiyot territory. According to the Wiyot Tribe and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Monument and Bear River Ridges aren’t appropriate for wind development. The turbines could harm or destroy some of the rare and protected species that call the area home.

The upcoming panel lists some of these concerns as additional talking points, but it is unclear if the company or the county have come to a conclu-



Solar panels on the roof of Music Building A.

Photo by Walter Hackett

sion on how to proceed with this particular option of alternative energy.

“Concerns raised include impacts on bat and bird deaths; tree removal; effects on sites with cultural and ecological significance to Native American Tribes; erosion and sedimentation from sub-river drilling and road expansion; visual impacts; light and noise pollution; and traffic congestion,” the flyer says.

Alternatively, PG&E maintains that shutoffs are necessary to prevent dangerous wildfires like the Camp Fire of 2018. Any at-risk transmission line can be shut off. As Califor-

nia’s dry and windy seasons become the new normal, power shutoffs will likely become common occurrence. However, some individuals are taking advantage of the winds, rather than suffering from them.

Blue Lake Rancheria has tested local energy generation since 2011. The Rancheria has yet to be seriously impacted by the power shutoffs because they have solar electricity and battery storage, forming a microgrid.

Their microgrid works as a system of solar panels which power the Casino and other buildings during the day while also charging up a bank of

Tesla batteries for the night. The grid can be connected or disconnected from PG&E’s grid as needed, making them sustainable without any power from the utility.

The primary barrier to building offshore wind turbines and micro grids or improving PG&E’s transmission lines is cost. Alternative energy projects cost significantly more upfront than traditional fossil fuels. The economic costs of the recent power shutoffs, however, may be enough to kickstart real conversations about alternatives.

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Jacks host CCAA cross country conference meet

Athletes from across California traveled to Arcata to compete in the Division II cross country conference championships

by Thomas Lal

On Saturday morning hundreds of runners prepared to toe the line for a California Collegiate Athletic Association cross country conference meet. Despite the impending power outage, the best of California’s Division II runners descended on the Baywood Golf & Country Club as Humboldt State hosted their first conference championship.

The women’s race was six-kilometers long, contested by 12 teams and the men’s race was eight kilometers long as ten teams aimed for the top spot.

The women’s race set off at 9 a.m. Humboldt State’s Cessair McKinney took an early lead for the Jacks but slowly slipped behind teammate Rosa Granados who ended as Humboldt’s top finishing runner in 16th, with a time of 22:49. McKinney finished the race in 30th with a time of 23:16.

Another standout in the women’s race was the Jacks’ Yuliana Garibay who was able to work her way up the highly competitive field to cross the line in 40th, just behind teammates Rosie Melville and Saedy Williamson.

HSU Coach Jamey Harris was impressed with Granados’ run Saturday, mentioning that as one of the highlights of the meet for him.

“Rosa was a little bit of a

pleasant surprise,” Harris said. “I thought top 15 was possible for her but I thought that was going to take a really, really good day and she had a really good day. Almost got top 15.”

Chico State claimed top honors in the women’s race by placing eight of their runners in the top 15 to finish with 23 points compared to second-place Cal State East Bay who finished with 81 points. The HSU women’s team placed seventh overall with 152 points beating Cal State Los Angeles and Cal State Bernardino.

A thirty-minute gap between events allowed the men to warm-up before starting their race. While the athletes were ready to get things underway, complications with the starting gun resulted in several false starts.

When things finally got moving, the race was packed up for much of the first two kilometers. Humboldt’s Daniel Tull has been the team’s leader since the start of the season and continued to stick with the front pack through the early and middle stages of the competition, even taking the lead for a brief time. As the race continued, Chico once again held control in the championship race.

Tull led the Jacks in tenth followed by the Jacks’ Elliot Portillo in 43rd, and the rest



Humboldt State’s Rosa Granados leads a small pack of runners during the CCAA conference meet at Baywood Golf & Country Club on October 26.

of his teammates took sixth as a team. Tull was the only Jack to finish in the top 15 Saturday, but that did not stop him from pointing out that he could have finished stronger had he not led early on in the race.

“I was feeling really strong and I was with the front group for the first 6K or 7K,” Tull said. “I kind of moved up from fourth or fifth to first. The guys that I passed made a really

strong move that I couldn’t really cover, so I kind of faded. Once I lost my momentum I kind of paid for that. I’m still happy with it, that’s my best race yet. But I know I could have done better.”

Portillo felt that the team’s performance was where things were expected to be, but he thinks there could be better performances up ahead for himself and his teammates.

“I got out pretty quick, kind

of found myself slipping into a back pack,” Portillo said. “As the race strung out, some moves were made. And then definitely within the last 400 yards, my body kind of shut down on me and it was just a struggle to finish. I think as a team we had a few guys that had bad days, that didn’t quite do what they wanted. We still finished about where we were expected to so that’s a healthy sign.”



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Men’s basketball wins first exhibition game

Transfer players create positive outlook for upcoming season

by Alberto Muro

Despite Humboldt County awaiting a blackout on Saturday, Jacks’ basketball made sure to keep the energy high on Friday night.

The blackout forced Humboldt State Athletics to move its volleyball game to the same time as the scheduled basketball game, which meant the Jacks had to play in the East Gym.

During the last few months, HSU men’s basketball added three Division I transfers to its arsenal. Compton, CA natives Raysean Scott Jr. (Florida Gulf Coast University), Leland Green (University of Hawaii) and Rob Lewis’ (Texas Southern University) combined efforts impact the game in a way the Jacks have missed for a while.

“It’s not surprising from me, I knew from the recruitment trail last spring that we were onto some very talented players,” Kinder said. “The players were remarkable and created a memorable environment for those in attendance.”

The Jacks started off strong as guard Isaiah Pope found the net seconds after the first whistle. It wasn’t long before Simpson gave up their first foul and Jacks’ forward Raysean Scott Jr. capitalized on a free throw opportunity.

Simpson began executing defensive plays against the Jacks as they attempted to find their place on the scoreboard, but it was met with resistance as the Jacks responded with chemistry between Scott Jr. and point



Humboldt State’s Raysean Scott Jr. jumps up to dunk the ball during the men’s basketball exhibition game against Simpson on October 25.

guard Amari Green.

Strategies issued by Head Coach Steve Kinder and Assistant Coach Rich Mendoza helped the Jacks focus on teamwork while capitalizing on opportunities to push points past Simpson.

The second half for the Jacks resulted in an increase of player activity and passing chemistry. HSU took another lead over Simpson as the battle for possession continued. The Jacks finished strong and concluded the exhibition game with a final score of 88-70.

Kinder reflected on the importance of the East Gym and the impact it had on his coaching career with HSU basketball.

“That East Gym experi-

ence today goes back to the good old days,” Kinder said. “It was the first time we have [played] there since the 2007 season, and to be back in there was quite a moment.”

Despite the sudden change of venues, Kinder and his team were not impacted as the East Gym is a consistent training place.

“We’ve held practices in there all year, so we felt like it was a road game for us,” Kinder said.

Men’s basketball will hold one more exhibition game at Lumberjack Arena on November 5 against Southern Oregon University before hitting the road for an away game against Point Loma on November 8.

EDITORIAL

MASSIVE MISCOMMUNICATIONS

During the most recent Public Safety Power Shutoffs, the Pacific Gas & Electric Company’s communication with its customers was awful. The first time the utility shutoff power in Humboldt County was on Oct. 9. The county had less than 12 hours of notice for residents to prepare for a possible four-day outage. Humboldt was the only county in California to lose all power and initially wasn’t even on the list of affected counties. After the outage, Michael Lewis, PG&E’s senior vice president of electric operations, said that Humboldt County shouldn’t have lost power in the first place. Although extreme weather and fire risk were at play in other counties’ outages, Humboldt went dark because of scheduled maintenance on one of the transmission lines coming into the county. On Saturday, Oct. 26, reports from PG&E said only about 2,000 customers in Humboldt would be affected. Several hours later, PG&E corrected itself and acknowledged that all Humboldt residents would be hit with the outage. During the most recent PSPS, the utility released news that another outage would likely hit Humboldt early Tuesday morning. Additional updates said that while many residents would regain power, it was possible that residents still without it may continue to be in the dark through to Tuesday’s outage. When Tuesday morning

came and went, locals wondered when the outage would hit. Those who regained power the day previous still had it, and conflicting reports from PG&E, the Redwood Coast Energy Authority and the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services led to mass uncertainty about when --and if-- the power would go out again. For those PG&E customers who tuned in to one of the company’s many streamed press conferences, they were forced to wade through jargon including “operational event,” “incident commander,” and the terribly-named “Public Safety Power Shutoffs.” Late Monday night, the Redwood Coast Energy Authority posted on Facebook that PG&E said that power in Northern Humboldt wouldn’t go out until 9 p.m. That same night, OES made its own Facebook post stating that PG&E said power was still planned to go out early in the morning. On Tuesday morning, OES continued to stand by what it had learned from PG&E. PG&E’s own updates from Tuesday morning listed the outage time for Northern Humboldt as 9 p.m., and as the day went on, that seemed to be likely. Humboldt State University had no better idea of when the power would go out, as it noted in its update on Tuesday morning. “HSU is seeking clarity from



Photo Illustration by Megan Bender

PG&E regarding the timing of a possible power shutdown,” HSU’s update said. “There has been conflicting information from the company, and in local news reports, over the last 24 hours.” PG&E later updated its estimated timing to 7 p.m., and then, around 5 p.m., it called off any PSPS for Humboldt at all. On Facebook, OES said PG&E had given it inaccurate information. “PG&E has provided the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services (OES) inaccurate information regarding times of de-energization in our County,” OES said. Communication is

everything. PG&E changing times of planned outages makes sense, especially since the outages are primarily based around weather patterns. But failing to provide accurate information to emergency services and county officials is ludicrous. The company’s communication strategies are unacceptable. As a community and state we need to hold PG&E accountable and remove ourselves from its firm corporate grip. These blackouts should be the push California needs to turn toward alternative energy and municipal utility boards, ridding the state of monopolized power once and for all.

OPINION

BLACKOUT BLUES

Force PG&E to be a public utility

by Jen Kelly

Now that Humboldt County can expect to be in the dark on a semi-regular, seasonal basis, it will become just another strange happening to blend into the myriad strange happenings Humboldt County has to offer. Even as blackouts become a regular occurrence, the first blackout will always hold a special place in my heart. I will remember having a great time playing card games with friends by candlelight. I wandered around Arcata while I watched society quickly come undone over the course of 28 hours. I saw a bit of looting here and there, supermarkets with cashiers casually haggling for goods with wads of cash in hand, pop-up folk bands that looked like they had foraged their instruments from the trash of a collapsed civilization and light-up hula hoop parties after dark. I even felt a bit melancholy when the power came back on. For some, the first blackout will be remembered as a story about how our community came together during a strange time. Whether it was the Blue Lake Rancheria providing for people who needed electricity, or the Mad River Hospital handing out food to those in need. For some, it will be remembered as just the start of the new norm. Whatever the case, we proved that when society collapses, it doesn’t mean we all have to start eating each other. But I don’t think that’s the



Photo courtesy of Creative Commons

only way we should think of the blackouts. We should not just let these power outages blend into our daily lives. We should recognize these blackouts for what they are: just the latest in a long string of failures from PG&E. These failures haven’t been disastrous for Humboldt County yet, but if the power goes out for more than a day or two, it might be. I may have had a great time playing card games by candlelight and making mediocre hamburgers and burnt s’mores, but it is easy for me to forget that it gets cold at night when I have a warm bed. It’s easy for me to forget we might run out of diesel or medical oxygen. The Wall Street Journal found that PG&E has known for years that their lines were failing in dangerous ways. The Intercept reported that PG&E has spent hundreds of thousands on public relations firms and billions in shareholder dividends, while the New York Times reported that they’ve shelled out

millions to campaign contributions across the political spectrum while they let their infrastructure crumble. This blatant, legalized corruption and knowing endangerment of human life has cost some people everything. I heard a muttered sentiment while waiting in line to purchase much-needed alcohol rations for the first blackout. “Well, what’s better, this or fires?” We do not have to make that choice. We don’t have to have either. When we let PG&E turn a necessity into a commodity before running our infrastructure into the ground, we opted for both. That’s how we should look at these blackouts going forward. They’re just one more piece of evidence that PG&E are just a bunch of con artists who should never have been allowed to profit off a public utility. The goal of PG&E is to please shareholders, which involves cutting costs. It doesn’t matter if you sue them, break them up or change their

name. Fixing what’s broken is too expensive and not in the interests of any private company focused on short-term profit. Instead, they hire public relations firms, buy politicians and shelve the problem. They ignore the dead bodies piling up from the fires they’ve caused, pay the fines, declare bankruptcy and somehow manage to profit. We don’t need a new company. We don’t need a few smaller companies. Forcing PG&E to become a publicly utility is our only option for protecting vulnerable people. The avoidable mistakes of PG&E aren’t really mistakes, they’re a natural consequence of leaving something so dangerous and so vital to people rabid over short-term profit. The most vulnerable people in our community will suffer the most going forward. We should remember that the failures of PG&E have had deadly consequences in the past and will have deadly consequences in the future.

ASK EVERGREEN

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

Dear Evergreen, How do I become more of a fighter than a flighter?

Dear Fight or Flighter, Discerning the best route to take for a situation can be strenuous on the mind as you decide whether to stand your ground or retreat peacefully. It takes strength to fight for something you believe as well as to flee from something that burdens you. Depending on the situation, you may want to be a fighter, flighter or both. There’s nothing wrong with running away from a situation, nor is it wrong to stay to strive for resolution. Don’t be a fighter just for revenge. You should have earnest intentions with the passion you feel for fighting for something, whether it’s for a cause, a relationship or an event. Remember, physically fighting someone is illegal. If you feel the need to duke it out with someone, cordially invite them to a round of fisticuffs at your local gym where the two of you can be coached professionally and geared up safely in a boxing ring. If you’re in a life threatening situation involving an aggressor, you should take caution with your departure. Don’t aggravate the circumstances by spouting back insults or being hastily bold. You should remove yourself from the situation and seek help from the authorities if need be. If you’re in a life threatening situation like a natural disaster, you should follow orders from the respective officials overseeing the event. Don’t try to be a hero if you think you’re incapable of fighting. Standing up to a situation with multiple people on your side fighting for the same sincere reason can help you all achieve something for the greater good. Fleeing from a situation, whether it’s a fire, flood or mass shooting isn’t cowardly. You’re allowed to be selfish to an extent if it saves your life, but don’t go sacrificing the safety of others by being a foolish fighter or a flawed flighter. If you’re in a situation that is less life threatening, fighting or fleeing are equal game—just use your best judgment. Ethical and moral dilemmas will challenge, but if you know and believe in the golden rule, you’re probably equipped enough to decipher the best outcome. Good luck!

Sincerely, Evergreen

Send questions to: contactthejack@gmail.com

A SPECIAL THANK YOU:

The blackout edition paper you’re holding in your hands is another news miracle brought to you by this semester’s determined Lumberjack student staff.

The editors, reporters, photographers and designers who craft your student newspaper each week had every good reason to head to the beach this week. No one would blame them a bit if they didn't get a newspaper out. No power? No paper.

Editor-in-Chief Deija Zavala, however, already decided to make a paper if at all possible. Topics were reported, written, illustrated and edited. Students used precious cell phone batteries to take photos during the blackout. Reporters reported and editors edited on personal devices with varying levels of charge and connectivity.

Obstacles emerged. Production day rolled around and -- yippee! -- the power was back on. But campus buildings were closed, including The Lumberjack’s newsroom in Gist Hall. Another outage could occur at any time. Student and faculty safety were paramount. No one would be getting into Gist.

Solutions emerged. Lumberjack newsroom operations were moved to the Clam Beach Room at the Jolly Giant Commons, thanks to HSU Provost Alex Enyedi, who put a plan in motion.

Special thanks to Doug Dawes, HSU’s vice president of administration and

finance by day and emergency operation center director by blackout. Hats off to Robert Yucker, IT’s desktop support team lead, who traversed secret passages of The J to get production computers to their temporary homes.

Thanks to everyone at The J who made the Lumberjack staff feel welcome, including the student assistants who made an LJ sign for the Clam Beach Room, Stephen St. Onge, associate vice president for student success, Donyet King, director of residence life and Todd Larsen, director of housing operations.

The Lumberjack is a journalism lab. When news happens -- blackouts, for example -- that is when it is the most important to let reporters, photographers, editors and production folks do their job. Humboldt State administrators helped make that happen this week.

Much respect to the student editors who staffed the temporary newsroom Tuesday: Editor-in-Chief Deija Zavala, Managing Editor Skye Kimya, Production Manager and Layout Editor Megan Bender, Layout Editor Jose Herrera and News Editor James Wilde.

These students are journalists to the core. I'm impressed.

With sincere appreciation,

Deidre Pike
Lumberjack Adviser

WEEKLY CALENDAR

Wed. 10/23

Oh SNAP Farm Stand
Time: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Where: Outside Recreation and Wellness Building
Description: FREE fresh produce with student I.D., Bring your own bag

Tiki Freaky Voodoo & Vintage Exotica
Time: 3 - midnight
Where: The Miniplex at Richard’s Goat Tavern
Description: Dress up in your retro ‘60 costume, DJ’s will be spinning 21 & up after 9 p.m., FREE

Thurs. 10/31

Steam Punk Halloween Ball at The Gyppo Ale Mill
Time: 9 p.m. - midnight
Where: The Gyppo Ale Mill
Description: The Gyppo Ale Mill is throwing a Halloween par-tay!!

Wess Vega’s House of Horror
Time: 8 p.m. - 3 a.m.
Where: Forever Found
Description: A horrific night filled with dancing, live entertainment and food. \$25 or \$50 for VIP Lounge (18+)

Fri. 11/1

Healy Senior Centor - Lost Coast Fresh Hop Fest Check Presentation
Time: 7 - 8 p.m.
Where: The Gyppo Ale Mill
Description: Please join us as we have a little celebration of our community

Dia de los Muertos
Time: 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Where: University Center 225 - Kate Buchanan Room (KRR)
Description: Food available, come learn about Day of the Dead

Sat. 11/2

The Del McCoury Band
Time: 8 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Where: Off-campus Arkley Center for the Performing Arts
Description: The Del McCoury Band, featuring Ronnie and Rob revel glee-fully in bluegrass’ classic traditions, \$15 for students, \$66 for general

Arts Alive
Time: 6 p.m.
Where: Eureka
Description: Eureka’s monthly get together with opening receptions, artists, exhibits and performances, FREE

Sun. 11/3

Fortuna Community Health & Wellness Fair
Time: Noon - 4 p.m.
Where: The Fortuna River Lodge
Description: Prints, jewelry, food, crafts, artwork of every kind - everything you need! Refreshments available

Low Brass Studio Recital
Time: 8 - 9 p.m.
Where: Music B - Fulkerson Recital Hall
Description: Come listen to low brass studio students perform solo and chamber pieces in completion of their music degree

Mon. 11/4

Campus Dialogue on Race (CDOR)
Time: ALL WEEK
Where: HSU - Various locations
CHECK OUT hsu_cdor on instagram for full schedule of events

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