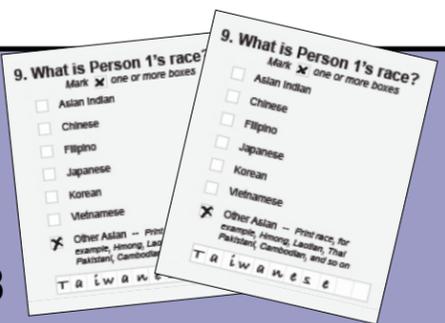




OPINION

Treat Taiwanese as any other ethnicity

pg. 8



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An Independent School Publication

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GO GREEN



Grishma Athavale

Students got a chance to see how technology could make for a greener future at the Alternative Energy and Fuel Fair on Thursday, April 22 at lunch. The event was organized by the Events Commission. Above: Freshman Amin Mirzadegan tests out an electric bicycle in the quad. Right: Freshman Abraham Salas and Chance Cox check out the interior of one of the electric cars on display.



Grishma Athavale

Poetry, CAD cut from next year's offerings

by Roy Bisht and Denise Lin

On a recent Monday afternoon, sophomore Benji Laus slung his backpack over his shoulder and headed to CAD (Computer Assisted Drafting), which is one of his favorite classes. Unfortunately for Laus, he won't be attending CAD next year, as it is one of the handful of classes that will not be offered next year.

The cutting of electives such as poetry and CAD results from the classes not receiving enough sign-ups.

Assistant principal Brian Safine said the cutting of these classes was not a direct result of the district's budget difficulties.

"Next year, as with all other years before, classes will be based on student sign-ups," said Safine. "So if there [are] enough students that sign up we can run classes; if there aren't, we can't."

The impending loss of Creative Writing Poetry, which has been treasured by

staff and students alike since it was first offered in 1999, is especially devastating to those involved in the program. Current poetry students were shocked when it was recently announced in class that the course would no longer be offered.

"The whole class was silent," said sophomore Darisha Jhutti. "We were so upset, but I kind of knew it was coming."

There were only 14 sign-ups for poetry, which is not enough to run the class.

Safine said the class size for poetry was in the 20s in previous years, and the district could not run a class with as few as 14.

Many of the poetry students, like Jhutti, were planning on continuing the course, which has thrived under the leadership of former English and poetry teacher Judith Sutton over the years, and English and poetry teacher Bill Peck for much of this year. Peck has been out in recent weeks because of illness, and Sutton, now

see CLASSES CUT, p. 3

Indian Culture on display at Bombay in the Bay

by Saniha Shankar

If there's one more thing to get excited about as April comes to a close, it's the Indian Cultural Awareness Club's biggest event of the year, Bombay in the Bay. The event will be held on May 1 in the McAfee Center from 6 to 9 p.m.

The tickets were sold for \$12 early and \$15 at the door.

"In the past years we've always had a soldout show, so we hope to continue the trend this year," said ICAC president Divya Singh.

Because of recent problems with scheduling both the McAfee and the quad at once, the club considered having a dinner at Foothill Elementary School. However, after looking into the com-

plications of having just the dinner at a smaller school with a smaller maximum occupancy, the officers decided against it. Instead, the dinner will be served during an extended intermission in the quad.

"The dinner will be catered by Sitara restaurant who serves traditional north Indian food," said Singh.

This year's show will feature a variety of dances and singing acts ranging from classical to Bollywood. All proceeds will go to the Vijaya

Foundation, an organization dedicated to helping poor children in India.

"Bombay in the Bay is always a fun event and something we look forward to all year," said Singh. "We're hoping to go above and beyond next year." ♦

THE BIG IDEA

Bombay in the Bay

WHEN: Saturday, May 1
6-9pm

HOW MUCH: \$12 for preordered tickets, \$15 at the door

PROCEEDS GO TO: The Vivaya Foundation to help poor children in India

LIFESTYLES

Are you smarter than a 9th grader?

pg. 10-11

SCHOOL SCOPE



Uncovering Saratoga's Hidden Talents

pg. 12-13

IN-DEPTH



Alumni look back pg. 14-15

ENTERTAINMENT



Must-see summer concerts

pg. 16

SPORTS



Badminton changes line-up

pg. 19

NEWS

BRIEFS



Senior class finishes senior prom plan

Seniors are busy preparing for a prom they're not likely to forget. Or at least that's the hope for the dance, which is themed after the song "Don't You (Forget About Me)" from the '80s cult classic movie "The Breakfast Club." It is also scheduled for May 15 at a new location: the Hayes Mansion in San Jose.

Bids are currently \$103 with an ASB and \$105 without. The prices will be raised by \$2 or \$3 every week and can be purchased now in the activities office until May 7, a week before the actual dance.

DJ delicious, who played for this year's Winter Ball, will be DJing. The menu for the night has been pre-determined; students have a choice between prime rib, chicken and a vegetarian pasta.

"We basically have everything planned," said senior class representative Ally Doles. "The only thing left to do is to put the centerpieces together, but that cannot be done until a later time anyways due to the fresh flowers."

Since the location is naturally stunning, organizers Doles, Sara Knysh, Maddy Reynolds, Chelsea Sabella, Aveena Shenoy and Aameka Shenoy are trying to have minimal decorations. The senior class is now concentrating on planning the day of prom itself.

"Right now we're just focused on making sure everything runs smoothly on the night of the dance," said Doles. "Everything is planned out but it should be fun to see it all come together that night."

As for regulations, there are no new rules from last year. The senior class officers are looking into any regulations the Hayes mansion has for using the location. The biggest thing left to do now is they get everyone pumped for prom.

"We hope to get at least 300 people, which is typical for a senior prom," said Doles. "The senior class has run into a ton of financial problems this year, so the more people who come the more money the class makes, lowering prices for events yet to come such as Beach Day. So make sure that everyone and all your friends come!"

-by Saniha Shankar

Soundings magazine preps for publication

Students who always dreamed of getting their work published can finally have the opportunity with Soundings.

The literary magazine, which has been at SHS since at least the late '80s, will be distributed around school on May 21.

"Soundings is basically a platform for students to showcase their works in the literary and artistic fields," said senior editor Tiffany Tung.

Nearly 70 poems and short stories, along with over 100 photos and hand-drawn art, were sent in by students and even a few teachers. All of the submissions were reviewed by the Soundings staff, a mix of newspaper and yearbook students.

Because there are so many submissions each year, not all can be printed. Photographs and artwork were voted on by the Soundings staff, while the poems and stories were separately reviewed by each member.

Tung said, "The editors uploaded all the entries on Google Docs (without the author's name to prevent bias), and the staff votes on each. It's been pretty successful so far."

Other editors include junior Shannon Galvin and senior Maggie Lin, who coordinated the entire process.

"The hardest part about Soundings is matching a picture with the written submission," said Lin.

After layout, the editors send it off to the printer, just like the regular newspaper, except in magazine form.

"What makes Soundings unique is that anyone can submit and all of it is student-produced. Students write poems, take photos; then, it's students who do the layout," said Galvin. "All of Soundings is 'for students by students'."

-by Kyumin Shim and Ashley Tang



Jordan Waite

Students have an off-road experience in Utah on the Wild Wild West trip over spring break.

Students go 'wild' west

by Lillian Chen
and Jenny Zhang

This year 22 lucky students got to spend the last six days of their spring break with history teachers Matt Torrens and Kim Anzalone on a Wild Wild West trip to Utah where they drove jeeps, rappelled, hiked, biked, and did various fun outdoor activities.

Open to all juniors and seniors, this history trip was organized by Torrens for the fourth time, allowing students to visit a Japanese Relocation Camp, touch a piece of a B-52 that carried a nuclear bomb and crashed, look at 500-year-old Native American petroglyphs, see dinosaur footprints and participate in many other entertaining outdoor activities.

"My goal for the trip is to get students to just get out and touch history," said Torrens.

The group, which also included parent chaperones and a few siblings of SHS students, visited Moab, Monticello and Salt Lake City and stayed at local inns with three to four people per room. They spent a lot of time on the road and traveled in three vans. Generally, they had to be ready to leave by 8 a.m. and back at 10:30 p.m., when they would fight over who got to shower first.

"It was exhausting but fun. I didn't want to come home," said junior Ellen Scott.

Each day was about 70 degrees, so students carried backpacks with three bottles of water, sunscreen, chaps tick and snacks. Many enjoyed the jeeping in Monticello the most.

"My favorite part was jeeping; it's something not usually done in California," said senior Tristan Littlehale.

With nine jeeps to fit everyone, the group went over steep

hills for three hours. Each jeep had a driver, but many students were able to drive the jeeps themselves.

Along the way, the group also encountered animals such as snakes, antelope and cows. Torrens had fun with the animals as he decided to pick up a snake and told juniors Jay Lee and Jordan Waite to try to touch one of the cows at a pasture on the side of the road. Unfortunately, he couldn't have fun with the bunny that he accidentally ran over on the road.

In the end, the group had a great time and all of students got pretty close.

"I did not expect to have this much fun," said senior Erin McCroskey. "It was amazing and went beyond my [high] expectations. I had one of the best times ever on a school trip, and it's an experience I won't forget. I definitely recommend it." ♦

MSET robot scores goals in international competition

by Anoop Galivanche

The school's Mechanical Science and Engineering Club (M-SET) placed 50th out of 86 teams in their event at the international robotics championships in Atlanta on April 15-16. The success, which came as a pleasant surprise for the team, was particularly impressive as it was the first time the club had ever qualified for the championship.

"We did really well considering that this is the first year for the club," said junior Cordell Hollingsworth, captain of MSET, "not to mention we were competing against the best teams in the country."

The 86 teams that competed represented the upper echelon of the robotics teams in the country and the world, coming from all over the United States as well as from Israel, South Africa, Brazil and Mexico.

The team's robot, which used a maneuvering system called OmniDrive, was designed to perform offensively and defensively. It was this, Hollingsworth said, that gave the team an advantage over the other competitors. It's aesthetic appeal may not have been there, Hollingsworth notes, but that doesn't matter.

"We were in nationals with what was essentially a robot drive train, but it worked," Hollingsworth said.

Progress, the name of the team's robot, and its opponents competed in a modified version of robot soccer, with three robots per team. Using OmniDrive, the robot was able to swiftly navigate the course, ultimately doing well. The rank of each robot was determined by how many goals they scored, and which teams they beat.

Sophomore Rod Jafari, a team leader and one of the 13 members who opted to go, thought that going to the competition itself was a good experience.

"We got to know one another really well," Jafari said. "I think that will help us next year because this is all about teamwork." ♦

CORRECTIONS

• In the Life section of the April 9 issue, the correct answer for the 8th grade level question, who said "No taxation without representation?" was Patrick Henry, not the answer printed, James Otis.

• In the School Scope section, the story on recommendation letters may have inadvertently confused readers. The article online has been updated to more distinctly describe the process for both college recommendations and other programs. It's at www.saratogafalcon.org.

CLASSES CUT | Award-winning poetry program gets axe

continued from page 1

retired, has been substituting for him.

"Our whole class signed up for [Poetry two]," said Jhutti. "Now we're really confused."

Even so, there have not been enough sign-ups to continue the class that has won numerous local and national awards over the years.

Students like Jhutti who have signed up for poetry will have to go with Plan B regarding their electives choice.

Peck will not return to teach for the rest of this

Also resulting in a smaller class choice for next year is the decision to not offer a few new electives that were going to be available next year

school year but plans return next year to teach regular English classes.

For the remainder of the year for poetry, Sutton will still be involved along with a long-term substitute for the rest of the year, said Safine.

Even though the classes being cut do not attract a lot of attention from the majority of the school, students such as Laus believe that the cuts were not necessary.

"CAD does not seem like the most reasonable class to cut because there is only one period every other day, and even if there are not a lot of applicants, it's not a very expensive class to fund, so there's not much reasoning behind cutting it," said Laus.

Also resulting in a smaller class choice for next year is the decision to not offer a few new electives that were going to be available next year, said Safine. Among these are Engineering and Fitness



Courtesy of Aditya Dev

The dedicated poets of the Saratoga's top poetry program will be left without a Poetry elective due to the class' elimination.

and Food, which, according to Safine, did not have enough sign-ups to support their addition to the course offerings.

Students who have signed up for these classes will be placed in their alternate choices, Safine said.

"There should be plenty of room," said Safine. "As of now we would anticipate these students moving directly to their alternate course."

Regardless of the fact that poetry or CAD will not be

offered next year, many students currently taking those classes this have positive feelings about next year due to the myriad alternative options available to them as a result of the school's diverse offering of classes.

"Some of our favorite classes may not be here next year, but [at SHS], there's so many electives available that students will always be able to find a class they like," said Laus. ♦

Students conduct festivities for National Poetry Month

by Parul Singh
and Kim Tsai

"Inside the circle are 300 things nobody understands and, maybe, nobody's ever seen. How many can you find?" The students in several different English classes looked up at the stage, listening in wonder to the words of Erica Goss.

That was the theme this year's poetry panel put on by the Creative Writing: Poetry students in honor of National Poetry Month. National Poetry Month is celebrated in April, the same month as Shakespeare's birthday. This celebration was bittersweet as the poetry students know that it may very well be the last time they do this. Although many poetry students are hopeful for the future of poetry, the Creative Writing elective are set to be cut from the list of classes because of a lack of signups

Despite this sad ending for the poetry program, the students worked tirelessly to make this one of the best panels yet. "We just celebrate poetry. What we do is try to get everyone to be involved in it, so we put up poems on every door and we also set up a panel to present poetry to the school," said senior Alice Liu, who has been taking poetry for two years.

This year the panel consisted of two professional poets presenting their work to students in the McAfee Center.

"Last year it was more intense because we were the ones presenting our poems. But this year it wasn't as intense because we were just backstage helping out, but I think this year was better because everybody got to see what real poets sound like and do," said senior Mindy Hsiao, a CW: Poetry 3 student.

Nevertheless, poetry students still had a big

role to play and a lot of time and effort went into the presentation.

"We helped out a lot this year, we did the sets, we manned the whole presentation, and we had to do the introductions," said Liu.

The two professional poets were Erica Goss and Mark Heinlein. Both of these poets have been with the poetry program at Saratoga High for years and often interact with the students. "[Heinlein] helps us with field trips. He actually plans the field trips for us and [Goss] actually corrects the Poetry 2 and 3 students' poetry," said Liu.

As for the poems around the school, this is also an annual tradition during National Poetry Month. All of the poems are student poems and they are written by students in all levels of poetry. During the month, students laminate their poems and tape them on doors all over the school.

This year also marks the first year when former teacher Judith Sutton has not been teaching the poetry classes. Although she is currently substitute teaching for poetry teacher Bill Peck, the poetry students have noticed a difference in the celebrations. Peck has been out on sick leave for the past few months and is not expected to be back for the rest of the school year.

"Ms. Sutton has been helping us with the panel most of the time, but this year we had to get two professional poets to come speak for us because there's been no time to do the panel. Last year it took around fifty hours of rehearsals," said Liu.

Although the poetry panel was completely different from previous years, some poetry students agree that they would rather do it this way.

"I'd rather be behind the scenes because it takes a lot of nerves to present all that," Hsiao said. "I think this year was better than last year because everybody got to see what real poets sound like and do." ♦



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GATE program fades away as result of state budget crisis

by Saniha Shankar and Christine Tseng

The GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) program seemed to hold a promising future last year as the school started to hold special enrichment activities, but with cuts in the district's budget, the program no longer has money to serve the students.

One example of the last year's efforts in GATE included an exchange program with Yerba Buena High School.

This experience involved 40 Saratoga upperclassmen from Saratoga and 40 at Yerba Buena, with 20 Saratoga students visiting Yerba Buena and 20 Yerba Buena visiting Saratoga.

"They came and shadowed them in their classes and visited with each other," said English teacher Kerry Mohnike, who served as the coordinator for GATE last year. "They talked about their different experiences, and when they went back to their home schools and our students came home, they talked about the advantages of being in a

school with a lot of academic rigor among other things."

However, when the state cut all categorical money to Basic Aid districts last summer, GATE essentially died, said Mohnike.

Mohnike said if money became available it would likely go toward funding advanced classes.

Much of the focus last year was placed on identifying which students would be part of the GATE category, since the program was expected to continue and grow at Saratoga.

"We got the identification criteria in place, did the identifying of the incoming freshmen, because we thought we could seriously start with the incoming freshmen, but then they took the money away," said Mohnike.

The state's shortage in finances also took away many of the activities that were planned, such as a trip to UC Berkeley.

"We had all kinds of plans, like extracurricular activities and enrichment activities to go to the Linear Accelerator, to go up to UC Berkeley and tour, or go to the theater and do some backstage

work for those interested in that kind of thing, but we were never able to do it," said Mohnike. "We didn't have enough money." ♦

THE BIG IDEA

Cutting GATE

WHAT IS GATE?: A program for the "gifted and talented" that expands students' interests.

CURRENT STATUS: Inactive, but if the budget situation improves it could return in future years.

PROBLEMS: The district cut money to programs like GATE. Last year they had \$10,000; this year they have none.



courtesy of Felix Tuan

Saratoga and Yerba Buena students meet in the Team Room in March 2009 as part of the GATE exchange program.

"We thought we could seriously start with the incoming freshmen, but then they took all the money away."

—English teacher Kerry Mohnike



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Jordan Waite

Junior Cid Diaz and sophomore Sarah Lum enjoy the chocolate fountain at junior prom, held at the Decathlon club in Santa Clara on April 3.

Jr. Prom a 'Swift' success

by Olivia Chock
and Pia Mishra

This year's junior prom was held on April 3 at the Decathlon club in Santa Clara. The bids were cheaper this year than last year's at \$130 per couple.

This year's theme was "You Belong with Me," after the popular pop country song by Taylor Swift. The reasonable bid prices drew in juniors as well as a number of sophomores. No official attendance figures were available.

Sophomore Will Edman was grateful for the chance to attend a prom as an underclassman.

"I thought it was a special privilege for me to go to prom. It's really cool to think that I might be able to go to three proms in high school and that I get to experience the night three times," said Edman.

Few attendees complained about the three-course meal provided by the Decathlon club. According to junior Grace Kim, the meal was the highlight of the night. Meals included the choice of steak, chicken, or vegetable pasta.

"We wanted to make sure there was a variety of food that would be appealing to all tastes," said class representative Chris Chung. "We also wanted to make sure the food was light enough so that no one would feel sick on the dance floor."

The food was catered from the Decathlon club as was the dessert table which included a chocolate fountain, cheesecake and fruit tarts.

Following the dinner, many of the couples moved to the dance floor where DJ Fergie Ferg played music for the rest of the night.

"The dance floor was a little cramped, but it was okay. The DJ was pretty good, but he had a lot of mixes. Some were really good and some were okay," said junior David Mandell.

"Usually, prom is always really overrated because it's so expensive to get a tux and buy tickets for you and your dates, but it was a lot of fun," said Mandell. "My date was from a different school, and she was a lot of fun because she was so relaxed. There was no drama or anything, and everyone was really friendly to each other." ♦

New MAP building will allow students to stretch their creativity

by Nandini Ruparel

Do you harbor the desire to record your band's music in a legitimate studio? Or maybe you have an idea for a Saratoga High sitcom? If you have an interest in performing arts and would maybe like access to some technology that would bring your art to all of Saratoga High then, next year, the new Multimedia Arts Building is exactly where you should head.

"You know what I'm looking for right now are students looking to do a show, or maybe in a band and they want to record the band, maybe there's someone in the music department who wants to perform something, record themselves," said Tony Palma, the digital media teacher in the Media Arts Program (MAP). "I'd love to have them start signing up; for some to come to me and say, 'You know, Mr. Palma, I've got this band or I want to do a performance or record ourselves...when can we do that.'"

The building, located behind the gym and woodshop, will be approximately 4,800 square feet, and facilities will include a recording studio and other media arts technology. The new MAP Building will be done by the end of June, which is about a month later than its original deadline of May 2010.

"Well, we've unfortunately had some delays, due to the state of California. Some of it is financial crisis-related where the state fees were put on furlough for a while, part of it is due to the complication in plans...and that has pushed us back," said Palma. "Now we're looking at the end of June as the opening date."

FALCON FIGURES

3.5 million The new estimated cost of the MAP building

4,800 Size of the new building in square feet

1 month How long the construction of the building has been delayed

The new estimated cost of the building is \$3.5 million, according to Palma, with a large part of the cost being paid by a state grant.

The center will be used as a base for the Multimedia Arts Program, which will hold English classes and Multimedia Journalism in the new building. There will also be media arts classes from the beginner to the advanced level in the building.

"The multimedia center is designed as a facility for doing video recording, for recording performances, audio recordings and that kind of thing, so we'd be using the space for that, and teaching classrooms," said Palma. The center can also be used by students for recording bands or theater performances.

"That way we can have access for the MAP students to help those students record so that they can learn the technology behind it, and the use of the building increases," said Palma, who hopes to integrate the MAP idea with all-round



Apeksha Sharma

The Multimedia Arts building, having overcome delays, is scheduled to finish construction by June, a month later than originally planned.

student access. "So if you're in drama and you're writing a play, let's do it, let's get the drama kids in there, get a set, record it, edit it and we have a show."

Meanwhile, the original MAP classroom, where most of the multimedia classes are held as of right now, is in limbo. Palma says the school and MAP organizers are still unsure of what to do with it once the MAP building opens. Currently proposed ideas for its future use is as a facility for freshman English and Media Arts 9 or MAP Government classes.

"It wouldn't be a classroom for teaching every day, but as the foreign language students have a computer lab, so this would be like that for English media arts and social studies media arts," said Palma. Most of this depends on the funding the MAP program can get for the technol-

ogy.

Another aspect of the room is the outside student involvement, as many students who are not part of the MAP program are encouraged to use the room as more of a student resource or for video or photo editing, although concerns exist about monitoring the security of the center and protecting the equipment from damage.

The MAP building will be set up during the summer and then most likely hold an opening ceremony on the first day of the 2010-11 school year.

"There's lots of questions and not so many answers, but we're looking into the future," said Palma. "Mostly we want students to have as much access to technology, and that's one of our potential opportunities we're looking at." ♦

Alumnus awarded prestigious Truman Scholarship

by Apeksha Sharma

Saratoga 2007 alumnus Varun Sivaram, a junior at Stanford University, was recently named the recipient of the Truman Scholarship, which provides up to \$30,000 for graduate study to college students who plan on playing an active role in the government.

To be eligible for a scholarship, students must be citizens of the United States, attend a college creditable to the U.S. and have a grade point average of "B" or higher within their junior year of college.

Students are mainly chosen based on their records of community service, commitment to a career in government, leadership potential, academic record and many other leadership-related criteria. Sivaram was nominated by Stanford after a rigorous interview process.

Sivaram heard about his acceptance through a phone call that he at first dismissed as a practical joke.

"My dad called me to tell me that I had won. I hung up because I thought he was playing a late April Fool's Joke. Seriously, people like me rarely get this. I'm an engineering major, and most of

my work experience has been in labs," said Sivaram.

Sivaram, who heard about the scholarship through the Stanford Fellowships Coordinator, was named along with 60 other students as the winner of this award.

This is fueling his progress into graduate school for engineering physics.

The scholarship also provides a special internship within the federal government and graduate counseling.

"I'm planning on getting a Ph.D in Materials Science. I actually changed my mind since the application. I had originally wanted to pursue a Masters

in public policy, but I'm interested in energy policy," said Sivaram. "I think you need a serious science background to lead effectively in a technical policymaking field."

It was not easy for Sivaram to commit to one major and he went through some inner searching to find his goal.

"Convincing them that I really wanted to apply my technical major to public service was obviously tough," he said. "It took a lot of soul-searching just to convince myself that I really wanted to do that. It took me a couple days to actually believe this." ♦

CHESS TEAM

Players capture their 6th consecutive state title by narrow margin

TEAM WINS BY NARROWEST POSSIBLE MARGIN, 0.5 POINTS, AGAINST MISSION SAN JOSE

by Jason Wu

Late into the sixth and final round of the 35th Annual CalChess State Scholastic Championships, the Falcon chess team knew that their bid for a sixth straight state championship would almost certainly end in defeat.

Although the Falcons were leading rival Mission San Jose by 0.5 points, with the teams having scores of 15 and 14.5, respectively, all of their players were done with their matches, while Mission still had three players remaining with unfinished matches.

But all three Mission players lost, and Saratoga walked away with yet another first-place trophy.

"If any of them had won, they would have beaten us. We were really lucky that they all lost," said sophomore player Evan Ye.

The tournament took place April 17-18 at the Santa Clara Convention Center.

"When we won, I felt a mix of exhilaration at our victory, and relief that we would not be the ones to end our streak, and amazement at our luck," said Ye.

The team, composed of freshman Kevin Garbe, sophomores Evan Ye and Brain Wai, junior Amol Aggarwal and seniors Charles Sun and Rolland Wu, took a clear first place victory by defeating Mission with a final score of 15 to

14.5—the smallest margin possible.

The Swiss tournament, so named because players were randomly pitted against opponents from other schools, added the top four individual scores from each team for the team score, which for the Falcons came from Wai, with 4.5, Sun, with 4.0, Garbe, with 3.5, and Wu, with 3.0. A win counted for 1.0 point, a draw counted for .5 points, and a loss counted for 0 points.

Each of the 55 players who participated in the 9-12 varsity championships played a total of six matches in the six round tournament, and a total of 15 teams participated in the event. Coming into the sixth round of the tournament, Saratoga was tied with Mission, with each school having a score of 13.0.

The Falcon's sixth straight championship means that out of all of the players, only Charles Sun played at the 3rd state championship win in 2007—a testament to the remarkable longevity of the chess team's success.

Considering that the team will only graduate two seniors next year, the possibility that the Falcons could collect even more championships in the future remains strong.

"It'll probably be a bit harder to win again next year since we are going to lose Charles and Rolland, but we are definitely determined to continue our winning streak," said Ye. ♦

Publication editors chosen for next year

by Girish Swaminath

Newspaper and yearbook editors-in-chief were announced in early April by journalism adviser Mike Tyler.

Juniors Shannon Galvin and Uttara Sivaram were chosen to head next year's newspaper staff and juniors Grace Kim, Lauren Mather and Catherine Nguyen were picked as yearbook editors-in-chief for next year.

"I was definitely excited. I mean, it's something I've hoped and worked for all through high school so far," said Galvin. "I'm continually amazed at what our newspaper produced and honored to help lead the process." Galvin hopes to work with Sivaram to improve staff collaboration and the design of the newspaper.

"We'd want to look more into how we can use technology, especially Google Wave, to improve communication and the editing process," said Galvin. "As far as design, I'd like to look more into giving the newspaper a facelift that it hasn't seen in several years."

Kim also was excited upon discovering that she was chosen as yearbook editor-in-chief.

"I knew that there were a lot of strong candidates that had applied to be editor-in-chief, so I was really surprised to find out that I made it," said Kim. "Of course, I was also pleased to know that I had shown something to Mr. Tyler to prove that I was fully qualified to be an editor."

Kim also had some goals for improving the *Talisman*.

"[The yearbook staff] always strives to get the best pictures, think of new ideas and tell stories that haven't been told before," said Kim. "However, I feel that what needs to be improved most is writing the

THE BIG IDEA

Publications

NEWSPAPER: Juniors Shannon Galvin and Uttara Sivaram

YEARBOOK: Juniors Grace Kim, Lauren Mather, Catherine Nguyen

CHALLENGES AHEAD: Increased staff sizes

story. I urge next year's staff to focus on anecdotes and not just talk about who that person is or what score they got during an athletic season."

Kim wants to work with both Mather and Nguyen to improve communication among the more than 40 students on the yearbook staff.

"What we really want to do is just create a friendly working environment among the staff and make fifth period their favorite class ever," said Kim. "I hope next year that people work even harder than they already do during class and outside of class."

Tyler said he looks for certain key traits in selecting the yearbook and newspaper editors-in-chief.

"In general, we try to meet the goals of having factually accurate and timely publications," said Tyler. "These select few students need to have the leadership and initiative to improve the quality of the publications."

In addition, Tyler said the yearbook and newspaper staffs will be larger next year and the editors will face challenges such as handling the increased number of staff members. ♦

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Toyota debacle brings out scam artists

by Kevin Mu

In January, Toyota announced a recall of 10 million of its vehicles as the result of floor mat and gas pedal defects that could cause spontaneous and uncontrolled acceleration. Since then, dozens of reports of runaway Toyotas have surfaced in the press, and unhappy drivers are looking for compensation from the car-manufacturing giant. Is this sudden increase in the number of reports all just a coincidence, or are sneaky consumers deliberately trying to take advantage of the situation?

Before answering that question, consider California resident James Sikes, who recently claimed that his Prius had accelerated out of control to 94 mph on a San Diego freeway. The incident sparked a media frenzy, and analysts even suggested a Prius recall. But private and independent laboratory results found that the situation that Sikes had described could not be reproduced.

When both the

accelerator and the brakes are pressed, the Prius automatically shuts down the engine of the car in a failsafe override.

In other words, it is possible that Sikes' story was entirely falsified, perhaps in an attempt to gain money or fame. Does this sound familiar to anyone else? Hey, look! It's a balloon!

Indeed, incidents like these can bring out the worst in people. When greed takes over, they will do anything and risk everything to sue a large company for profit. But these acts are extremely disrespectful to the families of those who have actually suffered because of Toyota's defect, not to mention unfair to Toyota itself these inconsiderate choices often cause millions of dollars in damage to the accused companies, even if they are false.

The falsified information also makes the investigation of the actual problem more complicated, which endangers even more drivers.

That is not to say Toyota is any less guilty for this recall debacle: The fact is that a

defect in their vehicles, whether mechanical or electronic, has hurt or even killed innocent drivers, and it needs to be fixed as soon as possible.

However, it is disgusting to see such claims being thrown around about such a sensitive topic that has seriously affected many families. But it is not surprising.

This same scheme has been used over and over again by people looking to turn a quick profit.

Perhaps some will remember the infamous "Finger Lady," who found a cooked finger in her Wendy's chili and sued the fast-food chain.

She was found guilty of setting up the scam and sentenced to almost a decade in prison, but the incident still hurt Wendy's, who suffered an estimated \$21 million in losses, according to the San Jose Mercury News.

Unfortunately, this kind of deception has been ingrained into our capitalistic culture and cannot be fully prevented. One possible solution is to impose harsher penalties for hoax attempts in order to deter potential opportunists, but

THE BIG IDEA

Exploiting Toyota?

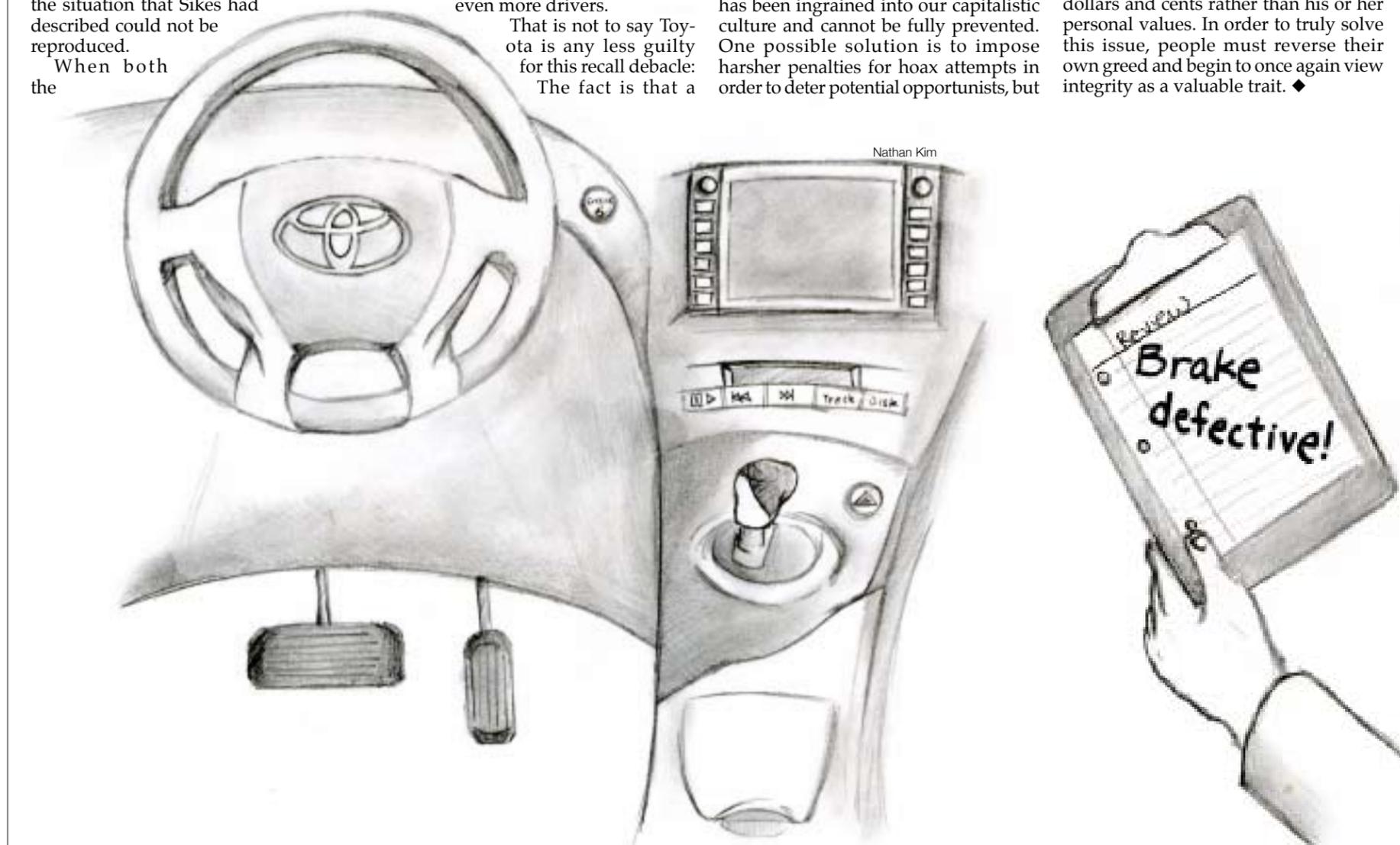
THE PROBLEM: Some unethical consumers are faking incident reports of unintended acceleration.

WHY IT'S HARMFUL: False reports cost companies millions of dollars and hinder government investigation of the problem.

WHAT CAN BE DONE: Stricter punishments can be instated to hinder opportunists, but the real solution lies in changing people's values.

instilling fear into would-be criminals still does not solve the root of the problem.

The true problem lies with society, where a person is often defined by dollars and cents rather than his or her personal values. In order to truly solve this issue, people must reverse their own greed and begin to once again view integrity as a valuable trait. ♦



Israel treads on many toes with newfound expansion

by Karthik Annaamalai

Ever since the end of World War II when the United Nations gave Jews land in Palestine, the United States has vested considerable interest in the maintenance of a close relationship with Israel in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This violent dispute has created animosity between the Jewish Israelis and the Muslim Palestinians because both their religions share a common holy land, Jerusalem.

For years, the two independent governments faced vehement resistance from the leftist groups of the other side. One example of such a group is Hamas, the terrorist organization currently residing in the Gaza Strip, who use bombs in public buildings to further their schedule of attaining a Palestinian state.

To solve this ongoing dilemma, the United States, as well as many other countries, advocated the two-state solution, in

which Israel and Palestine would be two separate states. The city of Jerusalem, however, would be under international control to prevent future conflicts from occurring.

The borders for the proposed two-state solution would be based on the borders of 1967, which were drawn during the armistice in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. In order to expand the border lines, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced that Israel's government will be creating settlement houses outside the borders.

Netanyahu theorizes that the borders will be expanded in favor of Israel if more Israelis inhabit the land outside the border.

This action, however, angers Palestinians as well as the international com-

munity, who believe it is unfair for Israel to take advantage of the opportunity at hand.

To prevent Israel from creating more of these settlement houses, Vice President Joe Biden recently travelled to Israel to speak with Netanyahu. A few hours before the meeting between the two leaders, Netanyahu announced a new 1,600 home settlement project.

Biden, who has been pro-Israel throughout his political career, responded that the action had been a "slap in the face."

Exactly two weeks later on March 23, President Barack Obama and Netanyahu had a confidential meeting in the Oval Office. Again, the Israeli leader publicly announced that another building project

was to be constructed outside border lines in East Jerusalem.

Although Netanyahu argues that his building schedule is no different than that of previous leaders, the peacemaking quartet comprised of the United States, Russia, the United Nations, and the European Union condemned Israel's recent actions. Not only has Netanyahu aggravated his main allies, the leader also outraged the Palestinians, which is the most important group for a peaceful resolution.

The burden is now placed on Israel to prove to Palestine that they wish to peacefully find a solution to the problem at hand. To do so, Israel must first stop building new settlements and publicly apologize to Palestine.

In addition, the troubled nation needs to increase the number of neutral meetings with Palestine in order to request that a new compromise be created. Only then will a peaceful Gaza Strip be possible. ♦

The burden is now placed on Israel to prove to Palestine that they wish to peacefully find a solution to the problem at hand.



PRIEST BEHAVIOR NOT SO HOLY

by Christine Bancroft
and Christine Tseng

Shortly before the Holy Week of Easter, the Catholic church was hit with a devastating and familiar scandal. A massive cover-up of pedophilia and sexual abuse committed by priests and high-ranking members of the church was brought to light. With over 300 cases just in Germany, the victims have reported everything from molestation to repeated abuses, including beatings and rape. These offenses have left an unknown number of children traumatized by the very people who were supposed to guide them.

So far, the Pope has given speeches and written letters and has expressed great sorrow that such an atrocity could have happened within the church. This recent scandal has also hit the Pope especially close to home since his own brother, Georg Ratzinger, is among the accused.

In response, the church has uncharacteristically become more open and transparent in lieu of the traditional tendency

to cover problems up. However, though this new change is good, this is something that should have happened years ago. The Catholic church should have taken a more aggressive approach when handling these cases from the very start.

After a priest is found to be guilty of child molestations, he is sent to get treatment and the whole event is essentially hushed up. Not only is this bad enough, as the community should have a right to know about this deviant, but the same priest is often released and sent to another church.

If a teacher committed the same crimes as these priests but, instead of being punished, was simply sent to another school, chances are that parents would react rather adversely.

What the church should have done was to help the victims and bring legal suits against the priests. It does not matter that the priests are part of a religious sect. People were hurt. Pedophilia is a crime, and should be punished accordingly, whether the offender is black or white,

Buddhist or Catholic. Just because it is a priest committing these crimes and not some strange man in the street does not make it any better or any less punishable. There must be legal action taken by law enforcement.

The priests should get the same sentence as any regular offender would receive and also be subject to treatment either after or during their prison sentence. They cannot be allowed to return to their past position within the church. If they wish to renew their priesthood, then mandatory tests, interviews and evaluations should be imposed in order to assure the safety of the community, and a public police record should be published to warn others to be cautious of the offender.

Just because the offenders happen to be Catholic priests doesn't mean that the victims who have decided to speak out are attacking Pope or the church. The anger is not at the church itself, but, it is at the individual priests involved.

300 victims to change is already 300 scarred lives too many. ♦

Taiwanese demand justice for census

by Brandon Yang
and Jason Wu

With commercials on TV and large billboards for the 2010 Census everywhere, almost everyone knows about the forms they are supposed to fill out and mail back. In addition to all the ads placed by the US Census, another group, especially in Silicon Valley, has started its own campaign for the census: Write in "Taiwanese."

Using websites such as Facebook and YouTube to spread the word, the Taiwanese American Citizens League (TACL) has been pushing Taiwanese immigrants and those of Taiwanese descent to check "other Asian" and write in Taiwanese instead of marking Chinese for their race, which many Taiwanese have done in the past, on the Census.

Because such a movement would create further support for the Taiwanese in the U.S., opposition has risen among those who believe that Taiwan is part of China. Since most Taiwanese Americans speak Mandarin and follow many traditions originating in China like Chinese Americans, many believe that Taiwanese should not be a considered a separate ethnicity. However, whether a person identifies him or herself as Chinese or

Taiwanese should not be a political issue, and there are notable differences in Chinese and Taiwanese culture as well. The Taiwanese Americans have the right to establish themselves as a separate ethnic group, including on the census.

The Taiwanese are not declaring Taiwan as a nation separate from China, just as a separate ethnic group. China currently has 56 different ethnic groups within its borders, from the Zhuang to the Tibetans. Although some of these minorities have had political issues concerning their sovereignty, much like the Taiwanese, China has recognized them as separate ethnic groups.

Because Taiwan is a subtropical island, different kinds of food, particularly seafood and certain fruits, have become an important part Taiwanese diets. Religious freedom under the Taiwanese government is also more prominent than in China, making mainly the traditional Buddhism and Taoism, as well as Catholicism and Protestantism, a larger part of the people's lives. These are examples of some of the differences between Taiwanese and Chinese cultures.

In addition to changes such as food and religion, an important difference is in language. While most Taiwanese speak Mandarin, the majority also speaks

9. What is Person 1's race?

Mark one or more boxes

- Asian Indian
- Chinese
- Filipino
- Japanese
- Korean
- Vietnamese

Other Asian — Print race for example: Filipino, Korean, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on

T A I W A N E S E

Taiwanese, a dialect of Chinese. Whereas the people in China have switched to Simplified Chinese characters, the Taiwanese have continued to use the Traditional Chinese characters.

Although there are certainly some Taiwanese who identify themselves as Chinese, or even both, having Taiwanese as a separate box on the census or any other form simply allows those who want to be recognized solely as Taiwanese to do so without infringing on anyone else. So if enough people do mark themselves as Taiwanese on the census, the government should treat them as it would treat any other ethnic group: Give them their own box on the 2020 census. ♦

The Saratoga Falcon

STAFF POLICY

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The staff of *The Saratoga Falcon* is committed to objectively and accurately representing the diverse talents, cultures and viewpoints of the Saratoga High School community.

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Serious PROMblems arising across America

by **Apeksha Sharma**
and **Kim Tsai**

As proms come and go, many students are getting geared up towards finding the perfect everything for the dance. The perfect dress, the perfect shoes and perfect hair are common, but for a Mississippi student named Constance McMillen, 18, prom means having to go to court to fight for her right to attend.

As a lesbian, she is battling her school district for the right to attend the dance at Itawamba Agricultural High School in Fulton, Miss.

Amazingly enough, the district and a group of parents even created a fake prom in which students with disabilities and social outcasts such as McMillen were told was the real prom.

The fact that a school district, an organization meant to benefit its students, can so easily outcast many is appalling. Clearly this small county of Itawamba, Miss., is far from reaching the social justice that is at least aspired to in many schools in California.

The limitations set by the school board was upsetting to many. Students were told that their prom date was required to be of the opposite sex, in response to which the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) jumped into action to help McMillen get the justice she and other homosexual classmates deserve.

McMillen's case was by no means unique. Derrick Martin, an open homosexual at his school in Cochran, Ga., requested to bring a male date to his senior prom. Unlike McMillen's struggle, Martin was granted his request and allowed to bring his date. However, ac-

ording to The Advocate, his story made headlines in the community, and soon Martin was physically threatened. "I've actually been threatened to be shot at," he told the publication. "Someone told me I should watch where I'm going when I ride around town, because they would be riding around with a gun."

Similarly, McMillen had been getting hate from students after they learned that not only was McMillen not allowed to attend the prom, but the entire event would be cancelled. Recently, various groups have popped up on Facebook against Constance, such as "Constance Stop Your Whining."

In both situations, McMillen and Martin endured hate that no child should ever be put through.

Schools and parents need to realize that being gay—and publicly gay at that—is one of the toughest decisions a young person can make, and young people who come forward in this manner deserve support rather than ridicule. It is in no way just for McMillen identity to be rejected.

Martin showed strength as he won his appeal yet was emotionally defeated after being kicked out of his house by angry and shocked parents.

Perhaps this is less of an issue with courts in America, and more a rising issue of discrimination, which has been rearing its ugly head more and more frequently, especially concerning the LGBT community.

Kids are an unfortunate casualty of this prejudice and it is for their sake that steps should be taken to ensure that their personal freedoms are protected. While today's America may be bigoted and homophobic, it is not late to ensure future generations are more tolerant by promoting acceptance and inclusiveness. ♦

School's make-up work policy deserves reform

For students, the days of kindergarten, when the most harmless cold merited a weeklong absence from school, are long gone. Questions of "Are you contagious?" have been replaced by "How many tests are you missing?" and "How much will your grade go down by?"

It's a sorry state of affairs when students have to sacrifice their health for academics. But a larger issue is managing inconsistent make-up policies among different teachers, a problem most students will encounter at least a few times in their high school career. In the interest of learning, the system needs to be changed.

It is hard to define the flaws of the current system, since frankly, there is no consistent policy for make-up work. At Saratoga High, teachers seem to forge their own make-up policies. This has led to a complex nexus of rules and policies that a student must navigate to pay for getting sick.

Missing a crucial day because of an upset stomach can lead to having to make up numerous tests, labs and in-class projects. The problem doesn't have as much to do with students being overburdened as it does with a lack of cohesive, streamlined policy. Each teacher expects the student to make up their work first, and students are forced to confront the same problem that the Time Traveler faced in H.G. Wells' famous novel. Unlike the Traveler, however, students don't have a time machine.

And until one is invented, students will have to find some, earthly way of making-up tests, quizzes, classwork and homework for multiple classes. Of course, a simple imposition of a school-wide make-up system could relieve this burden. This would demand that teachers relinquish their own policies—policies that range from a refusal to allow any

make-up exams to others that involve spending tutorial time in that teacher's room.

Teachers have seemingly valid reasons for these policies, usually because they want to preserve the integrity of tests. Students who miss exams because of illnesses gain a slight advantage over their peers by having an extended time to study; however, there do exist those who abuse this

advantage, leading to scandals and a teacher's deeper suspicion of those legitimately ill.

Understandably, situations such as these prompt teachers to impose more creative policies; one includes exempting

students altogether from taking a make-up test while counting the next exam for double credit. This policy neither hurts nor benefits the student who had been out ill unless that student has a borderline grade and muse relying on a single test in order to

buffer his percentage will be stuck with his grade—the negative implications of this policy are obvious.

An obvious solution exists to mitigate the majority of students' problems, apart from a school-wide distribution of Tylenol.

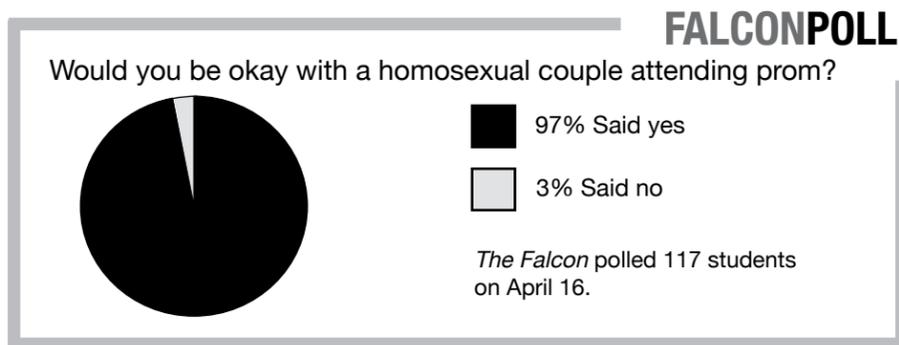
Quite simply, communication channels between teachers need to be streamlined and better utilized. A system needs to be put in place, perhaps during the Wednesday morning collaboration, to ensure that teachers don't have conflicting demands.

Such a system would at least consolidate the post-sickness work that students are required to finish.

Adding insult to injury (literally, in some cases), current make-up policies or lack thereof, perpetuate students' stress in the way a bad loan still draws interest—and students are often the poorer for it. ♦



It is hard to define the flaws of the current system, since there is no consistent policy for make-up work.



Medieval mining conditions in China raise safety issues

by **Anoop Galivanche**
and **Girish Swaminath**

Luo Lin had never felt more relieved. As medical workers, soldiers and overzealous journalists stormed the countryside of Xianing County in the Chinese province of Shanxi, Lin, the head of China's State Administration for Work Safety (SAWS) was at a loss for words. When reporters interviewed him about his sentiments regarding the state of SAWS and questioned his performance in the capacity, the man was noticeably less perceptive than similarly grueling press interviews he had participated in.

This was for good reason—the past week had been onerous for him, with 153 coal miners trapped in a mine that had safety mechanisms comparable to those of the famous 18th century British pits. By delicately managing an intricate balancing act involving a hungry press, angry bureaucrats and actual work, Lin and his colleagues were able to finally open up the mine. An unprecedented 115 workers were rescued—and the operation was hailed a remarkable success. The press had little to say about the remaining 38, whose lives were written off in true Communist fashion.

China's mines are as important as they are dangerous. Its coal mines comprise the very vertebrae of its growth, helping China meet its increasing energy demands, with 80 percent of Chinese electricity supplied by coal.

The desperate need for coal, and other mineable resources, has precipitated a mad-dash that has had private and state-run firms alike scrambling to open more and more mines. In the end, everyone profits—except for the families whose husbands, brothers, and sons were one of the 20,000 miners that die every year from irresponsible and hazardous mines. This number, which doesn't even include the 10,000 workers that die annually from medical conditions brought on by mine safety problems, is ridiculous, especially when propped against the mere 65 mining deaths the United States sustained in the same time frame.

Using its influence, the Chinese government needs to crack down on all mines. Regulation begins with creating minimum solvency requirements for private companies and hiring more mining inspectors to ensure that all mines conform to a high

CANDIDCARICATURES

By: **Kyumin Shim**



standard of safety. This kind of regulation will solve two problems—making sure that mines have enough money to stay profitable while also engaging in safe business practices and will improve the inadequate number of inspectors that China has for its mines.

The problem can only be solved with tangible requirements which need to be set forth. The BBC goes further when it

cited lapses in mining safety—including poor air filters that lead to the build up of poisonous gases, and weak ancillary structures that are prone to collapse.

The compromise China needs to strike lies somewhere in the vast region of socially beneficial economic progress. And if it doesn't venture into this terrain soon, Lin and his colleagues must start worrying about the people. ♦

are you smarter than

PUTTING A FRESH SPIN ON THE POPULAR GAME
THEY REMEMBER FROM FRESHMAN YEAR WITH

Questions

1. What is the organelle that serves as the "power plant" of the cell?
2. How many countries are there in the continent of Africa?
3. What two houses were in a feud in the Shakespeare play *Romeo and Juliet*?
4. What is the line segment with both endpoints on the curve of a circle that does not pass through the center of the circle?
5. What is the capital of Germany?
6. Who is the caretaker and friend of Lennie in John Steinbeck novel *Of Mice and Men*?
7. What are the four bases found in nucleic acid?
8. Who intervenes to help Odysseus escape his wrath in the *Odyssey*?
9. What country lies between Russia and Mongolia?
10. Where is bile produced?

1. Mitochondria 2. 54 countries 3. Capulets and Montagues 4. Chord 5. Berlin 6. George 7. Adenine, Guanine, Cytosine, and Thymine 8. Athena 9. Mongolia 10. Liver

Paul K.

Senior



PAUL KAZARNOVS

"I think the game went okay and I think I did decently well...I hope."

- ans
1. Chloroplast
 2. 48
 3. Romeo
 4. Secant
 5. Berlin
 6. George
 7. Adenine
 8. Some
 9. Mong
 10. Intes

Rebecca A. & Paul J.

Senior



REBECCA AMATO

"The questions I missed were difficult and I doubt I would have been able to answer them correctly at the end of my freshman year."

Freshman



PAUL JUNG

"I was actually ashamed at how much I didn't know while Rebecca still remembered stuff from three years ago."

answers +7

1. Mitochondria
2. SAVE, 54
3. Capulets and Montagues
4. Chord
5. Berlin
6. George
7. Adenine, Guanine, Cytosine, Thymine
8. Zeus?
9. ?
10. Stomach

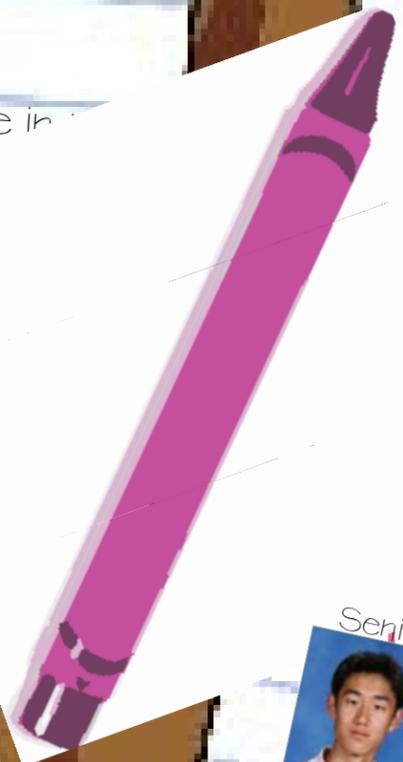
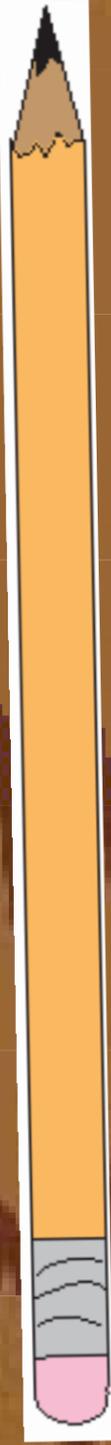
Senior



ERIC JUNG

"I was pretty humbled. It's a good way to tell seniors that they're not all that."

- ans
1. Mitochondria
 2. 54
 3. PEEK, Montagues and Capulets
 4. SAVE, chord was right a
 5. Berlin
 6. George
 7. COPY, Adenine guanine cy
 8. n/a
 9. n/a
 10. n/a



Can a ninth grader?

AMESHOW, THE FALCON TESTS SENIORS ON WHAT WITH THREE LIFELINES — SAVE, PEEK AND COPY

Henry S.

Freshman **HENRY SHEN**



"When I'm a senior I definitely will not remember all these questions."

Answers

1. last **+4**

2. and Juliet

3. t

4. ge

5. ne, Guanine, Cytosine

6. e God (Sorry Ms. I)

7. golia

8. stines

Dale E. & Claire S.

Senior **DALE EVERETT**



"I thought that overall it was pretty simple. Freshman year was only four years ago."

Freshman **CLAIRE SCHWARTZ**



"I think the answers were very easy and Dale did a pretty good job."

Answers

1. Mitochondria

2. 26

3. Capulets and Montagues **+9**

4. Chord

5. Berlin

6. PEEK, George

7. SAVE, Adenine, Guanine, Cytosine, Thymine

8. Athena

9. Mongolia

10. Liver

Tiffany Y.

Freshman **TIFFANY YUNG**



"It went okay. I had to think about them. A lot were from the beginning of the year."

Answers

1. Capulets **+7**

2. answer

3. Cytosine thymine

Trivia addict unimpressed with show

"The show itself is conceptually flawed."



Tiffany Tung

I have a confession to make. I'm a quiz/trivia show aficionado. I did watch "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" in my salad days, and "Jeopardy!" on weekday "Jeopardy!" shows in high regard, and—yes, you guessed it—You Smarter than a Fifth

Grade show has all the makings of a quiz show—a middle aged Asian host, trivia questions and highly intelligent contestants—what's the extent of its attraction. The first time I watched the show was on October 24, 2008, a year and a half after the show first aired, and the youngest mayor of a city, John Hammons, was the contestant.

After unsuccessfully "copying" his 5th grader partner's answer for the question "What's the name of the first American woman to travel to outer space?" he snagged \$25,000 for his charity.

The answer, which I thought to be common knowledge, is Sally Ride. The problem is, I didn't learn that in school, I found that out while writing a report on the woman about astronauts who went to space. John Glenn goes to space. Another time I was wrong and the prize was the prize cell.

to the what have learned in third grade. local Ohlone Apalachee tribe in Florida. Another affects all educators of the lifelines the show and contestants can choose or "peek" at their 5th grade answer. My academic integrity went off. I'm sure the show isn't



Albert Gu

Lighting up lives

SENIOR PERFORMS THE ART OF LIGHT SHOWS

by Karen Yang

Although senior Drew Hsieh has never been to a rave, he is well learned in the art of light shows, a type of entertainment common at raves where performers use a special type of gloves with colorful lights to dance with their hands, creating a brilliant spectacle for their audience and usually leaving them speechless.

"People usually do them at raves," said Hsieh, "but I just do it for fun just because I liked the experience of receiving a light show."

Hsieh first became intrigued in this type of dance after witnessing a performance by one of his coaches of his tennis team from Courtside while they were at a tournament.

"[My coach] is very well known in the rave world," said Hsieh. "He showed me these lights, and I was just blown away, so immediately after I came home, I bought myself a set."

Since then, Hsieh has learned this form of art on through online videos and his own experimentation.

After practicing and performing light shows for a couple of years, Hsieh finds that he enjoys not only performing the shows, but also the entertainment that it brings to his guests.

"I like entertaining people in general," said Hsieh, "and I find that this is a really unique, fun, and entertaining, way to do it, one that people haven't seen before."

Although few people know about Hsieh's talent, he often gives light shows to his friends as gifts.

"I usually show it to close friends only, and they might tell other people, but I don't go out of my way to show people because it's kind of weird and I don't really want to show it off to too many people," he said.

So if you ever hear techno music blasting and see a flash of colorful lights coming from Hsieh's room, know that he is just working on perfecting his light show skills.

"If people come over and we have nothing to do, I'll put on some techno music and do it," said Hsieh. "If someone wants one, they can pay me five dollars." ♦



THE HIDDEN TALENT Drew Hsieh

Talent: Performing light shows for friends and family by wearing a special type of glove on his hands that has colorful lights

Inspiration: Witnessed his tennis coach's performance and automatically became interested

Teacher: Self taught himself by looking at instructional YouTube videos and by practicing in front of his friends

—by Karthik Annaamalai



Amanda Yi

Drew Heish shows off his talented light dancing.

Tame the flame

Sophomore manipulates fires into intricate designs

by Arnav Dugar

It has instilled fear in our minds, bringing images of pain or widespread destruction. From childhood, we are taught not to play with it. We are taught that fire is dangerous. But over the past four years, sophomore Nick Turpin has learned something very different: that fire can be tamed.

"I always thought fire was an amazing, interesting thing," Turpin said. "And now that I know that, if used properly, it isn't very dangerous, it has become even more interesting."

For him, the passion to play with fire started during his seventh grade on a Boy Scouts camping trip when he saw some of the older scouts performing a trick with fire, Turpin recalled while demonstrating the procedure.

After pouring heavier-than-air butane from a lighter into a glass bottle, he dimmed the lights and struck the lighter. In his left hand he carefully balanced the bottle between his fingers; in the other, he inched the lighter flame towards the bottle's spout. Suddenly, the butane in the bottle ignited, sending a bright light shooting down the bottle.

After watching the older scouts repeat the trick several times, he tried it for himself, and was surprised by the ease with which he replicated the results. Since that debut with fire, he has built an ardor for this new, uncommon pastime.

"I like playing with fire. It's kind of exotic and dangerous, which is attractive," said Turpin. "And its pretty unique."

All of his tricks come from experimenting with readily available materials Turpin said, noting how many things that he daily encounters, seemingly ordinary on the surface, are actually quite flammable. One such example is hand sanitizer in both the foamy and liquid form and is quite convenient as the moisture keeps the flame from doing much damage.

For his more complicated tricks, most of his inspiration still comes from the world around him, often from YouTube and TV or from possibilities he occasionally he stumbles upon.

One of his easiest tricks is a modification of a demonstration from an episode of Mythbusters, a popular TV show, in



THE HIDDEN TALENT Nick Turpin

Talent: Creating unique designs and patterns using fires and flames

Years: Has been playing with fire for the past 3 years after seeing some older Boy Scouts do tricks

Inspiration: Self taught himself by looking at instructional YouTube videos

—by Karthik Annaamalai

which methane is bubbled through soapy water to form a highly flammable column. Turpin instead lights less volatile butane bubbles in his hand, making his hand seem like it is on fire when they burst into flames.

"If you look at my hands they don't have very much hair left on them," Turpin said, "but they are not burned."

Coming into such close contact with fire may seem dangerous, but safety is always his first priority. With the butane bubbles, a thin soapy lining keeps his hand from injury.

"I never really do anything unless I try it in a safe way," he said.

Turpin also understands the science behind his tricks and keeps himself safe by understanding the heat amount of heat produced and other chemical properties of the different reactions, always taking into account how the fuel burns.

For instance, he described how rubbing alcohol does not burn very hot, so when he lights it on his hand for a second or two, he'll be on fire, but it does not feel warm. Also, since heat rises, the intensity of the flame is directed away from his hands.

Turpin has even convinced his parents that his tricks are safe. Through his experience he has built a unique connection with fire, not one of fear, but of understanding and appreciation. ♦

JUNIOR PICKS UKULELE, NOT GUITAR

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?



Ukulele	Guitar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The ukulele is smaller, weighs much less, and is often cheaper - Has four nylon-strings - used to accompany a singer or other instrument - usually is easier to learn and play, but has a unique sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The guitar has higher and lower ranges, making it more versatile - Has six metal strings, which gives it a different sound - Can be used for solos or for accompaniment

—by Karthik Annaamalai

by Grishma Athavale

Learning a new instrument can be challenging. The different chords, keys, and playing variations would clearly confuse even an amateur player. It usually takes at least six months for a beginner to get a foothold on their instrument, but for junior Abner Inzunza, the chords and playing styles of the ukelele came quickly.

The reason for his skill in the obscure instrument? He had learned the guitar in 8th grade but found that he was not suited for it because the chords were a little too complex and his teacher was not very motivating. While most people opt for learning the guitar over the ukulele, Inzunza was determined on pursuing the ukulele because he found it to be easier.

"I just picked up an interest in the ukulele and I liked how it sounded," said Inzunza. Inzunza has been learning how to play the ukulele since February of this year, mainly by watching YouTube tutorials and teaching himself on the ukelele his friend gave him. Through these tutorials, Inzunza learned how to play a variety of songs. Out of the songs he knows how to play and sing, Inzunza's favorite is "1234" by



THE HIDDEN TALENT

Abner Inzunza

Talent: Playing the ukulele

Years: Has been practicing this instrument for only a few months

Idol: Looks up to Chipswow, a French woman who plays popular songs

Teacher: Self taught himself by learning through instructional YouTube videos of others playing

—by Karthik Annaamalai

Plain White T's; the other songs Inzunza has learned how to play are Womanizer, Bedrock, and Fireflies.

"[When I play] it really relaxes and cheers up people in class," said Inzunza. "I'm just happy people appreciate it when I play."

Chipswow, a French woman who plays popular English songs, inspired Inzunza to play the ukelele.

"I like Chipswow because her songs are so raw; meaning both the covers she does and her original songs," said Inzunza.

As of now Inzunza doesn't write his own music as he had only been playing for two months, but plans to as soon as

he masters the basics. Inzunza, however, did write his own version to "Party in the USA" by Miley Cyrus, making the lyrics more personal by relating it to Saratoga.

"It is actually really funny," said Inzunza. "I had a lot of fun writing it and I might start writing my own songs eventually."

Inzunza plans to pursue this hobby as it gives him time to relax and focus on something un-academic.

"I think it's a great instrument because it not only helps me discover myself but it's fun and entertaining," said Inzunza. "It also helps me relax, no matter who is listening." ♦

TOGATALKS

What is your unique, secret hidden talent?

Not many people know this about me, but I breed fish in multiple fishtanks at home. Then take them to competitions.



freshman Amin Mirzadegan

My friends always tell me that I sound exactly like a cat when I meow.....meow.



senior Simin Ghahghahi

Everyone usually does the wave with his or her hands but I can do it with my tongue.



junior Keerti Shukla

Soph's decorative cakes stun friends

by Vivian LeTran

Among the countless presents that sophomore Kellie Chiou receives on her 16th birthday, the one that stands out the most is from sophomore Connie Wang. The present is a topsy-turvy, three-tiered cake made from scratch, each layer embellished in different pink and purple patterns—stripes and polka dots—and completed with a purple 16" and a large bow at the top.

This cake is only one of the elaborate cakes that Wang has crafted for her friends, a hobby that she began about three years ago. Her inspiration was the show, "Ace of Cakes," a reality show featured on the Food Network starring baker Duff Goldman and his wife, Rose. Wang works at a hand-made cake shop, Charm City Cakes. "The cakes they make on Ace of Cakes are really awesome," Wang says. "It looked really fun, so I wanted to try making [cakes like the ones on the show] too."

Ever since discovering her talent and deciding to pursue this skill, Wang has only improved in making cakes, creating bolder and fancier confections with each attempt.

"I began with making simple cakes, then [moved to] two- or three-tiered cakes and topsy-turvy cakes," said Wang. "I've also made cakes in the shape of different sports, [such as] basketballs, soccer balls and baseballs."

Wang's uniquely decorated cakes make her stand out among other amateur bakers. Her unusual talent requires a great amount of time, dedication, passion, and creativity that not many students have.

"This talent is a great skill to have.

Most people can't make cakes that nice. They all have special meanings [according to] who she is making the cake for and are all really unique," said Chiou. "They also look really professional and she learned how to make them just by watching the Food Network."

Despite the time and effort it takes to make the cakes, Wang finds that when she gives the cake to someone, their reaction is worth all the trouble.

"The time that it takes to make a cake usually depends on how big it is. If it's a small one, it maybe takes about two hours. If it's big, it can take the whole day," said Wang. "Even though it can take a long time, when I give the cake to them, they're really happy and it all becomes worth it."

When I give the cake to [my friends], they're really happy and it all becomes worth it."

—sophomore Connie Wang. "The cake itself is wonderful and delicious, but, in addition, she gets me a really nice present too. I mean, the cake alone would make an awesome present. Connie is just an absolutely amazing person." ♦

THE HIDDEN TALENT

Connie Wang

Talent: baking and decorating uniquely designed cakes for friends' birthdays

Years: Has been creating her creative masterpieces for 3 years

Inspiration: Found her passion from the television show "Ace of Cakes" on the Food Network

Favorite Style: Wang's favorite style of cake to bake is the topsy turvy cake because it is the most fun to make

—by Karthik Annaamalai



Photos courtesy of Connie Wang

Taking inspiration from the reality show "Ace of Cakes" on the Food Network, sophomore Connie Wang enjoys making elaborate cakes such as these for her friends.

Life after high school...

The world after high school is full of possibilities. SHS alumni who graduated several years ago were interviewed to find out where they are now.



Michelle Lin, Class of '03

'03 Graduate: Don't stress over success

by Kevin Mu

ALUMNI'S EXPERIENCE SHOWS IMPORTANCE OF BALANCED AMBITIONS

Every student longs to be successful in their post-high school endeavors. And due to increasing competition, many students pack their schedule so full of AP class study sessions and extracurricular activities to remain "competitive for college" that they often don't make time to simply enjoy high school.

But 2003 SHS alumna Michelle Lin, the older sister of current senior Maggie Lin, has shown through her own experiences that stressing out about competition and obtaining an insanely high GPA isn't necessarily the only path to success.

Lin benefited from a "balanced" high school experience; among other activities, she was a writer for the Falcon, head of community commission, a member of various on-campus community service clubs as well as an avid

figure skater.

"My extracurricular activities were a big part of me—I loved volunteering and working on the Falcon staff," said Lin. "Looking back, these two activities defined a lot of my high school experience."

Perhaps most importantly, she cherished her high school years as a time not only to learn about subjects that interested her but also as an opportunity to create everlasting friendships.

"I absolutely love how my friends look back upon all my memories. My best friends from high school are still my best friends today."

After graduating high school, Lin went on to earn her bachelor's degree in economics and finance from Princeton University and found work as an investment banker at Citigroup. She recently transitioned to a position working as a financial analyst for Electronic Arts, a Bay Area company famous for churning out popular video games.

And although her job requires perseverance and determination in order to succeed—Lin often works long

hours doing research at her office—it is also a very rewarding experience.

"I would say the best part of my job is being able to do something I like and being able to work with a great group of people," Lin said. "My friends would probably say it's the great video game discounts I get for them."

In high school, Lin knew that she wanted to pursue a career in business, but at the time, wasn't sure what field to enter. But the personal qualities she helped to guide her career decision. "SHS instilled in me a disciplined work ethic," she said. "Hard work and discipline are crucial in any job that you do and in my opinion, crucial to succeed in life."

Lin learned through a balanced high school experience, she was able to create her own successes in the real world.

Michelle's healthy attitudes have further set a positive example for her sister Maggie.

"I do look up to my sister because she has worked really hard to achieve her goals throughout her whole life,"

Maggie said. "She showed me that perseverance really does pay off in the end."

The elder Lin adds that a student's high school should be about pursuing the things that interest him or her the most rather than conforming to a set standard of AP classes.

"Don't worry," she advises students who may be stressing about their own futures. "Everything will work out at the end." ♦

I would say the best part of my job is being able to do something I like. My friends would probably say it's the great video game discounts I get for them.

John Roberts, Class of '84 and Kelly Okada, '89

High school leadership lessons prove valuable in corporate world

by Serena Chan and Sarah Hull

No matter how many academic courses a student takes during his or her high school years, perhaps the most valuable lessons are taught not in textbooks but by experience. Students who participate in student government positions gain valuable leadership skills that invariably benefit them in the future.

Alumni John Roberts, class of 1984, shared how his leadership experiences in high school shaped his life in college and beyond.

Roberts works at Denver Investments, a firm that manages individual and company assets in Colorado and has held this position for 14 years. During his time at SHS he was ASB secretary, where he learned to improve his organizational skills. After graduating, Roberts attended George Washington University and has been in the investment business since leaving college.

"I had leadership roles in my col-

lege fraternity, as well as at summer jobs during college," said Roberts. "I was able to advance quickly through the ranks at various companies I have worked at partially through the experiences I had starting at SHS."

Although they did not have a strong influence on the career path he chose, the organization and people skills he learned from being an ASB officer greatly helped him to succeed at his firm.

But Roberts isn't the only one who has taken away valuable lessons through his leadership experiences at Saratoga High.

During alumna Kelly Okada's time at Saratoga High, she was freshman class president, and in later years held the positions of ASB secretary and ASB president. She graduated in 1989, and in her 20 years after high school, Okada feels that her leadership roles have helped mold her into the person she is

today.

"My roles in student government influenced how I interact with people, approach problem-solving, and deal with conflicts," said Okada, who works part-time as a director of marketing programs at Crescendo Bioscience, a molecular diagnostic laboratory in San Francisco that focuses on rheumatol-



ROBERTS

They taught me about teamwork and showed me the importance of listening to and valuing others' input."

After graduating from UCLA, Okada earned her MIA at the prestigious University of Pennsylvania and proceeded into the field of marketing. Her interest in working with people and collaborating in groups influenced her decision to go into pharmaceutical marketing, but the experience she gained from her leadership positions in high school goes far beyond her career decisions.

"These not only influenced the jobs I pursued and how I conduct myself at

work—but also influenced the choices I have made about the important people in my life like my friends and husband," said Okada.

Many people may not realize the impact of the life lessons they learn in high school until years later.

This growth and achievement is not as concrete a success as report cards or sports awards, yet in many ways, this crucial phase of personal development defines a person much more than any grade or trophy, Okada said.

"My leadership roles instilled me with a set of lifelong values: integrity, honesty, trust, openness, compassion, and just a general appreciation for hard work and the importance of perseverance," she said. ♦

Lynn Chow, Class of '01

From high school all-star to aerospace engineer

HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE UNCOVERED A CONTINUING LOVE OF MATH AND SCIENCE

by David Eng

What's the point of high school? So often we roam the halls of the science wing pondering the significance of the anatomy of a frog in our own lives or leave the math quad wondering why we need to know how to graph a parabola. Why do we read "Of Mice and Men" in freshman year, and who cares about the causes of World War I?

In short, these necessary high school lessons serve as building blocks for later in life, perhaps stepping stones for a future career. Just ask Lynn Chow, a 2001 graduate and current aerospace engineer at Lockheed Martin.

Chow vividly recalls visiting the College and Career Center in her sophomore year and deciding to become an aerospace engineer when she grew up.

"When I was really young I wanted to be an astronaut, but then found out that my bad eyesight would prevent me from that job, so I had to pick another," she said. "My parents never dreamed that I would stick with my job choice that I had picked out when I was 16!"

No, it is not crucial that a student chooses a career path during their sophomore year in high school, but as Chow explains, the experiences in high school helped to clear the road in front of her.

"I liked math classes in high school because they were logical and the type of class that I could sit down and work at until I figured it out," said Chow. "There was only one right answer."

Coupling this aptitude for mathematics with her life-long fascination with space, aerospace engineering seemed like the only logical profes-

sion.

However, Chow's passion for math did not blind her from other opportunities that high school had to offer—a tell tale sign of a true high school all-star. In addition to taking AP Calculus BC, Chow took several other college preparatory classes, including AP US History, AP Literature, AP Biology and AP Physics. Outside of the classroom, Chow was a three-sport athlete (field hockey, basketball and badminton) as

"I'm starting to realize that the more I know, the more I understand how much there is to learn."

well as a member of the marching band for four years. "I was particularly shy, but I don't think I was particularly outgoing," said Chow. "I got along with most people, and I think that was the reason why I was both captain of the basketball team and drum major."

In addition to providing students with a plethora of academic possibilities, high school is also a time for teenagers to just relax and have a good time.

"My favorite year in high school was my senior year," said Chow. "I finally became comfortable with who I was, and that was the year my soon-to-be-husband and I started dating."

After graduating from Saratoga High, Chow attended University of California, San Diego to attain her Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering as well as a minor in photography.

While she was attending UCSD, she also started playing lacrosse and joined the team. "Now I am both a lacrosse referee and a lacrosse coach at Saratoga," she said.

Currently, Chow is finishing up her masters in aerospace engineering from San Jose State University while she works at Lockheed Martin.

"I love what I do, I love my job. It's interesting and challenging, although



courtesy of Lynn Chow

2001 graduate Lynn Chow now works as an aerospace engineer at Lockheed Martin. She says that students who want to be engineers should focus on math classes.



With school winding down and fresh tunes beginning to top the billboards, it's just about time to drink in...

The Sounds of Summer

Wide range of bands with matching prices

by Aanchal Mohan

Lady Gaga

Lady Gaga, who has been entertaining the world with her catchy songs and ridiculous outfits, is now coming to the Bay Area over the summer to entertain us some more.

"I'm really excited because I've heard her concerts are amazing and I love her songs," said sophomore Shivani Chada, who will be attending the concert. "I can't wait!"

Lady Gaga will be performing many of her songs from her latest album, "The Fame Monster," along with her many other famous singles at the HP Pavilion Center in San Jose on Aug. 16 and 17 with the cheapest tickets going for \$120.

Wild Jam

Singers Usher, Ke\$ha, Lil Jon, New Boyz, Trey Songz and many more artists are all coming together to perform on one stage to give viewers a night to remember at the HP Pavilion on May 13. The

concert which is hosted by Wild 94.9 is an annual event which never seems to disappoint viewers, and this year will be no exception. At the moment the cheapest seats are being sold for \$59 and the most expensive are being sold for \$470.

Tim McGraw

Are you a country fan? If yes, then Tim McGraw's Southern Voice concert is just right for you. Playing at the Shoreline Amphitheater on May 29, Tim

McGraw brings his timeless country sound to the Bay Area. Featuring new bands Lady Antebellum, whose chart topping single "Need You Now" is rocking the radio,

and Love and Theft, three guys with amazing harmony, this concert is guaranteed to bring out the cowboy/cowgirl in you. Tickets are going out for \$90 for best seating and \$38 for cheap seats. ♦

"I'm really excited because I've heard her concerts are amazing and I love her songs. I can't wait!"

—sophomore Shivani Chada

Warped tour brings punk bands to Bay Area

by Ren Norris

Since 1995, one summer tour has remained the place to be for upcoming and underground rock bands: the Warped Tour.

Starting every June, a tour of about 100 bands travel across the United States and Canada to showcase their talent. The event, sponsored by the skateboarding shoe brand Vans, was originally founded to feature only punk rock bands but has since included a wider genre of music such as reggae, hip hop and alternative rock. The tour ends in late August and is a popular summer event at every tour location.

However, this festival is not only about music. It also holds many other attractions such as a half-pipe for skateboarders, and tents where bands can meet endearing fans, sign autographs and sell band products and other merchandise.

The Warped Tour is an entire day-long. Each show begins around 11 a.m. and ends at 9 p.m., with every band playing at least 30 minutes. However, one band is elected by online voters to play a longer ending set as a finale to the show. Various stages are set up across the venue, and multiple bands can play at the same time with the most popular bands on the two main stages.

The tour has also gone eco-friendly by introducing the Warped Eco Initiative that uses biodiesel to fuel the band's buses and has a solar stage that is powered solely by solar panels.

The 2010 tour lineup includes many underground bands such as Automatic Loveletter and Hollywood Heartthrob, but also some familiar names such as Dropkick Murphys, Motion City Soundtrack, Mike Posner, Sum 41 and the All-American Rejects.

The tour begins in Carson, Calif., on June 25, and will make its second stop at the Shoreline theater in Mountain View on June 26. General admission tickets cost \$33. ♦

This festival doesn't just include music but also a half-pipe for skaters and tents where bands meet endearing fans.

Some of the bands featured this summer (clockwise): The All-American Rejects, Tim McGraw, Mike Posner, Dropkick Murphy, and Lady Gaga.

THE BIGIDEA

Lady Gaga

Where: HP Pavilion Center in San Jose

When: August 16th-17th

Ticket Prices: Cheapest tickets for \$120

Wild Jam

Who: Usher, Ke\$ha, Lil Jon, New Boyz, Trey Songz

Where: HP Pavilion in San Jose

Ticket Prices: Cheapest seats for \$59 and most expensive for \$470

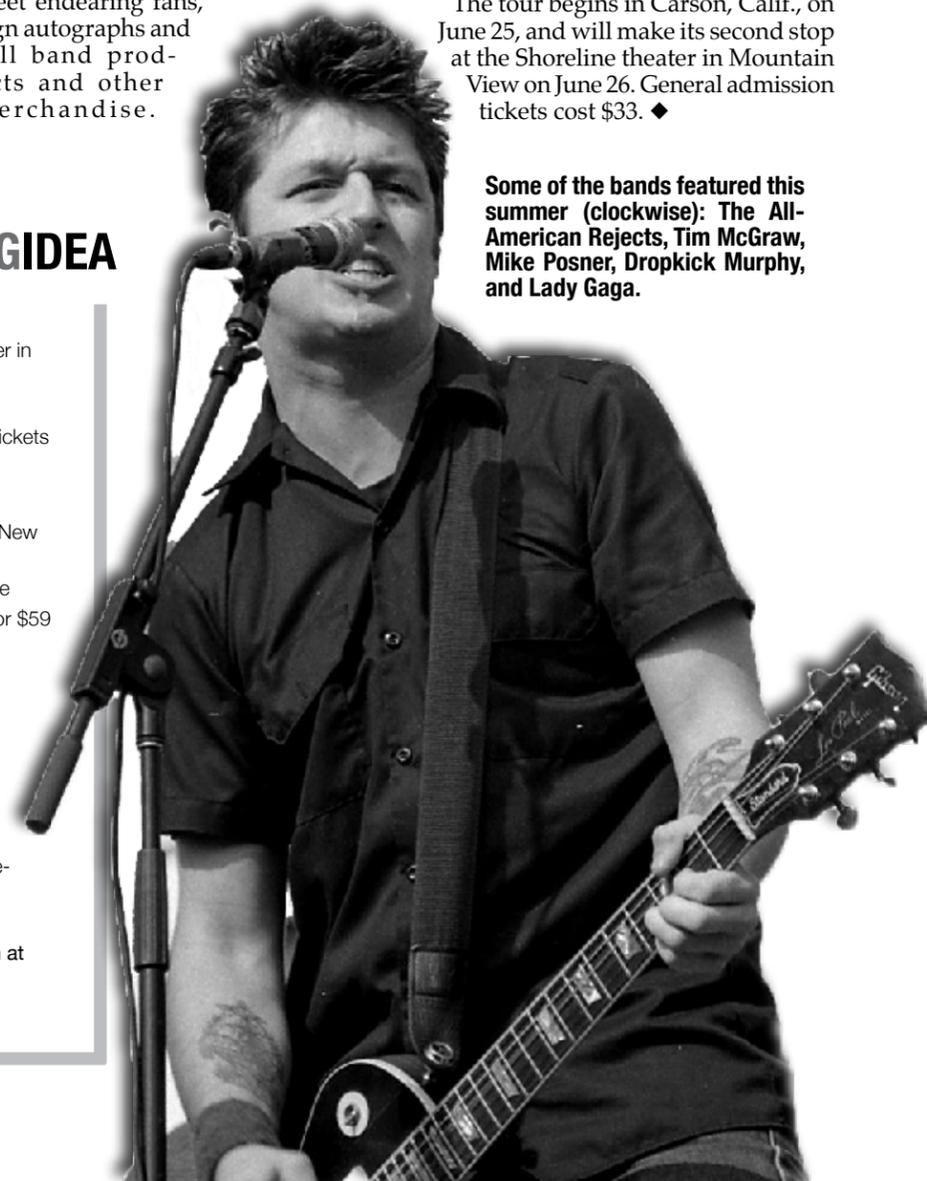
Warped Tour

Who: Dropkick Murphys, All-American Rejects, Motion City Soundtrack, Mike Posner, Sum 41

Where: Tour begins in Carson, California. Second stop at Shoreline Theater in Mountain View

When: June 25th and 26th

Ticket Prices: General admission at \$33 can be bought online at www.warpedtour.com



BOYS' LACROSSE

Team battles with injuries, lack of substitutes



Junior Marcus Hoffman leans in for a shot during a scrimmage at practice on April 22.

Jordan Waite

by Parul Singh
and Kim Tsai

Concussions, dislocated arms, pulled hamstrings; the list of injuries sustained by the Falcons goes on and on. Five starters, senior Adam Oreglia, juniors Alex Polcyn and James Hadid, sophomore Nicolas Doyen and freshman Chance Cox are all sidelined due to injury.

"[The injuries happened] one after another and for the next two or three games we just had a really hard time coming back, but we won on Saturday against [Archbishop Mitty] that we probably shouldn't have," said Oreglia.

Oreglia, the team captain, was forced to sit out with a collarbone injury after running into another player during a game against Burlingame in late March. However, Oreglia is expecting to be back on the field playing games soon.

Cox and Polcyn were both injured during the team's game against Palo Alto.

"Injuries happen, helmets can't protect you from every-

thing," said Polcyn. "This many players being injured is definitely affecting the line-up."

Although injured, Cox still feels optimistic about the prospects of the team.

"The coach isn't too worried about the injuries because he knows that we'll be back and he knows that we can still play and perform well."

The main problem, Cox feels, is the lack of substitutes which has caused many of the players to play full games without rest.

"The other players are getting tired a lot because they're playing the whole time. We have almost no subs, but I think they can push through," he said.

The reason the team can do so well even with the injuries, they feel, is because of the coaches.

"The coaches are a huge step up from last year. All the coaches know what they're doing," said Polcyn. "Last year, the coaches, they were inexperienced and people didn't really have any respect for them because they didn't really earn

THE SCORES

4/20 Saratoga 9, Gunn 6

Andrew Lee (12): 3 goals
4 assists
Eric Van Noorden (10): 2 goals
Trevor Comes (11): 2 goals
1 assist
Wade Troyer (10): 2 goals
1 assist
Rick Wilson (11): 1 assist
Gavin Peake (11): 9 saves

4/17 Mountain View 7, Saratoga 13

Noorden: 3 goals 2 assists
Andrew Hnojewyj (12): 3 goals, 2 assists
Lee: 2 goals 2 assists
Troyer: 2 goals
Comes: 1 goal
Marcus Hoffman (11): 1 save
Peake: 19 saves

it from us."

The team beat Gunn 9-6 on April 20 and won against Archbishop Mitty 11-10 on April 17. As of April 3, they had a league record of 2-4.

"It's been hard on us the last couple of games. We've been losing a lot, but we were still able to push through," Cox said. ♦

BOYS' SWIMMING

Hinshaw looks to break brother's CCS record

JUNIOR'S INNER DRIVE FUELS EARLY SUCCESSES

by Tim Rollinson
and Emily Williams

Every time science teacher and swim coach Kristin Thomson checks her box in the main office, she seems to always have a stack of letters piling up. They come from colleges in Florida, Texas, Virginia, Indiana and everywhere in between and they all want the same thing: the chance to have Adam Hinshaw on their swim team in two years.

Hinshaw, a junior, is one of the top recruits in the nation. His resume includes a high school national record, a high school national championship, an Olympic trials qualifying cut and four top five individual finishes in CCS, including a second place in the 500 freestyle.

What's the secret to his success? For one thing, Hinshaw comes from a strong aquatic bloodline. His dad played water polo at UCLA and holds the record for the swimming leg of the Iron Man Triathlon.

His oldest brother Ryan swims at Indiana University. His other brother, Ben, swims at Berkeley and recently placed among the top swimmers at the NCAA Championships.

Hinshaw also has an inner drive that's hard to teach.

"My motto in swim-



HINSHAW

"My motto in swimming since I was six has been crush, kill, destroy."

ming since I was six has been crush, kill, destroy," said Hinshaw.

And Hinshaw is doing just that this season for the Falcons. He has not lost a single individual event all season and hopes to break his brother's 500 freestyle record at CCS on May 21 and 22.

Hinshaw is one of the four individual CCS qualifiers so far this season. Senior Kyle Borch, Junior Justin Chung and sophomore Ian Burns have also qualified for individual

events.

The 400 Freestyle relay consisting of Chung, Borch, Hinshaw and Burns and the 200 Medley Relay team of Chung, junior Tim Rollinson, Burns and Hinshaw have also qualified.

Other swimmers hoping to make the cut at the upcoming league meet on May 5-7 include junior Will Tang, Rollinson and sophomore Mac Hyde. Hyde and Rollinson both competed in CCS last year and are very close to their qualifying times this year.

Coach Christian Bonner expects the boys CCS team to place in the top three overall.

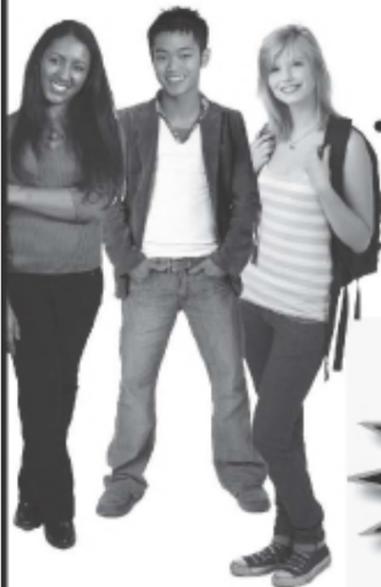
"The league season has been a struggle because we don't have the depth we did last year," said Bonner. "I still think the team will hit its stride at the CCS meet."

The boys swam at Palo Alto April 21 and Monta Vista April 23. They lost to Palo Alto despite victories in all but one individual event (the score was unavailable). They finished the league season against Gunn April 29. ♦

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Success an unfamiliar term for Giants

“2010 should be the Giants’ time to shine!”

Roy Bisht



56 years. It has been 56 years since the San Francisco Giants were the World Champions of Major League Baseball. It has only been eight years since they last went to the World Series, when former manager Dusty Baker's poor handling of the pitching staff ended the team's chances of winning it all for the first time since 1954. The point is, it has been a long time since the Giants won the World Series. But if there is any year that they are going to do it, it is going to be 2010.

In 1954, Dwight Eisenhower was president, the novel “Lord of the Flies” was published (yes, that “Lord of the Flies” from sophomore year) and the Giants were actually good? Yes, the Giants were actually good. Those were the days of Hoyt Wilhelm, Monte Irvin and the legendary Willie Mays.

Well, now the year is 2010, Barack Obama is president, Team USA won the Winter Olympics and the Giants are a legitimate threat to challenge for a title.

These are the days of Matt Cain, Pablo Sandoval and the amazing Tim Lincecum.

It has been so long since the Giants have done anything positive that the words Giants and winning sound awkward in the same sentence. But this year, that is going to change.

With arguably the best pitching staff in the majors, led by two-time Cy Young Award winner Lincecum, the Giants are in prime position to win the N.L. West.

Sure, their offense is only mediocre at best.

But the additions of Mark DeRosa and Aubrey Huff will bring a veteran presence to their lineup that has been absent since, well, Barry Lamar Bonds.

This year the Giants will only need two or three runs per game at the most thanks to their tremendous pitching. Even for the Giants, two or

three runs may be a stretch for a team that has ranked in the bottom five in runs scored for five years in a row but I'm expecting a .315 avg/27 home

run/90 RBI season from Pablo Sandoval, which could potentially account for 25 percent of the Giants slow offense.

With the addition of other RBI men such as DeRosa (87 RBI in 08') and Huff (108 RBI in 08') to the team, there is actually reason to watch the Giants offense this season.

Many sports analysts may say that the N.L. West is up for grabs but if the Giants' offense

can produce or at least support their stellar pitching, it's theirs for the taking. The Dodgers and Rockies are the Giants' main competition and, even though they both have strong offenses (especially the Dodgers), each of their respective pitching rotations is not strong enough to throw a lights out game every night.

The Giants rotation is strong through the first four (Lincecum, Barry Zito, Cain and Jonathan “No-Hit” Sanchez) but sorry [No. 5 starter] Todd Wellemeyer, your 0-3 record and 8.16 ERA hasn't gained anyone's respect yet. Even if Wellemeyer continues to fail on the mound, there is still a line of starters in Triple-A Fresno Madison Bumgarner, Kevin Pucetas, Joe Martinez and Henry Sosa. ♦

It has been so long since the Giants have done anything positive that the words Giant and winning sound awkward in the same sentence.

GIRLS' LACROSSE

Block leads the charge

by Synthia Ling

On a typical game, junior attack wing Vanessa Block rapidly sprints down the field, shaking defenders until there is nothing between her and the goal but the poor, defenseless goaltender. Quickly she heaves a shot that lands triumphantly in the net, to the cheers and high-fives of her teammates.

“She's really fast and she has a lot of drive,” said head coach Leni Lodgers of Block. “She is intense and keeps up her intensity up 100% of the time, so it helps bring the whole team to be aware that we need to stay in the game and try to focus on what we are supposed to do.”

Block joined the Falcons last year during the team's inception to stay in shape for field hockey. Although she had no experience before joining, Block quickly picked up the sport and became an integral offensive player. She is currently in her second year of playing on the varsity team.

“My sisters said their friends had played it and they said it was fun,” said Block. “I like it because I get to score a lot and in field hockey I don't get to score as much. Since I started playing, I've definitely improved I can use my left

hand more, which I couldn't last year. This year, I'm scoring more than I did so that's good. I take more risks when I play because I'm more confident now.”

As attack wing, Block plays an important part in both the offense and defense. Not only must she score goals and help with the offensive attack but Block must also run back to defense.

“She's kind of amazing,” said sophomore goalie Megan Benzing. “She's always really good at picking up ground balls and she's always communicating when she's playing which is something we lack at doing, so it's really nice. She makes amazing shots.”

Despite Block's strong effort and playing, the team has struggled to win with a season record of 2-8.

On April 21 at home, the Falcons lost 17-7 to the Palo Alto Vikings but on April 7 at home the team had an impressive win of 20-4 against Harker. It was a rewarding win because the team had a tough loss before of 20-5 against Los Gatos at home on April 2.

“The team is doing a lot better than we were in the beginning of the season,” said Block.

“The scores in the games aren't as good as we want them to be but we're playing as a team.” ♦



Block

BASEBALL

Injuries hobble Falcon roster

Team must deal with rash of season ending injuries

by Roy Bisht and David Eng

In Major League baseball, injuries are serious obstacles that clubs must learn to overcome. However, the plethora of minor league players ready to step up and the highly experienced team of medical personnel eases the painful injuries that so often rear their ugly heads.

This year, the Falcons have learned that, in this respect, high school baseball is nothing like the Majors. At the high school level, where teams usually carry around 15 players, injuries can be extremely dangerous.

Saratoga's season has been plagued by severe injuries, a main source of the Falcons' struggles. Even before the season's first pitch, the Falcons had already lost freshman infielder/pitcher Stevie Berman and senior pitcher Vinnie Carstens to season-ending elbow and shoulder surgeries, respectively. Berman was expected to provide an offensive punch in the middle of the batting lineup. Carstens was projected to be the team's ace pitcher.

“Losing [Carstens] was a huge blow to our pitching staff, because he was our best pitcher and we expected him to have a good season for us this year,” said junior pitcher Yoonbin



Amanda Yi

Junior pitcher-infielder Dillan Pak takes a hard cut earlier in the season, but the Falcons have recently lost their ace to an elbow injury.

Kim.

Injuries have really limited our roster which is already really small to begin with.

“The loss of Carstens also forced varsity head coach Manny Steffen to teach regular position players to pitch and according to Kim, the absence of experienced hurlers has made it harder to compete in the upper De Anza league.

“With Carstens out for the season, pretty much everyone who hasn't pitched now has to pitch, because now we need as much pitching as we possibly can get if we want to compete with the rest of the league,” said junior infielder Tim Lycurgus.

Over the course of the season, the team also has seen senior pitcher Jon Chen (foot), Kim (back/knee), senior outfielder Jon Hurrell (back), Lycurgus (ankle), and catcher/infielder

Andy Berman (finger) all sit out due to injury for several games each. To their credits all have fought through the pain and back into the lineup. Halfway through the season, the team also lost sophomore infielder Roy Bisht and junior pitcher/infielder Dillan Pak to season-ending elbow injuries.

Injuries have definitely shone through in the team's performance, vis-a-vis wins and losses. Through nine league games, Saratoga holds a mediocre 1-7-1 league record, outscored 89-24 in those games with numerous double-digit run differentials.

During spring break, the team trekked to Reno to compete in the Northern Nevada Classic, a tournament featuring teams from nearby states. In the first game, the Falcons crushed Elko High in a 17-1 blowout but over the next three games they did not fare as well, losing 23-5 to Spanish Springs, 11-9 to McQueen and 19-9 to Central Valley to send them home with a fourth place finish out of seven teams.

Perhaps some of the few bright spots this season have been the individual performances of various players.

Through 16 games, senior outfielder Grant Thomas boasts a tremendous .333 batting average and leads the team with 9 stolen bases.

Regardless of the tremendous season last year and the strong expectations for this year, those keeping track of the team can chalk this one up as a rebuilding year. ♦

THE SCORES

4/21 Los Gatos 22, Saratoga 5

GAME HIGHLIGHTS:

Overpowered by the potent Los Gatos lineup, Toga yields 15 runs over the final three frames in the blowout loss. Ace Dillan Pak is also hit in his throwing elbow by an errant throw, projected to be out for the remainder of the season.

4/23 Los Gatos 25, Saratoga 1

GAME HIGHLIGHTS:

The Falcons manage one run on a RBI hit by junior utility player James Reed, but are simply outmatched by their cross-town rivals. Poor fielding contributes to the loss, as only 10 of the 25 runs allowed were earned.

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BOYS' TENNIS

Falcons take lead in league; begin focusing on postseason

by Jason Wu

Senior Eric Gast closed out his last regular season match as a Falcon with perfection—literally.

Playing No. 3 singles in the Falcons' final league match against Palo Alto on April 22, Gast won 24 straight points in the second set of his match, accomplishing a feat known in tennis as the "golden set."

"It was just one of those matches where everything was going right, like how it feels to be in the zone," said Gast. "The ending [to my last season] couldn't have been better.

Due to dominant performances throughout the season like the one by Gast, the Falcons have finished in first place in the De Anza league with a 12-0 record.

However, the tennis season is just beginning to heat up for the Falcons, who look to face rival Menlo in the postseason as the respective second and first seeds in tournaments like CCS and NorCals. There will almost certainly be a rematch of their game at the Corona Del Mar National Invitational, in which the Falcons

lost a close 5-3 match to the Knights.

Although the Falcons came up short the last time they faced Menlo, head coach Tom Uyehara is optimistic about the team's chances against them in the postseason. (The teams played a practice match yesterday on the SHS courts; results were unavailable because of printing deadlines.)

"Even though we lost that time, it was in a 5/3 format with five singles and three doubles matches being played by the same top four players each game," said Uyehara. "I think we will have an advantage playing in a 4/3 format like the one used in CCS and NorCals because we'll have 10 players in the game, and our depth is a bit better down the lineup."

Junior player Deepak Sabada believes that the team will be able prevail if they meet again with Menlo because they have a stronger desire to win due to their tough prior loss against the Knights.

"We're definitely looking forward to having a shot at getting our revenge on Menlo in the postseason," said Sabada. "Until then, we'll compete throughout this season and get our moment." ♦

"It was just one of those matches where everything was going right, like how it feels to be in the zone."

—Senior Eric Gast



Jordan Waite

Senior Michael McGinnis goes after a backhand volley on April 22 during a match against Palo Alto. With Lamble's help, Saratoga won the match 7-0. by saratoga 7-0.

BADMINTON



Jordan Waite

Senior Guillame Bellegarda swings at the birdie on April 22 during a game at home against Wilcox.

Badminton team continues to be hopeful despite tough year

by Lillian Chen and Kevin Mu

If it ain't broken, don't fix it" is one philosophy that can be applied to this year's badminton team, which, despite not meeting their goals entirely, has remained competitive in the Bay Area's toughest league.

But head coach John Phung isn't the type to be satisfied with a team that simply "ain't broken"—he wants his team to be the best. To accomplish this goal, Phung recently decided to shake up the varsity lineup in an attempt to take advantage of opponents' weaknesses and ensure that each player performs to his or her strengths.

"Because our league is so competitive, we try to manipulate by moving players around trying to see who matches well

with who," said coach Phung.

Many players, including senior Gautam Srinivasan, have approached the new strategy with cautious opportunism.

"I'm not too sure about it, but it seems like a decent idea," said Srinivasan, who this year has switched between playing var-

"We're strengthening the areas where we have a better chance at winning."

—senior Gautam Srinivasan

sity singles and mixed doubles. "We're strengthening the areas where we have a better chance of winning against the other teams."

But some worry that the

changes have come too late in the season and they won't be able to adjust to their new positions.

"I'm not sure if it's a good strategy because, personally, it takes me a while to get used to playing with someone," said junior Jasmine Lee, who recently transitioned from playing mixed doubles to girls' doubles. "So [the lineup change] is bad for me."

Unfortunately for the team, these lineup changes haven't translated into wins. They couldn't defeat Monta Vista on April 20, falling 13-17; the Falcons' record is 3-4

"Our league is very competitive," said Srinivasan. "We move people around to help them improve. Compared to last year, we improved," said Phung. ♦

BOYS' TRACK

LEAPING TO NEW LENGTHS

Junior Eric Chuang's talent for long jump allows him to shine on the field

by Lauren Kuan

In sixth grade, junior Eric Chuang tried out for the track team as a way to stay in shape but came to find that he had a real passion for it. After trying long jump for the first time, he discovered a natural talent for the event and has stuck with it since, excelling at it and becoming one of the best long jumpers on the team.

"Eric is easily both one of the best sprinters and jumpers on the team," said track Coach Archie Ljepava. "I definitely see him as being one of the top athletes next year."

His current personal record for long jump is 19 feet, 7 inches, a huge improvement compared to his previous record of 18 feet, 8 inches last year. However, his main goal this year is to improve even more by breaking 20 feet, said Chuang.

"I want to get better in this event and break 20 feet because it is a big plateau for long jumpers which I want to overcome. Breaking it is one of those things where once you finally hit it, it shows that you've hit the next level, so I'm determined to hit it," said Chuang.

Chuang is working hard toward his goals for this year

and is trying his best to stay motivated despite a tough junior year schedule.

"Eric has improved tremendously between this year and last year," said Ljepava. "He is much more focused this year and is on track to break his PR."

Although Chuang competes in the long jump, triple jump, 100 meter and 100 meter relay, his favorite event out of all of these is long jump.

"I love competing in individual events because you can really mark your improvement," said Chuang.

Yet, Chuang is not completely confident that he will accomplish his goal but he is hoping he will.

"It is kind of a 50-50 chance because you just need to keep practicing jumps until you hit that one perfect jump; after that, you will just get it," said Chuang. "I just need to keep on practicing and practicing until I break it."

Yet, Chuang is not completely confident that he will accomplish his goal but he is hoping he will.

The League Top Eight was on April 23 and all eight best athletes in each event will compete with together. To see all previous meet results, as well as the April 23 meet, visit saratogafalcon.org/sports. ♦



CHUANG

"I love competing in individual events and marking your improvement."

The Skinny

What's Hot Online
saratogafalcon.org

-Opinion: "The name is iPad, not iPod" by Sulmaan Hassan and Roy Bisht

-Opinion: "Lady Gaga's videos taint American culture" by Sophia Cooper

TOPTEN

WAYS TO GET OUT OF TAKING FINALS

- 10 Find a look a-like to take the test for you. It usually only works if you're brown or Asian, though.
- 9 Bring a water pistol to school. You'll get to skip the final and, most likely, the rest of the school year.
- 8 Do the final with crayons, paint, or fluorescent markers. You'll probably fail, though.
- 7 Tell the teacher you have chronic constipation. Go to the bathroom and don't come back.
- 6 Go eat at J&J Hawaiian Barbecue. You'll be out for a good week.
- 5 Convince Ms. Cochrum the penguin population is in danger. Biology class cancelled.
- 4 Tell your teacher you feel sick. Sick of taking tests... BAHA
- 3 Run away from home. It'll get you out of the final, but you get an F in life.
- 2 Fake a family emergency. Go to Taiwan.
- 1 Get your parents to call you out. Get the answers from your friends and take the test the day after. Because THAT'S never been done before.

—Sulmaan Hassan

THECRITIC

Jason Castro
Released April 13

Jason Castro is back. The American Idol finalist released his self-titled debut on April 13 with a very positive response. Castro proves his genuine talent on the laid-back album full of acoustic grooves and catchy choruses. I guess only time will tell whether the dreadlocked singer-songwriter will join the Idol elite with Kelly Clarkson, Carrie Underwood and Chris Daughtry or fall into post-spotlight mediocrity with the likes of Ruben Studdard, and Fantasia whatever-her-name-is. ♦

—Tim Rollinson

Saratoga Snapshots



Courtesy of Paxton Barco



Courtesy of Proimage Studios



Synthia Ling



Grishma Athavale

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: model behavior Seniors SAM LI, PAXTON BARCO AND ALLY DOLES STRIKE A POSE FOR THE CAMERAS DURING THE BENEFIT FASHION SHOW ON APRIL 24. **These boots were made for walkin'** Teacher kim anzalone and susan dini SING AND SHOW OFF THEIR MOVES during the ptso luncheon on april 23. **healthy choice** junior patrick fitzsimmons samples the purity organic juice at the alternative energy fair on april 22. **dancing the night away** juniors greg johnson and vanessa block dance at junior prom on april 3. the prom theme was "You belong with me."

buzzworthy

MAP awards ceremony will be SMASHN'

Aspiring filmmakers, authors, illustrators, animators and other students in the Media Arts Program (MAP) will convene on May 28 to celebrate a year of great projects. It may not be the Oscars, but for the hard work MAP students have put in, it may as well be.

"We're very excited," MAP coordinator Kerry Mohnike said.

MAP will be hosting the first annual awards ceremony to celebrate the year's best projects on the Saturday night in the McAfee Center. The Saratoga Media Arts Showcase Night, or SMASHN', will include five different categories of awards for the best projects created this year.

"It's going to be a big event," said Mohnike.

Very big indeed: starting at 7 and ending at 10, more than 200 students along with their families are expected to attend, in addition to interested members of the

public.

"We will have each winning project explained prior to showing it, so you won't have to be familiar with the program to understand what's going on," said Mohnike.

The different award categories include best sophomore projects, best junior projects, best industry awards and the best overall project. Industry experts will comprise the panel that will award the industry award.

"This is going to be a great opportunity to really showcase the work that's been done to the public," Mohnike said. ♦



Grishma Athavale

—Anoop Galivanche

Fridays con amigos

"Café is not at all what many would imagine."



Brian Kim

The most fortunate students walk graduation, not with a fistful of tassels hanging from their caps or their names printed almost too many times to count throughout the ceremony program, but with the knowledge that they will take with them something unique from their high school experience that others would have been just as privileged to have come across. Some are lucky enough to impart with the wisdom of a teacher, while others are blessed to have made a close friend. And then there are students like me, who will be fortunate to graduate with both.

For much of my senior year, Fridays have been home to a tradition known as Café Social. A group of us, including seniors Varun Parmar and Tiffany Mo, have gone with Spanish teacher Arnaldo Rodriguex, or as most know him, Señor, to Peet's to converse in Spanish over coffee. Now, spending a Friday afternoon speaking Spanish outside of the classroom might not sound like your cup of tea, but Café is not at all what many would imagine.

Because conversation isn't limited to "Stacy camina en el parque," or what other mundane phrases our workbooks have us reciting, we discuss from the latest movies to politics, from college decisions to how to ask your date to prom. It's a lighthearted Spanish practice, and much of it is because of the relationships we've built with our teacher, a man who has been helping students here for more than 30 years.

Easy learning

We often talk about the disadvantages of the "periodo block" and how many Spanish students won't receive the practice to improve their communication because they don't speak in class every day. While at first I struggled with the intimidation factor of using improper grammar and stumbling over my words, I cannot recall a time when Señor broke away from conversation and jumped into a verbose lecture about "subjunctivo formula uno, dos, y tres." Although I still occasionally find myself stuck on a thought or unable to express myself, we always carry on as if I didn't just confuse the words for "to make a mistake" (errar) and "to put horseshoes on" (herrar).

I'll be honest, and certainly not modest, when I say that I am no better than my Spanish 5 AP peers at speaking the language. But as for our Friday after school meet-ups, I know I'm a lot more confident in my conversation skills than I would have been without Café Social.

Beyond the classroom

I know, the concept of a student-teacher friendship may sound questionable. And with regards to concerns by the administration that may lead to cutting off Facebook communication between students and faculty, they would be wrong in doing so. I noticed that my classmates often overlook the opportunity to witness Señor's genuine personality—the person beyond simply the teaching figure: a friend. For those who dare take the step to know their teachers, if you learn from them as mentors, and accept them as friends, I can assure that you'll be as lucky as I am.

So while we embark on the last weeks of the school year—the last Friday's, nonetheless—we invite you to join us after school, to meet us outside of room 601 for an afternoon of coffee and tea, plenty of laughs and good company.

As I like to think of it, "Thank goodness, it's Friday, pues vamos a Café!" ♦