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Holy Cow!

PAINTED COW MOO-VES JUNIOR TO FINALS IN NATIONWIDE CONTEST

by Melody Zhang

In one of the rooms branching off from the music quad, one will find a variety of power tools, a coffin and a cow. Standing at a magnificent seven-feet, the fiberglass beast dubbed "Tony" belongs to junior Yoon Kwon, one of 30 finalists in the Lucerne Milk's annual "Art of Dairy" contest.

Kwon, supervised by McAfee Center manager Adrian Stapleton, joined a contest to incorporate music and dairy products on one cow according to this year's "Taste of Moosic" theme.

see COW, p. 5

POWDER PUFF

Seniors take crown

by Kevin Mu and Ren Norris

It was a cool evening but the crowds that filled the Saratoga High football stands erupted with energy, as the seniors faced the juniors in a battle for the title of Powder Puff champions. At the end of the match on April 16, the senior class claimed the crown, clobbering the juniors 14-7.

The first half of the game was scoreless. However, early in the second half, senior running back Claire Marsh ran 40 yards for a touchdown. The juniors retaliated when junior quarterback Annie Lee made three completions before the seniors halted the juniors' advance on a fourth down.

On their fourth possession, the seniors were determined to score again to ensure a victory. After a few short runs, quarterback Katie Gasik again handed the ball off to Marsh, who ran to the outside for a 60-yard touchdown.

"Scoring both touchdowns was probably one of the biggest adrenaline rushes of my life," said Marsh.

At the end of the game, the juniors mixed it up. Junior Sara Knysh stepped in as quarterback and threw to Lee for a reception and touchdown, making the final score 14-7 in favor of the seniors.

"We lost because we couldn't pick it up in the first half but we pulled through and dominated in the passing field," said Knysh. "I don't count it as a loss."

The seniors credit their victory to the athleticism of the team and the last-minute changes to the offense.

"We have a lot of fast girls on our team," said Gasik. "We also changed our entire offense that day after barely winning against the sophomores."

The seniors felt that it was finally their turn to win the championship,

see POWDER PUFF, p. 2

SENIORS HAVE ONE WEEK LEFT TO DECIDE WHERE THEY WANT TO GO FOR COLLEGE

by Rebecca Nguyen and Uma Sambasivam

After years of hard work, the time has finally come for seniors to make the next major step in life, college. In most cases, several doors are open to them. All they have to do is decide which college is right for them by May 1. That's where the pressure comes in.

Senior Swupnil Sahai is trying to decide between UC Berkeley, Cornell and the University of Chicago.

"I have always tried to find a balance between student life and academics, so I want to go to a place that has one of the best undergraduate programs in the country, but also has an exciting student life," said Sahai. "For example, being located near big cities, having good weather and students I can relate with."

see COLLEGE, p. 3

COLLEGE STATS

80,820 The number of applications the UC system received

10,000 The number of available spots cut from the CSU system

7 Percentage of applicants accepted into Harvard

Sources: Daily Cal, Cornell Sun, LPC Express

Say hi to wi-fi network

by Shannon Galvin and Apeksha Sharma

After years of consideration and months of installation by the school, students can now wirelessly log on to the Internet on their own laptops and iPods almost anywhere on campus.

Limited wireless networks previously existed for the math wing's laptops, Journalism computers and the MAP program. The school-wide network was finalized during spring break.

Students log on

To log in, students need the username and password they currently use for school-owned computers in the library and computer lab. The school is then able to track who is using the network.

Technology coordinator Julie Grenier sees the network as a great communication tool for students.

"[Students] can bring their own laptops and hook up in the library and work there," said Grenier. "They'll also be able to access the Internet on their iPhones and other media devices."

In exchange for this privilege, she said students need to exercise good judgment when using the wireless network. Regular school policies still apply and the Internet filter is still in place.

Many students are grateful that the district took steps to install the network.

"It [will] be really helpful for group projects," said sophomore David Chang. "If someone brought a laptop to school, then we could work on the project anywhere, not just the library."

Teachers take advantage

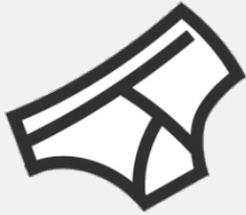
With the school-wide network, more teachers can take advantage of the array of resources on the Internet.

"My Sequential Geometry class is a great avenue to use the technology," said math teacher Kelly Frangieh. "There are a lot of online resources available to use. I have students go online and do a mini-quiz. They enter their answers and then can e-mail me their results."

Frangieh also plans to use the wireless network to enhance the usability of existing technology.

"I got a Smartboard in my room recently," said Frangieh. "It has wireless capabilities and I could potentially use my laptop with the board." ♦

NEWS BRIEFS



PTSO hosts two events to honor contributors to school

The Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) honored substantial contributors to the school and served two lunches this past Friday and Tuesday.

The volunteer appreciation lunch was held last Friday. This luncheon took place in the cafeteria and was put together to honor students, teachers, and parents who exceed of what they were assigned to do.

"This luncheon was basically to recognize the individuals who went above and beyond of what they were expected to do," said PTSO co-president Shinku Sharma.

There were four kinds of awards that a person could receive: Red pride, for loyal service to the school; blue ribbon, for making a difference in the school; silver certificate, for continued service and outstanding giving; and the Golden Oak Service Award, for significant and lasting contributions to the school. Only one person, however, received the Golden Oak award.

The event took place of the event, Founders Day, which in the past was organized by the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

On Career Day, April 21, the PTSO held a luncheon in the quad for students. The objective of this was to help students and teachers bond. This idea is similar to the tables of food that the PTSO sets up in the quad during finals weeks. Numerous entrees of Chinese food were served, including chow mein, fried rice and orange chicken. This event was made possible by fundraising that happened early this year in the *Just DO It* campaign.

New classes gain enough students

Now that students have completed the registration process for classes next year, some of the new proposed classes may now become a reality.

The new AP Environmental Science class has drawn quite a large number of prospective students. But the number of seats is very limited as there will only be two periods for the class. According to assistant principal Brian Safine, upperclassmen will be given first priority for the class.

Freshmen who chose to take the first-year Media Arts Program (MAP) class all got in. The second year MAP courses—Multimedia Journalism, Filmmaking, and Advanced Digital Animation—all have gotten enough signups to run.

Other new classes are simply changes to previous ones. As of next school year, there will be a Japanese 3 Honors class. Also, the Computer Science Introductory will be fused with the AP course into one class.

The next step the school needs to take is to get University of California (UC) approval for the courses by submitting them this spring, Safine said.

According to Safine, how many class periods there will be for each new class is still "yet to be determined."

SHS band and orchestra garner kudos

After several California Music Educators Association (CMEA) evaluations, the Saratoga band and orchestra continue to receive outstanding feedback and maintain a position as having one of the best music departments in the Bay Area.

The most recent CMEA evaluation was hosted by the school in the McAfee Center from March 27-29. Several high schools and middle schools participated in the event, including Redwood Middle School.

"We were really proud at how [the students] ran the festival, their performance onstage, but more importantly how they ran the festival offstage," said music director Michael Boitz. "[They were] very good leaders [and] very helpful to everybody at the festival."

The Saratoga band and orchestra received four unanimous superiors for the performances of their advanced orchestra, intermediate orchestra, symphonic band I, symphonic orchestra and symphonic wind ensemble.

Symphonic band II received two excellences and two superiors. Out of all the participating local schools, Saratoga High scored the highest.

"I'm very proud of our orchestra and band, because we have to work very hard to get unanimous superiors ratings for almost all our groups," said sophomore Walter Hsiang, a cellist in the symphonic orchestra.

Performances by the musicians were judged based on three judging criteria—musicality (style, expression, dynamics), quality of sound and technique.

Despite the music department's continued success, Boitz thinks the most important thing is not the achievement, but rather the path to get there.

"To me, the most important part is during rehearsal or in the classroom with each other," said Boitz. "The performance is very exciting, but all of the moments we have together in the rehearsal room is the most rewarding part. The rating is sort of an icing on the cake."

—by Grishma Athavale, Elizabeth Lee, Kirstie Lee and Anna Shen



Melody Zhang

Senior Alana Ledbetter carries the football in an attempt to score a touchdown under the lights on Thursday, April 16. The seniors clinched Powder Puff after defeating the juniors 14-7.

POWDER PUFF | Seniors prevail

continued from pg. 1

as it was their third year making it to the final game.

"This is our senior year and we were expected to beat the people in classes underneath us," said Marsh, "but the juniors showed some great competition."

This year, the second round of Powder Puff games were played on the full 100 yards of the football field, instead of half the field as it has in past years. The decision, however, caused some scoring issues for the players.

"It would have been much easier to score if we had a modified field," said senior lineman Alison Norris, "and the games would have been more exciting to watch since there would have been more touchdowns."

Students showed their interest with enthusiastic attendance to the lunch games as well.

On Tuesday earlier that week, the juniors beat the freshmen 14-0 thanks to touchdowns from

Sam Li and Emily Baba.

The seniors won a close game against the sophomores on Wednesday. No touchdowns were scored on either side, but the seniors had three first downs, which earned them a 27-7 victory and a spot in the finals.

"We did much better than expected," said sophomore Colleen Garland. "We didn't practice much or have many subs, so it was shocking that we held the seniors to no touchdowns."

This year there was also a game to decide third place, also on April 16. The freshmen defeated the sophomores with an early touchdown by quarterback Anna Ashe after Courtney Brandt ran it down the field. Sophomore McKenzie Crase responded with a 50-yard run, but the freshmen held off the storming sophomores at the one-yard line.

"We had an awesome game," said freshman Chloe Knight. "It was a great way to redeem ourselves from the game against

the juniors."

The freshman, sophomore and junior male cheerleaders cheered for their respective classes Thursday at lunch, drawing a large crowd in the quad.

"It was fun to perform our cheer and the crowd's energy was great," said sophomore cheerleader Jason Shiuan. "I think our routine was the best."

The senior cheerleaders will perform at the rally today during tutorial.

The Battle of the Boom was not held this year due to a lack of participants, and there was no dunk tank because of issues and injuries last Spring Fling, according to junior Spring Fling commissioner Natalie Tkalcevic.

All in all, Spring Fling succeeded in boosting school spirit by initiating class rivalries.

"We had a great turnout for all the activities and a great response from the students," said Tkalcevic. "Spring Fling turned out to be very successful." ♦

Science Fair awards handed out

by Abhi Venkataramana

Junior Malika Kumar eagerly walked into the entrance of Great America on March 30. But unlike most of the crowd, she wasn't there for the rides. She was there to participate in the 2009 Synopsis Science and Technology Championship Award Ceremony. Six other science fair participants from Saratoga High were also chosen to attend.

Of the 300 Bay Area students who participated in the championship on March 18, 220 were recognized by both individual companies like NASA and the official judges. Freshman Shriya Nagpal, sophomores Vijay Menon, Karthik Sreedhara, Abhishek Venkataramana and Caroline White and junior Haley Zarrin were all invited.

Nagpal was awarded Honorable Mention for her technical paper on the chemistry involved in cosmetics. The team of Menon, Sreedhara and Venkataramana won first place in the Chemistry category while White won the first place prize in Engineering as well as the Intel Promising Young Scientist Award. Zarrin and Kumar also received first place in Engineering for their project titled "Creating a SensorGVS: A Sonar/Accelerometer Guided Vehicle Stabilization System."

In addition, the girls were named the fair's Grand Prize Alternate, won an all-expense-paid trip to the University of Southern California (USC) for the state science fair on May 18, were listed as the first alternate for the Intel International Science Fair and received \$100 from the

Safety Systems Society for creating a project that could improve passenger safety.

"We were really shocked when we heard we'd won the Grand Prize alternate," said Kumar. "Neither of us expected that at all because it's really difficult to win the top award like that and we were pretty thrilled about making it this far."

Kumar said that the ceremony was not the only rewarding part of the experience for her.

"While doing our project we figured out a lot about writing and using computer simulations and about engineering and programming that can be used in models," said Kumar. "It was definitely a good experience and it's fun and challenging to completely build something from scratch and present in a fair." ♦



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Budget crises cause lower acceptance rates

by Karthik Sreedhara
and Girish Swaminath

Many seniors are learning of a tough lesson this spring: College is tougher to get into as a result of the tight economy and state budget cuts.

Students applying for colleges under the University of California system, including campuses in San Diego, Santa Barbara, Davis, Irvine, Santa Cruz and to a lesser extent, Riverside, have been experiencing lower acceptance rates, assistant principal Brian Safine said.

"We have seen some students this year who we would historically expect to be admitted to those campuses, [but] in some cases not [been] accepted this year," he said.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, the UC's nine campuses received ap-

plications from 80,820 California residents for the freshman class for the fall 2009 term and offered spots to 58,631.

According to university officials, 10,000 freshman applicants who were not offered a seat at campuses where they applied were offered admission to less in-demand UC's like those at Merced or Riverside.

According to UC officials, the acceptance rate for UC Davis dropped 11 percent, Santa Cruz dropped 19 percent, and UCLA dropped to 21.4 percent. UC Berkeley, however, is aiming for the same number as last year, about 4,300.

Many students have their own reason behind why the acceptance is so low this

year. Senior Harish Kothandapani believes universities do not look at students in detail.

"I think [the UC's] were overly selective," said Kothandapani. "It seems like they just took the person with the highest numbers, instead of looking at their backgrounds and what they have done."

However, Safine claims that even during these competitive times, there has still been a lot of success.

Said Safine, "Students who applied to a broad range of universities seemed to have been more successful in their applications."

Safine recommends students apply to

a variety of schools rather than applying to a select few because doing this will increase their chances of getting into a college they like.

He believes that the competition for the Class of 2010 will diminish, but said predictions are difficult to make given the state of the economy.

"This year, six of the UC schools had the biggest change in admissions history," said Safine. "It is impossible to project what will happen to the state of California economically. However, I would think that things will get better, but not by too much."

Class sizes are most likely to increase for the current juniors, as shown by statistics from the past few years. 48,253 students applied to UC Davis in the class of 2008, but that number went up by more than 3,000 for the present class of seniors. ♦

"This year, six of the UC schools had the biggest change in admissions history."

—assistant principal Brian Safine

TOGATALKS

What do you think about college admission rates?

"I'm a little nervous because my senior friends didn't get into the places they wanted."



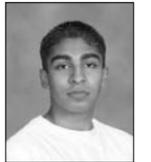
junior Sara Knysh



senior Alex Yen

"I think they are tough. A lot of people are bummed out."

"People should be happy with where they got in."



senior Kushal Shah

COLLEGE | Decision time

continued from pg. 1

Other students want to primarily focus on the academics of the school and opportunities rather than other factors.

"My primary focus for my decision is academics: strength of my major's department at the school, availability of professors, opportunities to do research, since I'm a science major, class size, etc," said senior Sarah Zarrin, who is deciding between two East Coast schools and UC Berkeley.

Students also have to consider the cost of going to different colleges. For instance, senior Mabel Hsu had her heart set on going to Boston University, but due to its high cost, a little more than \$50,000 a year, she decided to go to University of California San Diego instead.

"I was really disappointed at first because I had really wanted to go to Boston and spend my college years there. I was almost a little angry, or disappointed, that it was money that was holding me back," said Hsu. "It almost seemed unfair, but I realized it would have been more unfair to place my family, and myself, under such a monetary burden."

Not only do students choose by size and costs, but also by location. Senior Alex Ren had a difficult decision between two colleges, UC Berkeley and UC Davis.

"I think that one of the major factors is location because family and friends are important. I will always be attached to Saratoga. That's a major reason why I chose Berkeley over Davis," said Ren.

Some students, like senior Weilynn Chang, are weighing the chance to be away from home and enjoy new opportunities.

"I wanted a change so instead of a school in California where the weather is always the same [I wanted to go to] a big city like Boston where there are actually four seasons. College is about new great experiences," said Chang, who is deciding between Boston University and UC Irvine.

Although deciding which college to go to is difficult, English teacher Cathy Head encourages students to use a modified Kepner-Trego Method, which is usually used by CEOs when making decisions, to help simplify this task.

The method involves the students giving a score for each of the factors that they feel is important. Then, they total up the points and the school with the most is the one they should choose.

"It's just a way for you to sort out all the information, bring it all together, and then follow your heart," said Head.

After all of the work of applying, the colleges have accepted or rejected students. Now seniors must choose the college.

"It is tough, because there are going to be things you like about every school you apply to, and the inevitability of choosing one school means you're giving up some things you really liked in other colleges," said Zarrin. "In the end, it's obviously a matter of finding which college has the most factors you like and that fit you as a person." ♦

After all the work of applying, the colleges have accepted or rejected students. Now seniors must choose the college.



courtesy of Joleen Tseng

Over the spring break, senior Joleen Tseng visited Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill.—one of the many prospective colleges she is considering for this coming fall.

College open houses help seniors

by Karthik Sreedhara
and Girish Swaminath

As soon as college acceptance letters came out in March, students noticed an absence of seniors. Many seniors missed class and spent spring break at colleges to decide what college they would attend—a decision that would forever impact their future.

Senior Sara Gambord spent her entire spring break visiting college options and spent a lot of time at Hofstra University, where she will be heading next fall.

"I met with the head of the department [for my major] at my prospective school and took a tour of the facilities," said Gambord. "I also shadowed a student and attended several classes."

Gambord noticed many differences between high school and college class structures and professors.

"Classes are more student-based and more interactive [at Hofstra] than in high school," said Gambord. "This open house helped me see that college professors are not very organized but know their

material and speak whatever comes to mind."

However, not all students found on-campus sessions helpful. Senior Lisa Chang spent break at the University of Pennsylvania. Because she had been admitted early decision, she was bound to go there but still wanted to learn more about her college in person. She felt that her "Preview Day" meeting was not useful.

"There was a busy schedule from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., but I was unable to meet many faculty members and other students," said Chang. "One thing after another was set up during 'Preview Day' and they're mostly a couple boring, uninformative videos on college life."

Chang felt she learned more about the school through the website than visiting the campus. She believed that even if she had to make a decision, she would not have gained any new knowledge to help her choose.

"The whole thing was hectic," said Chang. "I wasn't able to meet many people, so I didn't learn much more about [the University of Pennsylvania]." ♦



Uma Sambasivam

Juniors Erin McCroskey and Sung Park rehearse "The Frog Prince" in the McAfee Center.

A show for the kids

by Sulmaan Hassan
and Holden Sparacino

The drama department underwent serious changes when drama teacher and director Chris Mahle was hired two years ago. Student productions were replaced with a One Act Festival, which enabled more students to try their hand in directing and producing a show. This year, Mahle decided to change things up again with the initiation of Children's Shows.

The Children's Shows are similar to the One Act Festival, which will be held later this year. However, unlike the One Act Festival, the Children's Shows let students from the Drama 4 Honors class adapt a children's story into a stage production.

"This year, the Children's Shows were the primary focus, while the One Act Festival was secondary from the beginning" said senior stage manager Matt Hawks.

The reason for the switch, said Hawks, is that the Children's Shows give students more experience than directing a one act play would, because the directors had to transform a written story, most only a few pages, into a production with their own sound, light, costumes and actors. They must also perform in front of an audience

of children, as well as one public show.

Hawks' job included working out the kinks in the new project, such as trying to get publicity and a sizable audience.

"Unfortunately, information didn't get out in time to the elementary schools, so they weren't able to arrange field trips," said Hawks.

But the Children's Shows had the full attention of Saratoga High's preschool.

"They were laughing the whole time," said senior director Christina Lauro.

Some Saratoga High classes also attended the show, which spanned the better part of a period on April 16 and 17.

Both the actors and high school audience enjoyed having preschoolers in the audience. Junior Sahm Jafari, who saw the show with his chemistry class, said having the preschoolers laugh first made the high school students follow.

Junior actor Sung Park also enjoyed performing in front of the younger audience.

"They were really into it, and gave a lot of honest laughs," said Sung, who acted as King Stanton in 'The Frog Prince.' "Back stage everyone was listening to the kids laughing and were saying 'aww, its so cute!'" ♦

A walk to remember

FIVE TEACHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THREE-DAY, 60-MILE BREAST CANCER WALK IN OCTOBER

by Kevin Mu
and Jenny Zhang

For three years, statistics teacher Seema Patel has wanted to participate in the inspirational Susan G. Komen three-day Breast cancer walk but because of the large time and monetary commitments involved, she put it off. This year, however, Patel had a different attitude entirely.

"This year I just decided in a matter of five minutes, 'Sure, I'll do it,'" said Patel. "I have always wanted to do this walk and this year I finally got around to doing it."

Now, she and fellow math teacher Kelly Frangieh have organized a team that includes five teachers: Patel, Frangieh, math teacher Kristen Hamilton, science teacher Genevieve Garcia and psychology teacher Laressa Ridge.

The five will join thousands of women in San Francisco for the breast cancer walk on Oct. 2-4. Participants will walk 20 miles each day of the three-day event, sharing support, kindness and laughter along the way.

The event takes place in 14 cities all across the United States, annually raising millions of dollars for breast cancer research, awareness and prevention. Last year, the walk raised over \$110 million for the Susan G. Komen For the Cure Foundation, according to the event's website www.the3day.org.

For many, the walk is a tribute to the survivors or to those who are currently fighting against cancer.

"[The three-day walk] is something that I've been wanting to do for a long time," said Garcia, "but recently someone very close to me has been afflicted with breast cancer, so I'm doing it in her honor."

For others, who realize that so many people have been affected by breast cancer and that so many people are still

fighting against the disease, the walk is truly an unforgettable, life-changing experience.

"Since I have decided to do this [walk]," said Patel, "I [have discovered] that so many people have [breast cancer]. When I started, [I knew] none. Now I'm walking for about 20 people."

One of the main challenges of the event is collecting the necessary donations. Each participant in the walk must raise at least \$2,300, for a minimum of \$11,500 for the five teachers. So far, Patel has raised \$1,200 in donations, including \$170 in contributions from her students.

"Raising \$2,300 every year is very hard," Patel said. "Asking people for money is a lot."

Despite the long hours of planning and fundraising involved, Patel believes all the work that the teachers have put in will definitely be worthwhile if it helps to cure a disease that currently affects one in eight women.

"I decided it was a really good cause because it affects girls and women forevermore," said Patel. "Until we find a cure, it will continue to affect women and kids as well."

Current fundraising ideas include a Mothers' Day camp, where children would be able to create arts and crafts for their mothers, and the selling of "good luck" goodie bags for finals week, Garcia said. In addition, the money raised by Garcia's annual physics catapult project will go toward funding the three-day walk.

For security purposes, the destinations and routes of the walk will not be released until the day of the event, when participants arrive. ♦

If you would like to donate to or participate in this cause, please talk to Ms. Patel in room 507 or visit www.the3day.org for more information.

Collaboration: What goes on Wednesday morning

by Grishma Athavale
and Nandini Ruparel

Every Wednesday morning, when students get to arrive an hour late to school, teachers must attend staff-collaboration, where they exchange ideas and work on improving school and classes.

According to teachers, there are generally two types of collaboration: individual/partner collaboration and group collaboration. During individual/partner collaboration, teachers work on their own or with another person on a

variety of projects. In groups, teachers often exchange ideas with each other on planning and improving their classes.

Sometimes, rather than allowing teachers to discuss student issues and lesson plans, collaboration is used for specific school wide purposes.

Last year, for example, teachers mainly used collaboration periods to work on the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) accredita-

SCHOOL RULES
What
teachers do in
collaboration



tions. This year, it is being used to help teachers gain the California Teacher of English Learners (CTEL) authorization, which required for all teachers to be able to teach students who are learning English as a second language. Many teachers have mixed opinions about this usage of collaboration.

"CTEL does take some of my time that I would have used for collaborating with other

teachers but other than that it's fine," said English teacher Kerry Mohnike.

"Collaboration's been helpful for me." Another focus of collaboration this year, said history teacher and staff development coordinator Matt Torrens, the staff development coordinator this year, is ensuring that all students of different abilities will be challenged in a class setting.

"Plans for collaboration next year include being more flexible and are more applicable to teachers [on] what they're doing in the classroom," said Torrens. ♦

Editors-in-chief, drum majors chosen for next year

by Uttara Sivaram

As summer nears and school wraps up, this year's student leaders are passing the baton to next year's leaders—namely, the positions of drum majors, yearbook and newspaper editors-in-chief. Next year, these coveted positions will be led by new drum majors juniors Flora Chang and Zach Jacobs and sophomores Jason Shiuan and David Mandell, yearbook editor-in-chiefs juniors Tara Fatemi, Eda Isik and Melanie Yamamoto, and *Falcon* editor-in-chiefs juniors Alex Song and Gautham Ganesan.

Traditionally, only two or three drum majors are named per year but due to the inconvenience that having only three majors heading the 200-member band has

presented in the past, four were instated this year. The process of electing drum majors is especially drawn out, demanding auditions, extensive paperwork, essay writing and interviews, all supervised and rated by music department heads Michael Boitz and John Zarco. Prospective majors have to type out a paper expanding upon their qualifications, conduct in front of the band, stand for election and fill out several forms before being considered for the job.

"There aren't really any set 'qualifications' [for being a drum major]," said Chang, "but like with any other leadership role, there are the unsaid requirements, like the ability to lead others and to get others to listen to you."

The selection process for the yearbook

and newspaper editor-in-chief positions is less arduous—though the applications are expected to be detailed; candidates go through an interview process with journalism adviser Mike Tyler, who then picks the editors. Many factors are taken into his consideration—experience, aptitude, leadership ability, etc. Yamamoto, one of the newly named yearbook editor-in-chiefs, acknowledges that there is still much to learn even after two years on staff.

"Although I feel that my experiences on the yearbook staff have helped to prepare me to fill a role as an editor, I know that there is still a lot to learn," said Yamamoto. "[Last year's editors'] example motivated me to do my very best on everything I worked on. I decided to apply, hoping for an opportunity to be

involved on a deeper level in the making of the yearbook and to encourage the staff in the same way that previous years' editors have encouraged me."

Hand-in-hand with the announcement of the new yearbook editors came the announcement of the *Falcon's* own editors-in-chief. Song, an involved *Falcon* staff member for the past two years, deems his promotion to be more of a "natural progression of leadership" and is confident that with his experience and the help of his staff, he will do "just fine."

For students who are interested in applying for leadership positions next year, Song believes that a strong work ethic is the way to success.

"Hard work and diligence can get you just about anywhere," said Song. ♦

COW | Junior reaches top 30 in Lucerne design contest

continued from pg. 1

Kwon first sent in a paper design that was considered one of top 30 designs out of the thousands of contestants nationwide; afterwards, Lucerne sent her a fiberglass cow, which she painted her design on. After results are released within the next two weeks, Lucerne will use the winning cow for commercials.

Assistant principal Karen Hyde hopes that when the time comes for "Tony" to be shipped to the local Safeway, Lucerne's parent company, the school will get to parade the masterpiece through the streets.

A hopeful future artist, Kwon has competed in art contests before, including a victorious Congressional Art Competition last year, which sent her on a trip to Washington, D.C. If she wins "Art of Dairy," she hopes to use the \$5,000 prize for art school tuition. Stapleton, who stepped in to help, would also receive \$5,000. The school would receive \$20,000, hopefully used to buy new equipment for stage tech.

After three weeks of strenuous work where work days sometimes lasted from right after school until 10 p.m., Kwon can't help but feel drained.

"I'm so tired and sick of this," she joked. "I even dreamt that I won second—

and I felt so jealous of first place."

Kwon's vibrant design was actually entered last minute. Originally thinking that she could only draw on one side of the cow, she realized right before the deadline that she could maximize her chances if she illustrated the entire cow.

"I was confident with my design but after I sent it in I wasn't so sure," said Kwon. "But I'm pretty happy with it now."

The chances were slim in November when the artist was up against thousands of other competitors across the country in the first round. Then in early March, Kwon's mother received a mysterious FedEx envelope.

"She opened it and she was like, 'Yoon, I think you got it,'" said Kwon. "We were screaming for like five minutes."

"My design's a combination between a classical [music] theme and just my imagination," said Kwon. The brightly colored "Tony" has become a familiar acquaintance with the stage tech crew, who warmly welcomed Kwon's charge to their workroom.

"We just walked in [to work] and we were like, 'Wow, what is this?'" said tech member junior Joe Stephens. "I thought it was really good. I had no idea she was such a good artist." ♦



Melody Zhang

Junior Yoon Kwon poses with her cow, one of 30 finalists in the "Art of Dairy" Contest.

Safe Rides program reinstated by Leadership, starts tonight

by Elizabeth Lee
and Lyka Sethi

After a year of planning, the leadership class will revive the Safe Rides program at SHS starting tonight. The program provides rides from student and parent volunteers for people who are in unsafe situations.

Originally, Safe Rides was to start on April 4, but was delayed due to Bombay in the Bay and a lack of volunteers.

Years ago, Safe Rides shut down due to insurance issues. Now, the leadership class and assistant principal Karen Hyde are "picking it off from the ground" and setting the gears back into place. This year, more than 30 student volunteers signed up and completed a mandatory training course.

Leadership students Farid Jiandani, Rishi Taggarsi and Michael Guercio introduced the idea of starting the program at the beginning of this school year. Since

November, they have been working, collecting information and dealing with legal issues involving the program.

"We realized how many hoops we had to jump through," said Jiandani. "We had to get insurance for drivers and find an off-campus location, St. Andrews, to work from."

After spending the last several months figuring out the logistics with a district attorney and getting the idea approved by superintendent Cary Matsuoka, the

program was finally put into action.

No identification is needed to access the program, which is currently limited to anyone in Saratoga. The operating hours are every other weekend, 10 p.m. to 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturday nights.

"I've heard lots of horror stories about people who drive inebriated," said Jiandani. "I know that even if we get one phone call, it will be worth it." ♦

For more information, the Safe Rides number is 408-239-7941.



Courtesy of Nyssa Spector

Senior Girl Scout Nyssa Spector constructed a paved sidewalk at the back of the school.

Girl Scout goes for Gold Award

by Rebecca Nguyen

After being an avid member of Girl Scouts for 12 years, senior Nyssa Spector is working toward the Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest award in the organization. Receiving this honor requires 65 hours of community service. Spector has been planning her project since October and approved it in February.

For her first part of community service, she decided to help beautify the school. She started her project over spring break by starting up the installation of one new sidewalk with the help of the school.

"I'm working with the Environmental Management System (EMS) club a lot," said Spector. "I'm kind of the CEO of my project; I've got a bunch of people working under me."

Although funds are an issue, the school donated money to build sidewalks, and the city of Saratoga contributed bike racks. Spector has also sold donuts after school

to earn money for her different projects. Nyssa's next project will include planting pots of plants around the sidewalk on April 25.

Spector's project also includes promoting National Bike Awareness Month in May.

"When people bike to school, we're going to give them a ticket or put their names down," said Spector. "At the end of the month, we're going to have a big party and raffle off prizes."

Prizes won in the raffle will promote healthy lifestyles.

"I'm going to get some bike stuff donated and eco-friendly type of things," said Spector.

Spector will be handing out free breakfasts to motivate people to bike.

"I think that one of the reasons that fewer people bike is because there's insufficient place to put bicycles, so it discourages them," said Spector. "My goal with this project is to encourage those people who normally drive to bike, be greener, fit and decrease traffic." ♦



Spector

Interview process added to Link leader selection

by Anna Shen
and Jennifer Zhang

As hopeful students apply for Link Crew over the next few weeks, returning Link Crew Leaders may realize that the application process has become much more selective than in previous years.

Link Crew, a group that was organized several years ago, tries to "help freshmen feel connected to the school community and help them transition to the high school scene academically, socially and emotionally," according to guidance counselor Alinna Satake.

In an attempt to improve the Link program, guidance counselors Frances Saiki and Satake have made new additions to the selection process, including an interview for each applicant and student-nominations by teachers.

"The way you get really qualified candidates is you have to put more time into the process of finding the best candidates," said Satake.

Because an application itself does not always accurately portray a person's true character and personality, the addition of an interview helps Saiki and Satake view every applicant's personality up close.

"[The interview process] is good practice for students," said Satake. "It's helpful because sometimes on paper,

people may not know how to say the right things on a resume, but they're actually very enthusiastic and would be great for Link Crew."

Many students agree that this new addition will be beneficial to finding good Link leaders.

"The new interview might give the counselors a better scope on who is going to apply," said junior Victor Wong, who was a Link leader last year and is applying again this year. "Some people in the past might have gotten by with

an [insincere] application, but the coming year, [Saiki and Satake] might actually see if the applicant is someone they want handling freshmen."

Qualities Saiki and Satake are looking for in an ideal Link leader are a willingness to accept the time commitment, enthusiasm and, most importantly, a positive attitude toward freshmen.

"[Saiki and I] are looking for people [who] really care about freshmen and aren't afraid to be goofy and will put themselves out there," said Satake. "It is not about looking cool or treating your freshmen like little smurfs. It's about really having a heart to care for their well-being, making sure you are committed to following up on them and being committed to a group of kids."

The turn-out of Link applicants has diminished from past years; there are currently about 150 applicants, compared to more than 200 last year. ♦

"[Saiki and I] are looking for people [who] really care about freshmen... and will put themselves out there."

—guidance counselor Alinna Satake

Cheer succeeds despite changes to routine

by Mira Chaykin
and Guy Quanrud

Although there were some last-minute complications, the cheerleading team, composed of JV and varsity, soared above their expectations and pulled an amazing routine together just in time to compete for the judges at the United Spirit Association's national competition in Anaheim on March 31.

The team performed a near flawless, though simplified, routine, after losing several girls in the weeks before the competition to various issues.

"Injuries took a huge toll on the team near competition. It seemed like every week someone was getting injured, and that affects the team because with one girl out, we have to re-do the entire routine," said varsity captain junior Ally Doles.

Another problem brought on by the unfortunate absences of many teammates so late in the season was the minimal amount of practice the girls got with an ever changing routine.

"We changed the routine in the weeks leading up to Nationals, then even at Nationals the day before the competition," said JV captain sophomore Erin Wong.

Most girls on the team came to a consensus that despite not making it to finals with their constantly changing routine, their performance was something they could look back on as a positive experience.

"Cheer and getting ready for Nationals was crazy time consuming, especially being a captain, but it was definitely worth the work," said varsity captain senior Harriet Russell. "I'm really proud of our team."

Doing the routine in front of the judges was the girls' first ever performance with the altered routine. They managed to hit almost every stunt regardless. But the competition was only part of the trip.

The team got to spend three nights at the Hilton in Anaheim, and three days at Disneyland.

However, now that the cheer season is over, the girls have more to miss than



courtesy of Tiffany Borgja

THE SPIRIT SQUAD PRACTICES THEIR ROUTINE BEFORE THEY COMPETE IN ANAHEIM ON

performing and Disneyland.

"I'm going to miss the seniors so much next year," said sophomore Kaetlyn Rourke. "They are all leaders of the team and it will be different without them."

Even with the loss of several key seniors, there will also be a lot to look

forward to in the coming season.

"I think we will try to work on the routine earlier next season and add more difficulty," said Doles. "But given the circumstances, I think this was a great close to our season. I was so proud of my team." ♦

Junior prom to be held tomorrow at rooftop ballroom

by Ben Clement
and Mary Mykhaylova

This year's location for junior prom, the Fourth Street Summit Center in downtown San Jose, has received much enthusiasm; however, the price of \$80 per person has solicited more conflicted opinions.

The prom is themed "Somewhere Only We Know" and will be held tomorrow, April 25.

According to junior class president Tiffany Mo, the chosen location is a ballroom

situated atop a parking structure.

"People think that because it's on the roof, it's outside, but there's actually a ballroom and two balconies," said Mo. "So, you can be inside in the ballroom or go outside on the balcony and see the view."

The event is being catered by the high-end Fairmont Hotel, which is, according to Mo, the primary factor contributing to the high price.

This tremendous price has resulted in varied opinions among students.

"\$80 is a huge amount of money for

just one night, especially for the guys who may end up paying for their dates as well," said junior Zakir Khan. "That totals \$160 for entrance alone...not to mention the cost of renting a tuxedo."

On the other hand, some students don't mind paying for high quality food and a nice location.

"I have heard that the Fairmont Hotel has great food," said junior Caroline Dietrich. "But I wouldn't make my date buy me my bid. That's just too much."

Students were slow to sign up at the outset, however Junior class officers are

still hoping for a high turnout. Due to publishing deadlines, final numbers could not be printed. ♦

THE BIG IDEA | Junior Prom

Where: Fourth Street Summit Center, San Jose

When: Tomorrow, April 25, 7-11:30 p.m. (Dinner starts at 7:30 p.m.)

Amenities: Rooftop ballroom, and dinner catered by the Fairmont Hotel

Key budget votes in May

by Tiffany Tseng
and Jenny Zhang

The fate of the California budget will rest in the hands of voters as Propositions 1A-F are on the ballot for a state-wide special election on May 19. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, along with the State Legislature, authorized these elections as part of a budget signed into law on Feb. 19.

Failure to pass any one of the first five propositions will have a direct effect on the state budget and result in a budget hole that the governor and legislators will need to fix, while failure to pass the sixth proposition will not directly impact the state budget, said district superintendent Cary Matsuoka.

The first three propositions are the heart of the financial package, according to the San Jose Mercury News. Proposition 1A asks for constraints on state spending, 1B shifts money to schools and education and 1C borrows \$5 billion from future lottery earnings.

"As the state budget is still tenuous, we are operating conservatively with our case and budget decisions," said Matsuoka. However, as the district continues to manage this school year and plan for the next, the stability of the district's funding will prevent any significant changes in Saratoga and Los Gatos High classrooms. This is due to still high property tax assessments for this school year as well as the relatively low foreclosure rates in the community.

"Barring any new bad news," said Matsuoka, "we believe we will be able to build a balanced budget for next year without significant changes to our programs and

staffing."

For this school year, the state budget is imposing a 15 percent cut across most categorically funded programs in all school districts.

Categorical funds help pay for class size reduction, school improvement funds, guidance counselors and instructional materials.

In order to help alleviate the burden this may cause for many schools, the state will be giving districts unprecedented flexibility in how these funds are used. A

preliminary analysis shows a \$323,000 cut for SHS this school year. Matsuoka said this can be overcome by reducing spending and using the district's remaining unspent categorical

funds to deal with the mid-year cuts. A current spending freeze on these funds has limited approvals for needs and projects for the remainder of this school year, he said.

"We need to conserve cash as much as possible to deal with the uncertainties of the future," said Matsuoka.

For the '09-10 school year, there will also be an additional 5 percent to 20 percent increase in cuts to categorical funds. There may also be a moderating of property tax values, Matsuoka said. With the county assessor projecting a slower growth in property tax collections from 5.6 percent this year to 3.5 percent next year, the district has estimated a \$439,000 cut for next school year, although the process of interpreting and calculating the total cuts necessary is still in progress.

According to Matsuoka, the district will continue with their strategy of conservative spending of categorical funds and taking advantage of the flexibility in using them. ♦

"We need to conserve cash as much as possible to deal with the uncertainties of the future."

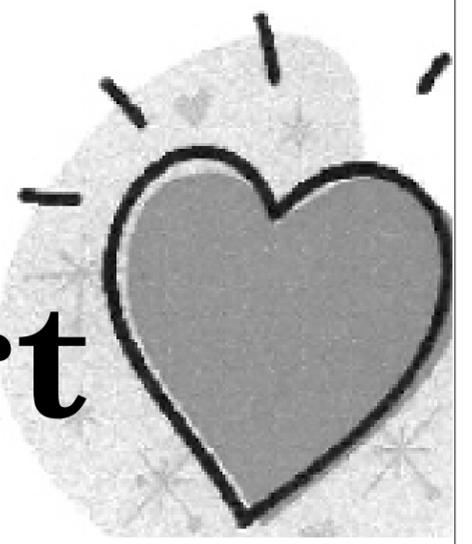
—superintendent Cary Matsuoka

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Melody Zhang

Senior Christina Robert performs at the benefit concert held by Amnesty International on March 26. It raised money for "Women of Zimbabwe Arise" and "Pennies for Peace."

Amnesty Club seeks world peace in music

by Melody Zhang

The Amnesty International club held a benefit concert on March 26 to raise money for "Women of Zimbabwe Arise," an organization dedicated to helping Zimbabwean women gain courage and independence within their communities, and "Pennies for Peace," which educates children in making positive impacts on a global scale.

The concert was held in the Little Theater and featured students interested in helping a good cause while showcasing many of their own compositions. Performers were encouraged to perform pieces related to women and children's rights and included seniors Sarah Baldwin, Brian Tsai, Christina Robert and Yvette Young.

Coordinated by Amnesty presidents seniors Paul Leung and Aditi Jayaraman, along with senior Elizabeth Shin, the concert originally experienced scheduling problems but was eventually deemed a success with approximately 30 audience members.

Senior Sacha Maniar, one of the attendees, said, "I was really excited that so many people were willing to promote women's rights and education. The concert raised [a considerable amount] for Pennies for Peace and that means a lot." Maniar has previously worked with Citizen's Foundation, a Pakistani-based organization that pursues similar goals as Pennies for Peace.

"It went well because people had fun—and that was the point," said Leung. "Even some people I didn't know showed up [despite the limited publicity] and I'm really glad that Amnesty's

getting known."

Leung hopes that Amnesty will make the benefit concert an annual event and that they will be able to "build up [popularity] from there."

"The singers were amazing even though the microphones weren't working," said Shin.

Shin, who had previously organized a concert in September 2008 under Paper Star Productions, took on the task of helping organize the concert as part of her interest in bringing people together for music.

"I will try to organize another concert by the end year if there are any willing clubs," said Shin. "Otherwise I'm taking my technical skills with me to college if possible."

The singers had requested an intimate setting and greatly enjoyed the flexibility of the program. Baldwin performed two of her own compositions, one of which she had finished writing just hours earlier, and Robert, who was still suffering from a cold, invited the small audience to join in with her on a medley of "Over the Rainbow" and "What a Wonderful Life," which they did heartedly.

Baldwin was originally inspired to write a song about building schools for girls in Pakistan after being inspired by the nonfiction book "Three Cups of Tea" about one man's mission to reduce poverty and educate girls in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"The concert was great," said Baldwin. "It sparked a craving in me to know more about Africa and the injustices going on there and ways I could help. The concert influenced me [to find out new ways] I could use my talent." ♦

AP tests approach

by Albert Gu
and Kevin Mu

Starting May 4, 441 students will be taking 919 AP tests at Saratoga, representing a slight increase from last year when 417 students took 905 individual AP Tests, according to College and Career Center coordinator Bonnie Sheikh.

Although students taking APs take only an average of about two tests, some strive to take as many as possible in order to gain college credit. Despite increasing pressure on students from parents, peers or themselves, assistant principal Brian Safine said he believes most students are taking APs for the right reasons.

"Students who have gone to college and come back to talk to me about the benefits of [taking] the AP have made good arguments," said Safine. "It helps keep them on track for college graduation. In some cases it allows them to double major or get into a study abroad program. The students who [take APs] usually cite good educational reasons rather than strictly parental pressure."

Although the school offers a wide variety of AP tests, some tests are offered at different schools in order to reduce proctoring fees if only a few students are taking them.

"Of course I wish it were held at Saratoga," said sophomore David Zeng, who will be taking both Physics C exams at Lynbrook High. "But it's not much of a hassle for me because Lynbrook makes it easy. A lot of students take tests there."

Students prepare for AP tests in a

THE BIG IDEA | AP Tests

AP TESTS: 441 students will be taking 919 AP tests at Saratoga

WAYS TO STUDY: Read study guides, take practice tests

REASONS TO TAKE: Keep on track for college graduation, double majors

variety of ways, including practice tests, preparation books and other study tools.

"Practice tests are the most useful study tool," said senior Paari Kandappan, who will be taking five AP tests this year. "Just read the books to be prepared. [The AP material] is really different from what you do in class. It's a lot easier, but it's also a different skill set, so practice tests are really important."

Whether students take AP tests to further their educational goals or simply to test their knowledge, APs undoubtedly play a large role in high school life.

"Many students at Saratoga High look for ways to challenge themselves," Zeng said, "and the APs are one way to do this."

But as the AP tests quickly approach, many students must cope with the stress of preparing. There is a constant fear of failing and affecting their chances of getting into and succeeding in college.

"I definitely feel worried about doing well on my [AP] tests," said senior Chris Sir, "because it determines if I can skip college classes. Studying is a really stressful process." ♦

Choir receives inspiration

by James Jiang

On March 24-25, the Chamber Singers and Concert Choir were visited by the Fresno Pacific University (FPU) Choir and a sextet group of a cappella singers from UC Berkeley called Noteworthy, respectively.

During the FPU visit, the Chamber Singers first listened to the college singers, then proceeded to sing a few of their own pieces, completing the exchange. From this, the Chamber Singers learned valuable lessons in how to improve as a choir.

"If you heard them, you'd see that they blended really well. They supported each other vocally," said junior Bryant Bae.

FPU shared more formal choral pieces

written for concerts, while Noteworthy sang more comical pieces, often arranged by members of the a cappella, including an a cappella version of the Pokémon theme song.

These visits also serve a different purpose than simply generating a few laughs and admiration at the great tonal quality. With exposure to college choirs, returning members can use their experiences to help them with college decisions.

"Not only do these schools show us that music can be continued in college," said junior Christy Pak, "they also give us a clear example of what college life might be like, and gives us some ideas on where to apply in our decision making process." ♦

"Not only do these schools show us that music can be continued in college, they also give us a clear example of what college life might be like."

—junior Christy Pak

Saratoga Youth Commission experiments with new events

by Tiffany Tseng

Many students remember the Saratoga Youth Commission for the Community Center dances they used to organize for middle school students, along with the other various events they planned for teens. These past couple of years, however, the commission has been shifting away from these middle school dances and brainstorming new ideas to reach out to teens.

"We've been trying different methods of publicizing," said youth commission member Tara Fatemi. "We started posting our events up on our Saratoga Youth Commission Facebook group, which is very useful for spreading the updates to many teens in the area."

The Saratoga Youth Commission is a city commission that focuses on the

opinions and needs of teens who live in the city. Many members of the commission attend Saratoga High, including freshman Kayvon Rezaii, sophomore Aditya Dev, juniors Tara Fatemi, Elena Rees and Natalie Tkalecic and seniors Justin El-Diwany, Corey Rateau, Tiffany Tseng and Cynthia Zhao.

After the closing of the after-school program at the Warner Hutton house for Redwood students several years ago, the commission lost connection with the middle school and, as a result, much of its audience who would attend the events. Because of this, the commission recently had a second retreat in March to discuss its purpose and goals, and is now experimenting with new events and looking for other ways to help the city.

"We kept trying different ideas, and some were more successful than others,"

said youth commission member Cynthia Zhao. "We were able to put on a successful dance with the Invisible Children Club and also a concert."

The concert, held on Feb. 20, was put on with Pinup Productions, a Bay Area-based concert company, featuring six bands. Since the event was so successful, the commission will be holding another concert with Pinup on May 9 at the Community Center.

Bands "I am Empire," "Undergone," "The Relay Company," "Raelin" and "Lions and Tigers" will all be performing. Tickets will be sold at the door for \$12.

"We're expecting this upcoming concert to be another success," said Zhao. "It's always more motivating when our events have a good turnout."

Another upcoming event the commission has been planning over the course of

this year is a film fest, Flix '09, an idea of junior Jacob Baker, a youth commission member from Bellarmine.

"I decided that the commission needed to branch out from its standard cycle of dances, concerts, lectures and such," said Baker. "The Bay Area society has truly become focused upon media. The film fest was a combination of a change in the norm and a shift to a digital and media-based event."

The film fest will be held on May 15 at the Warner Hutton house, where they will screen student films and serve food in a friendly environment.

They currently have 11 film submissions from seven high school students. They hope that this will be a step forward for them, as they try to refocus their efforts and find new ways of serving the community. ♦

SPIRIT, ANYONE?



Sagging school spirit requires more effort from students

by Ketaki Shriram
and Alex Sclavos

Following the week of Spring Fling, student participation in events can be best described in one word: deficient. The Battle of the Boom was a bust and got cancelled due to lack of interest, and a lunchtime demonstration of Powderpuff football cheering by boys drew few students to the quad. Why is spirit so lacking, and what can be done about it?

Over the past decade, the school has become increasingly academic, a change that has resulted in greater numbers of students attending top colleges, but also, more detrimentally, a dull and lifeless campus. This February, when students

from Saratoga High visited and hosted their peers from Yerba Buena High School in San Jose, one of the most striking differences was the level of spirit.

Students there have plenty of school pride, participating in yearly schoolwide dance competitions and helping to decorate the school for a vast number of spirit events. In contrast, seeing large groups of SHS students clustered in the hallway dressed in school colors is a rare occurrence: they're more likely to be found in classrooms or the library, studying for yet another exam.

Even students who aren't on student government can still create spirit by offering opinions.

This academic frenzy has resulted in an inactive student body, one that complains about school events—but offers no real

constructive criticism or even a helping hand to the small minority of their peers attempting to generate spirit on campus.

Even students who aren't a part of commissions or student government can still create spirit by simply offering opinions or participating in school-sponsored events. Whether they choose to participate or not, however, students should realize that commissions should not receive the majority of the

blame for the bland spirit, because the will of all students is needed to generate unity. Students themselves must feel a change of heart and become motivated to partake in school-wide issues.

So the next time a big spirit week rolls around, instead of demeaning the hard work of others, students should instead follow three simple steps to creating more spirit: attend as many school events as possible, stay on campus to support your peers during big spirit weeks and take a break from academics once in awhile to really enjoy high school.

After all, the moments that will stick with us aren't letters on a transcript—they're memories of a genuine experience. ♦

Evolution solution: Start buying digital texts

HIGH SCHOOLS MUST EMBRACE NEW, CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY—AND SAVE STUDENTS' BACKS

by Brandon Yang

For decades, students have been given massive textbooks, some to be carried back and forth between school and home, others left alone and forgotten until June. Many of these books are old and damaged, the newer ones already deteriorating. It is time to think about replacing these with something more advanced and less destructible: digital textbooks.

The Basic Idea

Although these e-books are not common in high schools, colleges have begun to offer electronic versions of textbooks as an alternative to traditional materials. Numerous websites let students download these e-books instead of buying or borrowing heavy, expensive books at a local bookstore. More practical and efficient than printed versions, digital textbooks are beginning to make their mark in

education.

E-books are much more interactive than their paper counterpart. When students attempt to find a specific fact with a traditional textbook, it often takes a long time with only the index and table of contents as aids. Electronic versions of textbooks, however, allow students to use a search function instead, which saves valuable time on homework assignments.

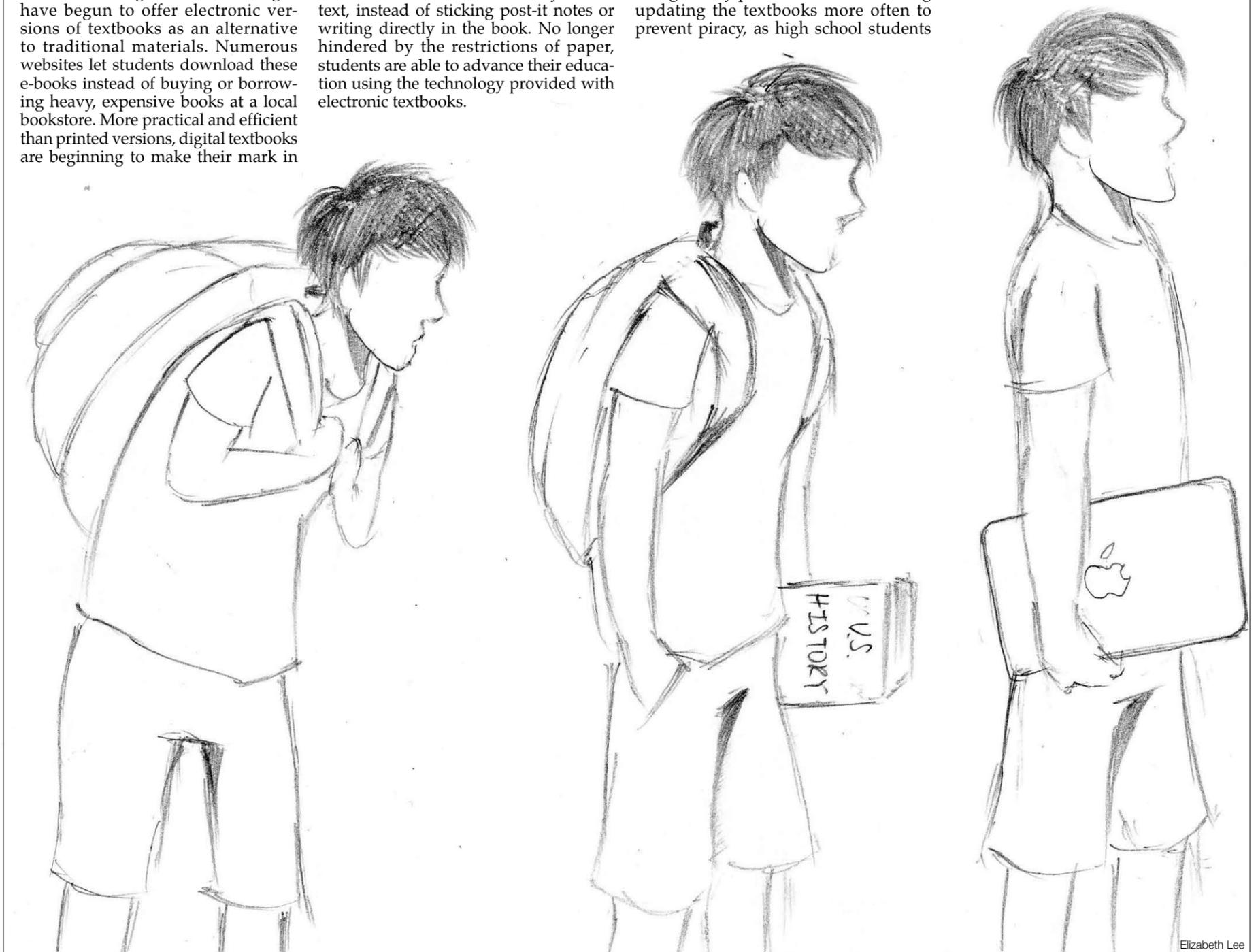
The copy and paste functions are also handy, allowing students to print and read only the section they require, instead of carrying hundreds of pages. In addition, students can take notes directly on the text, instead of sticking post-it notes or writing directly in the book. No longer hindered by the restrictions of paper, students are able to advance their education using the technology provided with electronic textbooks.

How Digitizing Can Help

Online editions are not only cheaper but also save a lot of paper and ink that would be used to manufacture these textbooks. Because publishing companies do not need to print the books, students skip the cost of production, saving both money and the environment. Instead of thousands of pages in the form of a few textbooks, a laptop computer would be sufficient, removing the hassle of carrying and losing the books. Despite concerns for piracy of such electronic documents, generally only colleges deal with the problem, though many publishers are considering updating the textbooks more often to prevent piracy, as high school students

borrow their books after the school purchases them.

Although students cannot expect SHS or other schools to replace all their textbooks with digital versions, they should begin to make the transition in technology. Every year, several books are lost or heavily damaged, requiring replacements; others become outdated, lacking the latest information. When schools next purchase a new set of books, they should consider making digital versions available as well. ♦



To double AP English or not: Now's the time for change

Students experimenting with taking multiple science courses and multiplying their math courses by two have long been prevalent at Saratoga High. Multiple English classes, however? Frailty, thy name is the school's concurrent AP enrollment policy.

For more than three years, the school has restricted seniors to only enrolling in one Advanced Placement English class, either Advanced Placement Literature or Advanced Placement Language. This lack of ability to take more than one English course creates a double standard for students' academic achievement by steering the school away from producing graduates talented in the arts and overemphasizing courses in math and the sciences.

Students are allowed to take courses such as AP Chemistry, AP Calculus and AP Statistics in either their junior or senior year of high school, assuming they

have fulfilled all the prerequisites. The same principle, however, is not applied to Advanced English courses. In contrast, students at Los Gatos High School are allowed to take one AP English course their junior year and another senior year. Since Saratoga High does not allow this course progression, it should accommodate students who wish to take both senior year.

Without the ability to take both AP Lit and Lang, students are forced to choose between two vastly different curriculums. This is a choice that should not have to be made—it will only disadvantage students by preventing them from learning more than one side of the high school English curriculum.

In the English Department's defense, they are worried that even students who are passionate about English will be unable to cope with the coursework required

in both courses combined. Conversely, the Administration argues that the reason behind a lack of concurrent enrollment is strictly a numbers game. Despite these created restrictions, the fact remains that giving students a chance to prove themselves instead of deciding that they are incapable would be a much fairer decision.

When students were previously allowed to enroll in both AP Language and AP Literature, the number of students taking the classes was too high for teach-

ers to manage. While this is a valid argument, students should still not have to be deprived of the opportunity to take more than one English class.

Although it may incite some amount of controversy among department chairs, excess funding commonly used to support electives could instead be given to the English department if needs for another staff member arose.

Not only would allowing students more freedom to take Advanced English classes be a decision that would improve the quality of student knowledge in reading and writing, it would dispel the double standard that currently exists that allows students to double up on math and science classes, but not on English classes.

With this policy, the school has failed to encourage students who seek emphasis in the humanities by preventing concurrent enrollment in AP English classes. ♦



SHS expulsion policies must be upheld

by Emily Chen

By now, most students have probably heard of the expulsion and suspension of several students around campus for drug-related issues. The expulsion of one student in particular for dealing drugs on campus has sparked an outrage among some, and even stirred students to create an online petition that was widely circulated on Facebook, asking the administration to reconsider its decision.

There are two sides to every issue, and especially in cases such as these, when many students are personally connected with the implicated individuals, feelings of indignation and anger tend to tint the views of those considering the situation. The bottom line, however, is that these students broke the rules, and quite egregiously at that.

While it is extremely unfortunate that the administration had to take such drastic measures, the line must be drawn somewhere. Pleas of "give them a break" and "it was one mistake" have some legitimacy, but the wide scale of the drug problem, in conjunction with the fact that they were in possession of drugs while on

campus, don't lend to much mercy.

While the methods of the administration were harsh and perhaps uncalled for, it is also true that students really have no rights to privacy while on school grounds. Common sense dictates that they refrain from dealing or doing drugs while on school grounds.

If the administration allows a petition to work for one student, then a dangerous precedent is set, and they will feel obligated to allow it for future students.

Expulsion and suspension are undoubtedly harsh punishments, but if the administration "goes easy" on the students and gives them a lighter punishment, it eliminates the purpose of having such a deterrence in the first place.

If the administration allows a petition to work for one student, then a dangerous precedent is set, and they will feel obligated to allow it for future students, blurring the line and further complicating

the situation. It also bears the danger of becoming a popularity contest — if one student happens to have more friends, or be a prominent figure on campus, they would have more petition signatures and make the playing field even more uneven.

For a relatively quiet school like Saratoga, where there is obviously a lack of violence and weapon use, there aren't many crimes that would call for such a punishment. So if dealing drugs isn't enough to call for an expulsion, what is?

While it's understandable that students feel their privacy has been invaded, and that the administration is overreacting because "everybody does it," from the point of view of school officials, they were simply fulfilling their duty to protect students.

The grounds for expulsion and suspension are clearly stated in the student handbook, and more importantly (because most people don't actually read the student handbook) should be a part of common sense. Drug use may be rampant, but it is also illegal, and therefore the students should be able to deduce for themselves through common sense the consequences of getting caught. ♦

State class size increases problematic

by Pia Mishra and Synthia Ling

In attempts to solve the state's fiscal problems, lawmakers recently passed a 2009 state budget plan that will cut \$2.6 billion from K-12 apportionments. These funds are what provide support for school districts in California and nearly 1/5 of the budget cuts come from reducing these funds. This leaves educational communities with a loss of \$787 per student, according to the California Progress Report.

With the news of the budget cuts, districts all over California are struggling to scrap up what's left of the budget. With the rapidly increasing California budget crisis, the Los Gatos Saratoga Union district has decided that for the 2009-2010 school year, they will increase class sizes to cope with the financial limits.

While adding just a few more students to each class seems harmless, the numbers never fail to add up. Larger class sizes means more students that need attention and less time for learning. In a learning environment, if students are not provided enough care, it directly affects a student's work and intellectual progress.

A smaller class gives teachers more flexibility to use different instructional approaches. A teacher will be able to understand a student's strengths and weaknesses, both academically and socially, which are essential to a student's success.

This is especially important in the elementary grades when students are just beginning to acclimate to the school environment. As high school students it is expected that we are self-sufficient but teacher guidance may still be necessary.

To many residents of Saratoga, the economic recession hasn't become directly palpable yet, but as these budget cuts take place, the reality of it will hit hard. Faced with \$11 billion in debt, California is trying to hold together a deteriorating state treasury by cutting "excessive spending."

Though it's understandable that in these tough economic times budget cuts are required in order to save money, taking away the essential attention needed for a child to flourish in a learning environment should be a last resort. ♦

R.I.P. newspapers, farewell to reliability



Mabel Hsu

Maybe it's Mabel

My first, more personal notice of the cutbacks in the print world of newspapers was from the San Jose Mercury News' reduction from six Sunday comic pages to four. As a devoted SJMN comic follower, I was devastated. If a newspaper as prominent as the Mercury News was willing to cut back on the comics, it meant nothing was safe.

In recent months, newspapers like the Rocky Mountain News in Colorado and the Seattle Post-Intelligencer have closed. Others like the San Francisco Chronicle may close soon because they're losing millions as a result of ad revenue lost to the Internet.

I guess you could say I'm biased, being on the newspaper staff and all, but I truly believe that being able to wake up every morning and having the newspaper nicely bundled and wrapped on my driveway is a gift. The world news, community on-goings, and comics, printed and inked on newspaper-paper, is a great way to start the morning. Unfortunately, now there's news of the decline, the disappearance, the apocalypse-of newspapers.

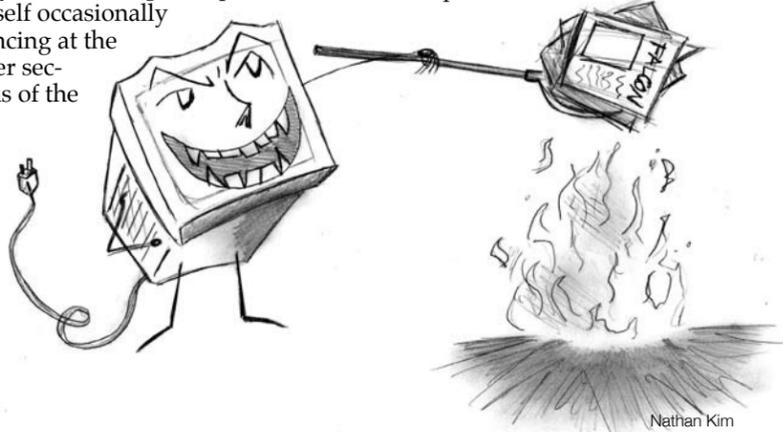
I started reading the comics in elementary school. My sister would have the more "serious" sections while I happily slurped the remnants of milk-turned-chocolate-milk in my cereal bowl and laughed at Jason Fox's incessant obsession with World of Warcraft. As a new family member was added to Baby Blues, I too grew up and found myself occasionally glancing at the other sections of the

newspaper. By sixth grade, I was reading the newspaper on a regular basis, cover to cover. It helped me develop a better sense of what was going on in the world, and to my mother's pleasant surprise, build a stronger vocabulary.

The sale of newspapers, magazines and other print media are rapidly decreasing. And it's not just the decline of good humor that worries me, it's the change in how we receive our daily news that does. Many people will often only browse through the Top Four Stories on our Yahoo homepage, or the Latest Breaking News on the CNN website, and that's all we read. It's sad to say that I have turned into one of these people. After unsubscribing to the newspaper in order to cut back costs for my family, I've resorted to reading only the "cover" stories before finding something more interesting to do. With newspapers, it was much easier to rifle through the pages look at each story.

The cutbacks on the number of pages, daily circulation and journalists, mean that the quality of the stories in newspapers and any media will decline as well. It's important to remember that newspapers play a cherished part in the foundation of our country. We used it to spread new ideas, report scandals and celebrations, and keep our government in check. While online media can do the same thing, less people read it as thoroughly, and fewer people are doing the reporting that becomes news.

I'm all for embracing a new era, but only if there is good that comes with it. Online media gets us our news faster, but print newspapers and magazines encourage readers to read more. With online news sites currently triumphing over print media, and in times of such economic turmoil, do newspapers have any hope? For our own sake, let's sure hope so. ♦



Nathan Kim

The Saratoga Falcon

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Views expressed in *The Saratoga Falcon* are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the administration, faculty or school district.

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LET'S STALK TOGETHER!

New Facebook layout makes stalking easier than ever

by Elizabeth Cheng
and Kavya Nagarajan

Be careful what you post on Facebook because just about everyone who's your friend will see. The new layout guarantees it.

The last time Facebook decided to undergo a makeover, users whined and moaned about the changes. "Oh no, the applications are out of place!" they complained. "Whatever shall we do?" Then when they realized it was permanent, the whiners stopped and actually gave the layout a try. To their surprise, they came to like the new (now old) look because it actually eliminated clutter and created easier navigation.

To the Facebook moderators, the latest change may seem like a repeat of the past. Some vocal protestors would create groups against the new layout and eventually, everything would settle down and users would come to embrace this version as they did the last. Too bad they forgot the latest changes have turned Facebook into a stalker's paradise, something many users don't find appealing.

Facebook was already a minefield of privacy issues, but the recent makeover has only made things worse. The home feed now shows conversations between two friends and every single thing that's

on those friends' minds. What that means is every user is privy to the intimate tidbits of others' conversations and random ramblings whether or not they're interested.

The constant updates on the news feed aren't only an invasion of privacy but also lead to constant refreshes of the home page. Users spend hours clicking the refresh button to read the latest news. And maybe that's the real reason behind the change: getting users to spend more time on Facebook. They're certainly succeeding by making stalkers out of all of us.

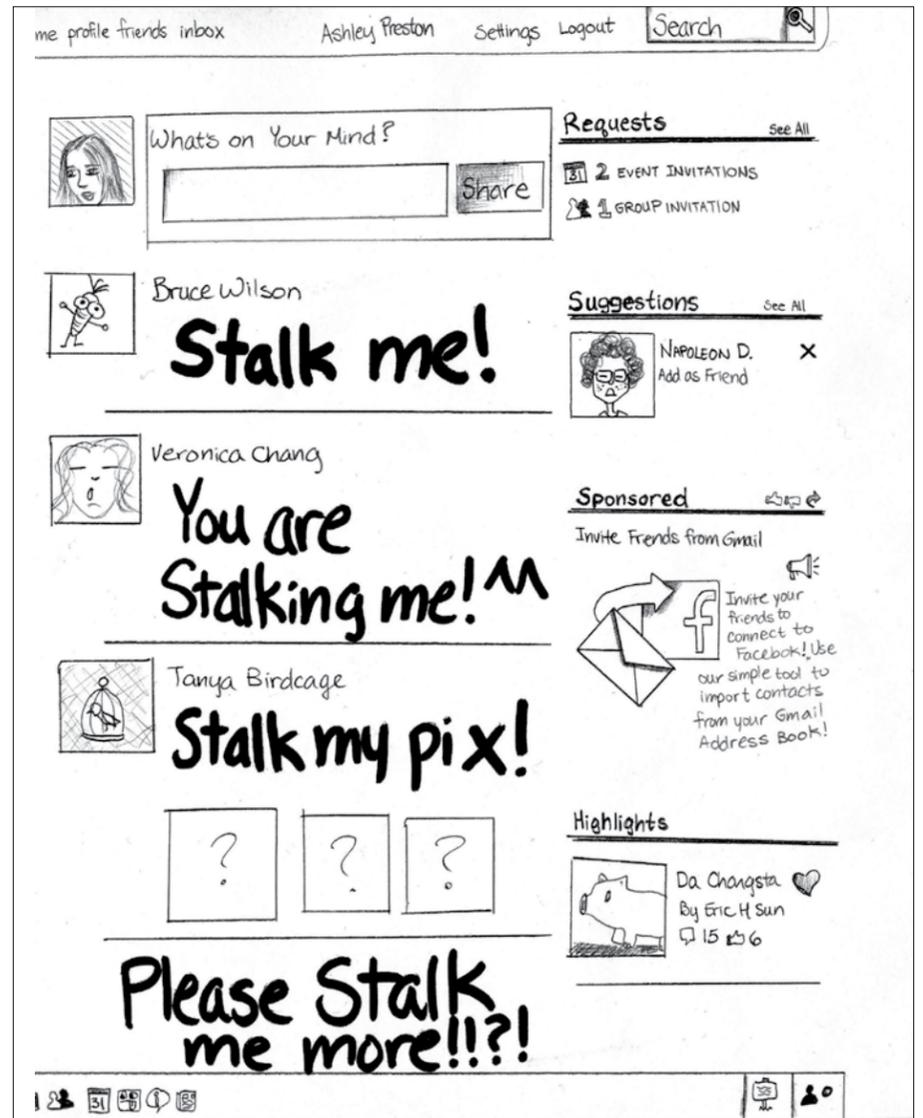
Also, what happened to status updates? The "What's on your mind?" box has replaced them and they are now designed to look exactly like wall posts. In other words,

there really is no such thing as a status update anymore, because if you enter something into the box and click "share," it looks like you've just written on your own wall.

The reason several of us joined Facebook, and why it has gotten so popular over the past few years, is that people wanted to get away from the clutter and confusion of MySpace. Facebook was simple and easy to use. But after all the changes the website has been through, it's becoming more and more like MySpace, and worse. It's true that change can be good, but why change something that was working fine before? ♦

Facebook was already a minefield of privacy issues, but the recent makeover has only made things worse.

The New Facebook | by Nathan Kim



Will Challenge Day efforts help inspire permanent change?

by Tim Tsai

For one day on March 17, a gym full of students connected on an emotional level—with none of the invisible barriers that usually fill high school hallways. Students shared their deepest fears, insecurities and secrets with complete strangers.

They formed bonds between former enemies. Students and staff empathized with one another on issues involving family problems, abuse and violence. They shed tears and tore down walls of human separation, revealing acceptance and love.

But do the effects of Challenge Day remain?

For the students who participated in Challenge Day, the lessons learned and relationships built will surely last. The energy in the gym was simply irreplaceable. Everything from spontaneous dancing, to the gut-wrenching crossing of the blue line left everyone stunned by the emotions that students and staff were willing to share. For those present, Challenge Day was an experience that shook the participants to their emotional core.

But for those who weren't in the Small Gym that day, the emotion and honesty will probably never be duplicated in our high school environment.

In order to do so, the school would have to transform itself into the completely open atmosphere of Challenge Day, daring students to be vulnerable and honest with each other.

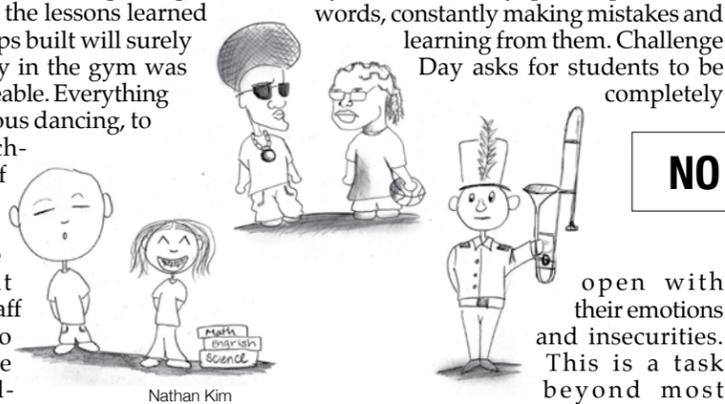
It would be an extremely ambitious goal to try to build a high school into such a community, something that won't happen because too many students are unwilling to change their ways of life.

High school life has been firmly established for decades, and while Saratoga

High defies many high school stereotypes (the band's enormous popularity, the value of intelligence, etc.), the change asked for by Challenge Day is nothing but a fantasy.

Challenge Day provided an atmosphere where everyone was encouraged to spill their emotional closets to a group of people. This atmosphere does not exist in regular high school. To change this is to change the nature of high school in itself. High school is an opportunity for adolescents to grow into adults. To expect them to muster the emotional maturity to open up to everyone in their lives is simply too great.

Freshmen enter high school young and immature. Throughout high school, they are continually growing, in other words, constantly making mistakes and learning from them. Challenge Day asks for students to be completely



NO YES

by Shannon Galvin

"All you need is love," sang the Beatles in one of their songs. And to make Challenge Day work in the days that follow, that's exactly what we need.

On March 17, about 80 students joined together in the gym for a day to break down stereotypes and develop a community. After a whole morning of energetic icebreakers and cheesy dancing, students broke into small groups. For many, it was one of their first opportunities at school to simply talk about the troubles they had stacked on their plate.

Ask practically anyone who attended the event and they will tell you they were moved or affected in some way. But now that the day has come and passed, it is even more important to keep up that level of openness every day at school.

Some argue that Challenge Day

only puts up a façade of false reality. Once the day is over, it's back to the same-old stereotypes and tight-knit cliques. But those who doubt the purpose of Challenge Day and feel this way simply have the wrong outlook.

The truth is, nobody ever said it would be easy. It's going to take work. It's going to require effort from the student body. We cannot expect Challenge Day to magically transform the school into a land of rainbows and unicorns, but the program provides an important start and foundation to make a change at Saratoga High School. Perhaps the rest of the school won't experience the power of the emotion and honesty experienced at Challenge Day, but that's not necessary to start this transformation.

There may not be dramatic confes-

sions and the sharing of tissue boxes happening every day, but anyone can appreciate the opportunity to get to know an acquaintance better or sit at another table for lunch. That's the change we need to make. Students should not be forced to follow the status quo and divide by race, interests or extracurricular activities. The goal of Challenge Day was to take the time to get out of your comfort zone and meet different people. And that is something completely realistic to duplicate in the average school day.

Already, the school has begun steps towards this change through the founding of the new "Be The Change" club. Through this new club, students hope to spread the power of what they experienced at Challenge Day. By taking this action to cement the success of the program even further, Challenge Day has the power to make a difference in the lives of those who didn't even attend.

There may not be the environment for every student to act like this now, but that's exactly why it is important to take the first step. The students who participated in Challenge Day have the tools to do this; now it's their responsibility to pass this on to others.

Think of it like your typical high school rumor. It starts with only a few people, but grows so quickly that the entire grade knows by lunchtime. At the final bell, practically the whole school has heard it.

To make a change at our school, that is exactly what needs to happen. One person can make a difference. Eighty people taking on this challenge can change the world. This is no wishful thinking; it's altogether possible to achieve.

Honestly, it will take effort. It may be uncomfortable. It may be scary. But the pioneers are not alone in this effort; they've got their 80 new friends from Challenge Day. ♦





Advice for the next four years at any college or university.

Senior contemplates confusing college choices



Tim Tsai

Is angry and loud

Ask anyone from this year's graduating class, and they will tell you they can't believe it—we are graduating, we are going off to college and moving on to bigger and better things.

For the longest time, I could not wait to leave Saratoga and go to college. For the first time in my life, I will be living on my own terms, studying classes that interest me from professors who know the material inside-out and living with classmates that share my goals. I will be living on my own, free from my parents. The possibilities of college life seem endless—anything I want to do seems within reach. I am going to love college.

Yet, as graduation and September approaches, I have become apprehensive about the utter freedom I will soon have. Saratoga has provided a safety net for me. My parents have always been there to bail me out and support me when I screwed up, this school has given me a terrific education, and I have friends here that I never want to leave behind.

College changes all of this. Life in college will inevitably be worlds apart from life as a Saratoga High Student—something that is amazing and terrifying at the same time.

For starters, I was fortunate enough to be accepted to schools both in California and on the East Coast. For the longest time, I had wanted to leave Califor-

nia, to experience life in a new culture. I had lived in a new country before; a new state should be a piece of cake. But as decision day looms closer, the categorical answer is now much shakier. I want to be able to come home every so often to see old friends and family.

The thought of going months without coming home or seeing the friends I grew up with, stuck in a snowed-in dorm room is something I don't want to be part of my college experience. But at the same time, many people have urged me to go someplace new, to meet people from all over the world and to live outside the "California Bubble."

The independence I once craved now looks much more menacing. True, I can choose when to study and when to go out, but high school gave me a structure that guaranteed safety and a means to succeed. I knew what my goal was while I was walking the halls of Saratoga High—to graduate and go to college.

Now that all that is done, I'm faced with the sudden realization that I have no clue what's next. What's the next step in self-improvement, in life? They say that college is where you find where your passions and your goals lie, but what if I never find

They say that college is where you find where your passions and your goals lie, but what if I never find them?

them?

As the class of '09 proudly throws our caps into the air on June 11, these issues will undoubtedly still be in the back of our minds. But in due time every question will be answered, every concern addressed.

After all, we will have graduated high school, and will be moving on to the so-called "best four years of our lives." And for all you juniors and underclassmen still hitting the books and counting down the days to your college decisions and graduation, savor your high school experience. Before you know it, it's gone. ♦

How To: Make friends in college

Break the ice with a charming joke.

For example:

"How much does a polar bear weigh?"

"Enough to break the ice!"

Join a fraternity or sorority.

Instant friends! However, side effects may include some vomiting and unhealthy consumption of alcohol.

Smile at people walking by.

But please, lay off the pedosmile. That's only for your close friends.

Start up random conversations.

For instance, talk about the weather, or how tart the punch at the party is.

Compliment someone.

A little white lie never hurt anyone.

Create opportunities for socializing.

Invite people in your classes over for study groups.

Get involved.

From intramural sports to Harmonica Club, extracurriculars are a great way to meet people with similar interests.

Bribe people in your dorm with food.

College kids really are always that hungry.

—by Pia Mishra

STHS Alumni Panel:



'08 Alumnus Pete Florence
(Princeton University)

"[Decisions in college] can seem daunting, but don't stress yourself out too much."



'07 Alumnus Varun Mehra
(UCLA)

"There's no rule saying you can't schedule yourself three-day weekends."



'07 Alumna Kelsey Marsh
(Arizona State University)

"Sleeping is overrated."



'08 Alumnus Andrew Shyu
(UCLA)

"Learn to manage your time and make [your life] as busy as possible."

Things I wish someone had told me about college

The Falcon asked 4 alums to share some bits of advice that they feel every freshman needs to know

On college life:

1. People from the East Coast think that people who say "hella" are mad cool.
2. [College is] a time to explore new things and go after whatever it is that makes you — not your parents — happy.
3. Sorority and fraternity "rush" doesn't mean that all of a sudden everyone's in a big hurry.
4. Encourage friends and family to visit as much as possible. They might even take you out to dinner.
5. People in college aren't necessarily interested in how you got there [but rather] what you're going to do next.

On education:

1. Go to class even if you don't think you have to.
2. Learn how to use the library because you will use it.
3. You will never again believe that you actually made it to 7:50 a.m. class every day.
4. You have to buy your own textbooks, so it's good to know where and how.
5. Retain the AP stuff you've been studying because it really does help.

On dorms & living:

1. Care packages will instantly make you the envy of your hall.
2. If you leave your laundry in the laundry room all night it might not be there in the morning.
3. The "Freshman 15" is real, so don't forget about the gym.
4. It's OK to be homesick; everyone is, whether they admit it or not.
5. Dorms are definitely smaller than you think.

Kim Anzalone

1) What is your funniest joke?

Hard to say...this Easter I saw a pic of little baby bottoms all decorated like Easter Eggs... cute and funny!

2) What is your funniest real life story?

Probably when I fell down in front of the entire school at a rally when I was a cheerleader as a junior in high school...I was jumping around a little too much...I always did stuff like that...I'm kinda hyper sometimes!

3) What is the funniest thing a teacher has ever said to you?

We're always saying funny things to each other...probably the funniest is "Aren't you glad we get paid the big bucks!"

4) Who do you think is the funniest person on earth?

W. Bush...he's pretty hilarious!

5) Do you see yourself as funny?

I am the funniest person I know...I totally crack me up!!

who is the funniest
of them all?

The Falcon staff had two teachers and two students come together on Wednesday, April 1, and bring their best jokes and improv skills. A video of the show is online at <http://www.saratogafalcon.org>.

Jason Huang

1) What is your funniest joke?

Anything that involves Ryan Pak.

2) What is your funniest real life story?

My funniest real life story isn't appropriate to be printed in this newspaper, but it involves green scissors, my brother and therapy.

3) What is the funniest thing a teacher has ever said to you?

Teachers don't tell jokes, so this question isn't valid. Just kidding! Haha, Mr. Boitz once said to me, "Jason, I got a call for you! It was from some girl named..."

4) Who do you think is the funniest person on earth?

Ryan Pak

5) Do you see yourself as funny?

I'm not one to praise myself, but you

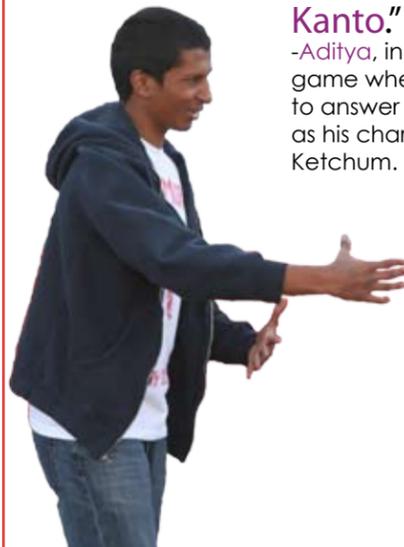
can ask Giselle Pak if I'm funny or not. (Yes, I am)

6) Why do you think funny people are important?

I think funny people are the most honest people because we tell the truth, just in joke form. Normally, if you try to tell somebody something about themselves with a straight face, they'll get mad and you can't be friends anymore, but if you tell them in joke form, everybody laughs and the truth is out there. Take, for example, Mr. T's hair. You could go up to him and say, "Mr T, you are a hairy hairy man" and then you'll check Aeries the next day and you'll have a D+ in his class. Funny people are the ones who can get away with that and say something like, "I'm Mr. T and I defend my girls with my hair" and still end up with a respectable B+.

"I would make you caterpie soup, a delicious item from Kanto."

-Aditya, in a dating game where he had to answer questions as his character, Ash Ketchum.



"D, you're so but i don't t because i d unless you is really no

Matt Torrens

1) What is your funniest joke?

What fruit is on a dime? A Date (Actually, the earliest joke I remember telling and it's the only one that sticks.)

2) What is your funniest real life story?

Asking a young lady in college to get together for a study session who I thought was attractive and being hopeful that it would lead to an official date...her reply to my innocent inquiry was, "Let me check with my husband!" (I never thought to look at her ring finger—sure enough she was married!)

3) Favorite breakfast cereal?

Bisquick pancakes/waffles I make for my kids every Saturday morning.

4) What is the funniest thing a teacher has ever said to you?

Anything Mr. Yielding says.

5) Who do you think is the funniest person on earth?

Robin Williams and idiots on YouTube.

7) Do you see yourself as funny?

Absolutely not, we just have lots of people in my classes who like to laugh.

Mr. Torrens

gesturing towards Ms. Anzalone while trying to sell a ridiculous flowered raincoat.



After careful deliberation, it was clear to the judges that there was one clear winner. She was quick and witty with her words and sharp with her poses.

Aditya Dev

1) What's your funniest joke?

So's your face.

2) What's your funniest real life story?

One time a bird poed on my friend, the next week it happened again. It was awesome.

3) What's the funniest thing a teacher has ever said to you?

"Hey."

"How ya doin?"

"Good, where are you going?"

"The graveyard."

"Can I come?"

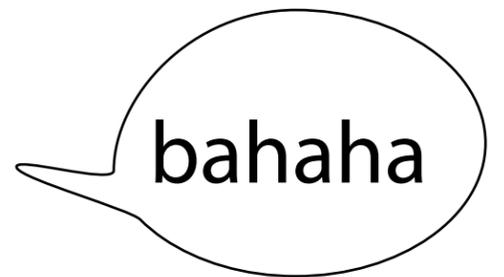
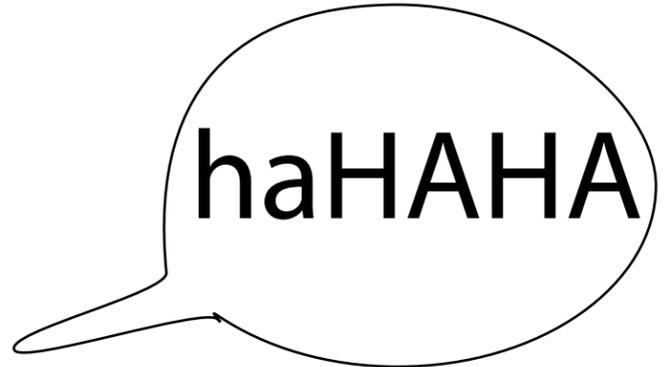
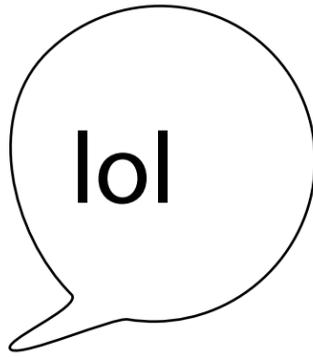
"Sure."

-Mr. Bill Peck

why,

of cours

the laughter Factor



so funny,
think you can be my hunny,
don't know a thing about math,
take my path to history, which
baloney."

-Ms. Anzalone, a history teacher,
in a rap battle against Aditya
after he praised her skill in math.



Ms. A is,
e! A .

COLUMNIST CAN'T STOP LAUGHING



Annie Lee
In My Own Little World

A couple weeks ago, I was walking down the hall to my next class and I saw one of my friends from my newspaper staff walking in my direction. Naturally, I walked toward her, waved, and said "Hi!" with an enthusiastic smile on my face.

However, what followed was anything but the ordinary. She looked at me and asked, "Why are you always so happy? It's kind of disgusting." Now, I won't name this friend (to protect the identity of Mabel Hsu), but it got me thinking, am I too happy?

Ever since middle school, I've always been the giddy one. When someone was having a bad day, I was never the one to sit down and have a long heart-felt conversa-

tion with someone while they poured out their feelings. Instead, I was the one that took their mind off the crisis with a joke or two. I guess I've just always enjoyed putting a smile on somebody's face by telling a joke or acting silly to make their day better.

Now this may seem a little unusual, but when I'm on AIM and I type "LOL," I actually "laugh out loud." Often times, my mom comes in to give me my daily fourth meal at around midnight to see me typing with a smile on my face, or even outright laughing at the computer screen. After she gives me an awkward glance and leaves the room, I continue "lolling."

Don't worry. I don't only laugh when I'm alone with my computer at home. At school I'm often the only one who laughs at Mr. Kucer's awkward jokes and I can't even count the number of times my friend and I started laughing at something stupid in orchestra and I started crying, eliciting even more strange glances.

Last year, my tennis coach needed someone "responsible" to remind him to do something important the next day. He immediately picked someone else on

the team and when I jokingly asked him why he didn't ask me for help, he simply laughed.

I realized that a lot of people didn't take me seriously because I acted too silly. So, I attempted to go one day without smiling or laughing, and honestly, it was a pretty boring day. I only lasted about two periods of monotonous conversation before I couldn't take it anymore and gave up. So I finished off my day with a smile on my face and when I got home, I felt the light bulb in my head go "Bing!"

I realized that maybe it's good that I gave up. I mean, what's wrong with a little laughter and foolishness? As far as I'm concerned, it's the only thing that gets me to wake up every morning and go to school (Actually the only thing getting me to wake up is the fact that I have five tardies and it takes six tardies to get a Saturday school).

Studies show that people who laugh more actually have better health. Now, I'm not so sure this is true, but if it is, I'm on my way to becoming the world's oldest woman. 200 more years of Annie Lee..... can you handle it? ♦

Got a tumor? Try humor! Research shows that comedy can be a remedy

by Tim Rollinson

Humor holds together relationships, brings people together and entertains the world. Now medical studies have shown it is also actually good for your health.

Trials have proven that laughter can actually improve a patient's condition. Laughter contributes to stress relief and blood flow, which are two major health benefits.

"It relieves patients' anxiety when they can laugh with their doctor," said Isha Clark, a pediatrician of Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. "When patients are comfortable they heal better."

A study by Dr. Michael Miller of the

University of Maryland showed that laughter actually improves artery activity, which is essential for providing oxygen to the heart and brain. Results showed that laughing helped as much as aerobic exercise.

Studies have also shown that patients can handle pain more easily when they're in an environment of humor and laughter.

"The hospital always has clowns for the cancer patients," said Clark. "You can see the effect it has on the kids, and it makes their diseases that much more bearable."

Clark explained that when patients are able to joke with their doctor, they are in a healthier state emotionally.

Dr. Melissa B. Wanzer conducted a study for Science Daily that proved

laughter increases communication and life satisfaction for elderly people.

Other supporters of the laughter remedy claim that laughing is like a mini exercise session increasing pulse and blood pressure.

Some positive side effects of laughter include reducing blood sugars and stress reduction.

Laughter also provides a cheap medicine in these tough economic times. Miller says in his study that half an hour of exercise three times a week combined with 15 minutes of laughter each day will keep people's heart in prime condition. That is more laughter than exercise so this under-rated cure will keep mind, body and soul in pristine condition. Laughter really is the best medicine. ♦

Classes work to accommodate individual needs

BY ADDRESSING EACH INDIVIDUAL STUDENT'S NEEDS, CLASS MATERIALS VARY BASED ON SKILL LEVEL

by Tiffany Tung

In elementary school, though all students in one class have one teacher, based on reading level and math skills in the classes, these students are divided. Some are already learning addition and subtraction, others multiplication and division, and the quicker learners are already learning fractions and basic pre-algebra. In language arts, some students are already at a fourth grade reading level despite being second graders.

When students reach high school, the problem is that even though some students are faster or slower learners, many of the underclassmen are pretty much the same.

Although high school emphasizes self-teaching, the recent addition of courses separated significantly by skill level, such as sequential geometry and Algebra 2, allows students the ability to experience different teaching methods necessary for

them to succeed. These separate classes are essential for the further development of each individual student.

"I was a big advocate of creating the sequential algebra/geometry classes," said former math teacher and current psychology and child development teacher Laressa Ridge. "Before, it was harder for students, and I'd say that the creation of these new courses was a big move in helping struggling students."

Specifically in math classes, where students must understand fundamental concepts in order to succeed at higher levels, teachers can observe this gap between skill levels early on in the school year.

"I allow my students to work in pairs, have them work with each other, I hold

tutorial sessions and hold groups during class and have them work on problems together as well," said Ridge. "If I notice that someone isn't able to do the work in class, I sit down with them one-on-one and say 'Let's make a group right here' and I'd have the students work with each other and explain things to each other."

Although some teachers enforce a policy that states students who need help must go to them during tutorial or after school and teachers will not directly call these students out, some students are shy and are not as eager to approach teachers despite the fact that these teachers open their rooms during tutorial to offer help for such students.

"Right now I'm having trouble in math and chemistry, but my teachers re-

ally help me out by being in their rooms, ready to answer questions before and after school and during tutorials," said junior Nate Morrison. "But I suppose that they should also make more review resources, especially before a big test or just for extra practice."

Students with different skill levels in classes may have difficulty, but teachers are always readily available to help by either having one-on-one sessions with the student to further explain class work or to suggest courses the student should take the following year, especially if he/she is not doing as well.

"If I have trouble, I will go to the teacher to ask for help, because in the end, it's up to the student to recognize that he's struggling. However, the good thing about SHS is that we have AP and regular courses so students with different levels can choose something that suits his or her needs the best, so it's easier for them to learn and succeed," said Morrison. ♦

Courses separated by skill level allow students to experience different teaching methods necessary for them to succeed.

Jordan's class projects help campus community

by Shannon Galvin

In Peter Jordan's freshman health class, the students are learning more than just nutrition and physical activity, they are also offered the opportunity to get the word out about healthy living to the rest of their peers.

Over the past month, students participated in a project that evaluated the school's health, came up with a solution and submitted a proposal for a grant in order to help promote health at the high school.

First, the students completed an assessment of the school's health. They investigated areas such as the amount of homework given, the quality of food in the cafeteria and the level of students' physical activity.

"The idea was to identify areas of weakness and areas where we can improve," said Jordan, "and then come up with a project to address that need."

The projects ranged from a health awareness campaign to a "Bike to School Week." The students then had to outline their proposal and come up with a budget if necessary.

Projects were then submitted to the Health Trust, a local organization with the "vision to be the leading venture capitalist for funding innovative nonprofit health prevention services and programs within the Santa Clara Valley," according to the organization's website.

"This is an organization that we've partnered with in the past," said Jordan. "They exist to promote health in the Santa Clara Valley, and we're looking to improve health at Saratoga High School."

The Health Trust had notified Jordan about the opportunity for students to apply for grants. Jordan then decided to have all his students apply as a classroom project.

"Not only is it an assignment for the class," said Jordan, "it's also an opportunity to reach out through this organization."



Jordan

The Health Trust then gave grants to two of the proposals submitted by members of the class to help facilitate the production and advertisement of their activities.

One project, proposed by freshmen Eric Wang, Justin Fang, Manish Raghavan and Shaun Chung, develops ways to spread health awareness through posters and YouTube videos.

"At first, we just wanted to find a project that would be easy and fun," said Wang, "but they ended up liking it and awarded us a grant."

The boys have already started work on their first video for the project—a parody of The Backstreet Boys' "I Want It That Way" with a healthy twist, including vegetable costumes.

The other project, developed by a group of ten freshman girls, encourages students to increase their physical activity by biking to school during a "Bike to School Week."

"First, we did the survey in class assessing our school's health," said freshman Meghana Rao. "We found one of the areas that needed a lot of improvement was biking to school. There weren't a lot of bikes in the bike racks, so we came up with the idea for a Bike to School week."

During the event, students who bike to school will receive raffle tickets.

At the end, a raffle will be held including two grand prizes of iPods and other prizes, including gift cards to local stores. A date has not been set for the event so far.

Other projects that did not receive funding from the Health Trust now have the opportunity to submit their proposal to the School Site Council for funding.

Through the project, Jordan is able to not only emphasize health for his students, but also reach out to the whole school.

"I think it's a pretty good idea," said Rao. "We actually improve the school's health for a long time." ♦



photos by Holden Sparacino

At right: Posters created by Peter Jordan's health classes are displayed around school to help promote personal health as part of a class project. The projects range from school-wide events to publicity.

Battle of the bands vs. the brains: music wars in math class

by Sophia Cooper

What do Billy Joel and 17 have in common? They're answers to a math problem.

In Kelly Frangieh's math classes, students review for upcoming tests by identifying the artist of a song playing while they work on review problems. In order to get full points, the groups must get both components correct.

"They do review problems in math and answer them as a team and then we listen to music ... and they have to guess the artist," said Frangieh. "If it's a really long problem, we'll do two songs."

This different teaching style is beneficial to students not only with the entertainment factor, but also with the intense review and group work. These "music wars" provide a method of teaching different than the



Frangieh

usual worksheet and lecture.

"Instead of just giving them a review worksheet to work on, it keeps their interest a little more and they're using the class time to review," said Frangieh, "whereas if you just give them a work sheet and say 'go do it,' half of them do and half of them don't."

Frangieh got the study technique from a colleague at her former

school, Lynbrook High School, and adapted it to use in her own classes at SHS. She feels that it works well because it involves students who don't usually participate in class.

"I think it's kind of fun to see some kids who are really good at math may not know all the music," said Frangieh, "and then kids who are used to being the weaker students can shine because they know all the music. It's not all math like it usually is." ♦

'Little Prince' projects grab students' imagination

by Rahul Thakker

Teaching is often a selfless job. Teachers spend much of their time to ensure a better life for younger generations, but in return they sometimes are not paid the salaries they deserve and are often criticized more than they are appreciated. Still, according to French teacher Kim Bergkamp, the effort is worth the reward of knowing that she has helped her students understand a difficult subject to learn.

"I love when a student finally gets it," said Bergkamp. "It's rewarding when you see a student who has been working really hard get a great test grade. Their hard work has paid off and that is fun to see."

The challenge is keeping the class interested, because as every high schooler knows, boring lectures may help students catch up on their sleep, but don't necessarily promote learning.

Every year, Bergkamp's French 4 Honors classes read "Le Petit Prince," a

children's novel that addresses important issues regarding life, moral lessons, and human nature, and complete various group projects to "hopefully create interest in the book." The activities—practicing vocabulary through crossword puzzles, tag, or even yoga, presenting puppet shows and skits, drawing posters that analyze the characters and sharing favorite quotes or events from the book—not only make the class more enjoyable, but they also emphasize conversational skills, especially necessary in a foreign language class.



Bergkamp

"I love using projects for this book [because] my students are so creative and talented," said Bergkamp. "They always amaze me with what they can do with an assignment. I think they have had fun with some of these activities and it has helped them to really learn the material."

Senior Mara Couch agrees, saying the projects are an effective use of time because they obligate the students to become actively involved in their own education

and learn the material better.

"Being forced to teach the other students the material really helped me internalize it," said Couch. "I still remember everything I have learned from ['Le Petit Prince'] since January, but I don't think I would if we had just read from the textbook or taken notes."

Couch's words relate a view that is held by many other students as well. While lectures and notes are valuable, a good education requires more. Students must be able to put their newly acquired talents to a practical use that will make the transition to the outside world easier and establish a stronger foundation for success.

Couch said Bergkamp's methods provided her and her classmates with the opportunity to express themselves and

prepare for future real-life scenarios.

"[Bergkamp] allows for a lot of creative freedom so it was a lot of fun," said Couch, "but more importantly, she really encouraged us to think outside the box. Later in life I am sure we will all face situations where we have to come up with new solutions to problems, and that's where projects like this will really help us."

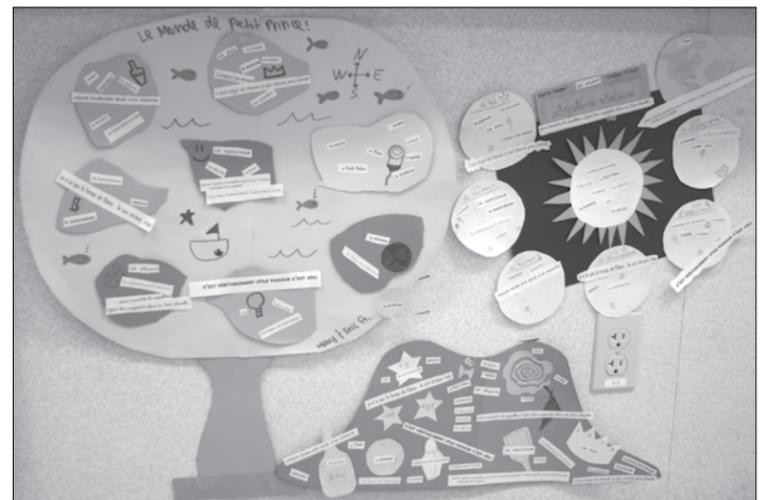
Bergkamp, however, gives the credit for her success to her students.

"It feels great to know that students enjoy being in class and appreciate when a teacher tries something new,"

she said. "Not every project turns out the way a teacher hopes it will, but when an idea does succeed it feels good. I feel lucky to have the students that I have. Any idea that I might have for an interesting project wouldn't amount to much without amazing students!" ♦

"I love using projects for ['The Little Prince' because] my students are so creative and talented. They always amaze me with what they can do with an assignment."

— French teacher Kim Bergkamp



photos by Jordan Waite

While studying *Le Petit Prince*, French 4H students created puppet shows, posters, yoga and games of tag to teach the class the subject material.

Out of the Desk and into action

Teachers often take new approaches in their lessons to help students get more involved in class, in addition to modifying lesson plans to accommodate all skill levels.



Brandon Yang

Love knows no bounds

Obstacles hinder, but usually stop short of inhibiting teen relationships



GROWING UP AND MOVING OUT

Seniors heading to college take relationships along with them rather than choosing to break up

by **Mika Padmanabhan and Saniha Shankar**

For most seniors, going to college means leaving parents in the past, old habits at home and boyfriends and girlfriends behind. However, some seniors are trying to maintain relationships started in high school through their college years.

Senior Brittany Hinrichs has been dating senior Alex Rothbard for over a year. Instead of ending their close relationship, they have decided to give it a try in college.

According to Hinrichs, though they have yet to pick which colleges to attend, they have already decided to move in together.

"We already see each other every day," said Hinrichs, "but it really is going to be different."

Hinrichs says that living together

means they have to take on a whole new set of maturities.

"It's not like we can just not talk to each other if we get in a fight," said Hinrichs. "We have to figure things out and make things work like adults do."

"We have to figure things out and make things work like adults do."

—senior Brittany Hinrichs

Making time

Senior Amanda Murabito can relate to what Hinrichs and Rothbard are going to face. Murabito and her boyfriend, Archbishop

Mitty senior Kevin Atkins, will be attending Cal Poly together in the fall. Atkins is going to Cal Poly on a soccer scholarship, which will make his schedule very busy but Murabito believes that they will still be able to keep a strong relationship.

"[Atkins'] soccer is a big commitment but we will still find time for each other and spend as much time together as possible," said Murabito.

Both couples agreed that it's impor-

tant to try it out to see if a relationship will work in college.

"In college, you meet so many more people, and the atmosphere is so different," said Murabito. "However, if you really want to make a relationship work, then you should give it a try."

Current distance

Growing up can be hard to do but going to college is also about making important decisions about relationships.

While Murabito and Hinrichs are planning to stay close to their boyfriends for college, senior Kate Stewart and Saratoga alumni and Berkeley freshman Eddie Koai, a SHS alumnus, have already been working with the distance caused by college for 10 months.

"It is difficult to keep your trust when they are always meeting new people all day and going to all these parties," said Stewart.

Despite the distance, Stewart and Koai keep in touch by calling each other through Skype and sometimes

through Facebook.

"We see each other maybe once every three weeks or so," said Stewart. "We still try and talk every day even if we don't get to see each other that often."

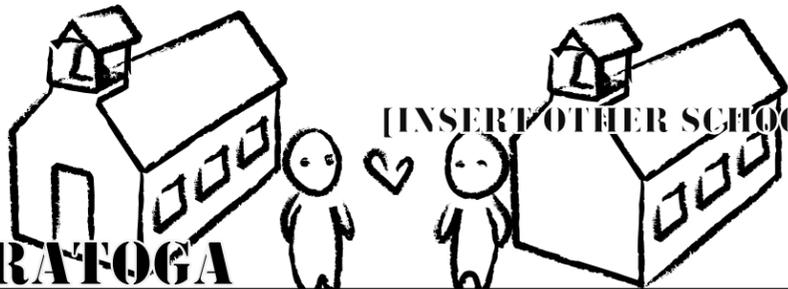
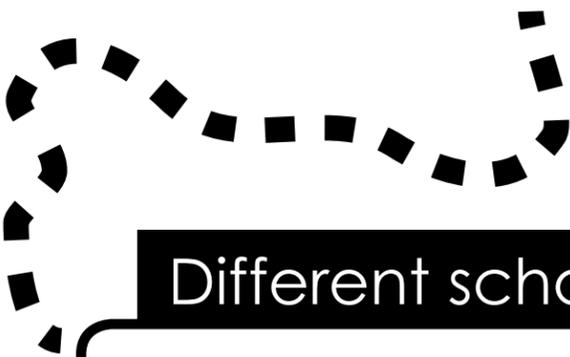
For next year, however, Stewart isn't sure how the relationship will continue as she leaves to college in Southern California.

"It's going to be harder to see each other next year," said Stewart. "Neither of us is probably going to have cars and the distance is farther between us but we're still going to give it a try."

They say true love can last through it all, while no one may ever know how true that statement is, it's always worth it to take a chance.

"If I was looking at my relationship and where it's going from the outside, I'd probably laugh," said Hinrichs. "It's turned into a great relationship though, so even if something seems like it may not work or be worth it, the best thing you can do is just go with it and see what happens." ♦

College



[INSERT OTHER SCHOOL HERE]

Different schools

SARATOGA

Students show ability to date across schools

by **Lauren Kuan and Rebecca Nguyen**

Every day after school, senior Daniel Wu and Cupertino High senior Lucy Li drive somewhere to meet up and spend time with each other. Occasionally, they visit each other at their schools.

Though students think that cross-school dating is difficult, many students say it is possible to have a successful relationship.

Wu and Li have been dating for 15 months. The two met last summer during a summer church retreat.

"All the churches from the area were combined [for the retreat] and that's where I met her," said Wu. "She was visiting from Texas during the summer. We talked and then, she went back to Texas. Then she moved here because of her parents and we

talked some more. Finally, I decided to ask her out."

Wu feels that dating cross-schools is not difficult.

"There aren't any problems because of cross-school dating," said Wu. "It's mainly because of college. For example, the question: [What are we going to do]?"

Although they go to different schools, Wu is still able to spend as much time with her as possible.

"Last year, she had three classes so she was done around lunch," said Wu. "She would come visit after lunch and this year she has more classes so I go over there and visit her."

Another successful cross-school dating couple is sophomore Kabir Jiandani and Leland High sophomore Karen Alexander. They were introduced to each other through

a friend when all three went to the movies together.

"After the movie, we started talking to each other and then a month later, I asked her out," said Jiandani.

They meet each other twice a week usually on the weekends and try to talk to each other every day on the phone.

"Sometimes it's hard to see each other during the week since we both can't drive but we try to see each other as much as possible," said Jiandani.

Senior James Jiang thinks a key part of his cross-school relationship is his ability to drive.

"I can drive to her house and so I see her at night time and in the afternoon but she doesn't have her license yet so she can't come to Saratoga as often," said Jiang, who

is dating Lynbrook senior Grace Hsieh.

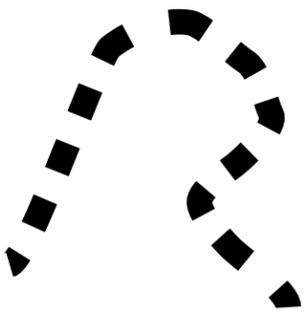
However, Jiang admits that sometimes it is difficult to really get to know a person when she goes to another school.

"I don't know who she hangs out with at school or what she does at school, so I feel like I don't know her as well as some of her other friends at Lynbrook," said Jiang. "When I'm with her Lynbrook friends, they often have inside jokes that I can only sit back and laugh awkwardly."

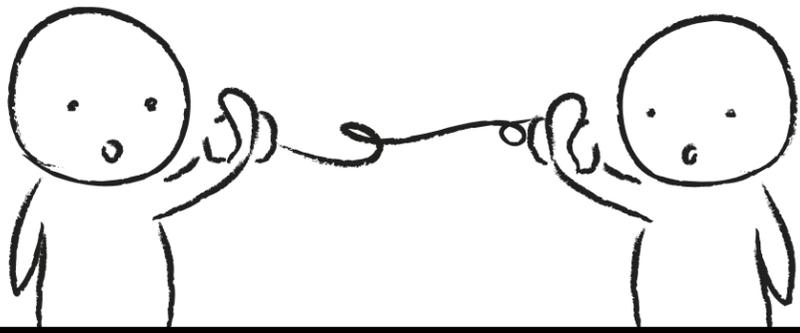
Although it can be hard, Jiang feels that successful cross-school dating is possible.

"I would like to see her more often but I guess that's just one drawback of having a cross-school relationship," said Jiang. "Besides that, it goes well." ♦

START



Long-distance



Couples find overcoming distance takes patience

by Elizabeth Cheng

Relationships, by themselves, are never easy. They require time, commitment and patience. However, when you add distance to the equation, it becomes a whole new challenge.

For some in Saratoga, distance has become a key aspect in relationships. Like many other families, senior Brian Tsai's parents live separate lives: one here with him and the other in Taiwan. Though the arrangement seems tough, his parents have handled the distance in the marriage for almost two decades.

"The children's education in Taiwan back in then was too competitive and too academic so we decided to immigrate here," said Susan Tsai, Brian's mother who works as a Chinese teacher at Happy Childhood, an after-school tutoring facility. Then we found out my husband cannot get a suitable job here so he decided to go back and continue his career there. Then I had Brian and when he grew up he didn't want to go to Taiwan to study so that's why it's been this way since 1990."

The year allows for a few meetings during holidays and breaks and Brian's father tries to come to the U.S. every few months for a one-week stay. Otherwise, contact is mainly from a phone call.

"Especially in recent years, both of

us are very busy," said Susan. "Every day, though, he calls us for a short time during the morning."

The seemingly minimal contact may seem harsh but Susan does not feel lonely thanks to her children's company. She does worry that it is harder for her husband, who does not have any company and has to make do with a distant bond with his children.

"Most of the time he wants to talk to the children but they are not available either [because] they are sleeping or they are not there because of the time difference," said Susan. "It's not easy to keep a close family bond, but each family is different."

Her plan, however, does not involve immediately joining her husband after Brian goes to college.

"I figure that my husband is still busy [with] his career, so I decided I will join him once he retires," said Susan. "I'm also interested in my Chinese teaching, and I don't want to quit my teaching and go to Taiwan and do nothing."

After many years of being in the international relationship, Susan believes that distance is not the problem.

"It's the thinking that's a problem," said Susan. "Especially in recent years, I have had many friends who have got divorced and distance wasn't the problem, it's the way they thought."

There are cases, like the Tsai's, where thousands of miles can be between two people and not cause much of a problem. But there are cases where even the smallest distance can hurt a relationship. For senior Lisa Chang, 30 miles was enough to cause a rift.

A frequent visitor of Fremont, she met her former boyfriend during a visit. There was no instant connection, but after talking online and meeting in person a few months later, the two decided to start a relationship.

"It was [winter] break so we had time for each other and we were both willing to try," said Chang. "We talked about being together in college and got really ahead of ourselves."

When school resumed, they found keeping plans was not as easy as they had thought.

"Once winter break was over, he became very busy and he kind of just gave up on the whole deal," said Chang. "I

felt less secure about a future together even existing."

Eventually the two realized that the relationship was not going to work.

"He was honest with me and told me he didn't think seeing each other every other week and not being able to make that much time for each other was enough for him," said Chang.

Chang believes that there are some differences that have to be accepted when dealing with distance.

"It depends on what you're willing to 'settle' for," said Chang. "Some people have the mindset of 'out of sight, out of mind' and that's not going to work. You can't have absence in contact. Even if you're not there, you have to be there for them in their lives."

The experience has made Chang only wary about what distance relationships entail, not completely dislike the idea.

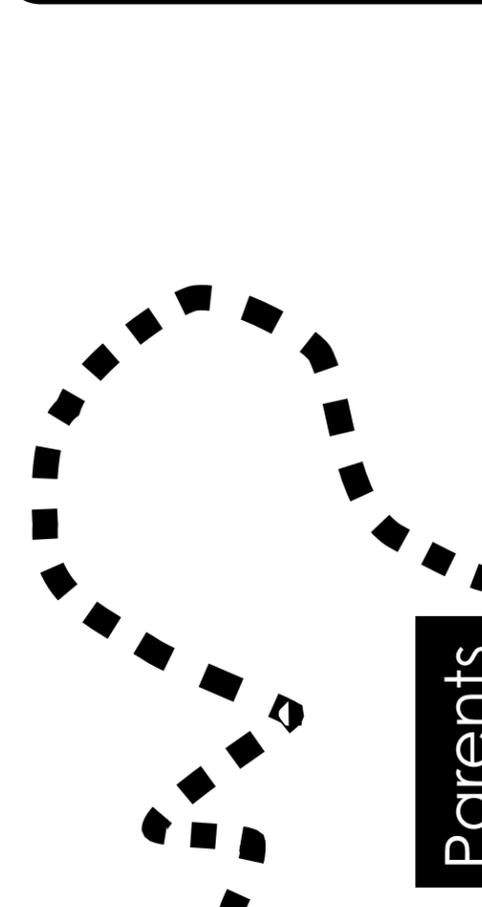
"I definitely think it's possible, but I don't know if it's meant for people our age since it seems like we have our whole future ahead of us," said Chang. "It's hard to envision one person with you throughout all that change while they're not really 'with you.'"

She said distance is like any other obstacle that has to be worked through.

"The saddest thing is people don't try," said Chang. "At least give the other person a chance to make it work since a relationship takes two people." ♦

"It's not easy to keep a close family bond, but each family is different."

—parent Susan Tsai



Parents

GOAL



Some cultures frown on teen dating

by Mika Padmanabhan
and Saniha Shankar

If you walk through the halls of almost any American high school, chances are you'll see couples holding hands, hugging or going off to lunch together. In America, it is completely acceptable for teenagers to be involved in relationships and show their affection. In other countries, however, dating is far from normal.

The effects of other cultures' restriction of dating can be seen here at Saratoga High. When students come from such a culture, many conservative parents may not accept high school relationships and dating as appropriate activities for young students.

According to junior Divya Singh, because most Indian parents grew up in a stricter environment and dating was something that was both prohibited and uncommon, they sometimes have a difficult time understanding why students feel the need to date in high school.

"Both my parents grew up in India where dating is usually discouraged

and allowed only with marriage in mind," said Singh. "It has become a little bit more modern these days and my parents, like many others, are starting to open up, but they still tend to treat it like a taboo topic at times."

Other parents who oppose dating often believe dating poses as a distraction for students. Because they think that academics and extracurriculars should be the primary focus of their children, and they feel that there is not enough time for kids to be completely devoted to these while also making time for a significant other.

"For students, studying is the most important thing. Having [a boyfriend or girlfriend] will only take away from this [studying] time," said Saratoga mother Vicki Pei.

Another parent, who asked to be anonymous, said, "These students tend to take these relationships too seriously and will end up devoting too much time and affection into it. And if it doesn't work out the end, it can end up negatively affecting the students' lives in general."

To avoid all of the discouragement

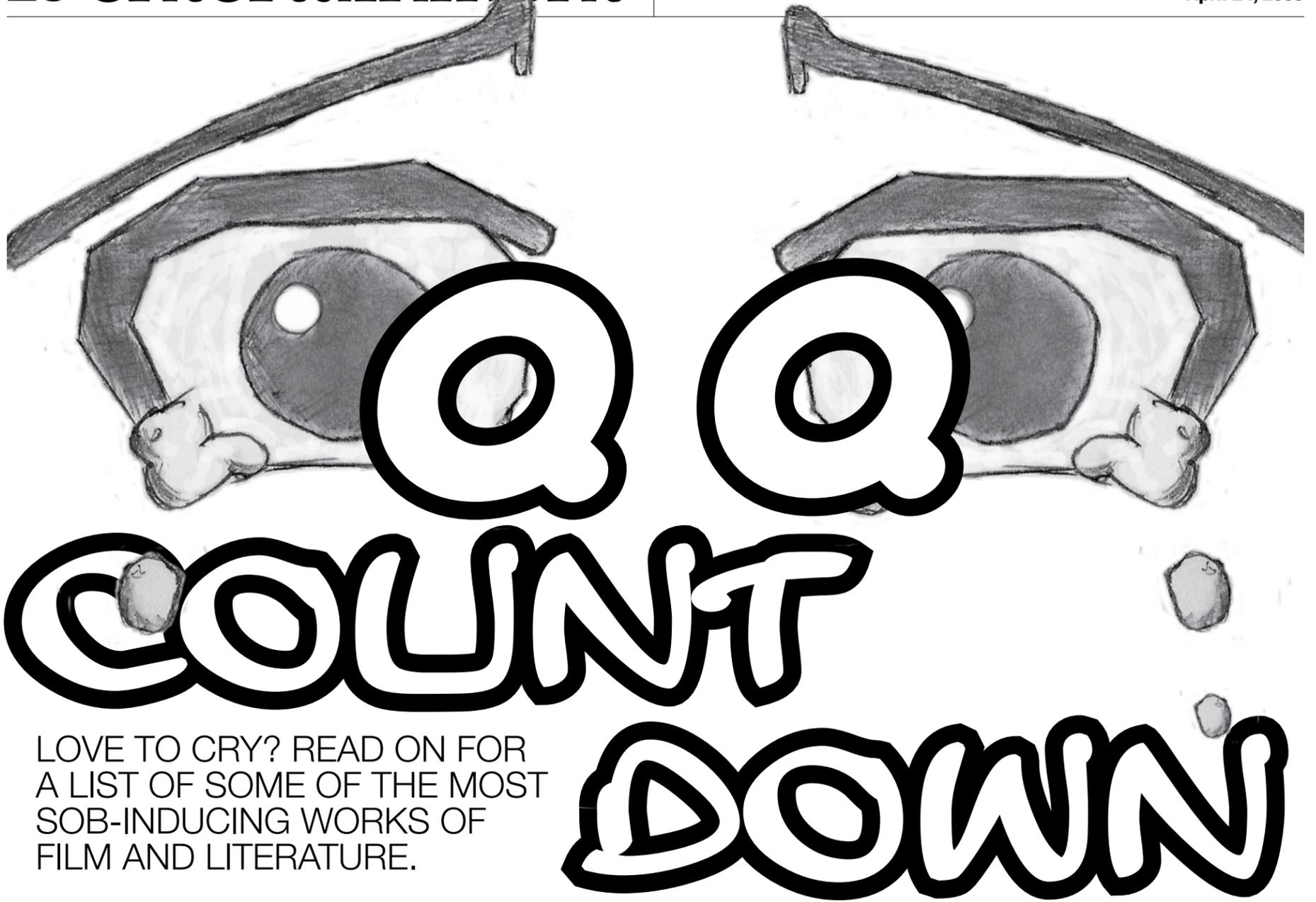
and scolding from conservative parents, some teenagers decide to get into a relationship without their parents' knowledge.

"I've had boyfriends before and although it's a lot harder without your parents knowing, it's definitely do-able," said one junior girl.

She often met her boyfriend at school events that she knew her parents wouldn't attend. She also met him along with other friends at a movie or at the mall. Her parents would just think she was hanging out with a friend or two, but she would bring her boyfriend along. Although she wouldn't be able to see him that often, she would talk to him a lot through instant messaging or her cell phone.

"My boyfriend and I broke up and despite the entire emotional circumstance, my grades and schoolwork have still stayed constant," she said. "I still had time to participate in all of the extracurricular activities that I had going. I don't think it's that big of deal to have a relationship in high school as long as the student handles the situation responsibly." ♦





LOVE TO CRY? READ ON FOR A LIST OF SOME OF THE MOST SOB-INDUCING WORKS OF FILM AND LITERATURE.

TOGATALKS

What do you think about crying during a movie?

There's nothing wrong with crying during a movie, especially if it's something worth crying for.



sophomore Lexie Mullaney



junior Daniel Chou

It's okay if it's a really good movie like "A Walk to Remember."

A good movie should have the power to move you to some emotion.



freshman Matt Opatrny

TOPTEN

WAYS FOR GUYS TO COVER UP TEARS DURING A MOVIE

- 10 Pass off the tears as raindrops coming from the ceiling.
- 9 Pretend to pick your nose while you slyly wipe off the tears.
- 8 Say that the movie was so corny that you started crying because you laughed so hard.
- 7 Pretend you have to go to the bathroom and just leave.
- 6 Tell the girl you are allergic to ugly people (SJP).
- 5 Eat onions. Downside: You won't get to first base.
- 4 Use the classic, "There's dust in my eyes."
- 3 Wear shades the entire movie because you want to look "hip."
- 2 Call Lady Gaga and learn her p-p-poker face, p-p-poker face.
- 1 Don't cover up the tears...maybe girls actually like that.

—by Karthik Annaamalai

Only soft whimpers for 'Titans'

by Karthik Annaamalai

When people think about their list of top "cry" movies, "Remember the Titans" isn't usually on the list. Most people think about movies like "A Walk to Remember" or "Titanic" when choosing their favorites, but those movies are not as sad for boys as they are for girls. People ignore the movies like "Remember the Titans," which show struggles that most boys can relate to. It has a sound mixture of action, sports and deep meaning intertwined into the story.

For sophomore Chris Chung, "Remember the Titans" stays ranked number one on his list of all-time sad movies because of the emotional storyline and plot.

"The whole movie is touching," said Chung. "In the time period that the movie takes place in, a friendship between blacks and whites just wasn't accepted. The fact that race can keep two people, like Gerry and Julius, from becoming good friends is really sad."

For most, like Chung, the saddest part of the movie is the ending, where Gerry Bertier, one of the main characters, dies. The scene shows all of Gerry's teammates at his funeral, deeply saddened by his early death.

Sophomore Garrick Chan thought that the death scene was sad, but did not drop a tear like Chung did.

"I am not the type of guy to cry during a movie," said Chan. "But, I still must say that this is one of the saddest movies I have seen. Most people don't think it's sad because it's a sports movie. But [this movie], especially when the team started to sing 'Na na na na, hey hey hey goodbye,' is really sad. Whenever I hear this song now, I think of the funeral scene."

Chung thought the most touching part of the movie was the scene where Gerry's girlfriend shook Julius' hand for the first time.

"I started tearing up at [this] scene," said Chung. "For me, this scene represented the obstacles that friends of different races had to overcome. In the beginning of the movie, Gerry's girlfriend was disgusted that Gerry was

friends with a black person. But, towards the end, she finally saw Julius as an equal."

Though many people think that "Remember the Titans" is a sad movie, it does not hold the place of number one on their lists. Most people agree though, that for a sports movie, "Remember the Titans", is definitely touching.

Junior Branden Kapur thought that the movie was sad only at the end and that it does not deserve to be number one, though it contained many touching ideas and themes.

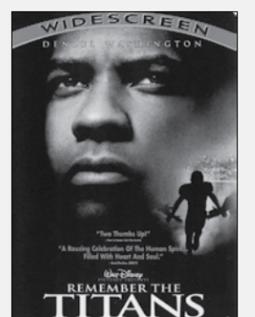
"The movie is definitely sad," said Kapur. "I could feel the tears forming up in my eyes towards the end because it showed the unity of two races and how well they grew up throughout their struggles, but for me, a movie needs to be sad the entire time to count as number one. I watched "Undercover Brothers" a couple of weeks ago, which was a pretty sad movie. So this movie was sad, just not the saddest I have ever seen." ♦

THE WEEP METER | Remember the Titans

What: Tender story of an integrated high school's football team and their struggles in the civil rights era.

How: Great characterization as well as roots from real world conflicts add to the moving plot.

Falcon Says: Basic weep flick for the manly man, sports nut.



LONG-LASTING EMOTION ON AND OFF THE SCREEN

by Apeksha Sharma

Every girl dreams about the day she meets her one true love. In "The Notebook" by Nicholas Sparks, Allie Nelson and Noah Calhoun meet for the first time at the age of 17 and fall in love. After Noah leaves for the World War II, Allie is set to marry a rich businessman until one day Noah comes back and their flame reignites. Allie must choose between the life she wants to live and the life she's supposed to live.

What makes *The Notebook* such a girl magnet is that it has drama, love and happiness all in one. Drama happens when Allie continually spurns on her fiancé by being with Noah. She is forced between them and finally settles on Noah.

"I really like the book because it's about true love," said sophomore Kaitna Shankar. "Just the way Nicholas Sparks describes it is really cute."

The book starts in an elderly home where Noah and Allie are reading out of the diary of their past love stories.

"I think it's cute that they still love each other when they're old," said sophomore Lexie Mullaney.

The story then goes into a carnival, where Noah and Allie meet for the first time. As time goes

on, they fall in love, but it is forbidden. When Allie gets engaged, she read in an article of a house that Noah refurbished and decides to meet with him again.

"I think it's nice that she met him again," said Mullaney. "This is her way of getting closure from him."

Allie then finds her true love in Noah and has to decide whether to be rich or happy.

In the end, Noah and Allie are back at the elderly home and fall asleep. They then wake up, but due to Allie's advanced Alzheimer's, she doesn't remember who he is, even though he visits her every day.

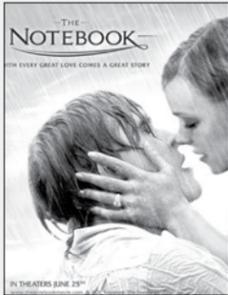
"It's really sad that she doesn't even remember him after being with him for so long," said Mullaney. "It's sad to see how Noah tries day after day to bring his love back to him." ♦

THE WEEP METER | The Notebook

What: Chick-book turned chick-flick about found and lost love over time.

How: Common love story equation, but the relationship's growth and description are the basis of the emotion.

Falcon Says: Pretty sad, but the tears usually only come for chick-flick lovers, macho-men see 'Titans.'



No real need for macho men



Rahul Thakker

Hakuna Matata

What exactly does it mean to be a man? I mean, what makes someone more "manly" than someone else?

I've heard several different theories out there, but it seems the most popular is this: Real men don't talk about their feelings. They aren't sensitive or compassionate. They don't share their problems with their friends.

And they most definitely don't cry. But why? Girls aren't the only ones who need an emotional release now and then.

What's wrong with a man opening himself up to his friends or family members so that they can help him through a difficult time in his life? For example, shouldn't severe physical agony be an acceptable exception to this most cardinal of man laws? Or, even more painful, what if you just saw the saddest movie of all time: "The Lion King?"

Simba and friends hit the silver screen on my third birthday. I was really excited when I walked into the theater and the movie didn't disappoint. Who doesn't love chanting along to "The Circle of Life" like an unintelligible African warrior? And that scene where all the savannah animals bow down to the newborn prince while Rafiki holds him up to the sky?

But then, out of nowhere, Mufasa died. I was stunned.

To be honest, it wasn't even Mufasa's murder that upset me; it was Simba's reaction. For those of you who don't remember or have suppressed

the heartbreaking memory, here's what happened: Simba walks down into the gorge where the wildebeasts stampeded and finds his father's body, lying broken and unmoving on the ground, and, on the verge of tears, desperately says, "Dad? Dad, come on. You gotta get up. Dad, we gotta go home. Help! Somebody! Anybody..."

If you aren't crying by now I honestly think you should get that ice-cold hole in your chest checked out by a doctor. Picture yourself in Simba's situation; what would you do if your dad was lying dead on the floor and your uncle just told you it was your fault—that you killed him?

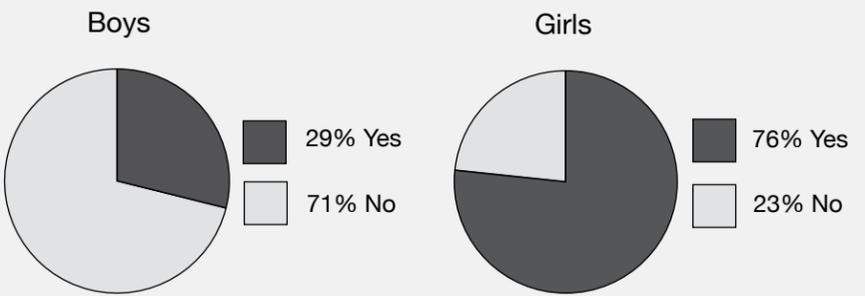
I guess part of the reason I was so touched by that part of the movie is that my parents are pretty awesome. I used to live in Southern California when I was younger and I still remember family trips to places like Disneyland, the San Diego Zoo and Sea World. I couldn't imagine my life without either of my parents, so when I saw Simba trying to wake his dad up, I did the only thing I could: I cried.

Maybe I'm not the manliest man ever, but I'm OK with that. I don't think showing emotion is a sign of weakness; I think it's a strength. I don't hide my feelings so that people think higher of me. In fact, I think the real men are the ones who like themselves the way they are, macho or not, because to be honest, it doesn't make one bit of difference. Being sensitive hasn't stopped me from finding plenty of close friends to hang out with or being successful.

In "The Lion King," Mufasa told a conflicted Simba, "Remember who you are," and I think in the real world as well those are words to live by. You shouldn't have to change yourself to impress anyone, so the next time you go see a sad movie remember: Some guys think they're tough, but they don't even have the guts to cry. ♦

FALCONPOLL | Emotion Notions

Are you willing to cry during a movie?



The Falcon polled 100 students (50 girls, 50 boys) on April 15.

Gump's optimistic tale

by Synthia Ling

"Mama always said, 'Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get.'" The Academy Award-winning film *Forrest Gump* tells the heartwarming tale of a mentally challenged man's journey from childhood to adulthood.

From the beginning of the movie, Gump, sitting at the bus stop telling stories about his life in his Southern accent, is charming and lovable. As a child, his mama teaches him life lessons and he grows up with his best friend Jenny.

"It's sad how Forrest is mentally disabled and what he has to go through," said sophomore Kaitna Shankar. "But he is really funny and sweet."

He goes to Vietnam to fight in the war and meets Bubba, his shrimp-loving friend, but one day they are attacked and Bubba dies.

"The part when Bubba died was really sad because Forrest went back and tried to save him," said Shankar.

After the war, Gump finds himself part of history-chang-

ing events. The audience feels like they are along Gump as he meets the president in several occasions, unknowingly reports the Watergate robbers, witnesses the Little Rock Five at their first day of school, invests in Apple and he inspires all the people he meets along the way.

"There is a drop in the movie and you really feel for the character," said senior Alex Shebanow. "But in the end it is happy because it shows that life still goes on."

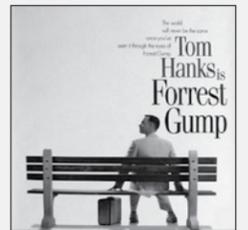
While this moment is depressing, the movie is not the saddest out there. In the end it is optimistic and hopeful, as Gump is able to continue living his life. ♦

THE WEEP METER | Forrest Gump

What: Quirky story of a simple man and his odd adventures through life

How: Memorable quotes and genuine insight

Falcon Says: Full of emotion, but not necessarily sorrow. Predictable ending leaves viewer refreshed.



Touching story inspires true tears of 'Happyness'

by Apeksha Sharma

When any parent abandons their family, the life of the other parent turns upside down. "The Pursuit of Happyness" follows the tragedy and rise to success of a dad and son as they struggle through the hardships of poverty. This real life story was developed into a movie in which Chris Gardner, played by Will Smith, invests the family sales on a bone-density scanner.

The scanners become obsolete, and Gardner loses all his investments.

Now Gardner and his son Christopher Gardner Jr., played by Smith's real-life son Jaden, are left on the streets without food or shelter.

"This is really sad, especially when Gardner is now a single dad fending for himself and his young child," said sophomore Katie Gifford. "It's also sad because this type of thing is getting more and more common, and it's not right."

Gardner applies for an internship, for which he has to undergo training for six months without pay.

"Since he needs money, it's really upsetting because he has to do all the training and work and stuff, but doesn't get paid," said junior Kristin Combs.

During his internship, Gardner and his son are left on the streets and must fend for themselves through hard times.

"That's absolutely tragic. You're rooting for them to get better," said Combs. "For Gardner to get paid, for something to improve, but they've got to go through being homeless."

In the end, Gardner overcomes all the obstacles that life has confronted him with and wins the internship.

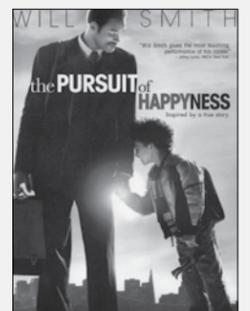
"I remember this part of the movie, and I really liked it," said Gifford. "It shows how sacrifice and hard work for something you put your all into can lead to great things." ♦

THE WEEP METER | Pursuit of Happyness

What: True story of a single father making it in the business world to provide for his son.

How: The characterization of someone down on their luck trying to move up in life, and truly succeeding after true desperation.

Falcon Says: Amazing, tears of hopelessness and optimism throughout entire film.



THE ARTIST OF THE ISSUE: Candace Kao

Senior Candace Kao is not a typical artist. Some artists pursue music or painting, but Kao's art form is architecture.

Her passion has led her to pursue architecture as a career.

Q: When did your interest in architecture begin?

A: I think it started in my freshman year of high school when I was wondering about what I might want to do in the future. My mom is actually a landscape architect, so she knew some architects. She said that what they did, using artistic inspiration in creating things that are very real and present in our environment, she thought that might suit my interests, so I started looking into it.

Q: What skills are required of architecture?

A: To be a good architect, you have to have a vision. You have to be able to create something that is beyond ordinary that is uniquely yours but is still something that the public can appreciate.

Q: Are there any architects you look up to?

A: I'm actually really fond of the work of Buckminster Fuller because of his influence on art and our civilization. He was multifaceted. He didn't just create buildings. He also lent his influences to chemistry and [other] forms of art.

Q: Are there any buildings that inspire you?

A: Yeah, I really like the Getty Center in Los Angeles. I went there over the summer. I was really inspired by the way that it was designed—the entire layout and the way that they used different structures to kind of guide the eye toward different parts of the building.



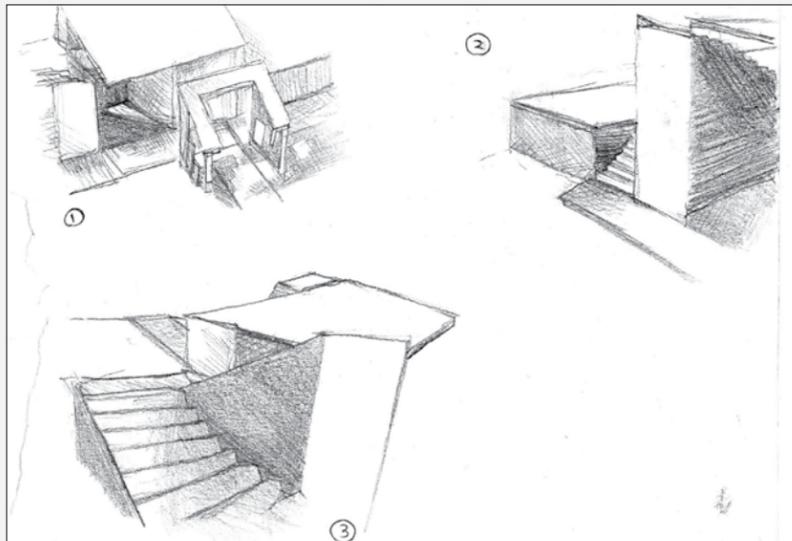
Kao

Q: What kind of style do you have when designing buildings?

A: My style is modern, simple and clean. I'm not fond of excessive ornamentation [unless] I need to draw the eye to something.

Q: What else do you like to draw?

A: I like drawing people because I find gestures interesting, and I hope to capture gestures and include them in my works.



courtesy of Candace Kao

THESE ARE BLUEPRINTS OF A BUILDING THAT CANDICE KAO DREW AT SUMMER

Q: Are you going to major in architecture?

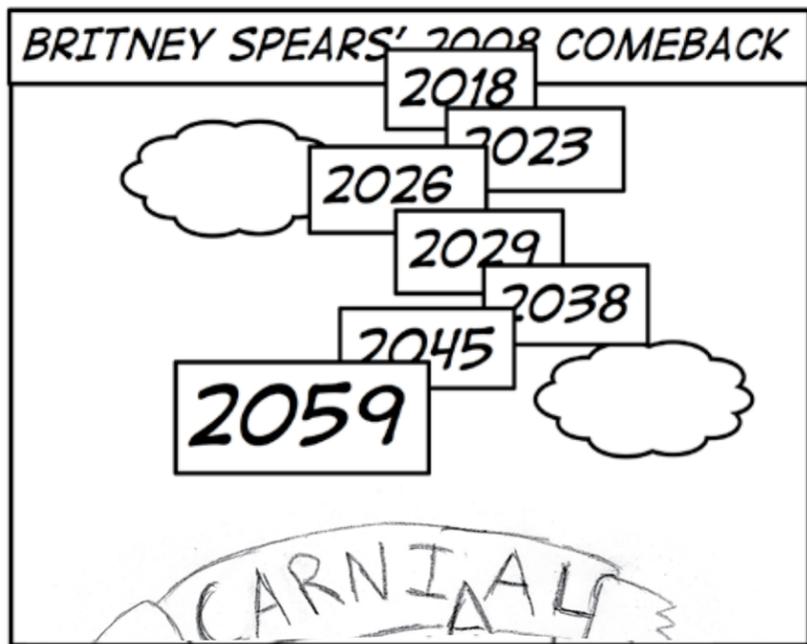
A: I'm definitely going to major in architecture in college. I went to a pre-college program on architecture last summer and I really like the studio environment and everything that it had to offer.

Q: What are your dreams for the future when involved in the field of architecture?

A: My first priority would be to build a resume. Then it would be to design houses because I am interested in how people interact with living spaces.

—by Synthia Ling

Quite the conundrum | by Alex Song



AUDIO FILES



Subject: Sophomore David Mandell

Weapon of Choice: iPod Video

Genres: classical, jazz, showtunes and pop

1. **Defying Gravity : Wicked** (5:53)
Memorable Lyric: "Everyone deserves a chance to fly"
2. **All I Ask of You : Phantom of the Opera** (4:52)
Memorable Lyric: "Love me, that's all I ask of you"
3. **This is the Moment : Jekyll and Hyde** (3:14)
Memorable Lyric: "Damn all the odds"
4. **Seasons of Love : Rent** (3:03)
Memorable Lyric: "Remember a year in the life of friends"
5. **Those You've Know : Spring Awakening** (4:28)
Memorable Lyric: "Still you know to trust your own true mind, on your way you are not alone. There are those who still know"

—by Pia Mishra

SOFTBALL

Graduates Reed, Pak return to help coach Falcons

by Pia Mishra
and Ren Norris

There's something about the softball team that makes it impossible to leave— just ask alumni Katie Reed and Adriana Pak.

Both girls were players on the team while in high school and have returned to help coach the varsity and JV teams. Pak returned after graduating last year and has helped with the JV team, and Reed, who graduated in 2006, has taken on assistant coaching for the varsity team.

Apart from coaching being a fun way to stay involved with softball, Reed and Pak feel like sharing their own experiences as former players help the team grow.

"I feel like I've spent a lot of years learning softball and I want to share all of that with these players and help out," said Reed, who is now attending San Jose State University.

As coaches, the alumni still feel connected to the team but realize that the responsibility of coaching sets them apart from the players.

"When I'm out with the varsity team, I don't feel much different than a player, but when I'm with the JV team, I feel more like a coach and I'm able to boss them around a little more," said Pak, who is now attending West Valley College.

Even though Pak played with a few of the returning girls last year, coaching the JV team allows her to work with players she did not know before.

"I played with a lot more people than [Reed] did, but being with the JV team is different because I didn't know as many

players coming in," said Pak, "but they're all really good girls, so I'm having fun with them."

When Reed played here, the team won league and went to the CCS Championships in 2005.

"I want the girls to live up to that and also try to make it to CCS," said Reed.

The alumni remember the team being the same as when they played, apart from the changes in coaching staff. Ray Sisco now heads the varsity team and Tony Palma coaches the JV team.

"Nothing else has changed since when I played other than the new players and coaches," said Pak. "The team dynamic is the same."

Reed's great memories from this year include playing an alumni game on March 28 as well as fun practices with the varsity team. One of these included "Fresh Friday" where all the players dressed up in crazy outfits for practice.

The players also enjoy having coaches that have experienced what they have and are more like friends than assistant coaches.

"It's really fun because they know what they're talking about, but at the same time they can relate to us and make practice more interesting while we still learn," said senior Kelly Darchuk. "Also, [Reed] and [Pak] are my best friends, so of course I love having them as coaches."

What makes this team so difficult to leave?

"It's just fun," said Pak as she broke into laughter at Reed nearly falling off the bleachers. "I come back for moments like this." ♦



Theresa Yeh

Senior Laura Ruddy takes a swing during a home game against Gunn on April 15.

SCOREBOARD | Softball

4/17 Saratoga 1, Los Gatos 8

"We played well for the first five innings, but we could have used a few more hits," said senior Satomi Ishikawa. "Overall, we played well defensively."

4/15 Saratoga 6, Gunn 7

Despite a good effort from sophomore pitcher Megan Brading, the team lost a nail-biter to the Titans.

4/3 Saratoga 4, Santa Clara 9

"The team did pretty well. We've improved a lot since the beginning of the season," said coach Ray Sisco.

ATHLETES OF THE ISSUE

Tennis opens collegiate doors for senior players

by Neyha Bhat

While most seniors look forward to attending colleges and universities for their respective majors, a select few members of the girls' tennis players will continue the sport in college.

"I'm so excited because I had so much fun on the Saratoga team," said senior Kara Wang, who has chosen Pomona College for their Division III tennis team.

Other girl tennis players who were recruited by colleges include Kelly Lamble, who will play at Santa Clara University on a full scholarship and Lindsey Marsh, who will play at Cal Poly University at San Luis Obispo.

Marsh and Lamble will play on D1 teams. Marsh was also considering Santa Clara, but decided to go to Cal Poly because it has a better program for her major, kinesiology.

Cal Poly's team requires a lot of commitment since it ranks as one of the best in the nation.

Lamble is looking forward to being an integral part of her team right away. After taking recruiting visits to Cornell, the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia as well as SCU, Lamble decided on SCU because of the scholarship opportunity.



Lamble

"I narrowed my choices down to Santa Clara and Cornell, but ultimately chose SCU because of the money," said Lamble.

"[Also,] after spending a week on the East Coast in winter, I couldn't imagine leaving the sun behind."

Still, the decision was a tough one. "I had a lot of trouble making up my mind," she said.

She also recognizes the high level of competition in the Bay Area and knows it will be a huge benefit.

"Even though I didn't play for the school for the past two years, having so many good players in the area gave me a lot of people to practice with," said Lamble.

While Marsh and Lamble look forward to making tennis the main focus of their college experiences, Wang has instead decided to take on a less rigorous tennis schedule at Pomona. She believes choosing a DIII school will allow her to focus more on academics, an important area as she wants to go to graduate school.

"The school wants team members to make academics a priority," said Wang. "They don't mind if you miss practice sometimes for class."

The school emphasizes an in-depth education through smaller student to teacher ratios. Wang was also approached by Columbia University, but

she liked the calm, fun aura surrounding Pomona.

"When the Pomona and Columbia coaches approached me, I could immediately tell Pomona had a much more relaxed atmosphere," said Wang.

Pomona only requires players to attend practices four times a week, while Cal Poly and Santa Clara both require six days.

Wang's DIII team will still require hard work, however, as it is ranked top among the West Coast Conference.

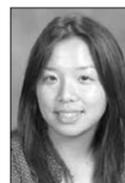
"I like the idea of not having to travel as much, but still being able to play tennis competitively," said Wang.

The three girls' recruitment to college tennis is a testament to the competition at Saratoga High School.

"To not have to give up something I love just because I'm leaving high school is great," said Wang. "It will be a different but exciting experience." ♦



Marsh



Wang

SWIMMING

New talent, senior leaders bode well for CCS

BOYS LOOK TO WIN CHAMPIONSHIP, GIRLS HOPE TO IMPROVE ON LAST YEAR'S 9TH PLACE FINISH

by Lauren Kuan
and Tim Rollinson

After both the boys' and girls' varsity swim teams started the season with two wins in dual meets against Lynbrook and Los Gatos, both teams suffered their first losses. The girls' defeat came against Monta Vista on April 2 and the boys' suffered a similar fate against Monta Vista on April 15.

After large margin victories over Lynbrook and Los Gatos, the girls' team went into the meet against reigning CCS champions Monta Vista confidently. They were disappointed

at losing by a mere ten points.

"I was really proud of the girls," said coach Kristin Thomson. "They were a really good team and if all of our swimmers would have been healthy I think it would have changed the dynamic of the meet."

There were many injured swimmers during the Palo Alto meet that Thomson believed could have helped the team significantly, including sophomores Debbie Lin and Joyee Woodrow.

The boys' team boasted a 3-0 record entering the meet against Palo Alto but lost to the powerhouse 92-91, by one point. Although the Falcons won almost every event at the meet, a lack of depth in the roster led to the loss. Saratoga also was outscored 13-0 in the one meter diving event in which they had no participants to Palo Alto's three.

"It was really disappointing to lose to Paly by one point," said senior Matt Murray, "but we have to leave this behind us and look forward to the rest of the season."

Saratoga will round out the season with meets against Gunn and Homestead on April 24

and April 30 respectively. They will then finish the season with League Finals from May 5-8.

After the league season is over a handful of Saratoga qualifiers will attend the CCS meet on May 15 and 16.

The girls' team is looking to improve on a ninth place finish at last year's meet. With a number of promising new swimmers and the return of some of last year's team leaders, this is looking to be a very realistic goal for the girls to achieve.

"We are going to be challenging Bellarmine this year. We have more people who are going to score points so this could be our year."

—coach Christian Bonner



courtesy of Pro Image Studios

Senior Brad Murray pulls ahead of an opponent during a breaststroke event at a recent Los Gatos meet.

The boys, who got second to Bellarmine last year, are hoping to take the title this year. The team looks even stronger than last year's squad, and with some fresh talent from Ian Burns and Kyle Borch, and the senior leadership of Matt Murray, Brad Murray and Ben Hinshaw, the team is more confident this year

than ever. All three seniors are especially hopeful for a winning end to their high school careers in order to propel them into collegiate athletics on a positive note.

Both teams should have pretty full teams at CCS as many swimmers have already qualified. Individuals only have to make the

qualifying time at some point in the season, rather than at league finals specifically.

"We are going to be challenging Bellarmine this year," said coach Christian Bonner. "We have improved our relays and we have more people who are going to score points so this could be our year." ♦

GIRLS' TRACK

Lone female thrower represents Lady Falcons

by Nandini Ruparel

Relay runners? Check. High and triple jumpers? Check. Hurdlers? Check. Throwers? Although many people don't know it, check. Oftentimes, the throwers on the girls' track team get overlooked because there is only one of them this year—junior Baylee Yates. As the only thrower for the girls, the burden of competition falls solely on her shoulders.

"I like it [because] you get a lot of one-on-one coaching," said Yates, who participates in the shot-put and discus events. However, sometimes she feels like it is up to her to keep up the high standards of the girls' track team.

"Sometimes [there is pressure], because I'm the only one who can get point for that section," she said.

Despite the great pressure on her, she still manages to perform well.

"I got into throwing because my freshman basketball coach encouraged me to try out for it," said Yates. Her favorite part about throwing, she says, is striving to beat her own personal record. She placed sixth at the West Valley meet on March 23 in varsity shot-put, throwing 9.61m.

As for the rest of the girls' track team, seniors Katie Nast and Kiersten

Dolbec competed in the prestigious Arcadia Invitational on April 11. At a meet most track and field athletes would be happy just to qualify for, Dolbec placed an impressive third in the high jump with a jump of 5'6". Nast placed 21st in the 3200m run with a time of 11:30.75. Results like these at such an important meet could be indicators of successful end-of-season finishes.

At the St. Francis Invitational on April 4, the Falcon girls did well in the 4x400m relay, placing third. The team included seniors Ashley Cole and Katie Marsh, as well as juniors Sarah Guy and Karen Wai. Cole also participated in the long jump where she placed 15th, and in the triple jump where she came in 10th. Saratoga placed 27th out of 45.

Nast also placed 11th in the 3000m at the Stanford Invitational, which took place March 27 and 28. Freshman Crystal Yen placed fifth in the 100m hurdles at the meet.

At the West Valley Relays on March 23, Nast and Wai both placed in the top 10 in 1500m at third and sixth, respectively. Yen placed third in the 100m hurdles. The Falcons placed second in the 4x100m relay and placed a well-deserved first in the 4x400m relay.

With important races like CCS Top 8 coming up tonight, the girls are looking for a powerful end to the season. ♦



Yates

BOYS' TRACK

Individual runners prepare for CCS Top 8

by Kelly Lamble

Later today, the boys' varsity track team will hit the ground running as they compete under the lights at rival Los Gatos' track in the CCS Top 8 Invitational. As its name implies, only the top eight competitors (or 16 if two heats are being run for that particular event) in CCS are invited to participate in this elite meet.

This year, the Falcons have five boys competing. Senior co-captains Alan Menezes and Kian Banks will be racing in the 1600m event. Banks will make another appearance in the 800m later in the evening as well as one in the final race of the night as part of the 4x400m relay team, which also consists of juniors Trevor Teerlink and Matt Marshall. The fourth spot will be filled by either sophomore Matt Cresci or senior Michael Beam; the final decision had yet to be made at publication time. Teerlink will also be competing in the individual 400m race.

While the varsity boys are competing in CCS Top 8 tonight, the frosh-soph team competed in the Top 8 preliminaries on April 3. Although many of the athletes did well, only one of them, freshman Brandon Oliveri O'Connor, placed high enough to advance to the next round. O'Connor placed eighth in shot-put, qualifying him for tonight's final round. Freshman Harry Curtis and sophomores Kyle Fukui and Matt Cresci also had noticeable performances. Curtis placed 27th in the 1600m with a time of 4:55.05 while Fukui came in a few seconds later at

4:57.24. This was a milestone race for Fukui, who had never broken five minutes before. Cresci came in 23rd in the 200m sprint with a time of 24.94 seconds.

Banks and Menezes were also the sole Falcon representatives at the Arcadia and Stanford Invitionals, respectively. At the prestigious Arcadia Invitational on April 11, Banks ran 2:00 in the 800m for 10th place. At the Stanford Invitational on April 5, Menezes came in 13th place with 4:38.07.

"It was a great experience to be able to run at a national meet like this one," said Banks, "but I was really nervous before the race."

Although the April 23 meet against Fremont could not be covered due to publication deadlines, the boys had a losing 1-2 record three dual meets into the season. One major reason for this record is the lack of top runners competing at the dual meets; they have been saving their energy for the weekend invitionals.

The close March 26 victory against Cupertino supported this theory. The Falcons barely scraped by, winning 64-62 on the last event, the 4x400m relay. As the team watched anxiously, Beam started the first leg strongly, putting the Falcons in first place. Marshall, Teerlink and Banks held onto the lead, and lengthened it to 120m, resulting in a decisive victory for the Falcons.

"It was exciting to have the meet come down to the very last event and then pull through for the win like that," said Banks. "It made it really dramatic." ♦

BOYS' VOLLEYBALL



courtesy of Pro Image Studios

Sophomore Garrett Huening (left) and senior Kevin Fongson (right) jump up for the block as junior Daniel Chou gets ready to pass during a home match against Harker on April 15.

Losing streak reflects team's lack of experience

by Sulmaan Hassan
and Amanda Yi

After 13 games and working to improve, the volleyball team has fallen on hard times, with only a 3-10 overall record so far.

The team's unsuccessful season results mainly from the fact that this year's players were second-string players last year.

"We have no experience and we're basically a totally new team," said James Kim. "We have to find out how people play so we can adapt."

The boys won their second match this season in a non-league home game versus Lynbrook on April 1, losing the first game but coming back and winning the next three.

"Lynbrook isn't the best team, so our win doesn't say much," said junior outside hitter Daniel Chou.

Like the Falcons, the Vikings only have three wins under their belt this season.

Two days later, the team suffered a quick three game loss against Mountain

View, which has an 8-4 overall record.

"We didn't even reach 20 points during any of the games," said Kim. "It's kind of sad."

On April 15, the boys suffered another loss to Harker by only 5 points. Although they won the first game 25-20, they came short in the subsequent three, the scores being 22-25, 22-25 and 21-25.

"They had their subs in for the first game and then put all their starters in," said Kim, "so I'm pretty sure we had no chance."

The boys walked off the court with their heads down further blaming their lack of volleyball training. They suffered another defeat on Apr. 16, losing to Los Gatos in 3 games.

"We are all pretty much new to playing against such good teams and we are definitely not prepared for it," said Chou.

Although the team is lacking in morale, they are slowly progressing in their skill level, as shown by the close scores in their most recent games. They look forward to finishing the season with more wins. ♦

BOYS' GOLF

Players looking to generate interest, rebuild tradition

by Brian Kim

The boys were holding onto their chances of winning leagues by their fingertips, but the varsity golf team fell short after losing to Los Gatos on April 2 by a score of 206-188. With no matches left in the season, the boys must hand over their league title for the first time in eight years.

Despite the loss of key players last year, the Falcons played an exceptional season. Coach Bill Drennan spent some time away from his players on medical leave, but the team still fared well, winning its final match 239-209 against Milpitas on April 16.

Their downfall, however, spawned not from a lack of quality players, but from a lack of interest in golf.

Student participation has declined recently, leaving the team with only seven players this season as opposed to last year's nine.

"There has been less interest in golf as the years have passed," said senior No. 2 player J.B. Lee. "With fewer incoming freshmen, fewer people trying out and, thus, not as strong of a team as we were before, we still tried our best and did rela-

tively well. Hopefully interest in golf will return to the way it was before, and we'll have a chance at leagues in the future."

The top two players, senior No. 1 player Stephen Hoffman and Lee, will be graduating this June, leaving big shoes to fill for incoming and returning players.

Freshman Michael Chen said this year will be the basis for future success.

"Although the losses were rather depressing at times, they definitely still provided a good experience for me," said freshman No. 6 player Michael Chen. "I had less experience beforehand involving matches and tournaments. But the team

played its best, and the players got along and worked well together."

As their season on the green comes to a close, Lee, having spent four years on the golf team, felt skeptical on what might become of the team in upcoming years.

"The future of the team doesn't look that great at this point," said Lee, "but hopefully next year, we'll see freshmen with good potential to turn the team around." ♦

"There has been less interest in golf as the years have passed. Hopefully [it] will return to the way it was before and we'll have a chance at leagues in the future.

—senior J.B. Lee

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Improved training methods advance league record

NEW COACHES' RIGOROUS PRACTICE SCHEDULE UNITES TEAM, BRINGS THEM CLOSER TO CCS GOALS



Senior Christian Biederman pitches against Evergreen Valley High on April 14, where the Falcons lost 8-3. They have fared better against league opponents with a record of 6-1.

by Lyka Sethi

Guided by coaches Travis Hatfield and Manny Steffen, the Falcons are currently first in the El Camino league with a record of 6-1, as of April 14.

With more rigorous training techniques, Hatfield and Steffen have helped the boys improve, leading to league success.

"The coaches make us spend more time in the batting cages working on our fundamentals instead of just hitting on the field every day like we did last year," said junior outfielder Grant Thomas. "It's definitely made us improve a lot."

Senior outfielder Marcus Lefton is hitting at .364, and both Lefton and sophomore pitcher Dillan Pak have two home runs. Senior pitcher Christian Biederman has performed impressively with an ERA of 1.50.

The boys exhibited their skills in a five-game winning streak, beginning on March 17 with a 3-0 win against Fremont. They then defeated Santa Clara 5-2 on March 19 and won against Lynbrook 8-5 on March 24, before going on to defeat Gunn twice, 4-3 on March 31 and 5-3 on April 2. However, they then suffered a brutal five-game losing streak when they lost all four of their games in the Lions tournament and then their game against Evergreen Valley, bringing their season record to 8-7. The team lost 0-10 to Monta Vista on April 4, 5-6 to Gilroy on April 7, 5-6 to Monterey

on April 8, 10-15 to Homestead on April 10 and 3-8 to Evergreen Valley on April 14.

During the past few weeks, each of the players has made a unique contribution to the team effort. According to senior catcher Casey Farmer, among others who have been doing well are Biederman, who plays third base, and junior Bryce Dozier, who plays first base. Both Biederman and Dozier have excelled at offense and defense.

The Santa Clara game was especially exciting—the boys were losing 2-1 going into the 7th inning of the game, but ended up scoring four runs in the last inning and

walking away with a 5-2 victory. Pak, Lefton, Thomas, junior outfielder Vincent Carstens and senior pitcher Joey Avery all contributed to the win.

Farmer said the increase in committed players this season has brought about a newfound cohesiveness in the team, which has led to many more victories.

"We've come together a lot more this year," said Farmer. "Our team didn't do so well last year and a lot of it had to do with team members who weren't focused and determined to do well."

The boys hope to continue their winning streak in their upcoming games so they can keep their first place in league and sail smoothly through CCS.

"We're really hoping to do well during the next few games and tournaments," said Thomas. "This season has been great from the start, and we want to end it that way." ♦

"The coaches make us spend a lot more time in the batting cages working on our fundamentals."

—outfielder Grant Thomas

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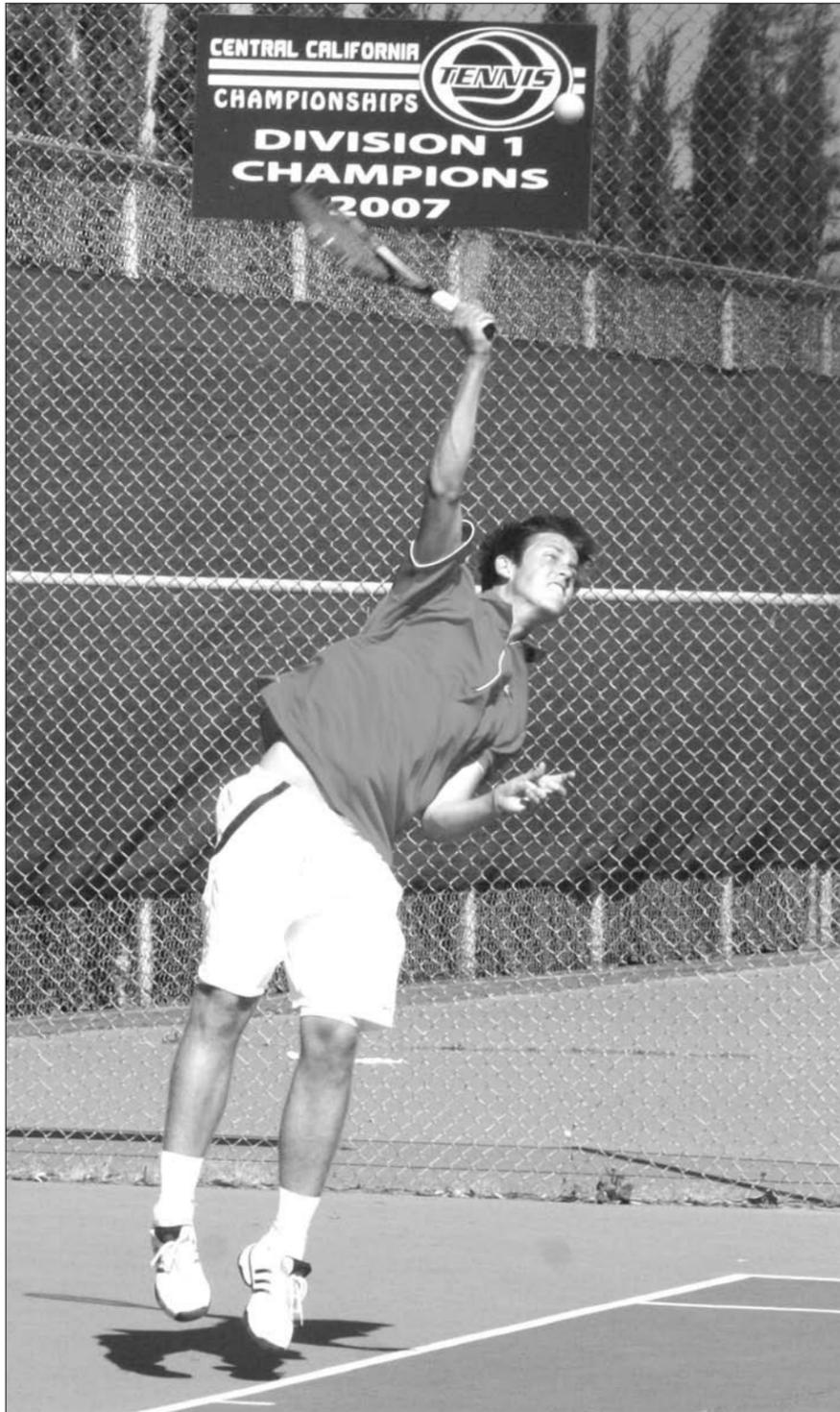
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BOYS' TENNIS



Amanda Yi

Junior Eric Gast hits a serve against Gunn on April 16. The Titans were defeated 7-0.

Team demolishes league

by Kelly Lamble
and Mika Padmanabhan

The no-hope-for-CCS Falcons have piled up a 10-0 record in league. The team attributes its success not only to the skill of its individuals but also to the cohesiveness of the unit.

"We all get along very well and that is the main reason for our success," said coach Tom Uyehara.

"A lot of the guys know each other from previous seasons, and they all decided to come out and play even though we can't play CCS."

As disappointing as not having the opportunity at a CCS title is, (they were suspended from CCS after failing to appear at NorCals last year) the boys are proud of their league accomplishments and confident they will snag the regular season championships. The only threat this season has been Palo Alto, who they narrowly beat twice previously, 4-3 both times. The key to keeping this threat at bay will be winning doubles matches.

"We need to play strong doubles again to beat them," said sophomore No. 2 singles player Deepak Sabada.

In anticipation for the April 21 showdown, which could not be covered due to publication deadlines, the team has been working on doubles as well as experimenting with different line-ups.

"[Paly] is probably going to come out with a different line-up, and so are we," said Uyehara. "Hopefully, it will go in our favor."

Pending the Palo Alto match, the boys will be crowned league champions with only a few matches left in the season.

Even without the excitement of a post-season, the team enjoyed friendly, though fierce, competition with each other, always urging each other to play better and improve.

"We are all competitive, but really close because everyone on the team likes each other," said Sabada.

Even though competition is tough during practice, the boys band together during matches to create a formidable united front.

"Playing on the team this year has been really great because you have all your teammates cheering for you. They are all really supportive," said Sabada.

The extra support helped the team to a 7-0 victory against Gunn High School on Thursday, April 16.

"Last time we played [Gunn], it was really close and I think we decided that we wanted to sweep [at this match] and we did," said Sabada.

On another positive note, the team is not losing any starters to graduation this year, meaning they could possibly be the favorites for the CCS title next year. With promise like that on the horizon, the future looks bright for the Falcon boys.

"Overall, they're a great group of boys, and much of our success is due to how close we are," said Uyehara. "I hope we can have the same kind of dynamic next year when we will be allowed back into CCS." ♦

BADMINTON

Struggling varsity players given hope by freshman

by Karen Lyu

Varsity teams are usually studded with juniors and seniors. Saratoga's varsity badminton team is no different with one significant exception—freshman Jeffrey Kuo.

Not only does Kuo meet varsity standards, but he surpasses them. Coach John Phung considers him "the best player on the team." Kuo plays the varsity boys singles' No. 1 spot.

"Every time he plays, [Kuo] has a fan base; at least 20-30 other players watch him," said Phung.

Kuo who has been playing badminton for four years and attributes his skill to all the hours he puts into the sport. He trains at badminton academies GGBC and Smash City outside of school.

"They teach me new techniques and help me improve consistency when playing against others," said Kuo.

Kuo was introduced to the sport by his uncle at age 11 and, from there, developed an intense passion for the sport. As if to prove his devotion even further, Kuo will be going to Indonesia to train for a month this summer.

"I'm going the week I get out of school, and the training [will be] pretty intense," said Kuo. "It's six hours a day, six days a week."

One of the reasons Kuo works so hard is that he has a list of personal goals to

fulfill. He hopes to win singles for the 2009 U.S. Junior Nationals Championships, an annual tournament held in July where all the best players from around the U.S. go to compete. Kuo is currently ranked 5th in the nation in the U15 age group.

"I want to play consistently and beat certain players [which will help me reach my goals]," said Kuo. "There are many different types of players. [For example, there are] people who can do long rallies, [but] I am the player who's quick on the court and has power."

Despite Kuo's strong leadership, the Falcons are struggling so far. Starting with a loss to Gunn High School, March 31, the team has not yet won any matches, suffering defeat after defeat. Gunn, Monta Vista and Lynbrook were all victorious against Saratoga with scores of 21-9, 23-7 and 21-9, respectively.

Despite losing to Palo Alto, 18-12, on April 15, Phung has not lost confidence in the struggling team. "Skill level, discipline, and team spirit" are the three things that contribute to a winning team, he said.

"We have much room to improve; [however,] we are seeing some positive signs in the team," said Phung. "My goal is to perform better the second half of the season. I think it is attainable."

The Falcons played Wilcox, Cupertino and Monta Vista this week. Due to printing deadlines, the outcomes of the games were not able to be printed. ♦



Kuo

LACROSSE

Coach inspires Falcons to succeed

by Ben Clement
and Ashley Chou

Frank Resetarits, who plays professional lacrosse, splits his time between New York, where he plays in the Men's Lacrosse League (MLL) on the Long Island Lizards, and California, where he plays in the National Lacrosse League (NLL) on the San Jose Stealth.

At only 24, Resetarits brings enormous credentials to the table as both a coach and player. In college, Resetarits was co-captain of the University of Albany's Division I Great Danes, and helped the team qualify for the NCAA men's lacrosse tournament his senior year.

The same year, Resetarits scored 57 goals and had 33 assists, for a total of 90 points, which is currently the third highest single-season total in Division I history. He is also one of Division I's top 10 scorers of all time. Resetarits also earned the honor of first team All-American, and was a finalist for the Tewaaron Trophy, which is awarded to the "Most Outstanding" collegiate lacrosse player in the United States.

Resetarits, one of the best collegiate lacrosse players of all time, is also the assistant coach of the Saratoga High lacrosse team.

Last spring, Resetarits was the head coach for the Redhawks JV team, which was ranked fourth in the northern California club league. In the fall, Resetarits also coached at Hamburg High in his hometown of Hamburg, NY.

Now at Saratoga High, Resetarits is implementing everything from commonplace exercises to more complex drills that target specific areas, such as knowing when to drive to the goal, in which the team needs improvement.

The work has paid off as the boys slowly begin to improve their overall game play, even though the scores may not reflect this.

The boys lost to Mountain View High on March 23 11-1, a large improvement from the previous game against MV. The game against Archbishop Mitty proved more challenging for the boys, who lost 15-2. Both games were away.

On March 30, the team lost to Burlingame High School 15-3 at home but played much more fluid offense. The team also lost to Junipero Serra High School on April 3, 15-2.

After a shaky start to the season, the girls' team has emerged from the unsteady platform of a first year team to become a force to be reckoned with.

And ever since their crushing defeat of The Harker School on March 24, the girls have been unstoppable. With a score of 18-5 on home turf, it was an uplifting win that promised even more future success.

A week later, the girls stunned the crowds, coaches and even themselves as they played a tight game against Mercy Burlingame on March 31. Strong offense in the first 10 minutes allowed the girls to get in some quick points.

The team faltered the last 15 minutes of the first half, which ultimately led to their loss; however, strong defense in the second half, alongside a relentless offensive attempt to score kept the girls in the game.

Though the girls lost, 12-10, it was the turning point of the season as they came to realize their potential.

Mercy had been a team they'd played against during the preseason Jamboree, one who scored goal after goal within the short 25 minute interval.

By this point, the Lady Falcons were on fire. The day after, they won their first game against a legitimate team—that is, one that posed actual competition—with a score of 15-13 on Nortre Dame's home turf on April 1.

Multiple goals were made by freshman Chloe Knight and sophomores Analiese Parker and Vanessa Block. ♦

buzzworthy

Senior's car squirts fountain of water

Senior Kyoshi Harada was walking through the front parking lot when something caught his eye.

"Why is that car peeing?" Harada thought.

The car belonged to senior Tyler Comes, who is currently driving an 1994 S420 Mercedes with some strange glitches.

"When you turn on the windshield wiper, the water squirts about 10 feet out of the front right headlight," Comes explained.

Comes first noticed this strange feature of his car when he watched his friend drive the car.

"He was adjusting the seat and he hit the windshield wiper on accident and I saw the water shoot out of the front of the car and I thought, 'Weird, why did that happen?'" Comes said.

After realizing the cap covering the water stream fell off and thus caused the water to squirt, Comes found this to be a cool characteristic of his car. Now, Comes uses this strange feature to entertain onlookers.

"I just spray people for fun, like my friends or random people that pass," Comes said. "People are pretty weirded out, they're always like, 'What the hell?'"

This car, affectionately named "Smokey," was Comes' first car, given to him by his grandmother.

"[My grandmother] also installed this really weird horn. It plays three different notes and almost sings," Comes said.

Comes plans on making his car even more unique, hoping to invest money in upgrading various parts of the car, the stereo system included.

Alumnus cartoons for college publication

While some students of the *Falcon* newspaper staffs continue to pursue their interests in journalism by writing for their college publication, class of 2008 alumnus Daniel Yang has extended his journey in another, more creative direction.

As a cartoonist for Georgetown University's *The Hoya*, Yang has free reign as to what to do with his cartoon, "Disconcerted Demagogue."

"No one tells me what to draw—I get to choose," said Yang. "Only one thing matters: make the readers laugh."

However, transitioning from head art editor of the *Saratoga Falcon* to a cartoonist for Georgetown University's *The Hoya* was somewhat of a jump for Yang. Not only is the content different, but also the style.

"Back at the *Falcon*, the emphasis was more on detail," said Yang. "Instead of the serious drawings I did for the *Falcon* in the past, now I go for a much more simplistic style. Too much detail detracts from the point I'm trying to convey."

Although Yang enjoys the freedom of cartooning at the moment, he knows that the chances of becoming a full-time cartoonist in the future are slim. At the very least, he would like to make cartooning a hobby or secondary job if possible for now. His cartoons can be seen at www.thehoya.com.

—by Alicia Lee, Kirstie Lee, and Maggie Lin

FALCON FREEZE FRAME



Melody Zhang



Amanda Yi



Tiffany Tung



Amanda Yi



Melody Zhang

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CELEBRATE THE SILENCE FRESHMAN MARIANNA ALLEN COMMUNICATES WITH A WHITE BOARD RATHER THAN HER VOICE ON A DAY OF SILENCE TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR GAYS AND LESBIANS ON APRIL 17. **GET IN THE GAME** SENIOR POWDER PUFF MEMBERS STARE DOWN THE JUNIORS AT THEIR GAME ON APRIL 16. **LET'S GO TEAM** SOPHOMORES CHRIS CHUNG AND ADITYA DEV ARE HOISTED UP BY CLASSMATES DURING THEIR CHEER ROUTINE ON APRIL 16. **HARD AT WORK** JUNIORS GIRISH SWAMINATH AND TIFFANY TUNG WORK DURING *THE FALCON'S* DEADLINE NIGHT ON APRIL 16. **KONICHIWA** JAPANESE EXCHANGE STUDENTS SMILE AT THEIR FAREWELL GIFTS GIVEN TO THEM ON MARCH 24.

TOPTEN

DOWNSIDES TO SPRING FLING

- 10 Houses get TPed...
- 9 Gender roles are reversed...
Which can be very confusing.
- 8 Spring Fling doesn't culminate with anything,
It just ends
Upside:
Girl-fights.
- 6 The drama queens never get injured,
How does that work?
It gives rally commission one more excuse to embarrass people...
- 5 Another opportunity for the class of 2011 to dance,
Our souls are still tainted from last year.
- 3 Girls walk around in jerseys instead of low cut shirts.
- 2 You get guilt-tripped into Powder-Puff cheerleading.....
- 1 This top 10.

—by Ben Clement and Sulmaan Hassan

Why 'Mystery Spot' is really not so mysterious



Amalie MacGowan
Sam I Amalie

Go into a parking lot, any parking lot in northern California, and I'm sure you can find at least one vehicle with a banana yellow bumper sticker on the rear of their car. Almost everyone recognizes it, and almost every local has visited this famous destination at least once.

After seeing the millionth "Mystery Spot" sticker randomly plastered on a car, my family and I finally decided to visit this puzzling destination.

I don't know if it was simply because it was a sunny, summery Saturday afternoon, but while waiting for 30 minutes to receive a parking space after finally reaching our destination, the anticipation was building for me. I really expected this Mystery Spot to be an experience I would

remember for the rest of my life. I walked with my family into what looked like a theme park entrance, and we purchased tickets from an old wooden booth. We were told to wait three hours for our tour and thought about leaving, but we were determined. I figured it was probably going to be bogus, but we had come all this way, so we were going to see it, and like it.

After talking, texting, eating gift shop junk food for two hours and 45 minutes, our tour was called at last. The tour guide began unenthusiastically repeating the speech she had probably said at least 10 times that day. It was just my luck that our group happened to have a large family from abroad. They constantly took pictures, thwarted my views and interrupted the speaker with an unrecognizable language.

This extra speed bump was more humorous than frustrating. I listened to the tour guide tell us the multiple theories on why the Mystery Spot is such a mystery including theories of aliens once burying unearthly metals in the ground, and the presence

of magma underneath the crust circulating in a different direction and causing a "special gravitational pull." My thoughts, this is a cabin built on a hill.

After watching a ball mysteriously roll uphill and watching the tour group marvel as they walked down an obviously slanted room, we left the site. As we did, one of my long-time questions was finally answered when they pushed two bright yellow bumper stickers into my hands. "Free?" I asked to myself quietly while having an epiphany. Of course, everyone gets a free bumper sticker at the end, and why not put it on your bumper? Sure, it's not very attractive, but it somehow says "I'm a northern Californian, and I'm proud of it."

After doing my research, I found that the spot really is a visual illusion. There are places just like it all over the continental U.S., and all over the world as well. In all, it may not be Disneyland, but everyone in this area has to see it once, and once you do, it will be an experience you'll never forget. Plus—you get a free bumper sticker. ♦