

CHECK THIS

OUT

SARATOGA HIGH SCHOOL JOURNALISM ONE YEARBOOK

# PLINKING, PLONKING ON THE PIANO

A pair of two completely unlike friends, one **sparty**, one **musical**, join forces to attempt to make a **musical failure** into a somewhat **musically literate individual**

**A**s my uncle drove me up to the small house with the red roof, nestled in a small corner of the road and surrounded by trees, I saw the familiar face my friend's mother cooking in kitchen.

She shouted, "Emily, Allison is here!" Nervously, I opened the door and was greeted by my friend Emily Chiang's adorable Sable collie, who was, interestingly enough, named Emi.

The reason for my visit? To learn how to play piano. While many people would assume that I, as a Chinese girl, would now how to play piano, it is completely untrue. Therefore, I decided to dive into the world of music with a trusty companion, Emily.

The moment I sat down onto the piano bench, I was immediately assailed with flashbacks of my sisters practicing piano for hours on end.

Intimidated by their skill, I swore that I would never learn piano and instead I chose to learn a traditional Chinese instrument, the Chinese zither. While by no means was it easy, there were no hours of learning theory or complicated lines and bars which I had to make sense of.

Nevertheless, I thought that a simple one-page piece from a children's beginner piano book would be easy. However, I was proven wrong.

Thus, the hour-long piano lesson began. Our end goal was to make me musically fluent enough in piano to play a simple piece called Alouette. First, Emily began teaching me a little about music theory, of which I had at least a small inkling about as my music teacher had no need of such formalities. Instead, my former music classes were composed of simply copying exactly what my teacher did and thus learning how to play music by ear.

We went through how to read the number of counts each note represented and which key designated a certain note. Then, when I already felt like my entire mind was spinning with all the so called "simply" theory, we actually began the process of working on the piece.

However, it wasn't simply banging out the notes and making something which sounded slightly musical. Instead, Emily made me undergo the grueling process of clapping out the beat beforehand in time with an annoying metronome which went "tick, tock, tick, tock" in a most aggravating manner. I soon learned that I did not have the patience needed for playing piano.

After I thought I would go insane from saying, "One and two and three and four and" over and over, she deemed me ready to try my hand at actually playing.

So far, we had spent nearly half an hour and I hadn't touched the piano a single time. Managing to play the correct notes in time with the beat on my right hand, Emily proceeded to make me repeat the clapping process for the left hand.

Finally, after my clapping had met Emily's standards, we set the metronome and played the left hand. I found this much more challenging than playing with my right, as up until now, I had never had much need for coordination in my left hand aside from typing on a keyboard.

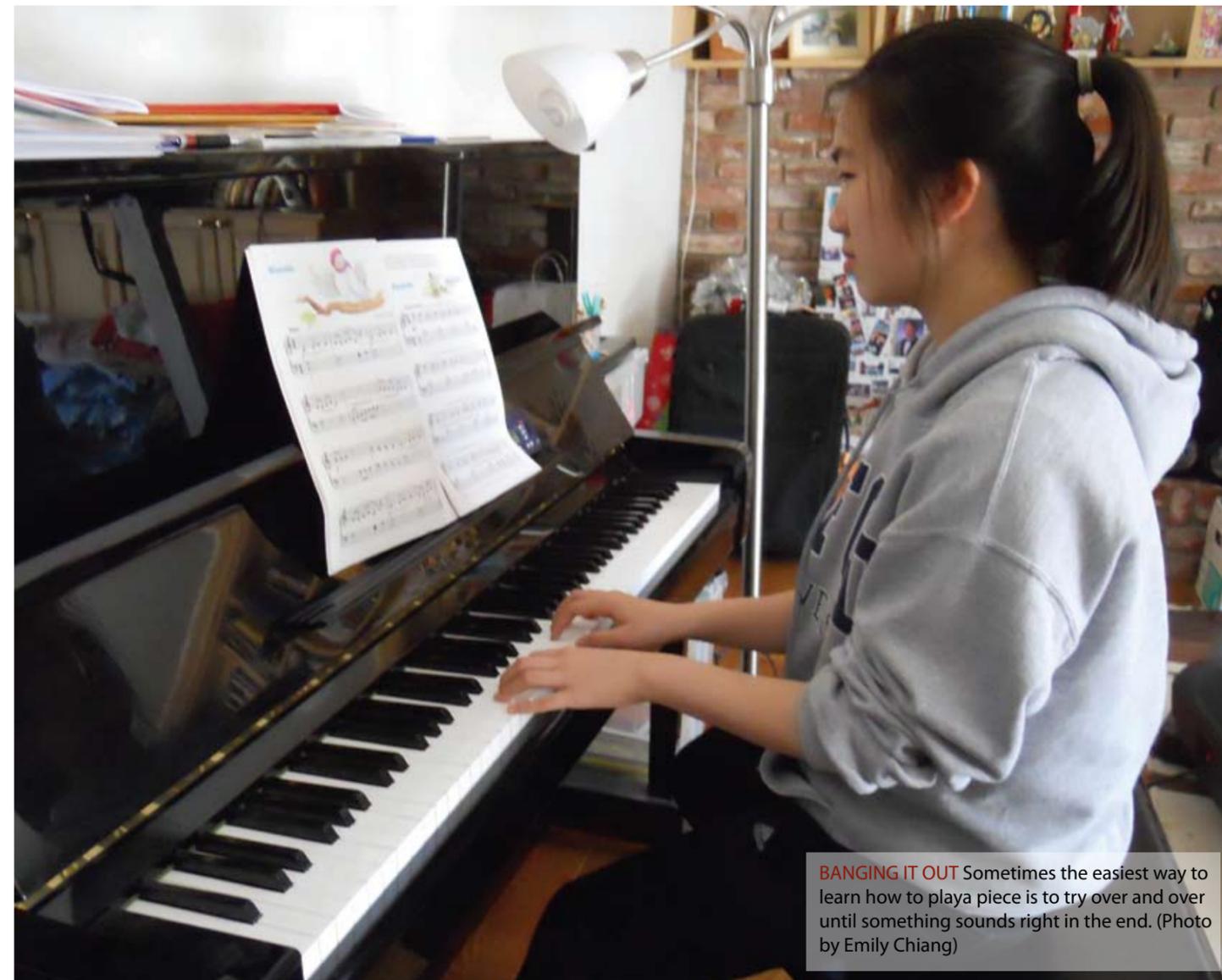
A few more tries and I was ready to play with both hands. Successfully managing to play the entire song, I thought I was finished. But no, Emily once again had a surprise for me.

She said, "There is a difference between simply playing a piece and really playing a piece, it's the difference between good pianists and really really really good pianists."

At this point, I just wanted to be done with piano playing but Emily proceeded to teach me about crescendos and decrescendos and whatnot. Mustering the last of my patience, I put up with playing Alouette one last time.

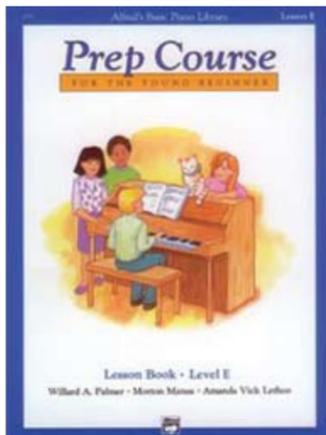
At long last, my lesson was over and I was free to go play with Emi and eat blueberries to my heart's content. However, besides simply learning about piano, I learned that while the ability of playing piano is considered to be commonplace, it is still quite difficult to acquire.

—Allison Chang



**BANGING IT OUT** Sometimes the easiest way to learn how to play a piece is to try over and over until something sounds right in the end. (Photo by Emily Chiang)

**SO MUCH FOR SAT PREP** this is piano prep instead! This book is generally for players between the ages 5 and 7. (photo by Allison Chang)



**WHATS BLACK AND WHITE ALL OVER?** Practicing playing the the scale required alot of consternation on my part. One must be sure to hit each key with the proper finger in the right order. (photo by Allison Chang)

**SUPPORTIVE HELP** Emiliy Chiang (9) plays Alouette in order to give a demonstration about what sounds right and what sounds wrong. Her fingers fly over the keyboard deftly as she easily sight-reads the song. (photo by Allison Chang)



## CHECK IT OUT: NATIVE SARATOGA PIANIST JON NAKAMATSU



A local legend, as well as the husband of a beloved science teacher, what exactly is Jon Nakamatsu?

Nakamatsu was the son of David Nakamatsu who was a San Jose engineer and his mother was Karen Maeda, who worked as a city employee. He was born in 1968.

He graduated from Prospect High School in 1986 in Saratoga, California.

In 1997 he was the first American to win a Gold medal at the 10th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition since 1981.

His accomplishments do not stop there, as he toured with the San Jose Youth Symphony in 2005 in Spain and went with the Peninsula Youth Orchestra in 2007 to Budapest, Prague and Teplice.

Additionally, he went on a tour with the Stanford Symphony Orchestra to play "Rhapsody in Blue" in China.

Before Nakamatsu embarked on his musical career, he was a German language teacher at Saint Francis High School in Mountain View, California.

Nowadays, he is known by the students at Saratoga High as the husband of Chemistry Honor and AP Chemistry teacher, Kathy Nakamatsu.

# WHAT IN THE WORLD IS A SEED BEAD?

Sophomore Debbie Soung teaches what it really means to be a jewelry maker, what really goes into each piece and that it's not exactly that easy.

Sitting in front of piles of multicolored beads and multiple spools of wire I knew I could never make, I felt lost. Phrases like needle nose pliers and head pins made my head spin.

The real world of jewelry making is not as it may seem. Flea markets, antique markets may all boast sellers who create their own masterpieces, but what about at the high school level?

Sophomore Debbie Soung has been making jewelry for about a year. Along with her website, unicornfication.tumblr.com where she shows off her pieces, she caters to what her buyers want personally. From the most popular, the rosette ring, to her spring bison bracelet, each piece embodies the personal style apparent in her work.

On a Sunday afternoon, I decided to give it a shot. Debbie went over the basics with me. Using just three main tools, a needle nose and flat nose pliers, and a wire cutter, a wide array of things can be made.

The real test however, is can anyone make jewelry? Going into this with an open mind, I assume it would be a cakewalk. Having done art before, I had experience basic jewelry making. But what I learned did not prepare me for the level Debbie made her crafts.

Although they may not look all that complicated, every little ring, clasp, beading is made by hand. On top of that, the customer's requests also have to be considered.

With just one year of experience under her belt, Soung has already surpassed the level I was accustomed to. I can just imagine how complicated the people who have done this for years are like.

Fumbling with beads, not being able to grip the wire, and just all over the place, I was astonished. How does anyone do this for fun, and take orders for pieces at the same time without going mad?

Surprisingly, it was a lot of fun. Inspired, I asked what was needed to start up my own jewelry making kit. The simplicity of it all surprised me. Just by going to a local craft store and picking up some wire, beads, and basic tools and watching some tutorials on YouTube, I was ready to go.

And if your pieces are any good, there's a chance they could be sold. Soung regularly gets orders for her various earrings, bracelets or rings.

Packaged in cute origami envelopes and ornate origami boxes, each buyer gets a personal note written by the maker herself.

"I usually write something for everything. A little thanks and a personal message," she said.

So while I will most likely never be a jewelry maker, the experience is fun. Can anyone make jewelry? I'd say it depends on how high quality you want your piece to turn out.

—Katherine Chang

## TOP 6 JEWELRY MAKING JARGON

1 **JUMP RING**  
"...a small ring that connects any two elements."



2 **SPACERS**  
"...to add space around a dominant element."



3 **FRENCH EAR WIRES**  
"...for all the normal dangly earrings."



4 **EYE PIN**  
"...to string beads and connect two elements."



5 **HEAD PIN**  
"...wire used to string beads for earrings."



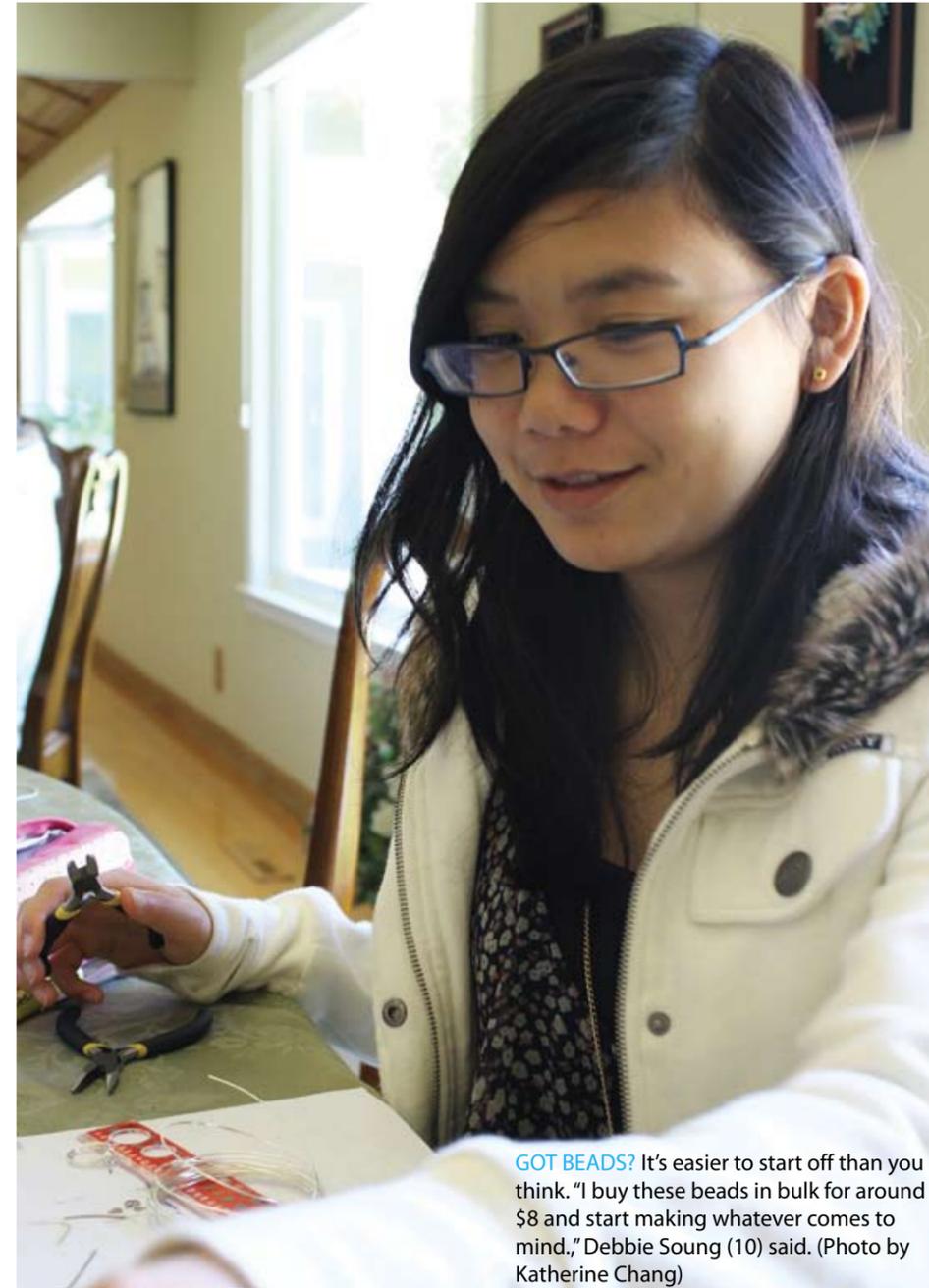
6 **SEED BEAD**  
"...one of the more basic types of beads used."



—Debbie Soung (10)

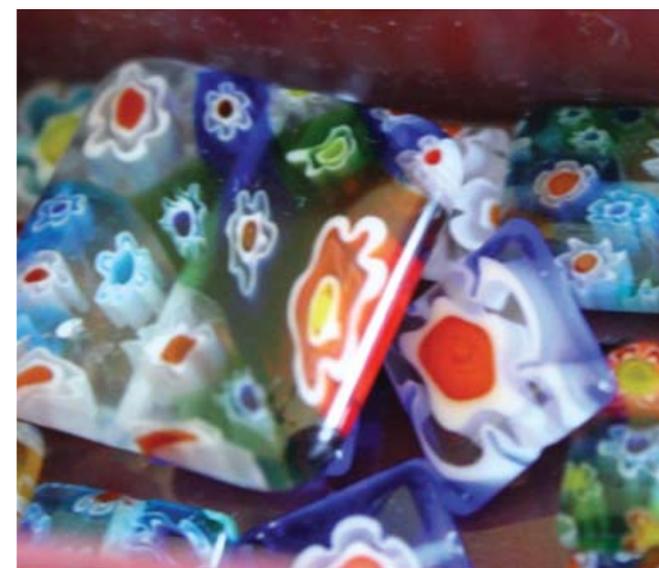


All photos by Katherine Chang



**GOT BEADS?** It's easier to start off than you think. "I buy these beads in bulk for around \$8 and start making whatever comes to mind," Debbie Soung (10) said. (Photo by Katherine Chang)

**IT'S HARDER THAN IT LOOKS** Katherine Chang (10) fusses with a pesky bead. "It definitely wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. My hands kept fumbling and I couldn't get the wire to work the way I wanted," she said. (Photo by Katherine Chang)



**FLOWER POWER** Debbie says she loves to use glass beads. "The shine and the clarity are just different," she said. **POWER TOOLS** Needle nose and flat nose pliers, along with wire cutters, are the basic tools any jewelry maker needs. (Photos by Katherine Chang)

# SARATOGAN AGORA

Sophomore Edward Dong discovers a **lively meeting place**—Saratoga's Farmers' Market

**CARRIED-AWAY CARROTS** Around 10 a.m., Edward reorganizes misplaced vegetables. Some customers left carrots in the potato pile when they saw how good the potatoes looked and decided to buy those instead. (photo by Karissa Dong)



**\$2.25...NO, \$2.50** Sophomore Edward Dong weighs a small bag of potatoes. He experienced the difficulty in calculating prices both accurately and efficiently. (photo by Karissa Dong)

"What are these called?"  
 "That's lettuce."  
 "And these are beets, right?" I ask, pointing to a mound of leafy stems, each attached to a cherry-sized root.  
 "No, those, those are radishes."  
 I try to smile as the woman throws me a quizzical glance. With a red felt tip pen, I write "Radishes, Green Onion, Parsley, \$1 a bundle" on a dog eared index card, which I place next to the produce on the checkout table.

I wonder whether I have provided more help than trouble for Araceli, a middle-aged Hispanic woman who sells vegetables every Saturday at the Saratoga Farmers' Market. Earlier this morning, she had heartily accepted my offer to help her out in her stall; now, I fear that my ignorance might prompt her to regret her decision.

However, my worries fade as Araceli, with a wide grin, repeats the prices for the remaining vegetables. She wears an apron over her green T-shirt, and her curly hair barely reaches her shoulders.

In Hollister, Araceli owns a 20-acre organic farm. She works with her husband and seven hired workers all year, even during the winter.

"The wintertime is actually better for us, because I sell vegetables," Araceli explains as we wait for customers. "Fruits, like strawberries, oranges, come in spring and summer. But when it is winter, people have no fruit to buy, so they buy vegetables."

A tall man wearing a bike helmet strolls into our stall.  
 "Good morning, sir, what would you like today?" Araceli calls out with a casual and friendly tone. "Fresh spinach, cabbage, Brussels sprouts?"

The biker hands me his pick, a few potatoes and Brussels sprouts. I strain to recall the prices I had written just five minutes ago. The potatoes cost \$2 a pound, but what about the Brussels sprouts?

Nervously, I place the produce on the scales. "About 1.25 pounds of

potatoes, and half a pound of sprouts," I whisper to myself as the man watches and waits. "That would mean \$2.25, no, \$2.50 for the potatoes..." Araceli helps me out. "Half pound Brussels sprouts, \$1.75, one and one-fourth pound potatoes, \$2.50, so \$4.25, sir. Would you like a bag?"

The man nods and hands me a \$5 bill. In the wide and shallow metal cylinder that holds cash, I find three quarters and complete the transaction. The customer smiles and thanks me with an unexpected congeniality.

Suddenly, from the pick-up truck behind us, a voice mumbles, "Por qué no hay chicharos?" Araceli's son Javier, a fifth grader with a brown hood pulled over his head and a bashful smile, complains quietly about his hunger as he lies listlessly on the front seat. Eyes plaintive behind glasses, he tells me that he came to help his mother without eating breakfast.

Araceli replies they will eat soon. As midday nears, more customers arrive. I weigh bag after bag of carrots and broccoli, and my mind clouds with fractions as I try to estimate costs and to add values to obtain the correct totals. Much to my relief, customers grin when I ask them to check my arithmetic. Meanwhile, Araceli chats with myriad acquaintances as she sprinkles her produce with a punctured jug of water. One returning customer practices his Spanish using basic phrases. A neighboring vendor jogs over with several packs of dried apricots, which she trades for lettuce. She talks about the recent improvement in sales.

"Last year was a very bad year," Araceli says in agreement. "Customers would say, 'If I buy potatoes, then I won't buy onions. If I buy onions, then I won't buy the spinach.'"

At noon, Araceli tells me that she often looks forward to meeting with these friends while I pack my bags and thank her.

"Next time I come to the Farmers' Market," I think to myself, "I'll make sure to visit."

—Edward Dong

## TOP 3 PRODUCTS

### SWANK FARMS



"We come because my wife really likes these tomatoes. They taste better than the tomatoes in the supermarkets."  
 —Dave (Cupertino resident)

\$2.75 / LB

### BREAD AND BUN ORGANIC BAKERY



"It really depends on the season. But one that's always very good is the Danish Bakery. It's expensive, but it's really good."  
 —Amy (Los Gatos resident)

\$6.50 / LOAF

### ORCHIDEXPERTS.COM



"I love the peas, the cucumbers, the lettuce, all vegetables and fruits. We buy our lunch here. Oh, and the orchids!"  
 —Jane (San Jose resident)

\$6 / POT



Edward helps a customer complete her grand purchase: 60 pounds worth of carrots. She has come for many weeks and "always buys a lot of carrots," Araceli says. (photo by Karissa Dong)

**IMPROVING SALES** Araceli watches after a customer decides to buy more produce. "This year people are buying a little more," Araceli said. (photo by Karissa Dong)



**PRICE TAGS FOR WHOM?** Edward places a price tag on top of the onions. Early on, Araceli asked him to write out prices for the customers, but "they might've been for me, too," Edward said, referring to his troubles in memorizing costs. (photo by Karissa Dong)

# FIRST STEPS ON ICE

Any sport is difficult. But try skating on **slippery ice** while only supporting yourself with two **sharp blades** and simultaneously doing gymnastics. Welcome to **figure skating**.

I slammed into a wall of cold air as I walked down the stairs to the ice skating rink at Vallco Mall in Cupertino. Junior Kelsey Owyang was already there waiting for me.

She was walking with her skates on, balancing only on two sharp blades, as if they were normal shoes. I rented skates, and with some difficulty, managed to put them on tightly. As I got up, however, my feet were unsteady and I had to hold onto Kelsey to make my way onto the ice.

I have always been fascinated by the artistic grace of Olympic ice skaters, but the thought of falling on the cold, hard, ice made me think twice about taking ice skating lessons. I decided to break away from my fears, however, and challenge myself to learn how to ice skate. With this in mind, I stepped into the ice rink and grabbed onto the side railing.

"It's just like walking," Kelsey explained, as I slowly pushed myself along. Even with the support, my left leg slipped under me and my right leg skid forward as I lost balance and nearly fell flat on the ice. Luckily, I fell in Kelsey's arms and she held me until I could once again coordinate my unruly legs.

Surprisingly enough, Kelsey had not had one serious injury in all of her training for the past nine years as a figure skater. I, on the other hand, was only a few minutes into the lesson and was about to pull a muscle from accidentally doing the splits.

After a few laps I finally felt confident enough to balance without the support of the side railings. "Hold your hands out like you're grabbing onto a table," Kelsey advised. But every few feet, my hands were flailing in the air in all directions trying to counteract my horrible balancing skills.

Around me, little children were gracefully skating backwards, spinning in circles, and a few were even jumping. I stared at them in awe.

Watching them, I started skating faster and faster until suddenly... SPLAT! I came crashing down hands first. After I got up with Kelsey's help, I decided to take a break to recuperate from my fall.

In the meantime, Kelsey showed me some of her acrobatics on ice. She performed a back scratch spin by turning in circles on one foot, each rotation faster than the previous one. Afterwards, she skated backwards, swifter than I could ever fathom going.

Back on the ice I felt confident enough to learn something new. Kelsey decided to teach me how to swivel, or move my feet apart, together, and then back apart again.

Holding me by the hands, she stepped me through the process. After much effort and time, I was finally able to swivel without falling over.

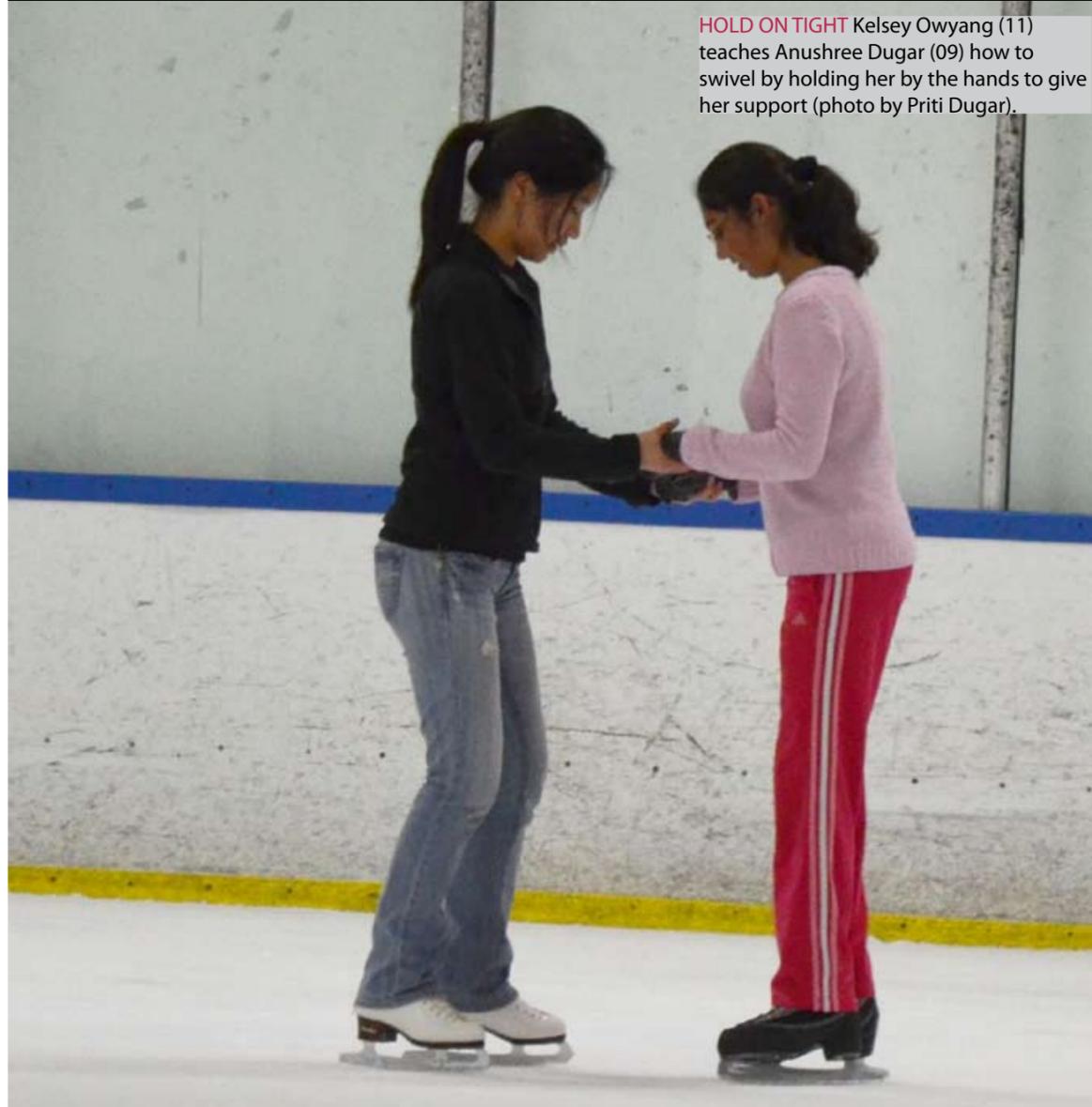
By the end of my entire experience I felt comfortable skating without holding on to Kelsey or reaching for the railing every few seconds, and I had even learned one trick. Walking on the normal floor with my skates on was not hard any more either.

I realized that my decision to set aside my fears was well worth the risk I took. I loved the feeling of gliding on ice, and will surely return to the ice skating rink in the near future.

On our way back up the stairs to the mall, a warm blanket of air made my cheeks burn and my hands turn red. Even though a few of my leg muscles were already aching, there was no doubt that I had an exhilarating experience.

—Anushree Dugar

**HOLD ON TIGHT** Kelsey Owyang (11) teaches Anushree Dugar (09) how to swivel by holding her by the hands to give her support (photo by Priti Dugar).



**FALLING OVER** Dugar loses balance and is about to fall over while Owyang catches her (photo by Priti Dugar).



**GETTING THE HANG OF IT** After half an hour Dugar finally feels confident on the ice and starts to skate faster (photo by Priti Dugar).



**WHAT FUN** Owyang enjoys teaching Dugar how to ice skate (photo by Priti Dugar).



**SPINNING** Owyang performs a back scratch spin by turning in circles on one foot. (photo by Anushree Dugar)



**HOLD YOUR HANDS OUT** Owyang teaches Dugar how to balance on ice by holding one's hands straight out (photo by Priti Dugar).



**WATCH IN FRONT** Dugar carefully tries to skate without holding on to the side walls or Kelsey (photo by Priti Dugar).

## TOP 5 WAYS TO FALL

- 1 Skate so fast, that you can't stop
- 2 Bend forward and lose your balance
- 3 You don't need to read this if you trip over your own feet just walking on the floor
- 4 Run into another skater. At least you aren't alone!
- 5 Don't be Kelsey Owyang



**TURNING AROUND THE CURB** Owyang makes a sharp turn while ice skating on Sunday May, 28. Owyang has figure skated for nine years. "I really enjoy the feeling of gliding on ice," she says (photo by - Dugar).

check this out  
ice skating

**PANORAMIC VIEW** The stunning view at the top of the Lookout Trail makes all the pain and toil absolutely worth it.



## DITCHING PAVEMENT

Running with sophomore Olivia Whiting not only led to soreness, exhaustion, cramps and occasional despair, but also **adventure, bonding and endorphins.**

I despise running. Well, to clarify, I hate running just because I'm a miserable runner. Keep in mind that this is coming from the guy who used to have an 11 minute mile. I would always be the last one to finish, and the rest of the class would watch my short chubby self huff and puff obscenely loudly as I attempted to finish my last lap.

These mortifying tween memories have caused to me to secretly yearn to be a good runner. So I called up my friend on Saturday night, fellow sophomore cross country runner Olivia Whiting, and asked her to run with me. She told me to show up at her house the next afternoon and she would lead a run from there. Foolishly I agreed, eagerly nonetheless, without asking further questions.

The next day, I showed up at her house on time. The weather was cloudy and slightly breezy, just the way I like it. After a couple minutes of amiable banter, I finally asked her where we were running to. She smiled sweetly and told me we were running the Lookout Trail. Then she pointed in the general direction we were running, which was basically to the Santa Cruz Mountains.

I had figured that we were just going to run repetitive laps around the track, which at least was slope-less, but Olivia was an adamant and persuasive proponent of the Lookout Trail. I'm guessing she either wanted a more strenuous work-out experience or wanted to amuse herself by seeing me suffer.

The plan was to warm up by jogging from her house to the Madrona Cemetery, where we would stop to stretch. By the time we got to Saratoga downtown however, I was already feeling the burn. A few minutes later, it felt like we had barely covered any distance and I was dying to get to the cemetery.

Stretching proved to be an opportune time to catch my breath again and I was ready to keep going. We were not yet even close to being one fourth of the way there.

We ran uphill for the rest of the way, though I would need

to stop every so often to catch my breath. Time started to blur and all that was on my mind was to regulate my breathing. My feet seemed to move on with minds of their own.

Suddenly, Olivia took an unexpected left from the road we had been following into what seemed to be wild woodland shrubs. However, this was actually a pretty hidden entry way into the Villa Montalvo hiking trail.

After a few minutes of excitement at reaching a benchmark part of the trail, the mundane and excruciating cycle began once again. We ran. And ran. And ran some more, mostly uphill with the occasional forest foliage maliciously scraping our legs and ankles.

Although we ran side by side for most of the run, we barely conversed and what little we did say was nonsensical and practically incoherent. I distinctly remember grunting, for example, "Trees, tall trees everywhere in the forest" to which Olivia replied, "Aah, Pocahontas".

Finally, Olivia told me we had reached the last hill we had to run before we got to the top. Then she sprinted away with a spurt of inconceivable determination. I tried picking up my speed a little but my body wouldn't listen and I ended up trailing a considerable distance after her.

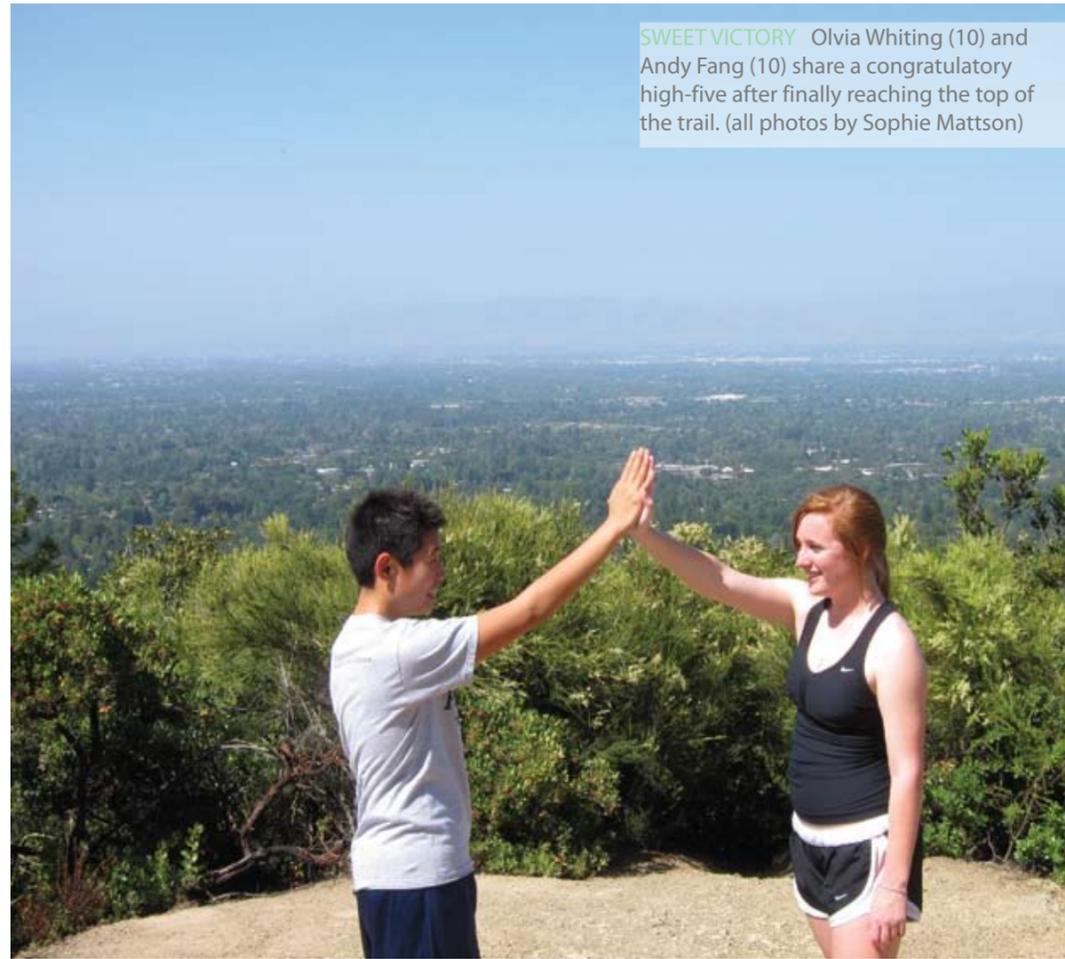
Suddenly, light flooded the trail and I realized incredulously that we actually had arrived at the clearing at the top. Sure, the view was great, but to be honest, I was more concerned with oxidizing my body.

Running downhill was a lot faster than the running uphill, and it was just a blur of dirt to pavement. When we finally got to Olivia's house again, we downed cups of water and then sprawled limply on her bed.

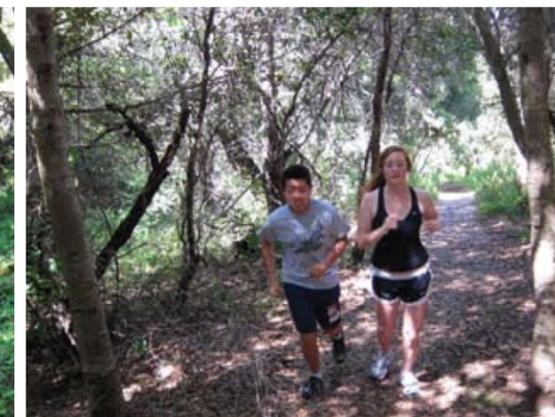
The next day, Olivia graciously told me, "I guess you did alright, better than I expected". Call me crazy but I've already made plans to run the trail again with her this summer. Maybe this marks the path to being a decent runner, who knows?

—Andy Fang

**SWEET VICTORY** Olivia Whiting (10) and Andy Fang (10) share a congratulatory high-five after finally reaching the top of the trail. (all photos by Sophie Mattson)



**RUN WELL TOP:** Olivia Whiting points to the approx. direction the run lead to. **LEFT:** Andy Fang (10) and Olivia Whiting (10) quickly catch their breath at the entrance to the actual mountain



**RUNNING, RUNNING, RUNNING** About midway to the top, all that could be heard among the runners were heavy breathing. **MERGING INTO THE TRAIL** Shortly after turning into the actual trail, Andy Fang (10) and Olivia Whiting (10) get accustomed to the change of asphalt to dirt.

## TOP 5 TRAILS

- 1 The SHS Track (Length: Limitless)  
—Sanj Nalwa (09)
- 2 Lookout Trail (Length: 7.5 miles)  
—Thomas Clark (12)
- 3 Neighborhoods behind Redwood Middle School Trail (3.2 miles)  
—Rachel Perera (09)
- 4 Golden Triangle Run (5 miles)  
—Matt Yee (10)
- 5 From SHS to the downtown Starbucks and back ( 1.5 miles)  
—Olivia Whiting (10)

# I LIKE TO BUILD

Freshman's quest in learning what the parts of a computer are and then learning how to place each one in a computer case which will be used.

I was guided through a crowded office lingering with engineers into a small, gray colored room in the corner. The desk in the room was filled with different electronic substances that I had never seen before, as well as an opened computer case. And right next to the case was a pamphlet that read "How to build a computer."

As I waited for my mentor to arrive, I thought about how badly I would mess up and how angry he would be at me. The thoughts about how I was going to learn what each object was and where to place them was buzzing around in my head, until I heard someone say, "Are you Farshad?"

This was the voice of my mentor, who later introduced himself as Alex Manso. He was a tall and skinny figure with brown hair. In his hand was a box of engineering supplies, like screwdrivers, that we would need to complete this task.

In the beginning hours of my visit, we briefly went over the different parts that we would be putting into the computer. He pointed out things like the motherboard, the main control system of the computer, the hard drive, the main memory of the computer, and all types of fascinating pieces I didn't even know about.

Once we had touched up on the functions of the different segments of the computer, Alex began lecturing me on where they would be placed in the computer. It was at this point where I started to get confused. I thought to myself, "How am I going to memorize this much stuff in this small portion of time?"

The reason for my confusion came from the fact that there are many different places which these same objects could

have been placed perfectly. However, having to memorize all the specific slots in the case for the different substances was mind-boggling for me.

Afterwards, he took some wires out of his drawer and explained to me where to apply these. This was the easiest thing to learn, because there were only a few, and their only function was to power the different parts. I thought this wouldn't be that bad after all, until I heard the next part.

He then pulled out a box of different types of screws from under his desk and began lecturing me on which substances each screw was used on. This part took the longest, because there were many screws in the box and also because I would forget what one of them was and ask him again. However, in the end, all the questions paid off.

At this point, he put the case and the substances in front of me and told me to build the computer. I confidently held each piece and my hand, and with the right screw and a screwdriver, applied it into the case. It did not take long for me to complete this section of the building process. The only thing left was to put the wires in their rightful positions.

I quickly placed all the wires firmly in the places they had to go, and began closing the case. Then I plugged it into the wall, and with a confident touch, clicked the power button. The minute my finger hit the power button, the computer began to rumble with the sound of success.

Alex, with a joyful look on his face, congratulated me for learning how to build a computer. And with a proud look on my face, I picked up the instructions pamphlet that we had used, and threw it into the recycling bin.

—Farshad Feyzi



photo by Farshad Feyzi

## HOW TO BUILD A COMPUTER

1



First, you have to start with by screwing in the different parts of the computer inside the case.

2



Next, you have to connect the power and connection cables to the different parts so that the computer will run properly

3



Finally, put the case back together. Plug in the main power cable to the end of, connect a monitor, and enjoy your very own self build computer. Later, you can upgrade your computer if you choose to, using these same steps!

## HISTORY



It all started with the creation of the typewriter in 1868. Over the years, many tech experts did experiments, failed, and tried again. Until a pair of close friends, David Packard and Bill Hewlett, founded the first step to the computer.

This was the moment other tech experts began to use their successful device and make it their own with something better. And with this push, in 1947, things like the RAM, or memory of the computer, began to show up.

After 1947, many different software and languages began entering the computers.

In 1974, the first actually computer looking computer came out into the the market. Now, we have the Imac!

## TOP 10 BRANDS

- 1) Apple
- 2) Hewlett Packard
- 3) Dell
- 4) Acer
- 5) Toshiba
- 6) Sony
- 7) Asus
- 8) IBM
- 9) Fujitsu
- 10) Gateway

PUT IT TOGETHER Computer engineer Alex Manso explains how to check for power in the wires.



photo by Azad Feyzi



photo by Azad Feyzi

PUT IT TOGETHER Freshman Farshad Feyzi poses with the computer that he successfully built after putting his mentor's useful advice to the test.

PUT IT TOGETHER Feyzi works on placing the graphics card in the motherboard, the main control board, of the computer. This is the last part of the placing processes. The next step is to connect all the wires.

# FIGHT TO THE FINISH

Freshman Ingrid Hong gets an in-depth look of the fast-paced martial art **taekwondo**, including all the swift **kicks**, accurate **punches** and quick **dodges**.

Sweat dripped down his forehead as he contemplated his next move. He took small steps, each step with a purpose to strike the opponent. With determination in his eyes, SHS student junior Benjamin Chung, struck his opponent in the head with his right foot. The opponent, an 18-year old student from New Mexico, stumbled trying to recover. However, it was too late, the referee called the round over. Ben had won the round with a seven point lead.

Taekwondo is a popular Korean martial art that is based on a point scoring system. During a round, the action is non-stop and the judges score points according to the strength of the technique, its style and the point of contact. The score is calculated from all three rounds.

It was the 19th California Open International TaeKwonDo Championship in the Bruin Event Center in San Jose. I didn't expect much, I thought I had seen it all in movies; the flying kicks and bone-breaking punches.

The center was packed and I got a front row seat. Watching the match had gotten me gripping the edge of my seat. Since you don't know what each person is thinking about striking next, each move is a surprise for the spectator. Each match also has unknown outcomes, as Ben Chung says, "No matter how small the match is on a competitive level, I always learn something about my technique and how I can improve." This is also the case of his close friend. A past taekwondo student, junior Ivan Lee, states, "When you're on the mat with thousands of people watching you, it gets nerve-wracking and it's hard to think at times. When your opponent strikes, you have to move on instinct."

With being in the room with hundreds of national

taekwondo champions, the energy of anticipation and excitement was endless. As I took my seat in silence, the opponents were already on the mat bowing. Both were dressed in a crisp, white robe-like uniform. Their black belts shown proudly, contrasting the bright white. The second the referee called "Joon-bi (ready)" and "Shi-jak (start)," Ben and his opponent were already on their toes analyzing each other. There was only focus and calm in their eyes; however I was just nervous watching them. Ben took a little jump forward, causing the opponent to quickly take a step back.

This exchange went along for a good 30 seconds. Then, Ben attempted a kick to the head, but the opponent dodged it going for a punch to Ben's head. He dodged the punch, kicking his opponents head successfully. The opponent's high spirit was broken, he was no match for Ben. Ben continued the kicks to the head and legs and continued dodging the opponent's kicks and punches.

A sudden "Keu-man (stop)" by the referee declared the end of the round. Ben had unanimously won the round. I quickly got a few words from him after the round. Panting, he gasped, "Winning a round is the second best feeling from winning the match. He really tested my skills with his dodges. But after I started to understand his strategies, I knew I could beat him."

I gained high respect for taekwondo students once you see them fight. The gracefulness and strength perfectly combined is an amazing sight to see. As the World Taekwondo Federation states, the principal physical movements are in sync with the mind and life. I used to think taekwondo was just fighting in robes, but there's a lot more to it. If you ever have the chance, check it out.

—Ingrid Hong

## DESCRIPTIVE DESCRIPTION BENJAMIN CHUNG



Benjamin Chung started taekwondo summer of 7th grade. Ben was walking by his future workplace when through the window of a building he saw one of his friends. They exchanged waves and his friend continued on with his Tae Kwon Do workout.

He watched in awe at the 540 degree jumps, the high kicks, and the power that went into every hit. After a few months, he quit swimming and decided to take up Tae Kwon Do instead. Four years later, he received his black belt and has a job at Mighty Fist Tae Kwon Do.

Ben is now ranked on a national level in Taekwondo after years of hard work and training. Ben has had to sacrifice many weekends and breaks to train for nationals. Over spring break, he went to the New Zealand Taekwondo Nationals, representing the US. He won second place in his weight group in sparring.

Ben is in the front row at the very right.



**TOP FIGHTERS** At the NorCal Taekwondo Championships, Michael Harvey and Jordan Gayle both look to steal the gold in the male -63kg category. (photo by Ingrid Hong)



**A PUNCH TO THE FACE** Ben Chung (11) strikes his opponent in the side of the head, contributing two points to his seven point lead. (photo by Ingrid Hong)

**KARATE KICK** "The kick is something you have to perfect, once you get it down, you're unstoppable," said Ben Chung (11). (photo by Ingrid Hong)

## HOW TO KICK INGRID HONG

1



Create a strong power stance. Have your right leg extended past your shoulder, with both feet angled towards your opponent.

2



With pointed toes, raise your right leg and swing your kick towards your opponent. Make sure you use the area right where your leg stops and foot starts.

3



After your foot strikes your opponent, pull your arms back and bend your elbows. Your hands should be in a punch position, with hands fisted.

check this out  
taekwondo

# SARIKA'S TOP 5 FOODS

- 1 Mint chocolate chip ice cream.... because one can never go wrong with ice cream.
- 2 Raspberry sorbet....exotic and tasty, this treat is perfect for hot days.
- 3 Turkey pesto wrap....filling and healthy, this wrap takes a Mediterranean twist.
- 4 Bagel...with cream cheese of course. A perfect way to start the morning.
- 5 Milkshakes....creamy and delicious, Senida's milkshakes hit the spot.



**I SCREAM FOR ICE CREAM** "The ice cream there is amazing," said Sarika Kathuria (10). Senida's coffee shop has over ten flavors, including butter pecan and mocha. (photo by Sarika Kathuria)

**WELCOME TO THE COFFEE GROUNDS** A welcoming sign hangs above the restaurant, giving passerbys a taste of what foods await them inside. (photo by Sarika Kathuria) **ENDLESS CHOICES** "There are so many options here," Sabina Kumar (10) said. The menu offers everything from wraps and sandwiches to coffee drinks and gelato. (photo by Sarika Kathuria)



**A COZY AMBIANCE** The sun filters into the cafe sitting area after a light drizzle on May 28. The restaurant has a warm, welcoming feel that allows customers to be as comfy as possible. (photo by Sarika Kathuria)

## DEVOTED EMPLOYEE SABINA KUMAR



Sabina has been working at The Coffee Grounds for three months. She got the job through her mom, who is close friends with Senida.

When Senida is busy baking a cake or managing her business, Sabina takes over the counter and does all the odd jobs, from taking out the trash to making the customers' food.

"My favorite part of being behind the counter is working the cash register," she said. "I feel so accomplished!"

Sabina works on Saturdays from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M., a manageable shift for a high school student. She says the experience is definitely worth it and doesn't take too much time.

The cozy cafe has become like a second home for Sabina. Work or pleasure, the cafe is definitely the place to be.

## CHERISHING THE CALM

An afternoon in a small coffee shop proves to be a memorable experience

en years ago, a determined woman with a dream in her head transformed a small ice cream shop in downtown Saratoga into a cozy, friendly coffee shop. "My wish was always to have a coffee shop," said the owner Senida Lelic.

The Coffee Grounds is a small cafe located in the heart of downtown Saratoga. Though quiet, it has become a frequent destination for locals and has picked up many regulars over the years.

Last Saturday, I spent a couple of hours taking in the ambiance of the cafe, enjoying the scenery on a lazy afternoon. With a cup of mint chocolate chip ice cream in hand, I settled into a state of relaxation and began to unwind from my stressful week.

In all honesty, I was simply there to observe Senida work the shop and see how the business is run. But while being there, I realized that the experience was not in the business itself but in the people who visit there and the love they share for such a small cafe.

Though I did not do much, those couple of hours spent in that coffee shop were the best moments I have spent in a while. The delicious food kept me satisfied while the cozy atmosphere made me feel welcome.

I can see why Senida is so drawn to her coffee shop. Being there is so calming and makes you feel at ease. One could spend hours there, not even noticing the time pass by. It's almost as if I was transported to another world.

As the hours ticked by, I watched a steady flow of customers come into the shop, some looking for a quick snack as they strolled through downtown, others stopping

for their regular chat with the owner and a bite to eat. Families, couples, and people working in other stores all seemed to enjoy the cafe. I could practically feel the ease and familiarity oozing in the air.

Even Senida's only employee revels in the comfort of the coffee shop. Sophomore Sabina Kumar says she can't wait for her shift at the cafe. "It's cute," she said. "It's cozy in here."

As a person who is not a regular at coffee shops, I can say that I have decided to make an effort to spend a couple hours enjoying at Senida's shop every few weeks. I barely even set foot in Starbucks, so for me, this is quite a change.

Sitting in that coffee shop, I realized a lot of things. People, in general, are just too busy. They are constantly running around and do not even notice the beauty of the little things in life.

Sometimes I think we need to just step back and let everything go to keep our sanities. I think the people who can take a couple of hours out of their day to go unwind in a coffee shop are the lucky people who see that need to just relax.

Not only did I happen across this amazing epiphany, but I also truly enjoyed myself. The music softly playing in the background created a happy mood in the cafe and the friendly nature of the people who came to the cafe made for a well spent afternoon.

I found my coffee shop experience to be quite rewarding. I never thought sitting in a coffee shop on a Saturday afternoon could make me think or feel so deeply.

—Sarika Kathuria

# THE WORKING LIFE

A sophomore girl tries a day as an employee to experience the daily life at a frozen yogurt shop to begin her working experience

The day started with cleaning the back counter and washing carts and bins. The sound of yogurt machines continued constantly like a drum beat in the distance. Light background music was playing as we cleaned constantly. When I was finally given a chance to let go of the cleaning rag, the counters sparkled, and I assumed the day's work was completed at yogurtland.

Unfortunately, that was only a warm-up for the next job. The frozen yogurt shop needed constant attention. The job turned out to be more like a work out. Toppings had to be organized and yogurt making materials needed to be placed in the machines.

I assumed that I would just be walking around idly, smiling at customers and introducing to new flavors to people. However, for all of the 3 hour shift I had worked, I never had a chance to sneak a gummy bear (one of the toppings) in my mouth. I now understood why the owner, Mrs. Kang, had been so eager to let me work a shift.

Since frozen yogurt shops have been so popular lately, I assumed that customers would come in and out continually. However, there were just groups of people who all came in at one time and left, never a flow. Then after a 15 minute period, another group would walk in. During the 15 minutes, there was more cleaning, sorting, and organizing to be done.

During my shift, Mrs. Kang and another employee worked with me. The other employee, Sarah Kameoka, helped me learn how to use the cash register. Using the cash register turned out to be as hard as calculus, possibly more difficult because of the need to converse with customers while pressing the different buttons. Then the shelf on the bottom shoots out at you, and you must place the paid money and get

change before an awkward silence forms. It took about 7 tries before I finished this whole process acceptably.

While doing the job, I also ran into many different types of people, some of whom were more difficult to deal with. Young children who came often made a mess while trying to get the frozen yogurt machine to work. Sometimes, the toppings also got mixed with one another which was impossible to sort. In the end, Mrs. Kang ended up throwing away toppings that were not able to sort.

Later in the afternoon, there was a crowd of people who came in for yogurt. They were a group of about 10, mostly adults. As they got their yogurts and toppings, we decided to use 2 cash registers to make the paying process faster. Mrs. Kang asked me to work at one of the cash registers, and I stood up in front of the box with lots of colored buttons. The other employee, Kameoka, watched me nervously as a man came up to me to pay. I hastily received the money and gave change, ending the quick conversation with a smile and an "enjoy!".

Mrs. Kang said, "Owning a yogurt store has a lot more responsibilities than it seems. After a while, it's like any other job, but it does take some getting used to." She was friendly and was understanding every time I made a mistake. When I was done with my shift, she gave me some samples of new flavors that they were planning to publicize next week.

Though the experience was memorable, I wish I were paid. With lot of tasks and cleaning to do, I also had to have mental abilities to do the job. Though it seemed simple on the outside, the job actually required both physical and mental capabilities. Life as an employee turned out to be more than simply standing behind the counter.

—Allison Kim

## THE ONE AND ONLY OWNER MRS. SARAH KANG



This is the owner of Yogurtland, Mrs. Sarah Kang. Mrs. Kang opened this frozen yogurt shop 2 years ago. She was the first person to open a self-serve frozen yogurt place. "I got the idea to open a yogurt shop after going to a frozen yogurt place in Korea," Mrs. Kang said.

Mrs. Kang thought it would be a good refreshing dessert in the summer that would be more healthy than yogurt. "Frozen yogurt has less calories and most of our flavors are organic or low calories," Mrs. Kang stated.

She went on to talk about the difficulties with having a frozen yogurt place. "It is hard in the colder seasons because people don't look for frozen yogurt unless the weather is hot," she said.

Mrs. Kang definitely is happy about how popular frozen yogurt has become in this neighborhood and plans to keep this shop open for many more years.



STACKING THE CUPS Allison Kim stacks the yogurt cups for customers. (photo by Sophie Kim)



SORTING THE TOPPINGS Allison Kim sorts all the bags of toppings on a shelf. (photo by Sophie Kim)

CLEANING THE TABLES Allison Kim spends time cleaning the tables after customers have left. All tables have to be clean for customers coming. (photo by Sophie Kim)

## TOP 5 CHOICES

- 1 Original tart.** Sorry, you can't buy the machine to take home. This flavor is plain but addicting and is compatible with any topping. It is the most popular flavor at yogurtland.
- 2 Chocolate** tastes just like chocolate ice cream and it's very rich. The sweet flavor captivates anyone who tries it.
- 3 Mango tart.** It's creamy and soft while it gives a rich mango taste. This flavor goes well with any fruit chunks.
- 4 Lychee.** The sweet taste of this fruit will definitely blow you away. This flavor goes well with mochi balls.
- 5 Red velvet cake.** This unique flavor of the loved red velvet cupcake is one of the staff's favorites. This flavor definitely matches with chocolate chips.

check this out  
yogurtland

# TERRIBLE AT TENNIS

A soccer player takes a **swing** at tennis using a different set of skills to prosper.

As I sat on the flimsy plastic bench of the tennis courts, I daydreamed about being the best tennis player in the world. I imagined myself acing Roger Federer on every serve that I took and everybody in the stands were chanting my name.

My day dream abruptly stopped as I heard freshman Tommy Chiou yell my name from the caged doorway across the courts. We walked to the opposite ends of the tennis court. I planned on winning one set since my confidence level was high.

As I awaited for the serve of the green tennis ball in Tommy's hand, numerous arrogant thoughts circled my head. I positioned myself where I thought that he would hit the ball.

Without any effort, Tommy tossed the tennis ball above his head and smashed it towards me with a lot of speed. As I positioned myself to return the ball, the ball suddenly dipped downward, due to Tommy's heavy topspin on the ball. When the ball hit the floor, the ball shot in my direction, faster than the original speed. The second after the ball whizzed past my left shoulder, I took a back handed swing, hitting nothing but the empty air around me.

I was baffled by my slow reflexes. I was known for being quick and agile, so I was surprised that I could not return the tennis ball back to Tommy. Tennis was a harder sport than I thought it would be.

A bead of sweat streamed down my forehead and entered my eye with a sting after a few minutes of playing tennis. Tommy made me work hard by aiming the ball to the sides of the court, forcing me to run back and forth across the width of the court. The muscle cramps kicked in shortly after I soaked my shirt with my sweat. As I leaned over for a gasp

of air, Tommy asked if he should stop playing easy, in a joking manner.

Tommy demonstrated his endurance by playing intensely throughout the entire game.

"Usually, I start to get tired after playing tennis for 45 minutes," Tommy said.

Tommy consistently hit the ball with a surge of power to the side of the court where I did not stand. Being a skilled soccer player, I have good anticipation of where the ball will be placed. But once I approached the exact spot of the ball, I would either hit the ball straight into the net or I would just completely miss the ball with my racket. I felt that I had a serious coordination problem as I rallied with Tommy.

With five years of experience, Tommy can read his opponent and predict where the opponent will place the ball.

"After a few minutes, you know where the opponent will place the ball because they have certain movements for certain shots," Tommy said.

Tennis is much different than my main sport, soccer. Whenever I made a mistake in soccer, there was usually a teammate covering up the mistake. But in tennis, there is nobody to cover up the mistake. Once the ball has passed you, then the play is over.

Unlike many tennis players, Tommy prefers to play doubles over singles. He enjoys sharing his experience with others.

"The more the merrier," Tommy said.

I learned that stamina, hand-eye coordination, and sturdy arms are necessary to become a proficient tennis player. Even though I am not as skilled in tennis as I am in soccer, I found this game with Tommy to be a good experience. Maybe someday I will pick up a tennis racket and give another shot at tennis.

—Jay Mulye



**Smashin' Serve:** Freshman Tommy Chiou tosses the ball up and strikes the ball with topspin. Tommy practices his serve everyday so that his serves are consistently effective

photo by Jay Mulye



photo by Jay Mulye



photo by Jay Mulye

**Backhanded Hit:** Freshman Jay Mulye takes a back handed swing at the ball, but unfortunately misses the ball. "I can't believe that I missed the ball," Jay said.

**Heavy Hit:** Freshman Tommy Chiou smashes a lobbed tennis ball across the court. "My favorite part of the game [Tennis] is to smash the ball," Tommy said. "You can feel like the most powerful person on the court."

## HOW TO BE GOOD AT TENNIS

1



First, you have to lift weights to increase your strength. The stronger you are the harder your hits. Also, muscle looks good for the girls.

2



Next, you have to jump rope to increase agility and calf muscles. But be careful, you do not want any lash marks on you legs.

3



Finally, play a lot of video games to increase hand-eye coordination. Hopefully your head will not hurt after the many hours of "practicing" in front of the screen.

## TOP 5 RACKETS

- 1 Babolat AeroPro Drive GT
- 2 Wilson BLX Six.One Tour
- 3 YouTek IG Speed Pro
- 4 YouTek Radical Pro
- 5 Prince EXO3 Tour 100



photo by Jay Mulye

**Diving Dangerously:** Freshman Jay Mulye attempts to return the tennis ball by diving towards it. "The whole right side of my body was covered with bruises after I dove for the ball," Jay said. "I will not try to dive on the tennis court ever again."

# BURNING QUESTIONS

- 1 Can robots replace doctors?  
No, one needs compassion  
—Dr. McBeth
- 2 Favorite part of job?  
Saving lives  
—Dr. Rendazzo
- 3 Least favorite part of job?  
Death  
—Dr. Rendazzo
- 4 What keeps you up at night?  
Missing a diagnosis  
—Dr. Rendazzo
- 5 What counts most?  
Every second  
—Dr. Rendazzo



**FULL SPEED AHEAD** A paramedic is parked in an AMR ambulance outside the ER at night on May 20, ready to rush out on the next call. (photo by Sanj Nalwa)

**INSIDE** Sanj Nalwa sits inside the AMR ambulance outside the ER at night on May 20. (photo by unidentified paramedic)



**RUSH** A doctor exits the ER at the front of the O'Connor Hospital ER at night on May 20. O'Connor Hospital is a nonprofit Catholic hospital in San Jose. The O'Connor ER is situated opposite the main entrance to the hospital. (photo by Sanj Nalwa)

# ER: THE FINAL FRONTIER

The story of two doctors, one ER, and a budding journalist

The spotted white vinyl floor pulses with life, radiating both warmth and cleanliness. There is an ever-constant beeping of a machine in the background.

It is Friday evening at the O'Connor Hospital in San Jose, May 20, 2011, 7:30 p.m. I am at its Emergency Room, ER for short.

I am here to shadow Dr. Marco Rendazzo, the Director of the ER and a friend of my mother.

I am here to put myself in his shoes.

I have some idea of what to expect as my mom is also a physician. But she primarily delivers babies. I expect an ER physician's job to be much more exciting.

I anticipate a dramatic evening: Maybe some gunshot wounds, with sirens blaring, as one might see on TV. Or I could settle for a heart attack, as long as it ends well.

I am armed with an Olympus W-10 voice recorder and a Nikon Coolpix L14 camera.

Dr. Rendazzo introduces himself, and asks for my name.

He has graying hair and bright brown eyes that glow warmly.

He looks exhausted, but walks with a reserved, refined step.

Dr. Rendazzo introduces me to Dr. Brian McBeth, the other doctor on call tonight.

"This is Dr. Nalwa's son," says Dr. Rendazzo. "He's shadowing me tonight. If you have anything good to show him..."

"Will do," returns Dr. McBeth.

Dr. Rendazzo has been practicing medicine for about 14 years, and Dr. McBeth for 11.

"Emergency medicine... every day you come in is completely different," says Dr. Rendazzo. "I like not being able to predict what the day is going to be like."

Dr. Rendazzo proceeds to tell me that roughly five to ten percent of patients die every year in an ER.

"It's always hard to break the news to the family," says Dr. Rendazzo.

Dr. McBeth is promptly called. He leads me to a curtained room.

A Hispanic man of around 30 is on the operating table. A young woman and child watch him intently. None of them speak English well.

The man has an ingrown toenail, which has cut into and infected his skin.

The toe is festering: It's blue-violet and seeps pus. The man is

worried.

"Aqui!" says the child, enacting the ripping out of a toenail. The man fidgets nervously. The young woman laughs.

The procedure is quick. Dr. McBeth slips on gloves, numbs the toe, cleans the area, and cuts out the runaway toenail with giant, sterile nail clippers.

Dr. McBeth then tells the family to apply an antibiotic cream to the toe for a few days regularly.

The woman tells him she's already been applying antibiotics to the toe.

Does she have the cream? No. She has been breaking open antibiotic pills and sprinkling the powder onto the wound.

I turn quickly to see if Dr. McBeth is as amused as I am, but his face doesn't crack.

His expression remains respectful, which draws my admiration.

We return to join Dr. Rendazzo.

It's almost 9 p.m. when Dr. Rendazzo is called.

"Come on," he says to me.

I follow him briskly to a stretcher carrying an Asian man, perhaps 80, with an oxygen mask.

The man's lungs have filled with fluid, restricting his breathing. He is having a cardiac arrest.

Dr. Rendazzo takes charge. He blurts out a series of commands to the techs and nurses.

"Medicine is teamwork," Dr. Rendazzo says to me. "A few seconds can make a difference."

I look on at the man as people rush madly about. His pale-blue eyes are dazed and his plaid shirt ripped open. His oxygen mask is replaced by a respirator and he's put on life support.

After a long few minutes, his eyes flicker as he regains consciousness.

"This is what we live for," says Dr. Rendazzo. "The cuts, the bruises, are all nice and good, but saving lives is what we live for. That's why we become emergency medical physicians."

It is now 10 p.m.

My mom is here to fetch me.

The ER is what I expected, and more: When every second counts, teamwork is crucial.

A patient may be alive one moment, but gone another. Just like that.

—Sanj Nalwa

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## THE EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS THE ER DOCTORS WITH THE BUDDING JOURNALIST



Dr. Marco Rendazzo (left) attended UC Davis and then St. George's Medical School. At first, he was unsure whether to major in medicine or Italian. If he did major in medicine, he was unsure whether to do orthopedics or emergency medicine. He is now Director of ER at O'Connor Hospital.

Sanj Nalwa (center) is a freshman at Saratoga High School and a budding journalist.

Dr. Brian McBeth (right) attended Stanford and then U. Michigan Medical School. He always wanted to be an ER physician like his dad, and now he is just that at the ER at O'Connor Hospital.

check this out  
the ER Experience

# FOOD SECRETS

FRESHMAN GIRL TRIES **VEGETARIANISM** FOR A DAY; BEGINS TO SEE **MEAT** EATING IN DIFFERENT LIGHT

"One thing only I know, and that is that I know nothing," said Socrates.

I found out the truth behind this when I became vegetarian for a day.

Being vegetarian meant I would have a constricting diet excluding all meat items. I anticipated a challenge since I was previously a meat lover.

My day began normally. It started with a bowl of Chocolate Rice Krispies topped with nonfat milk and a glass of Tropicana orange juice.

As I crunched and crackled my way through breakfast, I reached my first hurdle.

The smell was a nightmare for any beginning vegetarian, yet a dream for everyone else. The bubbling fat and the sear of a spatula scraping the pan drippings was pushing me to the edge. My dad, Wiren Perera, was cooking bacon.

My dad saw me eyeing his food and asked me if I wanted any.

"I'm a vegetarian for the day, otherwise I'd love some," I said.

Wiren said, "If you really want to be a proper vegetarian, just think of how your helping the animals."

Using his advice, I managed to persuade myself into sticking to my diet.

Lunch surrounded me with temptation. While I munched on a simple salad, others dug through ham sandwiches oozing with mustard, chicken strips glowing with barbecue sauce, beef jerky, and bacon bits to die for.

"Just think of your cats. If you wouldn't eat them, you wouldn't eat that," said freshman vegetarian Monica Saripella.

"I still don't understand how vegetarians can resist delicious food daily," I said.

I tried to keep my eyes down on the crossed green patterned table below. Knowing I wasn't allowed to eat any of the foods made the hour drag.

After countless reminders from Monica, I only focused on

the suffering of the animals.

My temptation died down a little.

When I arrived home, I was curious as to why people chose to be vegetarians.

It made perfect sense to me, that we should be allowed to eat animals. It's just natural.

The only real con I could see for being vegetarian was the death of the animals.

But I found out vegetarians chose their ways with reason.

The New York Times said Americans process nearly 10 billion animals every year. Farmed animals are not only suffering, but causing global effects.

The Union of Concerned Scientists said that farmed animals consume nearly 70 percent of the antibiotics in the U.S., leading to a serious increase in the amount of antibiotic resistant bacteria. This means more diseases that cannot be cured.

These animals require billions of pounds of corn and soy to eat, and thus have caused the president of Brazil to announce emergency measures to halt the burning and cutting of the country's rain forests for crop and grazing land, said the New York Times.

Many vegetarians are aware of these problems.

By the time dinner came along, I was starting to think in the mind set of a true vegetarian. I still wanted the taste of meat, but thinking of all the reasons to resist ceased the temptation.

That night, my mom made tacos brimming with beef filling. I tossed my own salad instead, and avoiding the meat wasn't difficult at all.

Although I still occasionally eat meat, I've cut down to indulging only once a week. I hope to cut it down further in the future, especially in college when I can make my own meals.

Eating meat may make me feel good, but not eating it makes me feel even better. —Rachel Perera



**CRUNCH ON LUNCH** Vegetarian Monica Saripella (9) crunches through her usual salad. "I eat the way I do because I feel I'm making a difference for an animals life, and I will continue being a vegetarian for as long as I can." (photo by Rachel Perera)



**PILING PILLS** Monica Saripella (9) takes vitamins every morning to make sure she is nutritionally balanced despite her meat free diet. (photo by Rachel Perera)

**POPPIN PILLS** Rachel Perera (9) takes a vitamin the morning of her vegetarian experience to make up for the lack of protein. (photo by Adele Perera)

## TOP 5 VEGETARIAN FOODS

- 1 "I like granola because I can make it at home. I make the best home made granola, not going to lie." —Amelia Troyer (9)
- 2 "Pizza, because I like bread, cheese, tomato sauce, and carbs." —Ingrid Hong (9)
- 3 "Rice cakes, because they're one of the only things I can eat. I'm allergic to wheat and lactose" —Laura Rea (9)
- 4 "Waffles because they just taste good." —Jay Muyle (9)
- 5 "Hummus, because it's healthy and delicious" —Izzy Zucarino (9)

## VEGETARIAN FOOD CHART

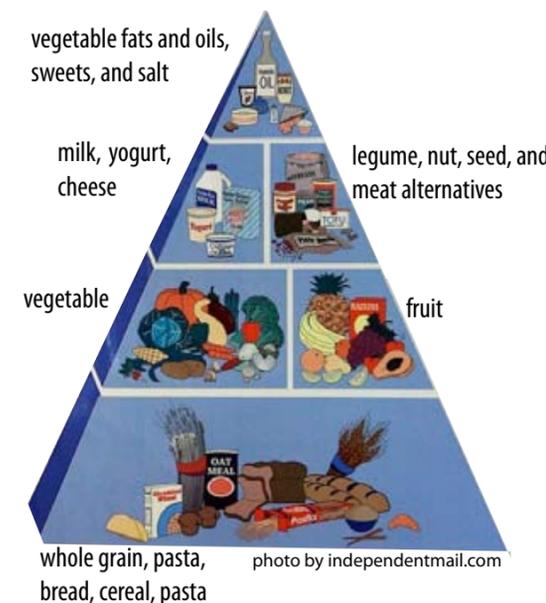


photo by independentmail.com

## VEGETARIAN SANDWICH RECIPE

### Ingredients

- \* 1 can sun dried tomatoes
- \* 2 slices bread
- \* 2 cups ricotta cheese
- \* spinach
- \* mushrooms
- \*extra virgin olive oil

### Directions

1. Toast 2 slices of bread.
2. Place about a capful of extra virgin olive oil in a pan and put on high heat.
3. Place the mushrooms in the pan and stir for about 6 minutes until they are well cooked.
4. Blend 1 can of sun dried tomatoes.
5. Mix the tomatoes, and the oils left in the can, with the ricotta cheese.
6. Spread the ricotta cheese on one slice of bread. Top it with the mushrooms and spinach in whichever order you like. Enjoy :)

# I LIKE TO RUN

Two sisters, **Katherine Rea** and **Laura Rea**, come together to train for 8 weeks and run the **San Fransisco half marathon** which is **13.1 miles** on **May 28**.

“Come on! You can do it! Keep going!” a spectator cheered to me as I labored to keep running under the big banner that read “Mile 12”. If I had made it this far, I had better keep going. Left foot forward, right foot forward. With every step the intensity of the pain and exhaustion seeped into every crevice of my body. Could I keep going?

The day was overcast and I'd been running for almost 2 hours with what seemed like no end in sight. Was it really still before noon? Whatever possessed me to get out of bed at 4:30 AM has got to kick in right about now. 4:30 AM had hit me like a ton of bricks that morning.

Around 5:30 AM, my mentor and my sister, Katherine Rea, and I ate bagels to get a quick fix of whole grain and potassium for the long hard run ahead. I had been training with my sister for a long 2 months, and we were ready to run through the city and along trails.

Katherine had run two marathons before, one in San Francisco and another in Philadelphia. “I love running. It makes me feel like I'm in my own world,” she'd say.

At about 6:30 AM we were prodded out to the starting gates like a herd of cattle. As we made our way toward the starting line, I saw about fifty people getting ready for the race.

That calm quickly dissolved into panic as I turned to see the other end of the starting line. Behind the temporary gate were leagues of thousands ready to run me over the second the race horn was blown. I suddenly felt like I was the rabbit in this dog race scenario. “Just sit down and stretch,” my sister said. As I focused my energy toward stretching, a calm wave swept over me.

Instead of feeling like was being chased, I finally felt ready. My excitement grew as the horn blew for the start. As I started running, I tried to ignore that nagging feeling that my body was not going to cooperate that day. Instead, I kept going and I am so glad I made that decision.

The first few miles I chatted with my sister and, feeling like I was on cloud nine. There were so many wonderful people out to help cheer all of us on. They knew the trail before us was long and they wanted us to know they were there for support.

By mile 5, that nagging feeling was turning into worry. “My body just doesn't seem to want to run today,” I commented to my sister. I kept my chin up and figured that my muscles would loosen up, as they had in many of my past runs, and I would feel better in just another mile or two. So I took a deep breath and kept going.

It wasn't until about mile 8 when my body decided it was no longer going to take a back seat to my mind. My body was apparently not aware that I was in a very important race.

For 12 miles I struggled through the worst pain and torment, and at times I didn't believe that I could finish. But then I'd think “No way!” I would finish. I was going to cross that line running. The only logical thing to do was to continue.

Finally, the last quarter of a mile. I will make it. I will finish, I will run and I will NOT throw up! I kept going faster and faster, barely able to lift my feet except for the sheer will power to get to that finish line. I gave my last final effort to cross that finish line, and with a determination unknown to myself before that moment, I planted my feet across that finish line like no one had ever crossed one. I grinned as they placed that medal over my head, and I breathed deeply to make sure nothing but air came out of my mouth. I felt so proud!

Marathons aren't just about running. They are about hard work, living through the pain, putting “you” first, and, most importantly, allowing yourself to dream. I dreamed, and I dreamed big. No one can ever tell me ever again that I can't do something, anything, because I, Laura Rea, ran a half marathon. I took what seemed like a never-ending race and turned it around...because I kept going. And I'm so glad I did.

—Laura Rea



THE PLACES WE'LL GO Not everyone likes to run, but the people in this picture are dedicated. These people are running in the San Francisco Marathon and are on mile 5.



AWARDING IN MORE THAN ONE WAY This is the medal Laura Rea received for finishing the San Francisco Half Marathon under 2 hours.

EARLY BIRD GETS THE MEDAL) At 6 in the morning, the race starts, fog everywhere. Part of the San Francisco bridge was closed off for the marathon.

## TOP 5 WORKOUT SONGS

- 1 “Like a G6 by the Far East Movement, because it has a really great beat.”  
—Nadia Roohparvar (9)
- 2 “Wake Up by Mac Miller, because his rapping is amazing and its fun to run to.”  
—Allison Buchanan (12)
- 3 “Pursuit of Happiness (Steve Aoki Remix), because it gets my heart pumping.”  
—Hannah Johnson (11)
- 4 “Roll Up by Wiz Khalifa, because I know all the words and I can sing along.”  
—Anup Kar (9)
- 5 “I like anything by Juanes!”  
—Senora Voorhees



GROUP DYNAMICS When running, finding a large group that has basically the same pace as you makes the time fly by. Freshman Laura Rea chatted with these runners the whole way through.

### 8 WEEK TRAINING PLAN

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Week 1	off	3 Miles	4 Miles	5 Miles	off	3 Miles	6 Miles
Week 2	off	3 Miles	5 Miles	6 Miles	off	4 Miles	7 Miles
Week 3	off	4 Miles	6 Miles	7 Miles	off	6 Miles	8 Miles
Week 4	off	5 Miles	7 Miles	8 Miles	off	5 Miles	9 Miles
Week 5	off	6 Miles	8 Miles	9 Miles	off	7 Miles	10 Miles
Week 6	off	6 Miles	8 Miles	10 Miles	off	8 Miles	11 Miles
Week 7	off	7 Miles	9 Miles	10 Miles	off	6 Miles	12 Miles
Week 8	off	6 Miles	5 Miles	7 Miles	off	4 Miles	13.1 Miles

# BEHIND FLAG LINES

Sophomore Sierra Smith arranges a date with a **flag** and the members of **Color Guard** to explore what makes them **spin** and twirl.

A quick eight count and we're off. Rapid body movements and turmoil follow as we put all our effort into recreating director Tony Crapo's spontaneous dance piece. We are performing a set of movements introduced to us only minutes ago and I am soon caught up in a flurry of dancing.

The Color Guard veterans have nearly no trouble keeping up with the fast paced gestures while the new recruits and myself struggle to stay on count. Luckily this dance was just an exercise to assess our skill level and the Color Guard welcomes everyone with open arms.

My experience as a member of the Color Guard team left me enlightened and in awe. What I previously perceived as a group of overly eager students making silly hand motions proved to be so much more. Color Guard is an activity that involves athleticism, artistry, and precision.

Each practice begins with an active stretch to music and a review of basic dance skills. By the end of this routine everyone is thoroughly stretched and excited to see what Tony has in store for them that day.

When the team lines up for flag practice they extend to all corners off the dance studio, each student distanced roughly five feet to the side or behind the next. As the Color Guard members carry out Tony's instructions, the sound of feet slapping on the gym floor echos throughout the room.

Flag twirling is a main aspect of guard and an impressive skill. To properly twirl a flag, one must rearrange his or her hand positions every 90 degree spin. Luckily, I have good hand-eye coordination so this skill didn't give me much trouble.

However, tossing the flag and maintaining the correct form to catch it proved too much for me to handle. Frequently my

flag would hit the ground and I would feel a quick rush of embarrassment before realizing that nobody had given it any notice. The dedicated students of Color Guard have become each other's second family and an inspiring group.

Water breaks at practice feel like a scene out of a movie as everyone gathers in the dance studio around a group of three or four girls. Music starts to play and the dancers begin to share their newest choreography. Cheers and hoots erupt from the crowd while the group shows off their skills.

The Color Guard practices for about seven hours during the school week and an extensive eight hours on weekends. Most of the members have been on the Color Guard since middle school and plan on continuing with it until they graduate.

Sophomore Michelle Shu joined the middle school Color Guard in seventh grade and continues to enjoy it in high school.

"The most enjoyable part of Color Guard is the interaction and accomplishments through each practice and competition," Michelle said. "It is a rewarding activity that works each member to their full potential while giving them a chance to meet new people."

As my day with the Color Guard came to a close I had a new understanding of the members and the challenging dynamic of the skills they perform. This squad is a group of dedicated students who put all of their effort into perfecting sharp, demanding routines.

I was overjoyed to get a chance to be a part of this enthusiastic group for a day. They showed me friendship, commitment, and a true love for what they do. The bond they form is hard to find anywhere else. I gained a new appreciation for the Color Guard and could not be more impressed.

—Sierra Smith

## COLOR GUARD VETERAN MICHELLE SHU



For sophomore Michelle Shu Color Guard is more than a sport, it's a lifestyle.

Michelle spends an average of seven hours a week in a dance class outside of colorguard to get ahead and keep her skills fine tuned.

This field season Michelle participated in the rifle line with about twenty other skilled Color Guard members. Rifle line is the most advanced line in the field performances and what every Color Guard student strives for.

Despite a demanding extracurricular schedule, Michelle is an academically accomplished student. She practices self discipline and adapts her schedule to accommodate her passions.

This model athlete is an inspiration to her peers and looks forward to her future with the guard. Michelle is a dedicated student who is a strong advocate for following your heart. (photo by Sierra Smith)



**MONKEY SEE, MONKEY DO** Sophomores Elizabeth McAfee and Sarika Kathuria follow along as director Tony Crapo teaches flag skills to incoming members in the small gym. "Tony is a great teacher," Sarika said. "He explains everything really well." (photo by Sierra Smith)

**AWE STRUCK** Sierra Smith (10) watches as veteran color guard members demonstrate advanced flag tricks. "They're really fun to watch," Sierra said. "It looks very impressive when they do synchronized movements with the flags." (photo by Michelle Shu)



**CARVE IT UP** Junior Alex Ju performs a basic "carve" skill at the beginning of flag practice, moving the flag in a figure eight motion. Alex is a master with the flag and advanced into the rifle line. (photo by Sierra Smith)

# RESTAURANT LIFE

Working In a **restaurant** for a day turned out to be **hard work**, but very fun!

When you step into a restaurant for dinner or lunch, and you see perfectly set tables and spotless floors, which you often take for granted, because they appear this way, every time you go there. I, like most, took these things for granted, but when I went to work at a local restaurant in Los Gatos, I got a look behind the scenes.

Owning and operating a restaurant is actually a lot of work. A typical workday, for Brenda Hammond, the owner of James Randall, a local restaurant in Los Gatos, and her son Ross, the chef, starts at around 10AM every day. On this Saturday, so did mine.

Entering the kitchen, I could smell the gas stoves, dish sanitizer, and various other scents. After setting up my work station, consisting of a cutting-board, knife and a couple bowls, I was ready to help. My day in the kitchen started with the task of pulling the ends off of about six pounds of green-beans, for that evening's dinner service, even though the day had just begun, and dinner was far from being served.

After accomplishing this task, I moved on to preparing some mushrooms. Executive Chef Ross Hammond, an SHS graduate, told me to take extra care to rid them of any dirt that could possibly be on them. I did so with a towel, and the mushrooms turned from a dirty shade of brown to off-white. Then, I chopped the mushrooms into halves, with a shiny chef's knife.

Next on the list, cutting four baskets of strawberries, for the graduation party arriving at the restaurant in about an hour (It was now about 11AM). Once again Ross showed me just how to slice the delicate fruit thin enough for the strawberry shortcake that was currently baking in the oven, with its aroma drifting through the kitchen. As soon as I finished cutting the strawberries, my kitchen duties were concluded, for now,

and I moved on to waiting tables, and running food, for that graduation party, that had just arrived.

Waiting tables may actually not sound all that exciting, but and it turned out, it proved to be quite fun. It took a little bit of time to learn how this process worked, but once I got the hang of it, I was able to bring a tea pot to table 20 without needing to look at the table key on the wall.

My duties as 'floor staff' also involved keeping the drinks stocked up in the ice buckets, and polishing wine glasses, which I had no idea how to do. It was actually pretty simple. All I had to do was hold the glass over some hot water, and wipe away the steam with a micro-fiber cloth.

When the graduation party started to wind down, I moved back to the kitchen to start the daunting task of dish duty. Looking at the sink piled high with pots, pans, various parts of a blender, and many, many plates I thought I would never be able to finish, as dishes kept arriving. After I had learned how to use the dishwasher, it was smooth sailing, as each load of about 15 plates only took about a minute and a half. (Much faster than my dishwasher at home) Within about 30 minutes, I had cleaned the sink, for the most part, and it was time for me to go home.

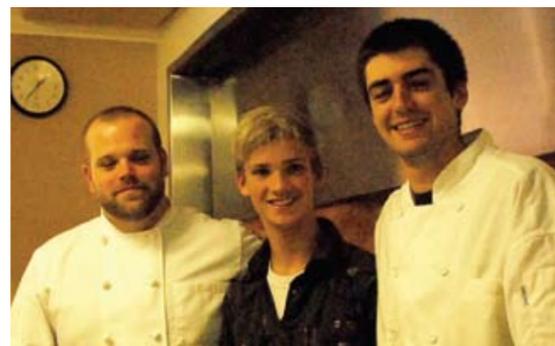
This experience really showed me how labor intensive owning and operating a restaurant really is. It was really fun to learn all how every job in the restaurant is accomplished and how everyone helps to prepare for the day. It was also fun to see all of the skills that are needed to run a restaurant. "Besides liking food, I think people skills are a huge part," says Brenda, "You have to be able to negotiate with vendors and talk to [customers.]"

Overall, this experience taught me how stressful being a chef actually is, and what it's like to work in a real restaurant.

—David Sparkman

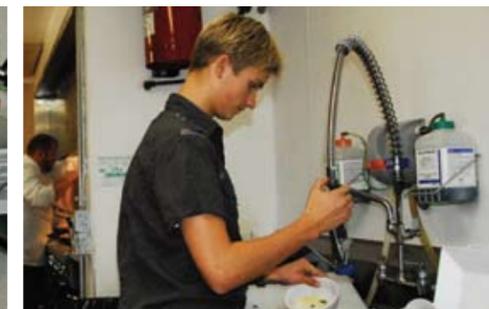


**ORDER UP** Executive Chef Ross Hanson begins cooking for the day's dinner service. (photo by David Sparkman)



**KITCHEN DUTY** Here I am posing with executive chef Ross Hanson (Left) and his assistant (Right). (Photo by: Brenda Hammond)

**CHOP, CHOP** Working in a restaurant requires a lot of preparation. The quantities of food required are also amazing. (Photo by: David Sparkman)



**SO MANY DISHES** Dish duty is a large part of operating a restaurant. There is always a constant flow of dirty dinner-ware coming into the kitchen. (Photo by: Brenda Hammond)

**AND YOU THOUGHT DISHES AT HOME ARE BAD:** This is an average dishload, that arrives at the sink about every two hours. (photo by: David Sparkman)

## HOW TO POLISH A GLASS

1



Take a Glass that has just been removed from the dishwasher. Get a bowl filled with almost boiling water. (This is for the steam)

2

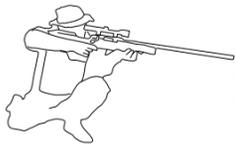


Dip the glass about half an inch into the water. Wait for the entire glass to fog up. (Be careful, hot air expands and will cause bubbles.)

3



Finally, clean away the steam in the glass with a microfiber cloth. Hold it up to the light to see if it has any dust or foreign substances on it.



# GUNS BLAZING

## AN ENTHUSIAST'S FIRST EXPERIENCE IN THE NERVE RACKING AND HIGH OCTANE WORLD OF AIRSOFTING AND THE ADRENALINE IT BRINGS

I was dressed and prepped for warfare on the chilly morning of May 20. I wore camouflage pants and a olive green shirt. My doorbell rang and I was ready for my first experience in airsofting. I ran out the door and got in a black surburban. As soon as I stepped foot in the car, I was handed an M416 assault rifle, the staple weapon for Spec-Ops operatives. I was ready for war and I was excited for my first airsofting experience.

Airosfting is used primarily to train military and police personnel: it has also become a very recreational way for kids to paintball, but without the mess of the left over paint. Instead of using paintballs, airsoft guns use plastic BBs

An hour later, my friends and I arrived at the 250 acre property of freshman Eric Ferguson in Hernandez, California. The group of airsofters numbered around 15. I was excited to jump in and play. After choosing teams, I was more than ready to shoot my weapon at a live target.

I was on team Spector and my partner was Andrew Ferguson, an 8th grader at Redwood. My responsibility was to watch the right flank as the rest of Spector pushed up on the left flank in attempt to surround the enemy.

Although we were only digging in to impede enemy movement, our position was estimated to get a lot of action. Perfect, exactly what I was looking for: an opportunity to guns blazing.

I sat in a foxhole with Andrew, scanning for movement. I gripped my M416, ready to lay waste to any enemy coming our way. The 90 degree heat beat down on us and we grew complacent.

Then all of a sudden, gunfire tore through the surrounding shrubbery. I hunkered down in the trench, aiming down my weapon's sights and blindly returning fire, not knowing the enemy's position. As we started to generalize the origin of the projectiles, the hailstorm of bullets seemed to intensify. Both me and Andrew hunkered down, scared to rise and return fire.

Fortunately, Ferguson radioed in for help. "This is fireteam bravo requesting immediate backup. My squadmate and I

have encountered heavy gunfire on Hill 103. Multiple tangos closing in," Ferguson said into the radio.

When reinforcements finally arrived, the enemy retreated. Myself and Andrew were ordered to push up with freshmen Davis Berryhill and Holden Peake to counter attack. We pushed into the thick forest and searched for enemy movement. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the distinct lens flare that signified that a sniper was around our area.

I quickly took aim and squeezed the trigger for 5 seconds. A hailstorm of bullets flew out and after a few seconds of silence, I heard someone say "hit" and a feeling of success flooded into me.

We continued to push up through the forest until we reached the top of the hill and we saw the rest of the opposing team dug in, and fortified behind a reservoir building.

Without any way to flank or ambush the enemy, the four of us snuck up to the building.

When we were within 100 feet of the building, our squad started to shoot. I opened fire as the rest my teammates crept closer to the building.

When they were 15 feet from the building, they opened fire and eliminated all the rest of the enemies in the area. We had triumphed.

Our mission was to eliminate the enemy team, or capture the reservoir and we had succeeded in doing both. As the game ended, our team celebrated.

Airsofting is a great way to blow off steam and stay mentally sharp. Despite being drop dead, my mind was somersaulting through my head due to the heavy amounts of adrenaline flowing through my body.

Airsofting, despite being tiring and nerve racking, was very enjoyable. Although, I was never shot, the adrenaline inside my body told me otherwise.

Despite airsofting being created for the military, it definitely has a recreational feel to it. Airsofting was meant to simulate the real feeling of warfare. Although not literally on death's doorstep, I definitely felt it and my body definitely did too.

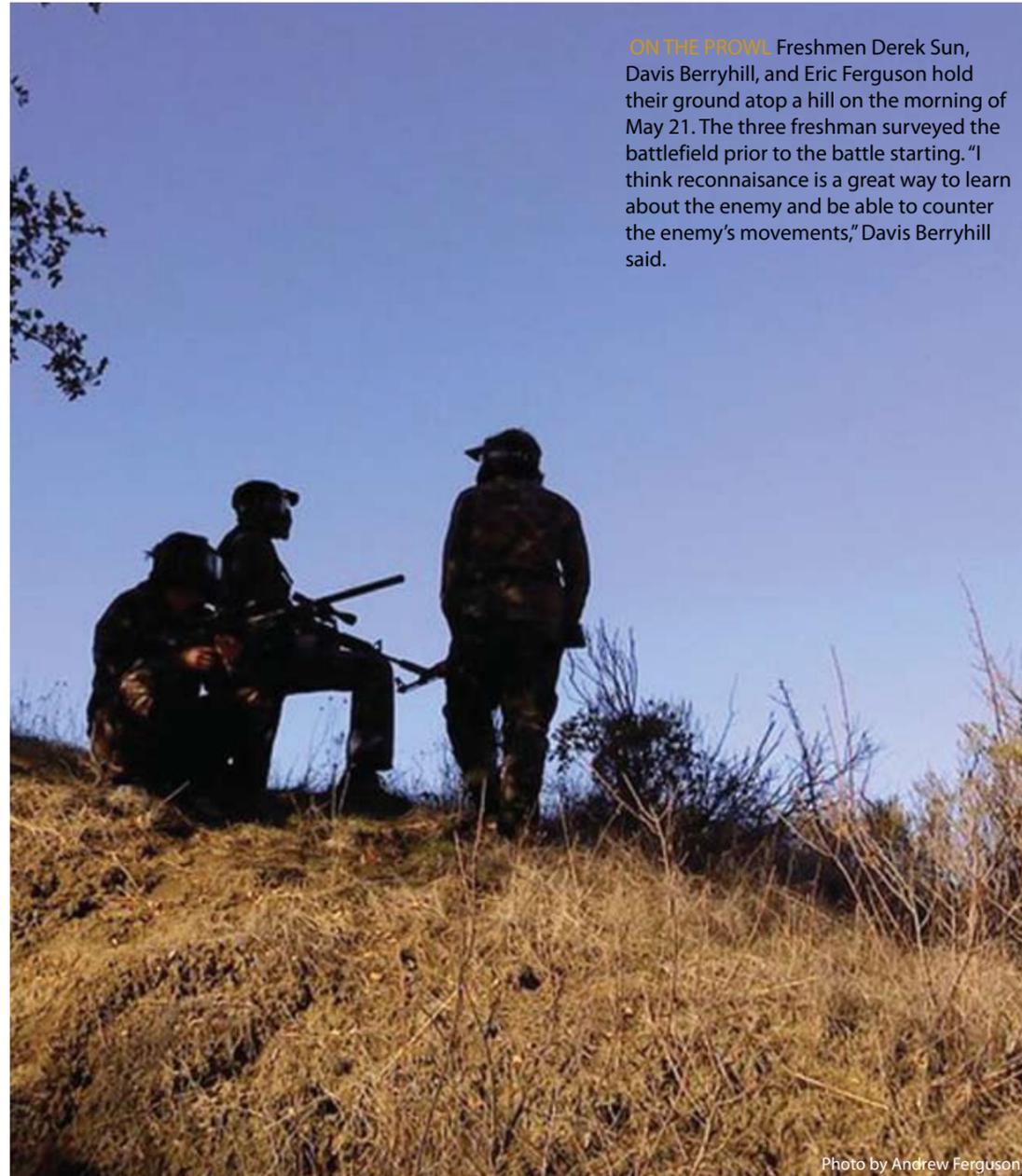
—Derek Sun

### STARING INTO THE FACE OF DEATH

This is the muzzle of 8th grader Andrew Ferguson's gun. "My favorite part of airsofting is being able to choose the style and design of your gun," said Ferguson. With airsoft guns made for military training, there are thousands of choices of different guns.



Photo by Derek Sun



**ON THE PROWL** Freshmen Derek Sun, Davis Berryhill, and Eric Ferguson hold their ground atop a hill on the morning of May 21. The three freshman surveyed the battlefield prior to the battle starting. "I think reconnaissance is a great way to learn about the enemy and be able to counter the enemy's movements," Davis Berryhill said.

Photo by Andrew Ferguson



Photo by Derek Sun



Photo by Bob Hansen

**DOGS OF WAR** A group of airsofters stand in front of the camera prior to the battle on the morning of May 21. Freshman Eric Ringsrud said, "Its an airsoft tradition of mine to take a picture before every war."

**WHERE IS HE?** Freshman Kip Ringsrud camouflages in the bushes with a sniper rifle and his ghillie suit, a suit designed to mirror the textures of nature. "I love ambushing the other team, there's nothing better," Kip said.

## Airsoft for Starters

**Face Protection:** \$15-\$45. There are two types of face protection in airsoft, glasses and a mask.

**Airsoft Gun:** \$100-\$250. For starters, one can choose between a spring based gun and an electric gun. Electric guns have an advantage over spring for the main reason that they can shoot fully automatic and with more power. The downside to electric is they are more prone to break, less reliable, and they cost two times more.



**Airsoft Attire:** \$15-\$30. Basic olive drab wear is very cheap and can be attained easily

**BBs:** \$10-\$20. BBs are fairly inexpensive with a bag of 5000 starting at 10\$

Photo by Airsoft Extreme

Source: Airsoft Extreme



Photo by Derek Sun

**Battlefield Hernandez** The airsoft war occurred at Hernandez, California, about 80 miles north of Hernandez. The Fergusons usually go up to Hernandez once every two weeks to hunt, or airsoft. "I think it's great that the kids have an open area to airsoft and just enjoy the outdoors," Mr. Lee Ferguson said.

check this out  
Airsofting

# NUTRITIOUS YET DELICIOUS

An inexperienced freshman learns the art of **healthy cooking** from her health-savvy friend. Together they make a **simple and easy** fruit tart!

**W**ith seemingly endless amounts of schoolwork every day, many high-school students don't have much time in their lives to remember the importance of eating balanced diets, myself included. The foods students consume often lack in nutrition, from the pizza sold during lunch to the popsicles bought after school.

However, eating wholesome, unprocessed foods is beneficial to the mind and body, so I decided to try cooking something nutritious. My culinary skills are limited to making sandwiches and cup noodles, but luckily I had my friend Gloria Breck help me learn.

Gloria is known amongst my friends as being an avid healthy eater, and she was willing to explain to me why she's so health-conscious, along with teaching me how to cook a nutritious meal. She first started cooking in sixth grade, when she woke up early to make breakfast. Gloria said her passion for food was only ignited further after her mom attended a culinary academy that specialized in natural, organic cooking.

"Although it's difficult at first, it's important to always try eating healthy, balanced meals for both the physical and emotional benefits," Gloria said. "It's hard for teenagers to find time to incorporate healthier food into their lives, but it can be as simple as purchasing natural, seasonal fruits and vegetables from the local farmers market."

With that in mind, we began preparing to cook by washing our hands and setting out the ingredients. We had decided to make an all-natural fruit tart that required no baking. Besides the fact that this tart was made of entirely raw ingredients, it was unique because it was quicker and easier to make than typical fruit tarts.

First, we blended almonds that had been soaked overnight together with dates, almond butter, vanilla, and cinnamon. Once mixed, we firmly molded it to the shape of the pie pan. This mixture made up the the crust of the tart itself. Because this tart was designed to be nutritious, nuts were substituted for flour and the dates, vanilla, and cinnamon took the place of sugar.

We then moved on to the filling for the tart, which consisted of cashews, orange juice, dates, and almond extract. To truly embody the idea of using natural, organic foods, we hand-squeezed our orange juice instead of using juice from a carton. Unfortunately, my arms began to ache from rotating the oranges repeatedly on the squeezer. Once that was finished, though, we blended all the ingredients together in the food processor, resulting in a creamy filling.

"You're really getting the hang of it now," Gloria encouraged me as I struggled to spread the filling evenly across the crust of the tart.

Now we could start decorating the tart itself with various fruits, which was my favorite part. We used an array of strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and pineapples, all of which are high in antioxidants. Using a knife to slice the fruit was frightening, since my coordination skills, especially when combined with sharp objects, was rather lacking.

Thankfully, I managed to finish without cutting myself. Gloria and I arranged the fruit into a circular design, and our masterpiece was finally completed.

I couldn't wait to taste our fruit tart, and I was pleasantly surprised with the results. The crust and filling were filled with flavor from the dates, vanilla, and cinnamon, and the entire tart consisted of a nice, crunchy texture from the blended nuts.

Overall, I was extremely pleased with our fruit tart, which only took around 45 minutes to make. Going into this cooking adventure, I didn't have very high expectations because my experiences with so-called "healthy food" in the past had not been very encouraging.

Gloria showed me new options to add more nutrition in my life without taking away the joy of eating food. The whole experience was very rewarding, and I discovered a new-found appreciation for healthy eating, and cooking in general. I can't say that I'm willing to give up cookies and soda forever, but I'll always be aware to incorporate foods with more nutrition to my diet from now on!

—Karen Sung



**SLICE IT AND DICE IT** Gloria chops up dates, which will later be added to the crust mixture, while Karen slices pineapples to garnish the fruit tart. (photo by Irene Breck)



**MIXING IT ALL TOGETHER** Gloria stirs together a concoction that will eventually be a part of the fruit tart. (photo by Irene Breck)



**ADDING A SWEET TOUCH** Decorating the fruit tart was Karen Sung's (9) favorite part. "Using fruit is a good way to add flavor to a meal because they have many health benefits," said Gloria Breck (9). (photo by Gloria Breck)

## HOW TO MAKE A FRUIT TART

1



First, blend almonds, dates, almond butter, vanilla, and cinnamon in the food processor to form the crust. Once done, mold the mixture firmly to the pie pan to form the crust of the tart.

2



Next, mix cashews, orange juice, dates, and almond extract together. Spread the filling across the crust.

3



After arranging the fruit into a lovely display on top of the filling, your fruit tart is now completed. Eat up and enjoy!

# TAKING A STAB AT FENCING

An average student gets the chance to try fencing out in the California Fencing Academy.

The sound of metal clanging on metal rang in my ears as I entered the California Fencing Academy. It was 7:20 p.m. and I was pumped up and ready to roll. As I stepped out of the hallway into the actual studio, I got a glimpse of kids children, teenagers, and adults in fencing uniforms, furiously trying to get a touch on their opponent.

Fencing is a sport that I have had my eye on for at least four years, but somehow have never gotten the opportunity to try out. This was an excellent chance for me to test it out, and if I enjoyed it, move onto a more competitive level. In fact, I was so excited that I anxiously anticipated for the clock to hit 7:30 so I could start fencing.

I met my instructor, Daniel Tibbetts, and he introduced me to the group of people who I would be fencing with. Their names were Rahul, James, Timothy, Allen, and Kate. After the introductions, Daniel took us to a rack which contained all of the protective gear and masks. For the moment, we placed our gear to a side.

The warm up which we did was rather a pretty basic one, with simple basic arm and leg stretches. Then came the part which I'd been waiting for, we geared up and then chose our swords that we would be using for some swordplay drills and ???

The Fencing gear consisted of a special jacket, mask, and a sword, called a foil. The foil was one of the three kinds of swords used in fencing, each of which consisting of different rules and hit areas.

Dan showed the other kids some other techniques and while they practiced, he showed me basic advances, parries, counters, and attacks. At this point, I was itching to actually get out on the strip and clash swords with someone.

"3, 2, 1, go!" Dan said to announce the start of the mini-rounds. I started attacking Tim, who was my opponent

for that bout in a frenzy. To my embarrassment, it turned out that there was a fencing salute which I had not known about.

"Fencing isn't just about attacking your opponent with everything you have," he told me. "It is also about showing respect for his or her talent and acknowledging it."

After showing me the salute, we got down to business.

He stayed back, observing me, while I just advanced full on. We parried and attacked back and forth for a minute, then he got the first touch.

"Ready," he called.

"Fence!" I replied back. Another custom while fencing was to start of each bout by making sure your opponent was ready and only then starting your attack. We battled back and forth, but he continuously won, match after match. After a few bouts, we switched partners.

I was getting into the groove and slowly gaining ground on my new opponent. Things slowed down at that point, kind of like it does in the movies. I took a lunge and he parried, but that set him off balance, so I used that as an opening and finally got a touch on him. I felt ecstatic as I had just earned my first point in fencing, even though it had only been during a lesson.

The rest of the lesson just flew by, as I won some rounds, lost more rounds, but still felt the rush of the moment every time. After the lesson was over, Dan gave us a little lecture about fencing and told us "Fencing is like physical chess, a gentleman's game, except where your moves are being countered constantly. You don't have much time to think about it, you just do it according to your gut instinct."

Fencing is definitely something I plan to do over the summer, because it is something that I enjoyed doing. Furthermore, it will be an excellent alternative to just sitting around and playing video games all summer.

—Neel Tiwary



**TAKING A STAB** Wilson Cole practices his lunge at his fencing instructor, Daniel Tibbetts. He is one the CFA ranked team and they are having competition in July (Photo by Neel Tiwary)



**NEAR THE GEAR** This protective gear along with the fencers swords is all the gear the fencers need. The shirt is worn by placing your leg through the strap and zipping it up. (Photo by Neel Tiwary)



**EN GARDE** Neel Tiwary and Rahul attack back and forth, locked in a furious "zone" for about five minutes. Tiwary finally gets the last touch and wins the match. (Photo by Gyan Tiwary).

## FENCING SWORDS AND STYLES

1



The foil is the most common and great sword for beginners to use. Hits can be achieved on the upper part of the body except for the arm, and only with the tip of the blade. It has a very basic grip and bell (arm guard)

2



The sabre is a blade with a bell guard that extends over the fingers of the arm. Hits can be scored on any part of the body, including the arms with the edge of the blade.

3



The epee is a three-sided sword with a pistol grip. Hits can be scored on the entire body with the tip of the sword.



**RIDING ALONG THE VINEYARD** Another group of trail riders stop to check in beside the fabulous vineyard setting. (photo by Amelia Troyer)



**MINI CITY** From the trails, the skyline of San Jose appears to fit in the palm of one's hand. The long white building on the left is the HP Pavilion. (photo by Amelia Troyer)

**SNACK TIME AT THE STABLES** Amelia Troyer cautiously attempts to feed one of Suzanne Sullivan's many horses at her home stable. (photo by Presley Troyer)



**ON TOP OF THE WORLD** Cash the horse remains calm as a flock of birds make a dive by the pond. (photo by Amelia Troyer)

# ON THE TRAILS

One journalism student gets reacquainted with the wonder in her own backyard riding horses at Cooper-Garrod Farms in Fremont Older.

Horseback riding has always been a foreign concept to me - something I never quite got the appeal of, like stamp collecting or flower gardening. The truth is, there's a whole community of people and their pets that spend their days at a stable, and Cooper-Garrod Farms was the perfect place for me to give riding a try.

Before I jumped right in, I stopped by Suzanne Sullivan's house for some background information and to get acquainted with horses, which to be honest I was a bit nervous about.

It turns out, horses are more similar to people than I thought. When one of them began to bang against the stable door, demanding more carrots, I promptly hand-fed to him with my fingers held down to avoid an accident.

When he put his ears back, I learned it meant he was unhappy, which thankfully could be cured with a snack. I was shocked by how easy it was to communicate with the horse, and immediately felt more sentimental toward horses than before.

"Horses are very aware. Their only means of protection is flight," Sullivan explained how careful riders must be before mounting a horse. Horses are spooked easily and don't think of their rider's safety when they attempt to flee a situation, something I didn't truly understand until I would later witness it firsthand.

The big day came and I couldn't have been more impatient and anxious to give the sport a go. It only took a ten-minute drive back to Cooper-Garrod and I was fascinated that I'd never known this existed so nearby.

I was told the horse I would be riding was named 'Cash,' and with a seemingly forever long wait, I was led to the saddle, heart thumping.

Being on the horse was a whole new feeling entirely, like

being on top of the world. I held the reins like an ice cream cone as directed and hooked my sneakers in the stirrups. Pulling toward my bellybutton would stop the horse, toward the right would lead him right and so on. At long last we head out on the trail in Fremont Older, a wonderland of greenery and fresh air.

The scenery was fabulous, as I thumped along on a living and breathing creature. San Jose could be held in the palm of my hand in the distance, and Cash was being as gentle as I could have hoped.

Each horse on the trail had it's own personality. One named Tanto was constantly trying to eat every leaf he could, and his rider struggled keeping him focused. Cash remained calm and collected, though he did sneak a bite in every twenty minutes or so.

At times my surroundings seemed overwhelming, like the wide openness was going to swallow me whole as I rode along the slopes of the hilltops. With the first few minutes I became instantly comfortable on top of Cash, wondering why I'd never done this before.

The trail leader's horse got spooked in the middle of our ride by a caution sign and she had to lead him through it, which made me realize the reality of what I got to partake in. A horse is not heavy machinery, it's something alive and I loved the connection that it offered. Horseback riding was no longer something I imagined only seven-year-old girls wanted to do - it is its own sport.

As I finished the ride feeling accomplished, albeit with a sore bottom, I knew I would have to return to this unexplored part of Saratoga's backyard sometime soon. Who knows? With this pleasant surprise of a day, I may have to give stamp collecting or flower gardening another shot.

—Amelia Troyer

## HOW TO FEED A HORSE A CARROT

**1** First, place a carrot in the palm of your hand at a safe distance between you and the horse so he doesn't snap at you.

Then, hold your fingers tightly together and at a downward slant to prevent your hands from being bitten.

**3** Finally, approach the horse and allow him to eat the carrot, only pulling away when he is finished so he does not get spooked.

# LEAGUE OF SHS

I try out competitive computer gaming with several freshmen from SHS.

As finals came closer and closer, I needed to find an outlet to release my stress. Unfortunately for me, my PSN (Playstation Network, which allows you to play video games online with others) was down and I needed something fun to do.

Freshman Derek Tanaka, recommended I try the online computer game "League of Legends". According to him, it was a kind of strategy game that required skill and intelligence. To be more precise, he called it a MOBA, Multiplayer Online Battle Arena. Derek is a high level player who was allowed to play with professionals. I had heard about the game as it was popular among many freshmen and several sophomores and decided to give it a shot.

I wasn't so interested in playing the game as I was interested in how a ranked professional game went. So I set aside some time during the weekend to install the game and use one of freshman, Kevin Jiang's accounts to play a ranked game with some of them including Clark Wang, Andrew Liu, Kevin Jiang, Jason Kao, Eric Taw, and a fellow rookie like me, Brian Kosiadi.

I had expected it to be a very simple process; I thought a ranked game wouldn't be very different from what a normal game looked like (which I assumed would just be charging in). However, these games involved rankings so it was very stressful. In fact it was comparable to a sports competition.

The game involves one team fighting another team where you try to conquer the other team's base. There is strategy in placement of units and surprise attacks. Because of this, I expected there to be strategy discussions during the game.

Rather than just starting to play, they actually had a long period of deliberation. Several of them went to my house for the sake of convenience, but those who couldn't come used Skype to communicate with us.

The first thing was assembling a team composition. In the game there were several roles to be fulfilled and we had to split them up evenly to be as well balanced as possible. We discussed this for a good 10 minutes.

When the game actually started, it was far harder than I expected. Even the basics of the game were difficult, not to mention all the elaborate mechanisms of the ranked games. On Skype, freshman Aurash Jalalian constantly yelled at me for

not warning him ahead of time and not being aware of what was going on. There was lots of suspense and tension in the air.

To my left, freshmen Andrew Chang and Clark Wang were intensely playing; occasionally looking at my screen to give advice, scold me, or just plain complain about what I had been doing.

Within the first 20 minutes of the game, teamwork had become major to the game. Teamwork, according to them, was needed in the ranked games but in normal games was rarely seen. Again, I was reminded of sports teams as we had to give each other advice and watch out for one another. We had to all do the same action and if one of us failed, then the rest did as well. Undoubtedly, I let them down and even though that lowered our morale, we still kept going.

According to them, there was bad sportsmanship in the game called "ragequitting" where one person quits once they being to lose. This ruins the gaming experience.

Eric Taw said, "I really hate the ragequitters. It ruins the game sometimes forcing three people to face off against five people. It can really discourage people from playing, because after one person quits, another one wants to quit as well."

The game easily lasted for an hour. The game was fun despite us losing, but the most important experience to me was seeing how they planned out the ranked games and how they worked so well together.

By the end, I had come to appreciate the world of ranked gamers. These people had to work surprisingly hard and get to know each other as a team. They had to have complete faith in each other. I hope to continue to play the game and work hard, until I deserve a position in a ranked game. Brian Kosiadi and Jason Kao both agree that the game is fun because they can play with friends. "I really like talking to my friends and it's really fun to play. It lets us hang out even if we're far away from one another," said Jason Kao.

I had looked for a way to release stress of finals, but the ranked games were just as stressful in their own way. Like finals, there's only one thing to do: practice, practice, practice until you finally nail it down.

—Nelson Wang



**MY FIRST GAME** I log in and start the game. I try my best not to get killed and to help the team. (photo by Kevin Jiang)



**WHERE TO GO?** The minimap which allows a player to determine their route. On such a large map, there are many options of what to do and where to go. (Left) (screen shot by Nelson Wang)

**LOGGING IN** Freshman Clark Wang logs in and contemplates which map he'll play on for this round. This is one example of the planning and deliberation an individual needs before a game starts. The map determines the style of playing needed by the player. (photo by Nelson Wang)

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR A GAME

1



Freshman Brian Kosiadi sits down and prepares to play.

2



He then grabs some food while the computer and game start up. (photo by Nelson Wang)

3



Finally, he starts the game and begins to play. He must focus and stay concentrated for the next 50 minutes or so.



**RAGING** Eric Taw shows how upset he is after losing a match from bad teammates. (above) (photo by Nelson Wang)

**TEAMWORK** Andrew Liu and Clark Wang play a game together. (right) (photo by Nelson Wang)





**RAHDA** Sachi Verma (9) shows Jennie Werner (9) how to hold her hands to symbolize Rahda carrying a pot (all photos by Sarah Finley)

# BELLS ON MY FEET

A freshman attends an **kathak** class and gains appreciation for dance and learns about the **Indian culture** from a peer who has been dancing for many years.

I can hear them loudly tap the floor to the music of the teacher's voice, "thakita, dhikita, thaka." The ghungroos, or bells, wound up the dancers' ankles jingle with every step, and the stamping feet imitate the beat of the tabla drum. The beautiful colors of the salwar kameezes, or Indian outfits, twirl around the room as the Kathakers tell a story.

Radha is walking along a stream, carefully balancing a pot of water on her head. Krishna spies her and throws a rock at her head. The rock flies through the air, and cracks the clay pot, drenching Radha.

Freshman Sachi Verma has been telling these stories for eight years through traditional Indian dancing. I joined her one day for her Kathak class in a Hindi temple in Sunnyvale, curious to learn about the Indian culture.

"You are going to be in so much pain, your feet will bleed," Freshman Nikki Thareja said when I told her I was going to try Kathak.

I went over to Sachi's house after school, where her sister sophomore Sanjna Verma gave me a salwar kameez to try on. It consisted of blue flowing pants, reminiscent of the pants worn by Aladdin in the Disney movie, a long tunic-like top, and a sash.

During the car ride to the temple, Sachi's mom, Sunita Verma gave me a crash course in Indian culture. She told me some of the stories about the many gods in their culture. She explained that the red dot on a woman's forehead symbolized marriage and that they wore bangles up their arms to show off the wealth of India.

I anxiously arrived at the dance class, scared by Nikki's warnings about Indian dancing and Sachi's stories about her strict teacher. I was nervous I would stick out as the awkward white girl.

"This is my Windian friend Jennie," Sachi said as she introduced me as her white Indian to all her friends. "I expect you to remember every one's name," she said jokingly.

Everyone was extremely welcoming and friendly, assuring me that I did not have to remember their names. We removed our shoes to show respect and entered the temple.

Surprisingly, the room was plain and ordinary with only a few folding tables and chairs. We sat down on the carpet and Sachi showed me how to wind the bells around my ankles.

"At first when you try [the bells] on they are heavy and hurt your feet, but after a while you don't even notice them," Sachi said.

Before entering the dance floor, the dancers first prayed to the gods, then to Mother Nature, and lastly to everyone. We stood in a line and started warming up. Didi, which means teacher in Hindi, played instrumental music through a boom box and we tapped our feet as she called out "thaka, thakita, dhikita."

Befuddled by the meaning of the Hindi words, I stared at the feet around me, attempting to even get a tap in every few beats. While Sachi's feet made satisfying slaps on the ground, my feet hardly made a noise. I asked Sachi how she could make such loud noises with her feet.

"I've been doing it for eight years," she told me.

Didi came over to give me a few tips. I learned that the Hindi words she was calling out corresponded to steps, such as tap and second half of the class, I watched as the Kathakers practiced their dance for their performance in a few weeks at a charity event. With a little background on their dance, I was able to understand pieces of the story they were telling.

I had watched the performances at Bombay and the Bay and not realized all the symbolism in the dances. Before I had not considered dancing truly a sport but after attempting it for myself, I gained a new appreciation for the skill it takes.

"You must be in touch with your Indian culture," Mrs. Verma often tells Sachi. Seeing the rich Indian culture first hand made wish that I had my own culture to learn about.

—Jennie Werner



**TAP HEEL** Werner taps her feet in time to the music. "The music was so fast, I struggled to tap my feet fast enough," Werner said, "It was way harder than I thought it was going to be."



**KRISHNA** Verma makes a flute to symbolize the god Krishna. This is Verma's favorite move.

**HELPING HANDS** Verma corrects Werner's hand position as she teaches her how to form Rahda's pot



**THE SPIN** Verma (9) and Ridhaa Sambandan (7), who goes to Kennedy Middle School, get ready to spin. "I like kathak because it helps me connect to my indian culture," Verma said.

## DICTIONARY HINDI

- |                                    |                                                          |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Didi<br>—Teacher or older sister | 5 salwar kameez<br>—Traditional everyday Indian clothing |
| 2 Ghungroos<br>—Bells              | 6 Namastey<br>—Hello or goodbye                          |
| 3 Paer<br>—White-Indian            | 7 Dhanyavad<br>—Thank you                                |
| 4 Naach<br>—Dance                  | 8 Windian (slang)<br>—White-Indian                       |

## HOW TO BE A GOOD EMPLOYEE

1



First, get used to the cash register! It's a little confusing at first, but learning how to use it easily makes the money exchange process less awkward for yourself and your customers.

2



Next, make sure all your utensils are clean when you make food items. Also, make sure to get the right amount of ice into each drink!

3



Finally, always give your best smile to your customers! Make them feel comfortable and remind them you're there to serve them. "I want Yolatea to have a friendly environment, pleasant to customers, just overall a nice place to hang out," said manager Dominique.



**CLEAN AS YOU GO** The counters always had to be clean to allow for a clear workspace, so Michelle used this washrag to wipe the spills off the counters. (photo by Justin Ra)

### TOPPINGS GALORE!

There was a wide selection of toppings, and all the tins had to be taken care of. The topping that ran out the quickest was the chocolate chips, so here Michelle is refilling the chocolate chip tin. (photo by Justin Ra)



# ENCOUNTERS BEHIND THE COUNTERS

Sophomore **Michelle Won** faces challenges and learns to appreciate **customer service** as she takes an in-depth look at what it takes to be a regular **employee**

Okay, I'll admit it: working at a place like Yolatea had always been one of the items on my bucket list. I've always liked yogurt chains and wondered what it would be like to work in one. There always seemed to be so much going on behind the counters, with workers measuring cups of tea and yogurt and expertly making thin, crispy crepes.

Excited and a bit nervous, I walked into Yolatea in downtown Saratoga on a Friday afternoon, not knowing exactly what to expect. The store churned with sounds and activity, and the scent of sugar and fresh yogurt welcomed me like a cool breeze.

I greeted the manager, Ms. Dominique Flexer, who handed me a paper towel and a bottle of Windex to clean the windows and gelato case. I was surprised at how difficult it was to clean the glass because there were so many fingerprints on it; now I will think twice about getting my fingers on display cases!

After the glass had been wiped clean, I got a chance to step behind the counter. I was first taught how to make a tea, one of the main items on the menu.

What goes into that tea is a trade secret, but it was definitely different from what I anticipated. I discovered that once I learned how to make one type of tea, making the rest of the drinks became fairly simple. Just a spoonful of this, a cup of that, blend it all together with some ice, and there it was!

However, bringing a drink to a customer always made me a little nervous; I would watch the customer's reactions after drinking, hoping that they would find the drink satisfactory.

Though making the teas was easy, learning how to work the cash register was much harder than it looked. It seemed simple, but with the pressure of customers staring and handing me their money, the buttons on the screen got jumbled up in my head, and so I had to clear the screen and start over several times.

The other employees made it look so simple, with the cash box swinging out with a "ring" every time. Somehow I managed to get the right change into the customer's hands, and the cash box opened and closed with that satisfying "ring" after I had some more practice.

The customers seemed to acknowledge me as a regular employee, but I felt a little bit nervous when they asked me questions that I didn't know the answer to, such as the lock code to the bathroom or the difference between a "royal milk tea" and an "almond milk tea". I tried to be as professional as I could, but I felt my cheeks flush when I could not assist someone.

However, the atmosphere behind the counter was very relaxed, even when there were numerous orders, and so I began to feel at ease after an hour or so. I realized that being an employee requires thinking on one's feet: always trying to memorize the fastest way to make a certain drink, how to press the right buttons on the cash register, and all the while looking professional.

With the help of my coworkers and understanding customers, I eventually began to feel more relaxed behind the counter, so I put on my best smile and served the Friday afternoon customers, comfortably easing myself into the groove of the workplace.

—Michelle Won

## HEAD MANAGER AND OWNER DOMINIQUE FLEXER



Meet Dominique Flexer, the owner and head manager of Yolatea in Saratoga. She started this business about one and a half years ago. Her main goal for Yolatea was to create an environment that would be a nice place to spend time in. After working, Michelle asked Dominique some questions about running a place like Yolatea.

**Q:** What is the most difficult thing about running a place like Yolatea?

**A:** I would say managing the employees. I have certain standards, but I don't like to be a mean boss. It takes a lot of time to train people with different personalities, so it is always a challenge to train employees.

**Q:** What do you think of students in the workplace?

**A:** It is definitely a good experience; I have trained kids who don't know what to do in kitchen, one kid who didn't even know how to peel banana, but now they know how to make tea. It's a good experience and a good break from school, to be able to have an experience with customers, and the kids feel productive.

**BELAY ON** Instructor Martin Britt criticizes Freshman Jonathan Young on proper belay technique. Belaying requires a lot of attention because the belayer has to keep pulling the rope taut, just as fast as the climber is climbing.



photo by Stephanie Young

**SCALING THE BOULDER** Freshman Jonathan Young bouldered at Planet Granite on Saturday, May 21st. Bouldering is a type of climbing without a belay, but with shorter walls.



photo by Stephen Hsieh

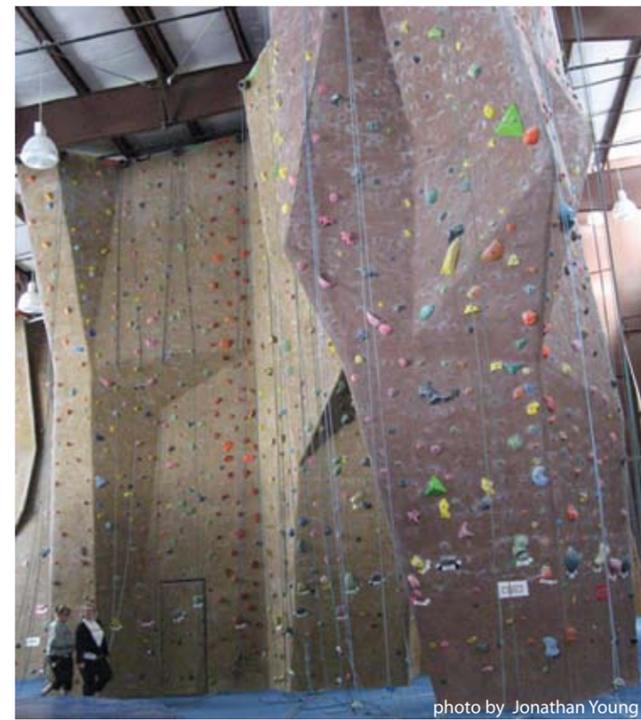


photo by Jonathan Young

**THE WALL** A climbing wall at Planet Granite in Sunnyvale. The walls have varying difficulties depending on the experience of the climbing. Climbers must have a partner who passed the belay test in order to climb the walls.



**BELAYING 101** Freshman Jonathan Young belays for another student in a belay lesson. The belayer is responsible for the safety of the climber at all times. The belayer also makes sure that the rope is taut so that the climber doesn't drop, if s/he falls. Belayers even have to take a test to be certified to belay for other climbers.

photo by Stephanie Young

# HANGING BY A THREAD

A STUDENT IN SEARCH OF ADVENTURE LEARNS TO ROCK CLIMB. A FAMILY FRIEND AND AN EXPERIENCED INSTRUCTOR GUIDE HIM IN HIS CLIMBING EXPERIENCE.

**A**dventure: *-noun*, 1. an exciting or unusual experience. As I looked up to the top of the man-made cliff at Planet Granite, I knew I was in for an adventure. I froze and the only thing in my mind was the hope that I wouldn't have to scale the giant plastic rock. My hands started to perspire and my mouth was wide open. All this was before I had even started to climb.

Entering Planet Granite in Sunnyvale on a sunny Saturday morning, I didn't know what to expect. The first thing I saw were the walls and was surprised to see that there were many people already climbing.

Then, like I would in a bowling alley, I had to exchange one of my shoes for a pair of climbing shoes. The rentals fit snugly around my feet, but they were worn and the laces were almost torn. Afterwards, all I had to do was wait for my lesson to start.

My instructor, Martin Britt, taught me and the rest of the class how to properly belay, which is the technique of knot-tying so that the climber doesn't fall very far. The knots that Martin taught our class were the figure eight, the figure eight follow through, and the double fisherman. After practicing the knots, it was time to climb, and I was first.

I started to make my way up the rock and about halfway up, Martin told me to fall. I was reluctant at first, but I let go and I closed my eyes. When I opened them, however, I found that I was still hanging there and the belay had worked. I then proceeded with the climb.

"Right leg, left arm, left leg, right arm," I whispered to myself as I scaled the almost vertical wall. "Don't use your legs," was Martin's

advice, which proved useful, helping me not get fatigued.

After I reached the top, I had to learn to descend. It was my belay partner's job to make sure that I wouldn't fall too fast and so I started to make my way slowly down the wall. Keeping my legs straight and walking backwards, I eventually made it back to the ground.

Martin had said that the best part of climbing was the adrenaline and that people do it for the sense of adventure. After my first climb, I finally understood that rock climbers like climbing because of the fear and because of the adrenaline rush.

Steven Hsieh is one climber who relishes this rush. "It was just one of those things I wanted to try so I took a class on belaying and then you kind of give in to it once they show you how to do it and climb by yourself," Steven said, explaining why he started climbing. He enjoys it so much now that he says he goes climbing once or twice a week.

Steven believes that the "sense of adventure" is what attracts people to start climbing. He also says another reason is that once people start working, they look for things to do outside of work. Even some activities, like going to the gym, seem like work and climbing is just a fun activity.

"I think [climbing is] fun, but at the same time it's a sense of challenge because you really do have to work at it to improve and to take it to the next level," Steven said. After my first time climbing, I find this statement even more true and although I thought it was a fun experience, I think that my next level is safely on the ground.

—Jonathan Young

## ROCK CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR MARTIN BRITT



photo by Stephanie Young

For instructor Martin Britt climbing is an adventure. When asked about why he liked climbing, Martin simply answered, "the adrenaline."

Martin has climbed in numerous places outside of indoor gyms. He says he has been to Red Rock Canyon in Vegas and has even climbed on the east side of the Sierra Nevada.

"I would say being outside and enjoying what is out there, the adventure," is what Martin believes attracts people to climbing.

Martin has climbed for many years and in his experiences he has picked up a few tricks. His main advice to me was to not use my arms, to climb with my legs.

Martin Britt genuinely loves climbing and after doing it for so many years, he finally decided to teach others. His job as an instructor has helped him share his passion and knowledge with others beginning to climb.

# SWAYING TO THE UKULELE

## Sophomore Tiffany Yung learns how to play the island tones of the Ukulele

As the music industry becomes increasingly more competitive, artists and producers find a new way to stand out from the sea of musicians. Artists such as Train and Jason Mraz have been able to pull out hit singles “Hey Soul Sister” and “I’m Yours,” respectively. These tracks are able to become popular because they step out of the norm of overused melodies played on guitars. These songs showcase the sweet island melodies of the ukulele.

Interested in learning this petite instrument, I sought my fellow classmate, sophomore Michelle Chan, to be my mentor. Although Michelle has only been playing the ukulele since last year, she was quick to learn and can now flawlessly play riffs on the ukulele.

“Someone I knew played it and I thought it was really fun and cute so I bought one,” Michelle said.

Since I had experience on playing the acoustic guitar and bass guitar, I found the ukulele to be, in many ways, quite different and was forced to learn the instrument from scratch. The ukulele consists of only four strings versus the six stringed acoustic guitar. Also, although the bass guitar is also four stringed, they both portray an entirely different range of notes.

Because the ukulele is so small, Michelle suggested to place the thumb and pointer finger together like an “okay sign” to use to strum in place of a pick. She first taught me the basic C, G, A, and F chord.

Since the instrument is so miniature, I had difficulty placing my fingers on the strings without pressing on other strings as well.

“You need to try to position the tips of your fingers on the strings, and bend them, or else you won’t get the full

note,” Michelle advised.

After I got the four cords down, I had to work profusely on strumming with the right beat. I tried to sing a song in my head, and strum to that beat.

Thinking for a while, Michelle tried to find a pattern of strumming I could follow. She thought out loud, “Down, down, up, up, down.” Then finally she said, “There’s not really one exact pattern of strumming, you kind of make it up as you play and see what feels right for the song.”

During her freshmen year, Michelle started a band with sophomore Lynne Okada, named “Ukuladies”. They would post videos of them singing along to their ukuleles on their friends’ Facebook walls. The Ukuladies went viral, and their Facebook fan page was bombarded with song requests.

“The best part of playing for our friends was the joy we brought to them. Our main goal was to turn their frowns upside down, and I feel like we were able to achieve that for them and for ourselves,” said Lynne.

Accompanied by Michelle playing the piano, I tried to make a melody with the four basic chords. Although I needed to work on strumming and transitioning between cords, Michelle deemed me a “natural”. We had a jam session for a while, playing melodies which would usually end in me losing the beat or playing the wrong note.

“It’s really not that difficult. I know it’s cliché to say, but it really just takes lots of practice to get good,” said Michelle.

Although I might not seem like a rock-star on the ukulele right now, maybe one day you’ll see me win a Grammy Award with tons of fans screaming my name and swaying to the island tones of my ukulele. Don’t worry, I’ll be happy to give you my autograph before I become famous.

—Tiffany Yung



**PETITE** Michelle Chan (10) bought her ukulele online for \$200. “Someone I knew played it and I thought it was really fun and cute so I bought one,” Michelle said.” (Photo by Jesse Yung)



**INTENSLY STRUMMING** Michelle Chan (10) strums to her favorite song on the Ukulele. (photo by Jesse Yung)



**DILIGENTLY LEARNING** Tiffany Yung (10) tries to copy the fingering of Michelle Chan (10). “It’s really not that difficult. I know it’s cliché to say, but it really just takes lots of practice to get good,” said Michelle. (Photo by Jesse Yung)

## WHICH INSTRUMENT IS THE PERFECT FIT FOR YOU?

### UKULELE

### GUITAR

- Higher octave
- 4 stringed
- Petite
- Portable
- Better to strum using fingers
- Upbeat tones

- Can be strummed
- Can perform the same techniques, such as riffs
- Has the same structure

- Can cover a wide range of octaves
- 6 stringed
- Bigger
- Better to strum using a pick

## HOW TO PLAY FOUR BASIC CHORDS:

C



C chord: Place your middle finger on the lower string and third fret.

G



G chord: Place your pointer finger on the second string (from the top) on the second fret, and your middle finger on the last string, second fret, and lastly, your ring finger on the third string on the third fret.

A



A chord: Place your middle finger on the first string second fret.

F



F chord: Place your pointer finger on the first fret third string, and your middle finger on the top string second fret.

# LIVING WITH BLINDNESS

One yearbook reporter set out to gain experience in living with blindness to see what it's like to live with a disability.

Memorial day is usually a combination of sadness and happiness for American students. It is a day to remember those who have died in combat, but also a day that students get off from school and to relax before finals. This past memorial day, I chose to skip the relaxation and go on a journey of enlightenment, where I set out to find out what people with disabilities go through, first hand.

My initial impression was that attempting to live with blindness would be more interesting than experiencing the other disabilities, and that I would have no trouble because I was familiar with my home and I would be surrounded by objects that I was around all of the time. I was met with an experience that was not as interesting as I thought it would be.

To simulate blindness, I tied a scarf around my head and my eyes the night before memorial day. This was to ensure that my whole day was an experience that gave me insight on disabilities, so that I would understand every aspect of the lives of the blind. Although I'm sure that I won't even begin to understand half of the difficulties of being blind from this mock, one-day experience, I learned a lot throughout the day and have emerged with a new-found respect and pity for those that are unfortunate enough to have to live with blindness.

After I woke up, everything was still dark. Initially I was dazed and did not know why it was so dark. I reached for my phone to check the time, but I soon realized that I couldn't see it.

"Right, blindfold," I thought to myself.

I started to get up to relieve my bladder, and instantly banged my foot on the frame of my bed. After several seconds of cautiously

feeling around, I found my door. Getting to the bathroom was fine after that.

"Easy peasy," I thought to myself.

"Finally you have gotten up," my mom said in Chinese.

"What time is it?" I said.

"Two o'clock," she said.

I start my way down the stairs in a quest to find a morsel of food. I have a hard time on the stairs because I cannot anticipate the changes in elevation ahead of time. After arriving downstairs, I realize that I can't find my own food.

"Moouoooooooooom!" I wailed to my mom in Chinese. "Can you make me something to eat?"

"Hao de," she said, which means okay.

I waited on the couch, bored, until my mom came back. Immediately after obtaining congee, which is rice in hot water, and shrimp from my mom I spilled a little on myself. After my morning experience, I didn't know what to do. Because I usually spend my weekends playing computer games, I didn't think I'd have anything to do.

I turned on the TV and just listened to The Disney Channel. Not having anything else to do, I just did that most of the time, whenever I wasn't eating snacks like fruit and broccoli. Overall, my experience of living with a disability was actually quite boring. Without being able to do homework or play games, I couldn't follow my usual routine, and just listened to the TV all day. I end up cheating and removing the blindfold after several hours, because I had to do my homework and it was hard for me to not be active. The main thing I learned: being blind is tough.

—Michael Zhang



## TOP 5 DISABILITIES

- 1 "Not being able to walk, because then I'll get my own scooter thing."  
—Terrance Wang (10)
- 2 "Blindness because then I wouldn't be able to rely on what I saw."  
—Michael Zuccarino (11)
- 3 "Deafness because that way I can still see and walk."  
—Ajay Kirpekar (10)
- 4 "A wooden leg, because then I could be a PIRATE!"  
—Pavithrama Sadras (11)
- 5 "Being mute, because then my teachers won't ask me questions."  
—Arush Shankar (10)



**HARD TIME WAKING UP** Sophomore Michael Zhang struggles to wake up in the morning due to the fact that he's wearing a blindfold. "It's really hard because you can't see any light, so you can't tell when the day has started," said Michael (10). (photo by Shelly Zhang)

**CHEW CHEW CHEW IT WELL** Sophomore Michael Zhang eats congee for breakfast with the aid of his mother. "Congee is just rice in water. I needed help getting some because I couldn't see," said Michael (10). (photo by Shelly Zhang)

## HOW TO ADAPT TO A DISABILITY

1



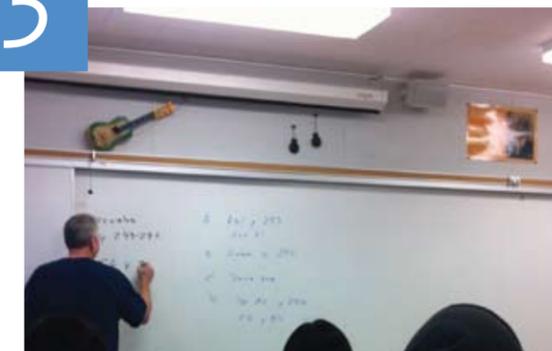
Play to your disability's strong points. For example if you are blind, you can take advantage of the fact that you can't be woken up by sunlight and sleep in.

2



Make sure to be careful when performing tasks that are made difficult by your disability. If you cannot see, then be careful when walking.

3



Finally, don't be afraid to get help. If you can't see but you need to take notes, have someone take a picture of the notes and ask someone to read them to you later on.

# GOING GOLFING

Join freshman George Zhou on his quest to explore the world of golf, with the aid of freshman Akshay Madhani.

The weather was perfect. The cloudless blue sky, the warm temperature, and the gentle breeze made Friday, May 27th a beautiful day to play golf. Freshman Akshay Madhani, a member of the golf team, was kind enough to guide me through my exploration of the unknown world of golf. He took me to a driving range located in Cupertino.

As we sat in his car on our way to the driving range, Akshay begins informing me about various golf trivia.

"Golf is the most expensive sport out there, other than shooting. A good set of clubs can easily cost \$1,000. A golfer's uniform can cost \$125," Akshay said.

Akshay was wearing a white-collared shirt and tan slacks. According to him, this was the proper clothing for a day out golfing. I looked down to examine the clothes I was wearing — a white, Quicksilver T-shirt and gray shorts.

Slightly embarrassed, I ask him, "What's the reason behind the clothes?"

"No reason. A golfer's uniform is just for their appearance. Did you know, you can actually get kicked out of a fancy golf club if you're not wearing the proper attire," Akshay said.

We sit in silence and my mind begins wandering. I was expecting golf to be as simple as swinging a club and aiming the ball into the hole. Wii golf should be sufficient experience, right?

Finally, we arrive at the driving range. We enter a building and he leads me through it as if he knew it as well as the back of his hand.

"How often do you come here?" I asked.

"Monday through Thursday."

As we exit the building a vast grassy field fills my vision.

Whack! A golf ball soars through the clear sky.

"This way," Akshay said, interrupting my moment of awe.

As soon as we drop our equipment onto the floor, Akshay pulls out a club and begins explaining the basics.

"Here let me demonstrate it to you," Akshay said.

I carefully observe him as he steps onto the mat. He positions a ball and gets into the stance he just went over with

me. He took a few practice swings and then went for the real one. The ball sailed through the air. It landed near a 125 yard sign.

"Your turn," he said.

Excited, I quickly take the club from him and get into the stance. He tells me control is key in golf. Someone that can aim is better than someone that can hit far.

I heard what he said, but it did not register in my mind. I lift the club and swing as hard as I can. I scan the air for the golf ball I just hit, but it was not there.

"It's okay. That happens a lot to beginners," Akshay said.

I look down and find the golf ball still here, right where I placed it. Now I knew why people say golf is a frustrating sport.

I attempted it again, but to no avail. This time the club hit the ground, which stopped its momentum so it never reached its intended target.

Finally, on my third try, I somehow managed to make contact with the ball. I sent it flying to the 50 yard mark. Although it was not even half as far as Akshay's shot, it felt very thrilling to send a golf ball into the wide, open air.

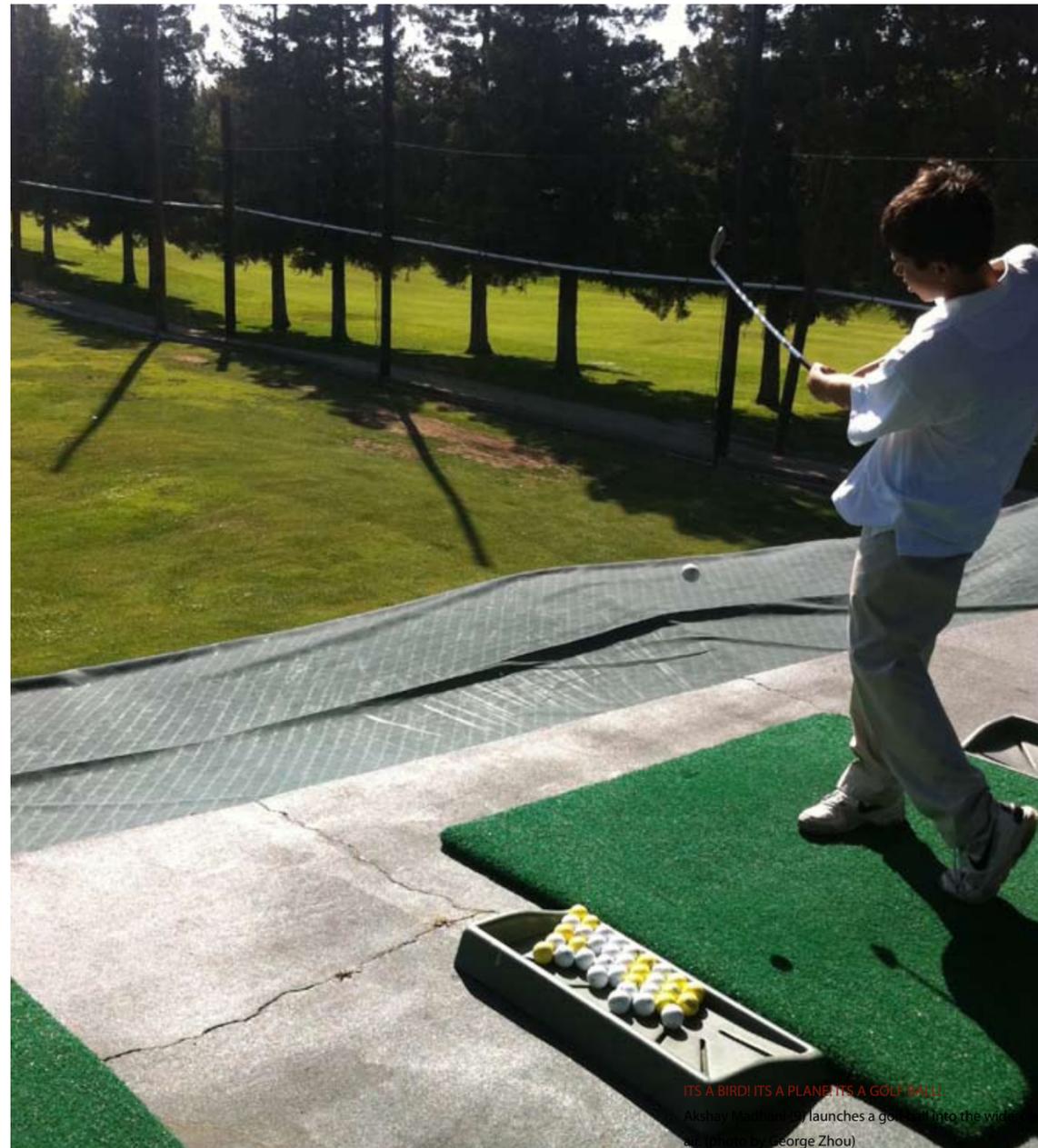
Without a moments hesitation, I grab another ball. Hoping for better results this time, I actually try to apply Akshay's teachings. I take the time to set up in the proper stance and mentally visualize what the shot is supposed to look like. Unfortunately, my preparations gave me little help.

As I advanced towards the ball, all my thoughts became diluted and my only goal was to hit the ball far and hard. Swinging the club like a baseball bat, I send it curving to the left and disappointingly watch it land, once again, near the 50 yard sign.

"Don't worry about it, golf takes a lot of practice," Akshay said reassuringly.

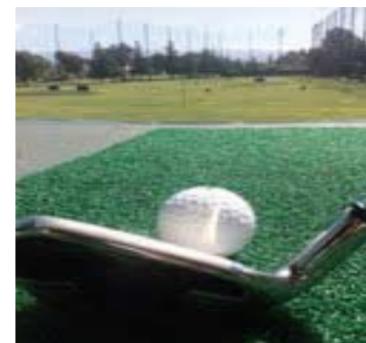
I underestimated golf, a difficult, frustrating sport. But once you manage to hit a decent shot, a feeling of accomplishment fills you. I am glad I embarked on this journey because it has bestowed upon me a new found respect for golf.

—George Zhou



IT'S A BIRD! IT'S A PLANE! IT'S A GOLF BALL!

Akshay Madhani (9) launches a golf ball into the wide open air. (photo by George Zhou)



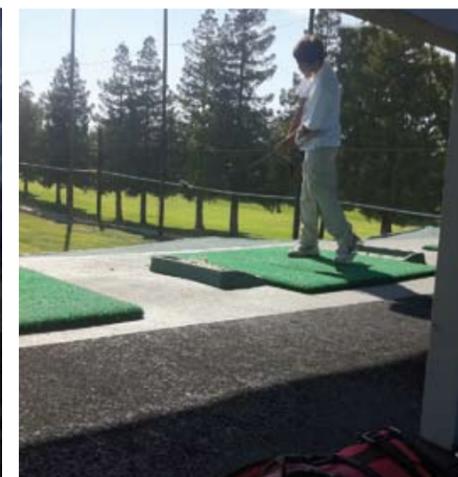
A GOLFER'S PARADISE This is the vast, grassy driving range. (photo by George Zhou)



Shh! Akshay Madhani (9) practices putting, which requires concentration. (photo by George Zhou)



First Experience George Zhou (9) sets up for a chance to hit the golf ball. (photo by Akshay Madhani)



Fore! Watch out for any golf balls Akshay Madhani (9) might send you way while he is on the driving range (photo by George Zhou)

If you can't put the ball into the hole, you can't win. Akshay Madhani (9) tries to perfect his putting skills to improve his overall golf game. (photo by George Zhou)

## HOW TO GOLF

1



To begin, shift your weight slightly back onto your weaker foot and turn your shoulders. Be sure to keep your arms straight.

2



Next, rotate your hips, bend your arms, and slightly hinge your wrist.

3



Take a swing by twisting your hips and straightening out your arms. Also transfer your weight forward onto your dominant foot as you make contact with the golf ball.

**MIXING IT UP!** Jennifer Ho (09) mixing the melted milk chocolate with a rubber spatula. "My favorite part of making truffles is the anticipation of eating them," said Jennifer (photo by Nicole Bowman)



## AN INSIDERS' GLIMPSE OF JENNIFER HO



Jennifer Ho is not your ordinary freshman. Instead of playing on the computer or watching TV in her free time, she bakes delicious desserts such as brownies and cakes. Jennifer is well known for her baking talents. It is not uncommon for her friends to beg Jennifer to bring her creations to school. Once in a while, she even makes her famous truffles, her most popular treat. "When I see Jennifer bring her tray of truffles to school, I try to grab as many as I can," said freshman Izzy Zuccarino. Jennifer loves to bake because it is relaxing and fun to do. She is an experimental baker who enjoys finding new recipes on the internet and in magazines.

# A LOVE FOR TRUFFLES

Freshman Nicole Bowman is taught to make her favorite dessert **chocolate truffles** from scratch with help from the extraordinary freshman **baker Jennifer Ho**.

"Do you dream in chocolate?" This popular advertisement for Lindt Lindor Truffles describes chocolate's irresistible and mouth watering qualities. I have forever been enchanted by chocolate's taste and I wanted to learn the secret to making my own chocolate truffles from scratch.

Not many people know how to make these delicious treats, but luckily freshman Jennifer Ho offered to teach me her special recipe and invite me into the world of chocolate making. Jennifer is known for bringing her chocolate creations to school for special occasions and people's birthdays, so I would be learning from the best.

At first I believed truffle making would be a quick and easy activity with instant gratification. It soon became clear that I was completely wrong; the entire process took about 3 hours. Not to mention, chocolate became smeared everywhere and stuck to everything. "Truffles are messy in the kitchen, but they're good," said Jennifer.

Most people are under the impression that truffles have many exotic ingredients. In reality, these chocolates require a few key ingredients such as chocolate chips and heavy whipping cream, both of which can be found in the typical grocery store. Melting the chocolate, on the other hand was a long and tiresome process. It required much patience and time.

First, Jennifer and I poured two bags of semisweet chocolate chips into a glass bowl over a boiling pot of water. After the chocolate melted, we stirred it with a rubber spatula and added

butter, milk, and heavy whipping cream to make the filling. Next, we placed the filling into the fridge for an entire hour. The outer layer was then made by melting milk chocolate chips.

Finally, we rolled the filling into little balls and dipped them into the milk chocolate. Many times we dropped the filling balls in the chocolate bowl and had to fish out its many pieces with wooden toothpicks. It was a nice bonus to eat all the reject truffles. The acceptable chocolates were put on a tray and placed in a freezer until they hardened.

The finished product was well worth the effort. By the time they were ready to eat, I had to use all my willpower to not eat the entire tray of truffles right then and there. They were so delicious that even my exercise loving, health-conscious family devoured the entire batch within a day.

I found that baking the truffles was a very therapeutic experience. It allowed me to take a break from school and the process helped me to enjoy the present. I had a great time eating chocolate and just laughing with Jennifer. Jennifer oftentimes bakes when she just needs a break from reality, which is something I may have to emulate. "Making truffles helps me to relieve stress, it's really fun," said Jennifer.

I learned many lessons while making chocolate truffles. Good things come in time and the best rewards are the ones that you work for. It took time and effort, but no chocolate has ever tasted better than the truffles I made that day. Most certainly will bake truffles in the future and continue dreaming in chocolate.

—Nicole Bowman

**ENJOYING THE SWEET TASTE OF CHOCOLATE.** Jennifer Ho (09) eating a completed, delicious truffle in the outside air. (photo by Nicole Bowman)



**CREATING HEAVEN** Nicole Bowman (09) trying her hand at truffles, with help from experienced baker Jennifer Ho (09) (photo by Nicole Bowman)



## HOW TO BAKE TRUFFLES

1



First, pour semi-sweet chocolate chips into a glass bowl over a boiling pot of water. After they melt, remove the bowl from the pot and add in milk, butter, and heavy whipping cream. Continue stirring to make the filling. Place filling into the refrigerator. Let sit for 1 hour.

2



Next, make the outer layer by melting milk chocolate chips using the same method as stated in the first step. Remove the bowl from the pot and stir.

3



Finally, take the truffle filling out of the refrigerator and roll them into little balls. Use a toothpick to dip the filling balls into the melted milk chocolate and place on a tray. Store truffles in freezer until they harden. Then eat truffles. Bon Appétit!

# DRAW, AIM, SHOOT

Senior Grace Kim spends an afternoon after school **teaching** a freshman the **basic skills of archery**, revealing more about this uncommon sport

Senior Grace Kim steadily draws back her pointed arrow, sharply releasing it into the air. In less than a blink of an eye, the sharp point stabs the bulls-eye of the target. Doink!

For Grace, archery has been a part of her life for over 4 years now. She describes it as a sport demanding complete concentration, focus, and mental strength. All aspects I had not expected to come with this unique sport.

I set out to observe, trying to discover more about this uncommon sport and Grace was someone who could help me get a sneak peek of this complex activity.

"Archery can't be that hard" was the first thing that came to mind once I heard of this so-called sport. It seems as simple as just shooting an arrow from a bow, but really there is much more to that.

I was given a small preview of beginner archery in 7th grade PE, but what I had done then was nothing close to what archery really was.

In reality, the bow was heavy and extremely difficult to control, but I had expected to shoot with a simple bow and arrow. Even the beginner's bow I had shot with was exceedingly hard to hold up. My arms were practically shaking trying to pull the arrow from the beginner's bow, where as Grace was using a 34 lb. bow.

I thought holding the bow was the hard part, but really it comes down to shooting and learning all the technique. How complex could it be? I was proven wrong right away, as I was trying to perfect every little thing I was taught in just under an hour.

"Make sure you don't forget to keep your arms up" and "keep looking at the target" were just some of the things

Grace was constantly reminding me of. The information just kept coming.

Standing there just about to shoot the bow was something that soaked up all my focus. It forced me to constantly think about aiming at the target, keeping an upright posture, correct form, all while struggling to make it seem like the bow was "as light as a feather." You need to be in the exact position every single time; it is all about consistency.

"You have to have your head in the game, and each shot has to be executed the exact same way as the others," Grace said.

The thing that had shocked me most of all was that it demands more from you mentally, compared to what other sports require.

"It forces you to be focused for a 10 hour competition day, and if you lose focus at any time, 10 points are on the line--the highest amount of points you can get," Grace said. Each point you earn counts, and one point can make a huge difference in whether you place or not. It may not be notably physically demanding, but it will drain you mentally.

My thoughts before and after my whole shooting experience were drastically different. There were so many different things to know about the sport in general, leaving me overwhelmed. There were so many parts to it, from holding the bow right to keeping your form as consistent as possible. I had clearly gotten a better taste of archery, when before, I had doubted it was even a sport.

"People can say it is not a sport, but they clearly have not actually tried it," Grace said.

—Stephanie Chu



**NEVER LOSE FOCUS** Experienced archer Grace Kim (12) keeps her focus on the target, even after her release. (photo by Stephanie Chu)



**BULLS EYE** Stephanie Chu (09) shoots five arrows at the end of a long day of learning technique. (photo by Stephanie Chu)

**1...2...3 SHOOT** Grace Kim (12) demonstrates proper form before releasing her arrow at the target. (photo by Stephanie Chu)



## A CLOSEUP LOOK ON GRACE KIM



Archery has been a part of Grace Kim's life since the 7th grade. Instead of participating in more common sports, Grace chose a more unique activity. In the beginning, it was just a fun past time activity, but it soon became more serious. So, her parents decided to send Grace and her sister to Korea for training.

Grace took a break from this time-consuming sport during her junior year to focus more on academics. She then resumed training again her senior year with the US National Archery Coach practicing at her house and at different archery ranges.

She now competes in competitions all over the United States, ranking highly among her peers.

"Competitions are definitely tough. I got better senior year, but I'm still not where I want to be," Grace said.

Grace was accepted and will be attending Columbia University, as a part of the incoming class. There will be set practice times, when it is mandatory to go to the gym, where they will meet with a trainer three times a week, and compete as a team rather than individuals.

"I have never really worked or been on a team sport, so this will be a first!" Grace said.



**A LOAD TO CARRY** Archery shouldn't be taken lightly, even the quipment weighs you down. Grace Kim (12) displays all her equipment that she is always required to bring. (photo by Stephanie Chu)

**FOCUS FOCUS FOCUS** Stephanie Chu (09) keeps her eyes locked on the target while preparing to shoot. "Eyes on the prize," said Grace Kim (12). (photo by Grace Kim)

# AW, SHOOT! I MISSED.

A freshman spends an afternoon at Coyote Creek Shooting Range in Morgan Hill to explore what it is like for experienced hunters to practice their sport.

I stood on a stone path, surrounded by rolling hills covered in half-dead grass, holding a yellow remote control in my hand. My finger rested lightly on a black button, and I listened for the voice. A few seconds later I heard a voice shout "Pull!" I pressed the black button and soon enough an orange pigeon was flying across the sky. Less than a second later, the sound of a gunshot was followed by orange clay pieces flying in the air.

In the rural area of Morgan Hill, Coyote Creek Sporting Clays attracts hunters from around the bay area to come and practice their shooting during the offseason. One Thursday afternoon, Saratogan Jeff Perrone, a seasoned hunter, and his daughter Laura, showed me what it was like to be one of the many who load their shotguns and shoot at clay pigeons flying across the sky.

Driving in to the shooting range was an experience in itself. The half mile or so of dirt road was lined with cows and their baby calves, surrounded by flies and bees of all sorts. The range was a medley of golf course and farm, and felt like an old western movie coming to life.

I found out quickly that if you are planning on shooting a gun, you need to know what exactly it is that you're doing. From explaining how to load the shotgun, hold it, remove the safety and pull the trigger, my mind was overloaded with points to remember.

The gun I was given to shoot was called a 410 gauge, the smallest shotgun and the one commonly used for first-timers like myself. The upside of this was the impact while shooting was lessened and the gun itself was lighter to hold. The downside was that the margin for error when aiming was extremely small.

When I picked up the 410 I was surprised by its weight, considering this is what many young children use to learn

how to shoot. It was not easy to handle, and I had to be careful to always have the gun pointed down. After loading the gun with one shell, it took me seven tries to close it.

"What's wrong with this thing?" I kept asking Perrone. I could not get the gun closed for the life of me.

"You've gotta push harder," he kept saying.

Once I got the gun closed and put it up to my shoulder I felt like I was the Hunchback of Notre Dame. The gun rested uncomfortably against my right shoulder, and I hunched over the gun to get a proper view. My left hand supported the barrel of the gun while my right rested near the trigger.

Standing with the gun poised ready to shoot, I was dead scared. Laura, Perrone's daughter, had mentioned how the gun kicks back and I did not know what to expect. I did not have a lot of confidence in the yellow foam earplugs I was wearing, either.

When I was ready with my gun raised and both eyes open, I shouted "Pull!" loudly. In less than a second, a clay pigeon was shot out of a tower from behind me. I saw it, attempted to aim, and while anticipating the kick back of the gun, pulled the trigger.

I was hardly thinking about hitting the pigeon the first time I shot. I missed it by more than 10 feet for sure. I was so curious to just see how it would feel when I pulled the trigger. The impact of the gun was not at all painful, and the entire experience was exhilarating. And once you miss the pigeon, you just want to keep trying.

Out of the 20 or so shots I took, I hit the pigeon twice. In comparison, Perrone only missed the pigeon twice. The saying "practice makes perfect" truly does apply.

Even though I was not very successful, the last thing I said when I left the range was, "I haven't had that much fun in a long time."

—Cristina Curcelli



**BYE BYE BIRDIE** Cristina takes her first shot at an orange clay pigeon. "The first time I shot the gun, I forgot about aiming all together because I didn't know what to expect," said Cristina. (9). (photo by Jill Curcelli)

## TOP 10 RULES OF HUNTING

- 1 Watch that muzzle. You would't want to kill anyone.
- 2 Treat every firearm with the respect due a loaded gun.
- 3 Be sure of the target and what is in front of it and beyond it.
- 4 Keep your finger outside the trigger guard until ready to shoot.
- 5 Check your barrel and ammunition.
- 6 Unload firearms when not in use. Accidents happen.
- 7 Point a firearm only at something you intend to shoot.
- 8 Don't run, jump, or climb with a loaded firearm.
- 9 Store firearms and ammunition separately and safely.
- 10 Avoid alcoholic beverages before and during shooting.

California Department of Fish and Game



**PIGEON PERFECT** Perrone shoots at the pigeon and hits it precisely. The orange clay shatters when hit and the fragments litter the ground. (photo by Jill Curcelli)

**LEARNING THE ROPES** Perrone explains how a shotgun shell is assembled and how it functions. "When you pull the trigger, there is a hammer that fires out the shell," said Perrone. (photo by Jill Curcelli)



**FINDING THE TARGET** Cristina Curcelli stands ready to shoot. "Aiming at the pigeons was the toughest part of shooting," said Cristina (09). (photo by Jill Curcelli)



**WATCH THAT MUZZLE** A shotgun rests on the gun rack before being put to use. "The 20 gauge is a heavier and more powerful gun, but the range is also bigger," remarks hunter Perrone. (photo by Cristina Curcelli)



**HOME ON THE RANGE** Coyote Valley Sporting Clays attracts hunters from all over the Bay Area to come and practice their shooting. (photo by Jill Curcelli)



**UPSIDE DOWN** Friday Night Waltz attendee Jessie Mun dips Sarah Finley (09) during a fast waltz. (photo by Katrin Cooper)

# WALTZING THROUGH LIFE

A freshman tries out a **new type of dance** and learns the tricks of the trade from **an experienced peer** who understands the art of the sport.

I walked into the First United Methodist Church in Palo Alto with freshman Casey Takahashi and looked around, noting the loud music, plastic chairs, shiny dance floor, and the heaping table of snacks. Having never attended Friday Night Waltz before, I had no idea what to expect that night.

I have danced my whole life, so I suppose that is part of the reason I wanted to go. From ballet and tap in preschool to Irish dancing in elementary school to jazz in middle school, I have tried them all. Yet from the attendees I saw practicing in the hallway, I could tell this type was something much different from anything I had ever tried.

Casey led me down a long hallway into a ballroom with shining lights and an open dance floor, a scene that seemed straight out of a Disney movie. Although I was surprised by how old many of the participants were, we each grabbed a middle aged partner and joined the circle around the instructor.

This week's class was on the cross step waltz, Casey had told me earlier in the car. Since different types of dances are taught each week, Casey greatly emphasized the benefits of going every week if you wanted to improve.

"If you don't attend consistently," Casey told me, "then you can't learn a variety of dances, and you also tend to forget how the steps go."

Casey herself has attended Friday Night Waltz since last summer. Although she readily admits she does not know everything about the sport, she is one of the better and more knowledgeable dancers in the class.

The instructor taught the steps too fast for me to follow, but with help from Casey and my middle-aged partner, I managed to pick up the first steps as well as could be expected from a beginner.

Every 15 minutes, the teacher yelled, "Switch!" On this command, the men would rotate one woman to the right. I

found it confusing to dance with different people, but Casey explained, "The purpose of having people switch partners all the time is to meet new people and also experience the different levels and styles of people's dancing skills."

Unfortunately, the cross step waltz got progressively harder, so that by the end of the class I was spinning the wrong way and tripping over my own feet. When I apologized to my partner for my bad dancing, he just said, "Don't worry- you're just a beginner. You'll get better."

Afterwards, Casey told me about the next event, the ball. During the ball, the DJ plays music for different kinds of classical dances while men ask the women to dance.

As we walked into the ballroom, slow music for the first waltz began playing, interrupting our conversation. A smartly dressed college student promptly asked Casey to dance and they walked off. As I watched Casey elegantly spin and twirl with her partner, I wondered how she could be so graceful while performing such complex steps.

Suddenly, I heard a voice. "Would you care to dance?" a high school boy asked me shyly, after introducing himself as Ricki Roberts. I told him I would love to, but warned him that I was a beginner so I would need some help. He only smiled.

He led me out onto the dance floor and began counting off the steps. I struggled to keep to his rhythm, as we spun around the dance floor time after time. When the song ended, he let go of my hands and gave a little bow.

"Thank you very much for this dance," Ricki said politely. I was surprised by his chivalry, but returned the thanks before moving on to dance with a new partner.

The night continued for another hour and a half, until we decided it was time to go home. I had met new people, learned classic dances, and become more confident in my dancing, all in one night. By the time we got home, it was past eleven thirty; I guess we just waltzed the night away.

—Sarah Finley



**PARTY ON THE DANCE FLOOR** Jennie Werner (09) and Casey Takahashi (09) lead the night's class in a line dance as a break between waltzes during the ball. (photo by Sarah Finley)

**UP IN THE AIR** Casey Takahashi (09) teaches Sarah Finley (09) how to perform a lift. "After you get the basics [of waltzing] down," Casey said, "It's easy to add them in." (photo by Jennie Werner)



## YOUR TURN: HOW TO PERFORM THE CLASSIC WALTZ

1



First, the man steps out to the side with his left foot. The woman steps into the new space between his feet with her right foot.

2



Then, the man brings his left foot back to his other foot and the woman brings her right foot back to her other foot.

3



Both adjust their feet back into starting position so that their shoulders are square. All three steps are repeated again, only roles are reversed.

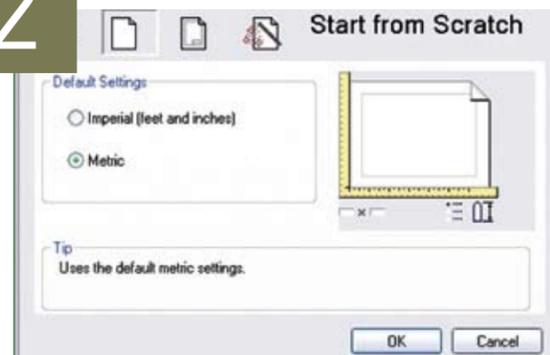
## HOW TO CAD LIKE IVAN FRANCE

1



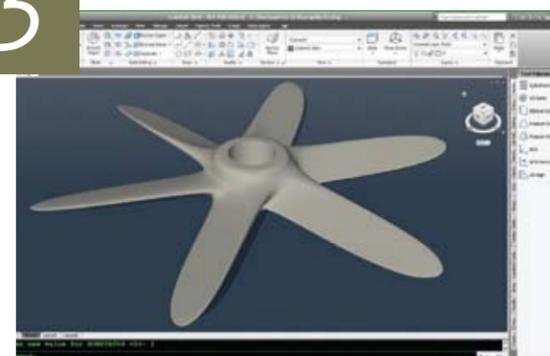
First, install AutoCAD 2010 and step away from the computer for a few hours while it loads the components. If you really want to be like Ivan France then go fishing in the meantime.

2



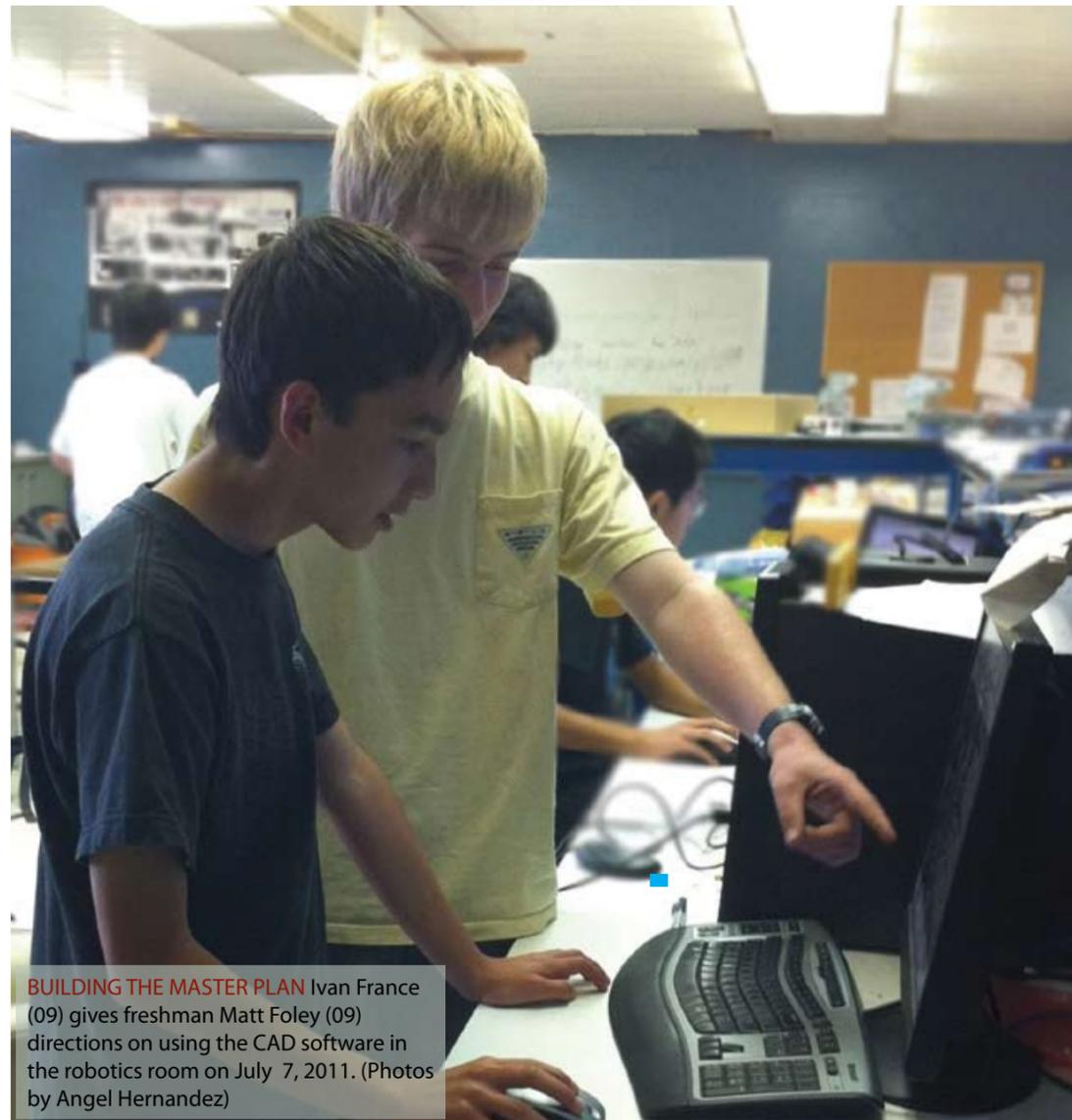
Next, open up the software that just took you five hours to install and make a new file.

3



Finally, draw random shapes that look like they could fit in a robot and export the project as any type of file you want. Be happy with the final outcome because you just spent eight hours of your life installing something you will probably never use again.

**CODING THE FUTURE** Freshman Matt Foley's hands fly across the keyboard as he types a new line of java code in the robotics room.



**BUILDING THE MASTER PLAN** Ivan France (09) gives freshman Matt Foley (09) directions on using the CAD software in the robotics room on July 7, 2011. (Photos by Angel Hernandez)



Photo courtesy of EducationTimes

## BLASTING OFF

A freshman with no prior knowledge of robotics or engineering learns the difficulties of designing and programming a robot first-hand.

The smell of sawdust filled the air and wood laid scattered across the concrete floor. The glare of computer monitors lit up the room and students filled the room talking about various topics related to robotics. One student was waiting for me when I arrived.

Freshman Ivan France greeted me as I entered the robotics room for the first time. Ivan had moved from Texas to California during the summer and his parents decided to be mentors for the robotics program. Today however, Ivan was my mentor.

Ivan plays a huge part in the success of the robotics team. He is the build manager for the robotics team and also competes in TARC (Team American Rocketry Challenge) with the rocketry team.

My goal was to learn about two of the main aspects of robotics: design and programming. We started with design. We sat down in front of the 24-inch Dell LED monitor and opened up the CAD (computer assisted drawing) program.

"Alright, to start with I want you to do a kind of puzzle," Ivan said. "All you have to do is design a robot within the boundaries I have set within the program. The parts you need are in the library."

"How long should this take?" I asked.

"Not too long. Maybe 30 or 40 minutes," Ivan replied.

The CAD program allows for 3D editing and helps to layout the robot before it's actually made. Geometry is hard enough for me, but organizing a robot with actual parts that have a function is 100 times harder.

I grew frustrated with myself as I tried to fit the different pieces of the robot into the small boundaries that Ivan had set within the CAD program. I started with the motor then worked my way to the fans and wheels.

Fitting everything into the boundaries and placing them

correctly was like solving a 10,000 piece jig-saw puzzle. Finally, after hours of rearranging and replacing various parts, I was finally finished.

I checked my phone and saw that the activity had taken nearly two hours. Feeling satisfied that I had even finished, I decided it was time to move on to the programming of a robot. That was a subject that I had a little more experience in.

"The language we use to program the robots is Java," Ivan said.

Java was one of the few languages that I had no prior knowledge of.

The Java SDK (software development kit) loaded on screen and my head was spinning with confusion the second I looked at the monitor. Numbers, strings, and threads from previous projects filled the screen and I didn't know where to begin.

Eventually I was able to navigate my way across the interface of the SDK and it was time to start coding! We started by making buttons that changed the color of the desktop and worked our way up. By the end of my two-hour session of programming, I felt like my head was going to explode.

Nothing I had done had come even close to the lines of code that the programmers do every day, yet I felt as mentally fatigued as someone who had just finished STAR testing.

"Not bad for a beginner," Ivan said.

"Thanks, I think I'll go now" was the only reply that I could think of at that point in time. I scurried out of the robotics room and breathed in fresh air.

Overall, the experience was very enlightening. I got to see what these students did everyday for "fun" and I also learned a little bit more about the creation and programming of robots in the process.

—Matt Foley

## ENGINEERING PRODIGY BEN EVERETT



Photo by Matt Foley

Sophomore Ben Everett has been interested in robotics ever since he was a little kid.

"When I was a kid I always used to like building different structures with Legos," Ben said. "Robotics is not much different."

When Ben heard that Saratoga High was offering robotics, he immediately jumped on the offer and became the freshmen job manager.

Ben now does a variety of jobs such as helping design the robots and putting them into the CAD software.

Ben also loves to work on the TARC Team. He has constructed the head of the rocket and has also designed to the tail piece of the rocket.

He is also a valuable component during Build Season in robotics.

He has designed the pneumatics of the rocket and robot. He worked on the drive train and the arm of the robot, the two most valuable parts of robot.

Next year Ben plans to be electrical technician too.

"I love playing with electronics and fiddling around with wires," Everett said. "This is why robotics is such an interesting subject for me."

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** Sophomore Abigail Lin practices a trick before trying it out on the ice. “Doing stretches beforehand can help you do more complex things,” said Abigail. (photo by McKenna Galvin)



**SLOWING DOWN** Abigail Lin demonstrates how to come to a stop on the ice. (photo by McKenna Galvin)



# ICE ICE BABY

Sophomore **McKenna Galvin** tried out ice skating for a day, leaving with more appreciation for the activity.

“Bend your knees! Don’t widen your feet as much! Push out to go faster!” The words echoed in my head as I attempted to make my way around the rink without falling. With my skates cautiously placed where they should be and my hands stretched out in front of me for balance, I slowly picked up speed and began to smile as I whizzed passed a group of 11-year-olds at a birthday party. I spoke too soon. While I was concentrating on maintaining the proper stance, I ran into another skater and fell flat onto the hard, icy surface.

All my life, I had imagined ice skating to be as easy and carefree as they make it look on the Olympics. So when I first stepped out onto the ice that Saturday morning, I thought that I was on my way to doing jumps and spins in no time. Although this didn’t end up happening, I still managed to have a good time despite my lacking skills.

“Ice skating is all about practice,” said sophomore Abigail Lin, a former ice skater who helped teach me how to skate. “You can’t just show up and expect to do all these crazy tricks the first day. But if you continue to take baby steps, you will eventually be able to do more advanced things.”

Abigail began ice skating when she was ten years old. Practices would last up to five hours a week, and consisted of both group and private lessons. She continued the sport through eighth grade,

when she stopped due to other commitments.

“I decided to stop because I knew that once I started going to high school, I wouldn’t have that much free time between homework and other extracurriculars. It’s still fun to stop by the rink sometimes and skate, though,” Abigail said.

She said that the activity was especially hard because she started late compared to other people, who usually begin ice skating as early as three or four years old. Despite the late start, however, she was still able to learn advanced jumps and spins.

“My favorite trick to do is the scratch spin. It’s an upright turn where one leg crosses over the other and you slowly start to spin faster. It’s pretty basic, but it’s fun because I can turn fast,” said Abigail.

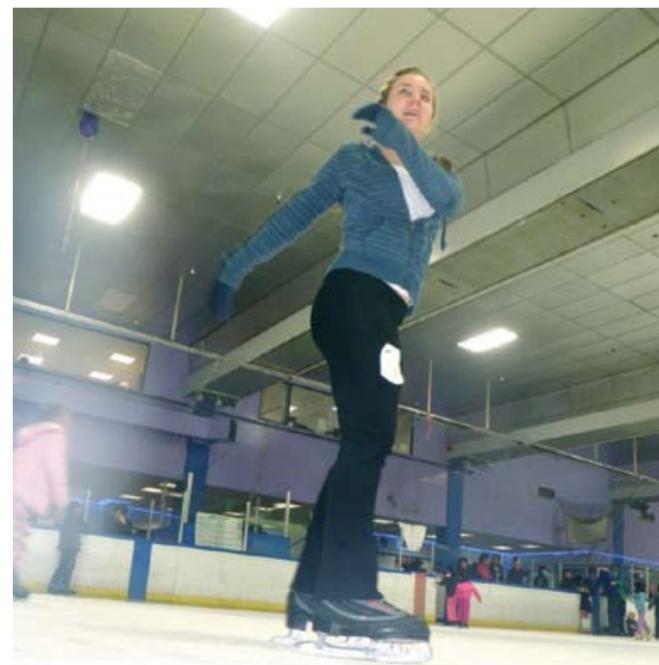
Although I was far from being able to do complex tricks and spins, after spending a couple of hours ice skating I was able to get around the rink without hesitantly clinging to the bordering wall. After this experience, I formed a new appreciation for the activity I once thought to be easy.

Ice skating is a fun activity that I would encourage anyone with a willing mindset and a spare \$10 bill to try. Although I was far from becoming an Olympic athlete after this excursion, I returned with an open mind and plenty of bruises along the way. I’m glad that I was able to give this activity a try.

—**McKenna Galvin**



**TIME TO SKATE** Most rinks allow people to rent skates for around \$3, but once you start going regularly, it’s a good idea to invest in some skates of your own. Shown here are Abigail’s skates, which she usually covers so that they stay in pristine condition. (photo by McKenna Galvin)



**JUST CHILLIN’** Both novice and advanced skaters glide around the rink at Ice Center Cupertino on May 21. (photo by McKenna Galvin)

**A+ FOR EFFORT** Sophomore McKenna Galvin attempts to skate around the rink without falling down. (photo by Abigail Lin)

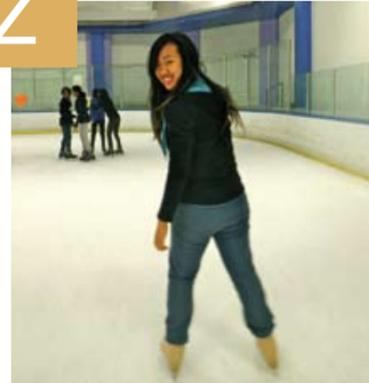
## HOW TO ICE SKATE

1



First, put on your skates. “They should be tight enough so your ankles won’t move around inside the skates,” said sophomore Abigail Lin.

2



Next, step out onto the ice. Step smoothly and bend your knees to stay balanced.

3



Finally, take breaks frequently. Going for too long can lead to injury, so take a couple of minutes to rest your legs.



# CHANGING WORLDS

## Experiencing America, Freshman learns about Eliza Sirbu's transition from Romainia to the United States.



Hello, hola, bonjour! Help, ayudya, aider! Not one person seemed to understand me as I looked around hoping to find my parents before I seriously get lost. I eventually found my parents waiting by the bathrooms, but it took longer as I Sadly, this country's official language is not English, Spanish, or French, it's another romance language, Romanian!

Last summer I visited Romania and they only have one official language, Romanian. There was no way of getting any where as some people knew English, but most people there spook Romanian.

To come more prepared the next time I end up going to Romania, I decided it was time to learn the language. I sat down with 27 year old Eliza Sirbu, as she gave me a simple 90 minute lesson of speaking Romanian.

"Romanian language is not as complicated as it may sound," Sirbu said, "The hardest things to transition to from Romanian to English would be pronunciation and punctuation would be a close second.

Sirbu left her parents and brother to come to America for the job opportunities eight years ago. She now works as a caretaker and entertainment director at a retirement home in Willow Glen.

She learned some English during her 19 year stay at Romania, but her English was the equivalent of a student that just finished Spanish one, French one, or Chinese one. She had to take English classes for about two to three years while she was in America. English is Sirbu's third language as she is fluent in Romanian and French.

"The United States is much more complicated and I'm still learning all the cultural aspects of the U.S.," Sirbu said, "One cultural aspect that's here and in Romania though is all the fast

foods, even though in America, they are all over the place!"

In our lesson, I learned many simple things that include greetings, such as hello, thanking people, and saying goodbye. The main problem I had was really bad at pronouncing the words correctly. The "r" needs a much heavier emphasis than in English and it made pronunciation tough. I asked Sirbu how to say a simple greeting, "how's it going?".

"Cum merge treaba?" Sirbu said.

I tried to repeat the sentence and Sirbu laughed and smiled at my attempt to say the sentence.

"First you must keep the 'ge' silent, so it's almost like saying 'mer' and then you need a heavier emphasis on the 'r' for treaba."

I tried again, this time using her advice. She smiled and congratulated as I said my first perfect sentence.

During our lesson I noticed many similarities between Romanian and French. In order to say thank you one way to say it would be "merci" and one way to say hello is "salut", both words used in the French language to thank and greet someone.

"It takes time to learn the Romanian language. It took me years and years to learn English and I still am not perfect. Anyone can learn the language, it will just need some good effort and practice," Sirbu said.

Learning Romanian was absolutely a blast and it was enjoyable. I got a very good idea of how Sirbu had trouble learning English, as I had large amounts of trouble speaking Romanian. Though I probably will not remember much from when I visit Romania again, but the idea of transitioning from one country to another proves it is one of the hardest things in life when you change societies, cultures, and languages.



**BECAUSE IT'S WORK, WORK, WORK** Before Sirbu left to the United States, she was helping work on her grandmother's farm with watering fruits and vegetbales (top page) and feeding and giving water to the four cats and the chickens (bottom right). "My grandmother has about 90 to 120 chickens," Sirbu said.



**THE NEW WORK IN THE NEW LIFE** Sirbu is pictured at the entrance to the nursery finishing her 2009 christmas eve shift. She has been working at the nursery for about five years.



**FAMILY PORTRAIT** A family photo of Sirbu (bottom right) while she was living in Romania. Here she is around the age of eight with her photo (top right), grandfather (top middle), grandmother (bottom middle), her mother (top left), and an unidentified



**NEED A MOMENT?** Photo of the delicious, satisfying "Kirbab" made at one of Sirbu's favorite resturants in downton Bucharest, Romania. (All photos except for the very top right photo is courtesy of Eliza Sirbu)

### Romanian

### English

ianuarie
februarie
martie
aprilie
mai
iunie
iulie
august
septembrie
octombrie
noiembrie
decembrie

January
February
March
April
May
June
July
August
September
October
November
December



—Ethan Gelfand

Ăă Ââ Îî Șș Țț

ș Ș ș Ș  
ț Ț ț Ț

**LAUNGAGE!** Sirbu spoke two laungages at Romania, French and Romanian. Here are some letters used in Romanian, French, and months

# THE SECRET LIFE OF A TRACKLETE

Athletes apart of SHS track and field running events demonstrate what it takes to be an all-star "tracklete". Beware of sore muscles and sweat.

**JUST KEEP RUNNING** Sophomores run on the SHS track to practice building up endurance. "Endurance is probably one of the most important things when you are doing a running event. It greatly effects how successful you will be in a meet," said Melodie Bellegarda (10). (photo by Tim-Casey-Clyde)



**JUST KEEP RUNNING** Sophomore Maya Nag runs a typical warm-up lap before practicing before her 400 m event at the SHS track. "We all have to do warm-up exercises before we go off and practicing for our seperate events," said Maya Nag (10). (photo by Katlyn Hirokawa)



Months of laziness are sweated off as I exercise with the two of most respected Saratoga High track members, sophomores Melodie Bellegarda and Maya Nag.

As my lungs feel like bursting, they continue to laugh while talking about memories they made while on the previous band trip to Carnegie Hall. I try to hide the fact I am struggling with one lap, when I know this simple warm-up is as easy as breathing to them.

"You can do it Katlyn, we're almost done," said Maya.

It made me wonder how they could survive one track practice full of physical conditioning. Some may wonder why anyone who is not athletic, like me, would want to work out with all-star track athletes. The answer is simple. Most of my friends are in track, so after hearing all about it I thought it would be interesting to see what they have had to go through this whole spring season.

Maya and Melodie inform me that in a typical track practice everyone in track starts off running two warm up laps, stretching, and drills. After the warm ups everyone breaks off into their own separate events to practice.

After, I stretch with the girls they demonstrate some of their track moves, and before I know it Maya and Melodie are running so fast that I have to concentrate to keep my eyes up with them. I understood why these girls are famous for their record breaking speeds.

Melodie informed me that she ran the 400 m race in 60 seconds this season, while Nag broke 2:30 in the 800 m race. To be a successful runner they informed me that you need to have a proper body form, and build up endurance.

Having a perfect body form does not just play into the success

of running events. Freshmen Tim Casey-Clyde informed me that people who apart of throwing events spend most of their time perfecting their forms during practice.

After taking some pictures I sat down with them, and found some specifics about what it really takes to be a successful track member.

"I think when you run an event, you always have to train for something bigger than that event, like if you run the 400 m, train as if you're running an 800 m," said Melodie.

Going into this workout I set a goal for myself, that I would keep up with Melodie and Maya no matter what. Whether this goal was accomplished it too embarrassing for me to reveal, but then I had a thought. I wondered what kind of goals track members set for themselves.

"I had three main goals. They were to improve throughout the season, break 2:30 in the 800 m, and the last one was to try a new event. I met them all," said Maya.

By the end of the work out, I thought about how much pressure it was to not look like a fool in front of these respected track members, but then I realized how much pressure track athletes must feel to do well.

"The most pressure I get is probably pressure on myself. I know if I don't run well I'll beat myself up about it later. Also, I don't want to let my parents down," said Melodie.

I could just imagine what that would be like, carrying that much pressure on your shoulders. It's enough pressure being a good student.

I went into this experience not knowing what I would learn, but once this work out session was over I gained the inspiration to have the work ethic of a "tracklete", and sore thighs.

—Katlyn Hirokawa

## TRACKLETES CAN HURDLE



300 hurdles in 46 seconds seems impossible for most people, but not for sophomore Justin Hang.

Justin started hurdles as a freshmen, and notes how daunting this event can be to someone just starting this event.

"Hurdles were extremely challenging my first year, but this year it got a lot better. People think that hurdles aren't that hard, but once they try it they are like "holy cow"! Its probably the only race where there are obstacles purposely put in front of you to stop you from running your fastest which makes it insane," said Justin.

Most people would not know that the hurdle event is not one of the most challenging events in track, but it can also be dangerous.

"I think most people would agree hurdles are probably the hardest events there are, and you also more likely to be injured because there is something in your way while your running. I honestly can't remember how many times I have fallen while jumping over a hurdle," said Justin.

Justin also notes how just being apart of track is challenging enough.

"The biggest challenge was to stay motivated in track, because it got so tiring and so hard as the practices kept going, and you had to keep up with all your other extracurricular activities," said Justin.

Overall Justin notes that this past track season was a success improvement wise.

Although the coaches said we had a good chance to get first in league's we did not. However as a whole team everyone got better and ran faster by the end," said Justin.



**JUST KEEP RUNNING** Sophomore demonstrates what the proper body form is for running at the SHS track. "For a running event it is important you have a good body form, which helps propel one to run faster," said Melodie Bellegarda (10). (photo by Katlyn Hirokawa)

**JUST KEEP RUNNING** Varsity girls long distance running event, otherwise known as the "dream team", takes a picture in exulsive track meet at Anaheim. "We allgot really close this past track season, and you make life-long friends in track," said Melodie Bellegarda (10).

# WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU LEMONS...

Two SHS freshmen become conosseurs of **lemon bar making**, equipped with lemons, sugar, and lots of free time. Mmm!

A zesty and vibrant concoction sat on a silver aluminum foil tray, with an audience of two hungry teenage girls awaiting the dessert's powerful flavors. The snacks were cut into petite squares, as a child-safe knife glided through them with ease. Suddenly, a fork came out of an organized drawer, and dug itself into one of the pieces.

The fork tugged out a slice, as it mocked the sliver of lemon bar, for it seemed powerless under forks' sharp spikes. As the morsel of lemon desert plunged into one of the girls' mouths, sweet and tart flavors exploded around her tongue. She nodded to her baking companion. The lemon bars were a success.

When I heard of freshman Manini Desai's mastery of delectable lemon bars, I phoned her as soon as I could to learn the secret to these amazing treats. We met at her house on a Wednesday afternoon with our mouths prepared for the burst of flavor that was yet to come.

We reached for the most common ingredients any cook would have: flour, eggs, butter, sugar, and of course, lemons.

To start off the bars' delicious creation, we mixed the eggs, flour, butter and sugar in a large steel bowl.

When the formation of the mixture was complete, we plopped the dough into a tray and began pounding it into place.

Just as we thought that everything was going according to plan, we remembered one of the crucial elements to baking anything-- we forgot to grease the tray!

Sadly, the dough was already in place and it was too late to spray Pam on the pan. So, we hoped for the best and shoved the dish into the preheated oven for a good baking.

"When I realized that we forgot to spray the pan, I snatched up the can of Pam and began spraying it frantically on the edges!" Manini commented. "But after we took them out, we realized that we didn't even need any because there was so much butter in it already."

However, greasing the pan was the least of our problems. When we made the lemon topping for the bars, everything

went splendidly. We stirred the eggs, flour, and lemons, and poured it on top of the crust that was now baked to perfection. Soon after we had pushed them back into the oven did we realize that we forgot the single most important thing-- SUGAR.

When we realized our tragic mistake, it was yet again, too late. We decided to move on and see how it turned out.

"This time, I knew that they wouldn't turn out as good as they had the last time I made them," Manini said. "I mean, I don't think sugarless lemon bars will be all that sweet."

As the oven alarm blared in the kitchen, it signaled to us that the bars were ready. We popped them out of the oven and onto Manini's counter top. Although the bars had gotten a little over baked, their vibrant yellow color did not fail us.

While we glazed the tops of the gone-astray treats, they began looking like their selves again, not the grease-less, sugarless, and over baked bars we thought we had created.

Soon, the time had come to taste-test our lemon creations. As we took our first victorious bites, we were happily surprised.

Although the lemon bars were milder than we had foreshadowed and they were a tad less sweet than we had wanted, they were better than I would have been able to make without Manini.

"The lemon bars didn't come out as great as I had hoped, but they were still pretty good," Manini remarked with a laugh. "Together we actually ended up eating like eight bars, so I can't say that they weren't any good."

Although this was not our most successful baking venture into the art of lemon bar making, Manini and I will work toward making better lemon bars.

Manini will strive to become a connoisseur of the treats, while I simply learn how to bake a proper set of snacks, instead of the ones we had made.

Soon enough, with some practice and tons of lemons, we will reach our goal of mastering the great task called lemon bars.

—Ruchi Jain



**TURNING UP THE HEAT!** Ruchi Jain carefully places the lemon bar batter into the oven. "I was really scared that I would drop it and all of our hard work would amount to nothing" Ruchi said.



**MIXING IT UP** Manini Desai mixes lemon bar's batter with expertise, as drops of the mix spatter all over the counter.

**CHEW CHEW CHEW IT WELL** Manini Desai and Ruchi Jain line up all the ingredients in preparation to their baking extravaganza. "I couldn't wait to make the lemon bars!" Manini said.

JUST MAKE SURE YOU DONT...

1



To make SWEET lemon bars, make sure you don't mix the sugar up with salt, or even forget the it all together!

2



Also, when you juice the lemons, make sure that they're sour enough, because otherwise, your bars will just taste like lemon-less bars.

3



Always remember to grease the pan before you use it, because otherwise the bars may not pop out! Lucky for us, the bars were buttery enough so they were easy to cut out.

## topten SWEET YET SOUR FOODS TO MAKE WITH LEMONS

- |    |                                                                          |   |                                                        |
|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | Fresh and tangy lemonade... perfect for a summer day!                    | 5 | Lemon cupcakes-- they're so much more than cake bites. |
| 9  | Mmmm lemon meringue pie, a tasty treat thats always good!                | 4 | Sweet and creamy lemon cheese cake.                    |
| 8  | Ever added lemon to coke?!                                               | 3 | Nothing like a lemon muffin to spruce up your morning  |
| 7  | Don't forget the lemon bars!                                             | 2 | Lemon Citrus jelly for all of your sandwiches.         |
| 6  | Ice cold lemon sorbet-- if its too much work, you can get it at Safeway! | 1 | Sugary and delectable lemon tarts.                     |
- Ruchi Jain

# I WILL BE FIT

Saratoga athletes join Cross Fit to weight-lift and become bigger, badder, and stronger than ever before.

Freshman in Saratoga High School, 5'5", American born Chinese, and barely scratching 130 pounds. This description neither strikes awe into readers, nor materializes a hardcore, weight-lifting lineman in their minds. In fact, it describes a below average height, weight, and in journalism below par standard boy. Bluntly put, it's a perfect description of me, Eric Kao.

I left 8th grade P.E. with flying colors claiming a record of an astounding max of 80 push-ups, 20 pull-ups, and a sub 7 minute mile. Even walking into Saratoga High School on my first day, I still walked with a proud swagger I believed I had earned as a presidential-ranked athlete. That is, until I walked by the weight room one day after school and saw the athletes inside lifting behemoth weights that made the wrought metal bars which held them look like pencils and the dumbbells I use look like toothpicks.

Today, I throw aside the prejudices towards a person of my stature, bolster my confidence, and accompany the weight lifters. I joined Cross Fit, a weight lifting elective run by Mr. Rick Ellis.

Cross Fit is during 7th period, all students meeting in the big gym. Upon arriving, I find myself a a throng of students. Everyone is talking, passing footballs, a scene of total anarchy. As short, scrawny Asian kid among a group of towering football players and wrestlers, I was, undoubtedly and hopelessly, lost. Then, Mr. Ellis and Football coach Tim Lugo walks into the gym, ushering an unbroken silence.

Freshman Christian Lee said, "The team respects Coach Ellis a lot. He knows what he's doing and none of this would be possible without him. Coach Lugo? He's the best coach I've had. Football wouldn't be the same without him."

Immediately, Mr. Ellis starts taking role. As the last student files through the door, I'm left standing alone, sticking out like a sore thumb with this mysterious man I've never met who is able to silence a room of giant athletes without a word. He looks up from his clip board, looks at me, and tells me to walk with him to the weight room.

"So your the new student?", Mr. Ellis asks along the way, his eyes looking at me as if sizing me up.

"Yeah." It was awkward silence the rest of the way.

Upon arriving he shouts "MIKE FITZIMONS." Presently, a broad, hulking guy

lumpers over. Coach Ellis takes him aside and talks to him. Mike then, shambles to me and says, "Looks like I'll be your guide for the day."

Mike said, "I'm a wrestler and a football line-man. I need to keep up my game if I want to be at the top. Cross Fit gives me the boost I need to be there." Among the strongest Freshman, Mike is a role model in Cross Fit.

My first workout, was the dead lift. Already the name inspires confidence (Pardon the heavy sarcasm). A dead lift is where someone holds a bar in front of them while in squat position, and stands up.

Mike puts down a shining 45 pound metal bar and four tire-like rubber 45 pound weights in front of me (225 pounds total). As he slid the weights on, two weights on each side, I believe I saw a devious smirk on his face. Mike performs the dead lift. Mike's face scrunches up, his face turns purple, and he gasps for air. The bar, slowly but surely, rises. He drops the bar, and does this five times before telling me to do the same. I get in position and apply all my strength into standing up. My face scrunches up, my face turns blood red, and I gasp for air. All, to no avail. The bar doesn't budge an inch.

Mike, not surprised, smiles and pats me on the shoulder and tell me he'll go get lighter weights. Humiliated and exhausted, I sat down beside Sophomore Edward White for a brief rest and explained to him my vain endeavors in Cross Fit.

Edward White said, "The first time I came in here was when I was a Freshman. I honestly didn't know what was going on. It took some time for me to go with the flow, but when I got it, everything made sense." His words of comfort, though much appreciated, offered no salvation from Mike.

Unfortunately, my respite was rudely cut short. Mike Fitzimons grabs my wrist, and hauls me towards the power racks, mumbling something about squats. All my attempts in following hour of workouts ended nearly identical to the dead lift. All the while, P.E. is outside on the upper field having an unquestionably equally rigorous and intense game of Tug-of-War.

My first Cross Fit session was an embarrassing defeat. However, my visit wasn't fruitless, as I discovered my strength and potential to get stronger. I left the weight room with new found will, respect for those in Cross Fit, and a fatally crushed pride.

—Eric Kao

## FOOTBALL LINEMAN

### MIKE FITZIMONS



Mike Fitzimons is a lineman on the Saratoga High School JV football team. 15, 5'8", and 165 pounds of muscle demands fear and respect wherever he goes.

Mike began his passion for physical sports in 6th grade when he joined wrestling. To this day, he is still a talented and skilled wrestler, even practicing with the pros at Stanford.

This year Mike was finally able to join football, his dream sport. Mike said, "I was just about getting bored with wrestling. Being a lineman is something new and I love it."

Even off-season, Mike still constantly tones his body in the weight room. Mike believes he must stay fit to be the best.

Even Mike needs rest from working out. In his spare time, Mike plays videogames. His current favorite is Dead Space 2.



**THE DEADLIFT** Mike Fitzimons(9) performs a deadlift of a jaw-dropping 295 pounds.



**STEPPING YOUR GAME UP** Edward White(10) slides more weight onto his bar for a deadlift. Rival football teams better watch out, because Edwards is packing a big punch next time he's on the field.

**OUT FOR THE COUNT** Darst(9) sits out due to injuries. But nothing prevents him from getting better; Not allowed heavy lifting, he still tones his strength with less straining workouts Nothing out of the ordinary in the battle to be the best.

## HOW TO BENCH PRESS

1



First, get in the right position. Your legs should be spread, look up, and have a firm grip on the bar. A spotter, or someone who keeps watch on your progress, is highly recommended

2



Next, lift the bar of the rack, and slowly let it drop to your chest.

3



Finally, push the bar to your maximum range of motion. Then repeat step 2-3. Careful. People often can't handle the weight and come dangerously close to dropping it onto themselves. This is where spotters come in handy.

# HOW I PUT THE BAD IN BADMINTON

## HOW TO BE A BADMINTON PLAYER

1



First, find badminton supplies, such as a court, a racket, and a few birdies.

2



Next, start taking lessons and train to be the very best.

3



Finally, practice practice practice! It takes years to become a badminton pro.

photos by Trishika Shetty & Vanessa Wang

After



**SERVE IT LIKE YOU MEAN IT** Lauren Lin (09) awkwardly transitions from an overhead tennis serve to an underhand badminton serve. "Seriously, how do you guys do this? There's no power. Can I please serve illegally overhead?" said Lauren. (Photo by Trishika Shetty)

Before



**TOSS, PAUSE, HIT** Lauren serves the tennis ball with an overhead serve to opposing players at Harker during a match. Tennis serves differ from badminton because in badminton, an overhead serve is illegal. She and Jennifer Jin (10) won the match 6-0 (Photo courtesy of Lauren Lin)



A freshman tennis player delves into the world of **badminton** for two hours on a mission to learn a new sport and ruin her **tennis** technique.

As a tennis player, I've learned not to play badminton, because it conflicts with my tennis technique. However, I'm a rebel with a point to prove, a fight to fight, and a birdie to break.

In November, freshmen JV badminton players and tennis haters Candice Zheng and Vanessa Wang challenged me to a duel of the sports-- tennis vs. badminton. We decided to take turns playing the opposing sport, and using our experience, we would settle the eternal argument.

"Badminton is way better than tennis! It requires technique and footwork that tennis players don't use, and also, badminton is extremely popular," Candice said.

I beg to differ, because tennis also includes footwork and technique which only rigorous training can instill. Although Candice and Vanessa have not upheld their side of the bargain, I have always been confident that tennis will be the victor.

Badminton is a racket sport played by two opposing sides, who take positions on opposite sides of a net. Players score points by hitting a shuttlecock (also known as a shuttle, bird, or birdy) so that it passes over the net and lands in their opponents' side.

In my case, badminton is the process in which I swing wildly at the birdy in hopes that perhaps it might go over the net, and if I'm really lucky, it may even land within the boundaries.

My mentor of the day, badminton mixed doubles player and my best friend, Vanessa Wang, complied to taking the hopeless responsibility of teaching me badminton.

It seems badminton is not only boring, but hazardous to one's health. Players are responsible for setting up nets, which includes pushing heavy poles in place. When Vanessa wheeled the heavy post into place, I feared for her safety because it seemed as if it would topple over and crush her small frame. Tennis players are obviously more important, as we never have to set up thanks to the numerous courts available. (Tennis: 2, Badminton: 0)

However, it was raining outside, and the big gym was a nice refuge from the elements. Unfortunately, with the shelter came an unbearable

stiffness which my nose just couldn't take, which playing outdoors never caused. (Tennis: 3, Badminton: 1)

When all the courts were finally set up, the badminton-ing began! I thought that I would fail beyond reason, but using a hybrid of tennis and badminton forms, I managed to maintain short rallies and actually execute a few smashes.

"Yay! We're ruining your tennis form. Your coach is going to be so pleased with us," Vanessa said.

Unfortunately, badminton demands more usage of the wrist than tennis, while using only one hand. Unaccustomed to the extra movement, my wrist quickly got sore. (Tennis: 4, Badminton: 1)

Also, because the courts were set up so closely together, the birdy kept flying onto the other courts, and waiting for the players end a rally to retrieve the birdy was an awkward affair, similar to crossing the road when one is unsure of whether an oncoming car will stop. The difference was that while a pedestrian is granted right-of-way, someone seeking a run-away birdy could be stuck waiting on the side of the court for an opening to rush in and snatch the trouble-making shuttlecock. (Tennis: 5, Badminton: 1)

Because of the lack of room, I was whacked on the head when Grace Ma, a freshman JV badminton player, was practicing her swing. The racket hit me across the back of my head, and immediately, I crouched down and cradled my head in a classic stop, drop, and cover form, as if awaiting an earthquake. (Tennis: 6, Badminton: 1) Since badminton battle scars are not the most fashionable accessories, I was quite dismayed. Fortunately, I was reassured that my wound was not too gruesome.

"Oh, it's all black and blue. It's over, you're finished," coach Alex Chan, one of the three badminton coaches said. However, I will grant badminton a point for sarcastic wit, leaving the final score at Tennis: 6, Badminton: 2.

One thirty minute rally session later, open gym finished, and I left bearing a new bruise and a renewed appreciation for my beloved sport, tennis.

Lauren Lin

## tennis vs. badminton



**THAT WAS YOURS!** Vanessa and Lauren stare as a birdy hits the ground, both thinking that the other would hit it. (Photo by Grace Ma)

**POWER IN NUMBERS** The large badminton team has over 60 members, due to combining JV, varsity, and mixed teams. (Photo from the Talisman)

**HIT IT** Lauren hits a forehand during a rally. "Yay! We're ruining your tennis form. Your coach is going to be so pleased with us," Vanessa Wang (9) said. (Photo by Trishika Shetty)

check this out badminton

What do you get at In-N-Out?

I live under a rock... never been to In-N-Out.



freshman Eric Kao

I usually get a cheesburger, or a double-double, always with animal fries.



freshman Nikil Ramanathan

I usually just get a burger and fries... I like it because their service is fast.



freshman Laura Rea

Oh... I don't eat there much, maybe once in a year... They're a very well run franchis though, always effecient.



teacher Michael Tyler

I'm hungry, don't ask me.



freshman Nikhil Goel

# Feeling Fat

5'2" freshman eats four double hamburgers

I am 15 years old, 5'2", and on the lower end of 100 pounds, give or take a couple of quarter-pounders. Ask my friends to describe me in one word, and they might jokingly say "little boy," "shorty," or the worst of them all; "midget." (Of course a couple of punches to the gut easily bring silence, remorse, and fear.)

I have an exceptionally weak stomach, and I used to vomit prolifically at the slightest provocation. Yet in spite of all this, I daringly decided to eat four In-N-Out double hamburgers, and I will never do it again.

In preparation for my journey through eight crisped buns made from slow-rising dough, raw, spicy onions, a forest of lettuce, a lake of In-N-Out secret sauce, and a mountain of eight never frozen beef patties, I had eaten a scanty breakfast and thus failed my Spanish quiz.

For lunch my mom sent me almost nothing expect asparagus, which doesn't count. Fast forward four hungry hours, low blood sugar, and the In-N-Out cashier takes my order.

"I'd like a double hamburger, onions and no tomatoes, no fries."

"Ok, is that all?"

"Yeah I'd like four of those."

The cashier did a double-take: was this ten year old really ordering food twice the weight of his head and thrice the capacity of his stomach? Then he remembered his manners and suppressed his apparent amusement, assuming that the feast was for more people.

The first one was easy, and delicious to the infinite degree. In-N-Out has this special effect on me; the mere scent is intoxicating. As I tasted good flavors in every corner of my mouth, I tried to savor the moment, but then I realized that I had only taken the first step on my thousand mile journey-- pardon the cliché.

Number two was equally delicious, but not eaten with the same fervor. As the burger got smaller, I started feeling comfortably full. This is where I usually stop, belch, and start on my animal fries.

"Ohhh..." I burped satisfyingly but apprehensively, wor-

ried that I would fail my challenge and thus disgrace myself before all those I had bragged to. I took a deep breath, drank some root beer (Jimmy Chestnut, San Jose's world champion eater, recommends dousing food with liquid to make it go down easier), and bravely chomped on burger number three, hoping that my bravado would lead to an increased appetite.

It didn't, and enemy number three took me a whopping 32 minutes to finish. Though I did not feel nauseous yet (that would come later), I was very full, and my expanding stomach exploded my belt. I felt fat, and I reveled in the novelty of my obesity.

Every bite of the final burger was a battle. I felt defeated, so halfway through, I took a bathroom break. It turns out this was what my thieving sister was waiting for. Without my imposing presence to intimidate her, she stealthy stole my half-burger and ate it, enraging me but also saving me from my impending failure.

In the end, I lost about two pounds from the experience, because I skipped dinner and my metabolism kicked into hyperdrive. This proves testament to my unique weight situation: eat all the junk food in the world and still never gain weight (Sorry, all you hardworking weight watchers)! In fact, most champion eaters are skinny. Joey Chestnut, widely regarded as the greatest eater in the world, is six feet tall and 218 pounds. You can watch him chug a gallon of milk in 41 seconds on Youtube.

"When you're eating 20, 30, 40 hot dogs in very little time, it's hard to breathe," Chestnut explained. "That's one reason big guys sometimes have trouble at competitive eating." (reporting from Buck Wolf)

Score one for midgets.

However, contrary to what I said earlier to catch your attention, eating four double hamburgers has actually incited more addiction for In-N-Out.

Writing this story has been painful. Salivating over pictures of the burgers has been traumatizing.

I guess I'll have to do it again. You know, for closure.

—Samuel Liu

Champion Eater  
Joey Chestnut



He is the greatest eater in the world. Hailing from San Jose University, Joey Chestnut's picture dominates eating competitions, local or global.

talisman figures

World Records held

**241** The number of chicken wings eaten at Wing Bowl XVI

**103** The number of Krystal burgers eaten at the Krystal Square Off

**4.5** Pounds of steak eaten in 8 minutes 52 seconds at Big Texan Steak Ranch

**68** Hot dogs eaten in 10 minutes during Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest

>> Samuel Liu via Wikipedia

check this out  
on nom noms



**CHEW CHEW CHEW IT WELL** Samuel Liu (14) munches down on the first double hamburger. "I'm hungry," Liu said. (photo by Samuel Liu)

**FEAST FOR ONE** The four double hamburgers Samuel Liu (14) ate. "It was intimidating at first, but not nearly as bad as I thought." His story is on the adjacent page. (photo by Samuel Liu)



# HOW I GOT TUMBLRED

The story of a regular girl turned from a Tumblr critic to a Tumblr addict.

In the 21st century, smart phones, iPods, and Facebook have grown to become common household names. However, a new website is also joining the list: Tumblr. An online blogging forum, this website allows users to upload photos and videos and “like” or re-blog posts.

With over 9 million active blogs and 6 billion total posts since the start of Tumblr in 2007 according to the site’s own “About” page, Tumblr has increasingly gained popularity. The website has also earned a reputation of being dangerously addicting. Several friends of mine, like fellow freshman Vanessa Wang, were immediate Tumblr fanatics ever since they started blogging.

I decided to see what all the hype about Tumblr was about, so I created an account. The world of “blogging and re-blogging” made no sense to me at all. I was never interested in the blogging site, thinking that my friends were only addicted to it because they had no better way to spend their time.

I made my account, and I began creating my blog. After entering a brief description about myself and selecting colors for my generic Tumblr theme, I was free to explore the billions of posts uploaded to the site. Looking through pages of photos and quotes, I wondered if this was all there was to Tumblr. I couldn’t imagine how someone could be so obsessed over a site that was all about looking through “pretty pictures.”

Starting to get the hang of how the website worked, I went online and searched “Free Tumblr themes” in hopes of finding a layout that would further individualize my blog. Back at the Tumblr homepage, I looked up several topics, typing in all my favorite artists and movies and re-blogging the posts that I found clever or funny to fill up the first page

of my blog.

After a week, I became an experienced Tumblr user. Somehow, the routine of surfing through photos and posts never got old. Instead, it felt like I was connected to millions of other people just by one inspirational quote or a hilarious video that was shared among the users. There was also the rush to find the next “most authentic” theme or layout to show off to the rest of the world.

Everytime a post I uploaded was re-blogged or “liked,” I felt proud, as if someone had seen an original artwork done by myself and complimented it. I found myself on Tumblr every day for hours at a time, always stumbling upon new creative posts that made me laugh.

As a die-hard fan of Korean pop music, I sometimes am criticized at school for liking a style of music whose language I can’t even understand. On Tumblr, however, I can connect with people who share the same passion for K-pop. I can post links to music videos of Korean artists knowing that the haters couldn’t do anything about it, but the fans who liked it would appreciate it.

Vanessa also finds Tumblr a refuge for her thoughts to roam free “You can say whatever is on your mind because nobody is going to judge you,” she says.

The entire Tumblr experience is a whole different world. In the beginning, I thought Tumblr was just another online public forum to “share your feelings.” However, I have figured out that it is much more. Tumblr is a website connects millions of people together by their hobbies, interests, and what they love.

—Grace Ma



**TUMBLR-ING AT SCHOOL** Joyce Kao (09) checks Tumblr on her Droid Incredible during tutorial. “Tumblr is just somewhere where you kind of forget about others and you can rant about anything you want,” said Joyce. (photo by Grace Ma)

## TOP 3 REASONS TO MAKE A TUMBLOG

- 1 PHOTOSSETS: “A picture is worth a thousand words, photosets are the future of books.”
- 2 You can make your own original themes for you blog.
- 3 From photos to links to videos, you can share anything you want.



**UPDATING AT HOME** After finishing a tiring round of studying for finals, Grace Ma (09) relaxes by surfing through Tumblr’s endless amounts of posts. (photo by Grace Ma)

tumblr.

V S

facebook

Which website do you think is better?

“I would say Tumblr. You can say what you’re feeling or what you’re going through and know people won’t judge you, because they don’t know you (it is a blog to the world, after all). And even if they do, they can’t put you down; they can’t comment on it, the only options are to “like” it, or leave it alone.”

—Kristie Lin (09)

“Tumblr, because your news feed isn’t always clogged up about people saying random things I don’t care about.”

—Rohan Cotah (10)

“I like Tumblr better, because I enjoy finding people in the world who have the same interests as me.”

—Lauren Lin (09)

“Facebook because you can interact with people easily, unlike the ask box in Tumblr which is kind of inconvenient”

—Kevin Tran (09)

I choose Facebook. It connects all of your friends and you can see what everyone is doing. It’s a great social networking tool because it can be used for both fun and for work. Plus, it’s really easy to use.

—Candice Zheng (09)

“Facebook, because it’s more personal and you can control who sees your stuff!”

—Gavin Chu (12)

## MASTER OF TUMBLR LAUREN LIN



Freshman Lauren Lin was introduced to Tumblr by one of her friends. As a huge fan of Broadway and musicals, she was ecstatic to find so many other people on Tumblr who were interested in musicals as well. She found herself always surfing the website during her free time.

“It’s the first site I open when I get home and the last site I close. I check Tumblr during lunch, and even sometimes before school,” Lauren says. She thinks of Tumblr as her news source, for world news and Broadway news.

As a proud Tumblr fanatic, Lauren spends almost up to eight hours on Tumblr a day.

“There’s the constant checking to see if anyone’s followed you, reblogged, or liked any of your posts,” she said. “I follow almost 250 people, so the posts just keep coming in, and I don’t want to miss anything.”



**NINJA STATUS** Vanessa Wang (09) secretly escapes her parent’s watching eyes and goes on Tumblr after hours of homework. (photo by Grace Ma)

# GARDEN (AND CHICKEN COOP) OF EDEN

A girl who gets all of her produce off of a supermarket shelf comes together with another who grows her own sustenance in her backyard, to make for a memorable experience

**T**n a world of gargantuan tomatoes artificially ripened with calcium carbide, potato fields coated with toxic chemicals to ward off insects, and Chiquita bananas shipped in from South America, resorting to smaller, more natural means of crop production might seem antiquated to America, but agricultural giants such as Monsanto and Cargill.

However, pesticides, genetic modification, and crops from foreign countries are nowhere to be found in the garden of sophomore Jenny Guarino. Jenny and her family have a home in the mountains separated from the noise and bustle of the city, where a garden is nestled in the back of their secluded abode.

As a girl completely reliant on produce from supermarket aisles, I wanted to experience what it was like to harvest locally grown organic crops. I have heard the romanticized version of what it is like to grow your own produce, and in order to weed through all the hype, I took a trip to the Guarino household in order to help her pick fruits and vegetables in her backyard garden.

After a twenty minute ride up to her house, I was immediately enchanted by the abundance of greenery and nature surrounding Jenny's home. My exposure to the outdoors on a daily basis is limited to the artificial lawn bordering my house and the pathetic, sickly lemon tree in my backyard that produces inedible lemons.

There were numerous bushes of light green unripe blueberries and cherries, thick purple artichokes hanging from stems, bushels of grapes, tiny pumpkins, luscious eggplants, dark blue blackberries, spinach leaves, and an apple tree with mid-sized yellow apples.

Along with the fruit-bearing bushes and trees, Jenny showed me two large planter boxes filled with soil and sprouting with bright green plant stems. Inside of one box were about fifteen radishes bordering the edge of the box, each a deep pink hue.

I heard a curious clucking noise coming from around the house, and after a moment of confusion Jenny led me to a pleasant surprise. I found twelve hens inside a mid-size tin nesting house connected to a wooden fenced-in enclosure!

Jenny informed me that they were not for consumption, but to lay fresh eggs.

They looked nothing like the debeaked hens I had seen on smuggled tapes of egg production facilities, who were crammed into shoebox-sized cages.

These hens look anything but abused, their feathers were a vibrant mix of red, white, and black, and shone in the afternoon sun.

"Would you like to go inside of the chicken coop and get some eggs?" Jenny asked.

As I gawked at the hens through the large triangles of the fencing. I agreed, and as she was opening the creaky white door of the coop, I didn't know what to expect.

My nasal passageways were greeted by an offensive, extremely pungent odor of hen feces, wood shavings, and old feathers. Jenny seemed accustomed to the smell, as her face was calm and showed no sign of discontent.

Despite the unpleasant smell and lack of headroom, it was almost magical when I saw three eggs perched atop a shelf of the coop.

As I held an off-white egg in my hands, Jenny told me that she knew it was freshly laid due to the fact that it was still warm to the touch. Though it seemed smaller than the traditional large factory-produced eggs I am accustomed to, it felt more wholesome to be holding an egg produced in a stress-free, cage-free environment.

Overall, my experience in the Guarino garden was eye-opening, and it made me much more receptive to why the production of organic agriculture is a much more intimate and emotionally satisfying process.

Although organic produce is smaller and has less uniformity than crops produced through contemporary factory methods aimed at procuring the highest yields at the lowest cost.

Given the choice of eating the Safeway eggs or gigantic Fuji apples I grew up on, I would choose to consume Jenny's eggs and produce because I know that they were produced through much more humane methods. I left the farm with a new appreciation for local, backyard farmers, and the pleasure they take in supplementing their own sustenance.

—Sophie Mattson

## ORGANIC IN-DEPTH LOOK GARDEN GALORE



Though Jenny's garden isn't at its full potential during the summer, as the harvest is more successful halfway through summer and into the fall, crops are still growing.

Unripened crops shown on the bottom row still have several weeks to go until they mature.

They include purple artichokes, and light green blueberries and cherries. When ripened, these natural delights are tasty treats for the entire family.

The Guarinos also have their own chicken coop to produce organic eggs, grow edible flowers as garnishes for salads, and use a compost bin for uneaten or spoiled food. (all photos by Sophie Mattson)



EGGS OF OUR LIVES A freshly laid egg in the hands of Sophie Mattson (10), still warm to the touch. (photo by Jenny Guarino)



CURIOUS CREATURE Jenny has 12 chickens in her backyard chicken coop in order to produce organic eggs. (photo by Sophie Mattson)

## HOW TO BE AN ADEPT RADDISH PICKER

1



Get your footing! Nobody wants to fall on their face in a planter box. Don't pull the raddish out by the stem, dip your hands into the soil in order to get a firm grip on the vegetable.

2



Inspect the roots, signs of plant disease can be determined in the shape and color of the roots.

3



When you've chosen the perfect raddish, turn the crown upsidedown. After all of your hard work, you've harvested a succulent miracle of nature! Don't forget to rinse it, you don't want potting soil in your stew. (photos by Sophie Mattson)

## fastest times

2x2	4:30
3x3	10:01
4x4	23:19
5x5	1:12:30
6x6	2:54:43

# simply SOLVING

Freshman **Minu Palaniappan** solved America's hardest puzzle, the Rubik's Cube in just one day with the help of mentor, **Edward Lin**

## EDWARD LIN



Edward Lin a Rubik's Cube genius has been solving from a young age. Edward has traveled the world going to tournaments in Germany and even Spain. He has the fastest time in North America for the 2x2 Rubik's Cube and has the 8th fastest time internationally for the 3x3. Edward has also been represented as a national competitor in international competitions between all the nations in the world. Edward also is a sensation on Youtube, teaching younger kids to solve the colorful puzzle. He is a current freshman at Saratoga high school, but speed solves as a past time due to the homework level in high school.

I scramble the cube, desperately hovering over the vibrant stickers. My eyes shift from side to side, hungry for an answer. I twist, and turn the cube, trying to find the last green sticker. I finally see it positioned on the corner of the cube. Sweat rolls down my face, as I turn the cube aimlessly trying to find the perfect fit. It's seems impossible, so I give up.

That's the story of any typical Rubik's cube rookie. You scramble the cube trying to find a match without any intended plan or pattern. You either solve it by luck or you waste half a day trying to find a solution; like the way you would find a needle in a haystack. The chances are slim.

As an ambitious person, the challenge of solving this cube in a day was too hard to pass up. I envisioned this experience to be very challenging, almost as hard as stating 50 digits of pi from pure memorization. Just solving one side seemed like a mediocre challenge, but solving six sides; that's a different story.

I took a seat with Edward Lin, a Rubik phenomenon to get the basics of cubing and understand the ideal stratagem to solving the Rubik Cube.

"The Rubik Cube in my opinion is a easy puzzle to solve. It's practice. In order to find a solution to the cube, a solver must use algorithms," said Edward.

This term "algorithms" seems fancy and perplexing, but in truth it simply means a repeated pattern applied to get a different result.

There are over 20 algorithms, but one recommended was the "Beginner's Algorithm". Edward then took me on a step by step tutorial on how to successfully execute the "Beginner's Algorithm".

"The Beginner's Algorithm is a very easy method used to solve the Rubik's Cube. It's slow but very effective. In my case, I use Friedrich's Method in order to speed solve in competitions," said Lin.

After countless hours of memorization, I was soon ready to face up to the challenge. Edward handed me the cube, requesting me just to solve the first side.

I quickly picked it up, observing each face,

deciding which colored side to pounce on first. I picked green.

I got into action, rotating, twisting and turning each layer. Edward's dull expression gave me the feeling that I was getting nowhere. I was egoistically scrambling the cube, making matters worse.

He pointed out my mistakes and generously gave me another chance. This time I went on the right track, precisely executing each rotation in the algorithm. After a few minutes of hard solving, I had successfully completed one face of the cube.

"After solving the first side, it's important to be aware of that the next 3 sides just get harder and harder," said Lin.

This gave me no confidence at all. It's like running a mile uphill, in which the slope itself gets steeper.

I fought, barreling through the second and third side with difficulty. By the end I was in sweat and was accompanied by a bright red face that looked like I had just ran a marathon. I took a deep breathe. The moment was tense as I worked on the last two sides. The air around me became humid, and the room fell silent.

Pairs of eyes glared at the colorful cube, watching the sluggish hands scramble the cube.

"You can do it," said Edward.

"I got this," I said in a weary matter.

"Don't get distracted by the scattered pieces, just follow the algorithm," said Edward.

My hands trembled as I was so close to victory. I could see the last yellow sticker in sight as I made my last turns.

I nervously revolved the last side, and finally saw the yellow sticker complete the puzzle.

The uniform colors shined bright in the classroom light, and everyone was in cheers. The moment was unforgettable and I had finally overcome the challenge.

Overall, the experience was a blast. I know for a fact that I won't be any speed solver like Edward himself, but now I have a new found insight to the world of cubing!

# AS EASY AS CAKE

Three sophomore girls get together to bake a **chocolately delicious** three-layered cake topped with tons of frosting and sprinkles. **Yum!**

**D**eautiful and rich ribbons of chocolate frosting surround all of the three layers of the moist cake, accompanied by touches of sprinkles decoratively spelling out the word "J-1." The mere sight of this one of a kind creation makes my mouth water. It becomes difficult to keep my strong will for the homemade dessert under control.

Baking this tasty treat is definitely not as easy as it seems. Sophomores Abby Wolf and Olivia Whiting happily agreed to teach me how to make such an appealing delight. And so began an entertaining challenge.

"We need to beat the butter first," Abby said as I brought out the rest of the ingredients. "Then mix the sugar and eggs in."

To my surprise, beating the butter was much harder than I anticipated! We each took turns trying to mash the butter because our arms constantly grew exhausted. When it was my turn, Abby and Olivia held the bowl steady as I forcefully beat the butter into a thick cream.

"For about a half an hour we constantly pounded at the stubborn butter," Olivia commented. "We each had to take turns because the butter just wouldn't cooperate!"

Finally, after the butter was ready, I brought out the cold, white eggs from the refrigerator. Playfully but cautiously, the three of us catapulted the eggs into the air, secretly wishing that they would not end up splattered on the floor.

Suddenly, our hopeful thoughts failed us when Olivia slid on the floor trying to catch an egg that had gone the wrong way. We all waited in anticipation to see what would happen next. Then came the "crack" followed by a sad "splat". The egg had shattered to pieces all over my tiled kitchen floor.

An explosion of laughter flooded the room as we clumsily attempted to clean up the gooey mess. Working efficiently together, we cleaned up the blob and still managed to add the rest of the ingredients without any other disasters.

I expected the process to take much longer and be more difficult than it actually turned out to be.

"We almost forgot that we had to spray the three pans with nonstick spray before pouring the batter in," Abby said. "That cake would have been toast!"

After putting the three pans for each layer of the chocolate cake into the oven, we sat down and relaxed for about thirty minutes. Time quickly flew by and it was time for the next part: frosting and decorating!

Abby whipped out the cans of rich, milk chocolate frosting while Olivia brought out three containers of colorful sprinkles.

We each grabbed knives and spread the thick, sweet-smelling frosting all over the three layers of the moist cake.

It was a messy task because chocolate frosting had some how managed to find its way all over the kitchen-- but it was definitely worth the strenuous work!

"You guys we should write something on the top" I said. "It looks too plain!"

"How about 'J-1' for journalism one?" Abby suggested.

We unanimously agreed that writing J-1 in sprinkles would give the cake a lively and colorful edge.

As a finishing touch, we each grabbed a container of sprinkles and joyfully dashed multicolored bits of sugary goodness randomly all over the chocolate cake.

Abby, Olivia, and I stepped back in satisfaction at the sight of our masterpiece.

This experience taught me that you should always be careful around eggs!

I also learned that making a cake is not as easy as it seems and you must follow instructions step by step in order to make a dessert that will please your taste buds.

Baking a cake is certainly a great way to do what you love and even satisfy that sweet tooth!

—Tina Pourani



**TADA!** Perfection at last! Sophomores Abby Wolf, Tina Pourani, and Olivia Whiting pose with their delicious dessert. "It was a messy project," said Olivia. "But it was really fun making a cake with my best friends!"



Courtesy of Tina Pourani



Courtesy of Tina Pourani

**OM NOM NOM NOM** Delicious ribbons of chocolate frosting cover the rich cake topped with touches of colorful sprinkles decoratively spelling out "J-1"!



**CRACK! SPLAT!** Uh... Looks like Humpty Dumpty had a great fall!

Courtesy of Tina Pourani

**ALMOST DONE** Sophomores Tina Pourani and Abby Wolf spread the rich, chocolate batter into a baking pan. "Pouring the batter was the final step for baking the cake," said Abby. "But eating the cake was the best part!"

**check this out**  
baking a cake

## BAKING MADE EASY AS 1, 2, 3



To make a delicious chocolate cake in record time, go to your local Safeway store and buy a \$4 Betty Crocker cake box.



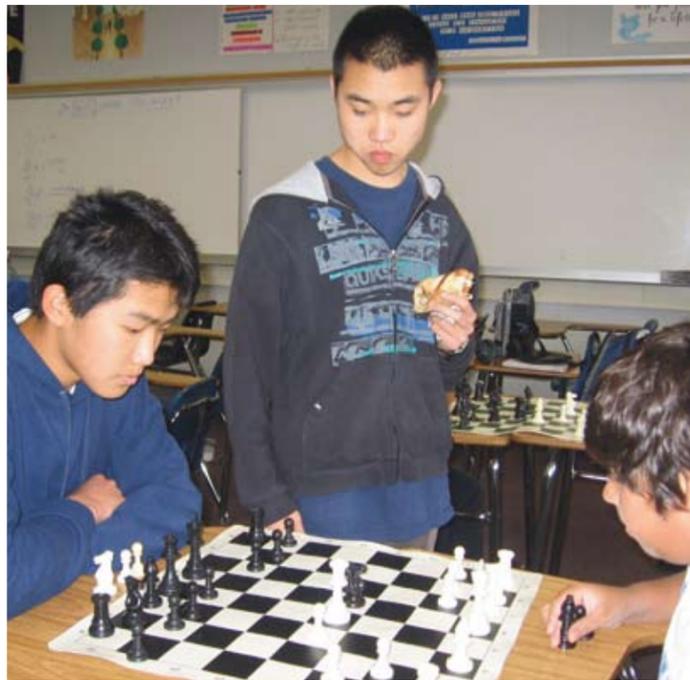
Next, follow the instructions on the back of the box.



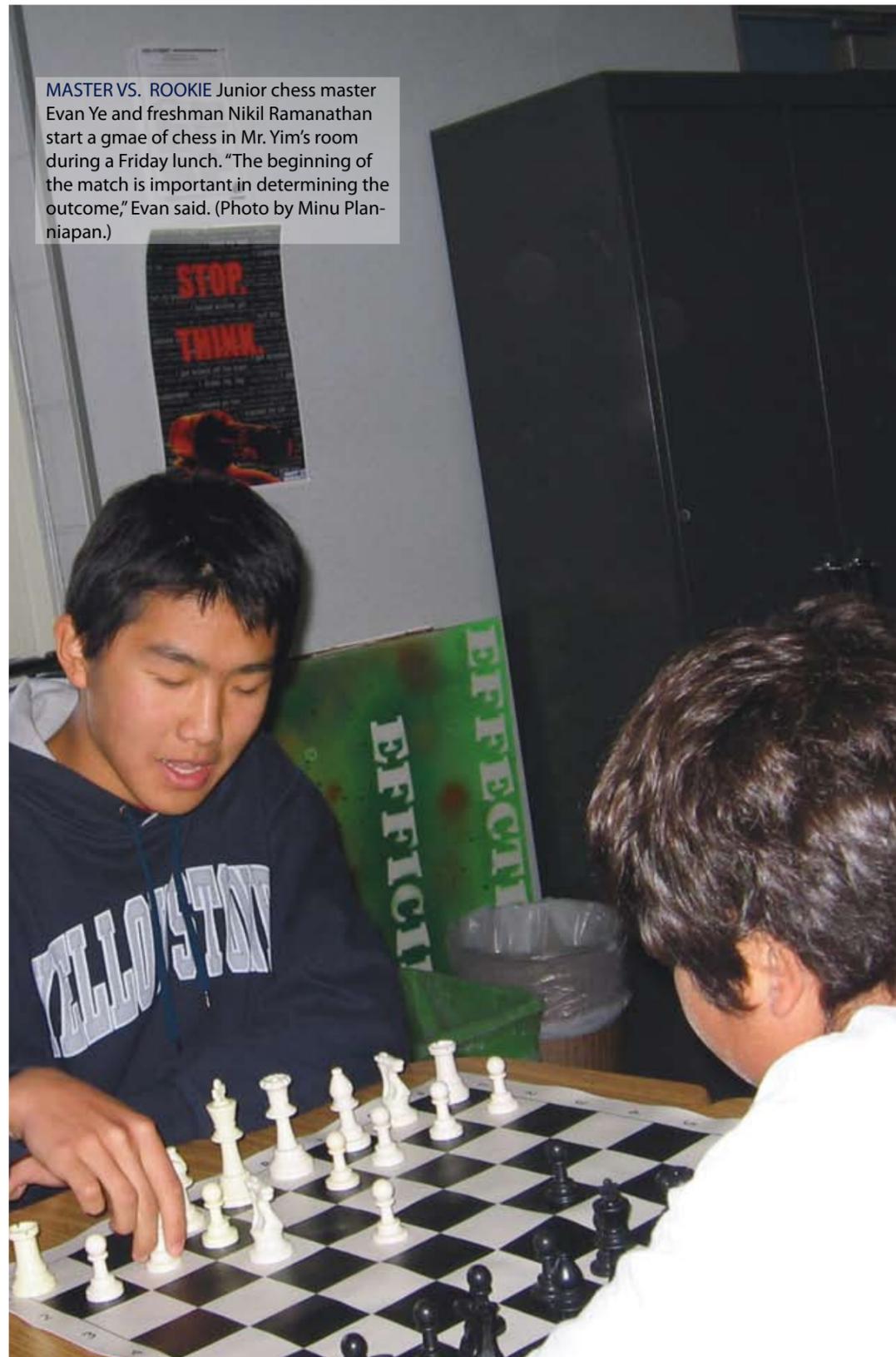
Finally, frost the cake with two cans of frosting and dig in! Bon appetit!

## TOP 5 CHESS MOVES

- 1 "Queen's Gambit because you move your queen early."  
—Minu Palaniappan (9)
- 2 "Rolling rooks because it's effective on taking pawns."  
—Matt Foley (9)
- 3 "I don't really have a favorite, it depends on who I play."  
—Sabrina Cismas (11)
- 4 "The pin, because you're able to effectively trap pieces."  
—Evan Ye(11)
- 5 "Four Move Checkmate... it ends the game quickly :)"  
—Clark Wang (09)



**AUDIENCE** Junior Brian Wai observes as freshman Nikil Ramanathan and junior Evan Ye duel it out during lunch. (Photo by Minu Planniapan.)



**MASTER VS. ROOKIE** Junior chess master Evan Ye and freshman Nikil Ramanathan start a game of chess in Mr. Yim's room during a Friday lunch. "The beginning of the match is important in determining the outcome," Evan said. (Photo by Minu Planniapan.)

# ROOKIE FALLS TO KING

Freshman chess beginner puts his skills to the test against a chess master.

"Checkmate," says calm and composed junior Evan Ye. After this one little word is uttered from his mouth, I am in disbelief. I felt like we had just started the match en route to a trying battle, but in reality I had just followed Evan's calculated plan of my demise, playing right into his cunning and strategic plan.

I may not be an expert at chess, nor even an amateur, but I did not think that I was bad enough to lose a match in about 7 minutes. After I ask Evan how this happened, he reveals my fatal mistake in which he so smoothly capitalized on.

We were in Mr. Yim's room during lunch on a cool, calm Friday afternoon. The room was quiet and we were just getting ready to start the match.

It had been over five years since I had played the enigmatic game of chess, and my skills had become rusty. I had heard that Evan, a chess club member, was an expert at chess, so I was prepared to lose badly.

However, I didn't expect to lose so quickly to him. I wanted it to be a fair experiment so I told him not to hold back and go all out on me. He did just that and down right destroyed me.

Evan said that he was introduced to chess when he was in kindergarten, but he didn't start playing competitively until fifth grade when he succeeded at a state chess tournament.

When the game started, it wasn't so bad as I moved some of my pawns up to clear up space like he did. After that, when we started to move the pieces that could move in multiple directions, he had the upper hand, taking my confidence piece by piece.

I hopelessly moved my knights, bishops, and rooks, hoping to take one of his pawns, while he went on a rampage, capturing most of my more advanced pieces without having many of his taken away.

As sweat was beading down my distraught face, Evan

swiftly made quick moves, while I had to resort to moving random pieces to random places on the board. Once he said the word "check" for the first time, I knew the game was over.

The minute I moved my king out of harm, he quickly moved another piece into my king's danger zone. In the end, he had multiple pieces placed so my king wasn't able to move anywhere without being in danger. That was checkmate not only for my king, but also for my chess hopes and dreams.

According to Evan, the most important quality for chess is determination. "Determination and interest are the prime motivators for people to study chess. Once you start studying, it's only a matter of time before you become boss," Evan said.

Chess is a heavily mentally stimulating game and because of this, has great lasting effects on people. "Chess has done wonders to help me in life," he said. "It has drastically improved my critical thinking/ reasoning, memory, 'brain power' and ability to work under pressure."

Chess requires an immense amount of practice. Evan said that getting to "master status" takes about 5-10 years of practice. On the other hand, if you want to just become good enough to be able to beat your friends it takes about a year of consistent practice.

On what advice to give young chess players Evan said, "Enjoy! Chess is a game. It is also a sport, but not to be taken too seriously. Chess is at its best when you play with your friends and enjoy it. Save the competition for the tournaments."

Overall, it was a lot of fun playing chess after a while, although it was a little discouraging with me getting crushed. Who knows, maybe one day I will get good enough at chess and it will be me who proudly declares the word "Checkmate."

—Nikil Ramanathan



**START IT UP** Junior Evan Ye, sophomore Kabir Chandrashekar and freshman Nikil Ramanathan set up the chess pieces and board to start the game. (Photo by Minu Planniapan.)



**MAKE YOUR MOVE** Freshman Nikil Ramanathan prepares to make his move during the intense chess game. (Photo by Minu Planniapan.)



**SINGING ALONG** The class sings old Chinese tunes. "Culture is an important part of the Chinese culture," said Abigail Lin (10). (photo by Tiffany Yung)



**LISTENING IN** Sophomore Akshara Sekar and senior Lauren Kwan watch Mr. Wan demonstrate the proper etiquette to singing Chinese hymns

**SWEET TALKING** Senior Kenny Song and teacher Mr. Wan discuss Song's progress in the class (photo by Akshara Sekar)



# LOST IN TRANSLATION

Indian sophomore and delves into the fascinating world of language and culture by attending her peer's Friday night Chinese school class .

"It's Friday, Friday. Getting down on Friday! Everybody's looking forward to the weekend." These truthful words come from pop sensation Rebecca Black's infamous song "Friday."

But for sophomore Abigail Lin, partying is nothing more than a lyric to a song she listens to on the way to her weekly Chinese class.

Generations of Chinese immigrants moved to the United States in search of new opportunities and hopes of a brighter future for their children. Along with this came the price of losing part of their culture, but much to the dismay of their children, the iconic tiger moms prevailed.

Now these children attend a weekly crash course of Chinese language and culture.

The clock strikes six as Abby races through her room to find her completed Chinese homework with a freshly inked signature from her mother.

By 6:30 p.m., she and I are staring at the gray painted wall at Lynbrook High School, the fear in her eyes noticeably apparent.

It seemed as though the hostile environment had seeped through the classroom doors, giving the two of us a chilling sensation.

From that point it seemed as though my perceptions were correct; Chinese school was one of the scariest places on earth. Sadly, this notation turned into reality.

"Ni Hao," said her teacher, nodding in approval of Abby arriving on time, which quickly turned into a confused look as he saw me.

Remarkably, there was not a single non-Asian who attended Chinese school at Lynbrook High School contrary to the multiple that take Chinese classes offered at Saratoga High School.

To this account I was the black sheep for the next two hours.

The night continued with Abby's teacher, Mr. Wan, personally checking each student's homework.

They were then instructed to read from their textbooks. Just to make sure everyone was focusing, Mr. Wan had students randomly read from the text and answer questions. There wasn't a smile in the room.

One girl sat in the corner and played with her hair as another boy silently enunciated the Chinese characters aloud from their

textbooks. Within one minute, she was identified and called out for her supposed "crime."

After reading and answering questions from their homework, each student was given a sheet of paper.

Mr. Wan asked me to read the first line on the paper. Thankfully the paper, what I later discovered was a song, was written in syllables rather than in characters. Sharing the paper with Abby, I shyly read out the first line with accompaniment from the class in the form of giggles.

The class proceeded to sing with Mr. Wan, and what seemed previously impossible was defeated with melodious voices in front of me.

As the culture unit comes to a close, I see Mr. Wan passing back the homework, each signed with blue or black pen. I later discovered that homework is considered incomplete if a parent signature is not signed in pen.

"It seems hard to believe at first, but Chinese school has a lot more rules than high school does," said Abby.

Through my two hour experience, this was precisely the truth. Not one student dared to take their eyes off of their work, let alone play with their phones.

"Fear is what keeps everyone alert," said Lin. "No one wants to be on Mr. Wan's bad side."

More than anything, there were a few key lessons I learned from my experience on how to be a successful Chinese school student.

Firstly and most importantly, speak Chinese. For the majority of my experience, I assumed the context of most conversations based on head movements, facial expressions, and head gestures. In order to succeed, first one must understand.

Secondly, never turn in homework that has not been signed by a parent in blue or black pen. As Mr. Wan said, "All other colors express disorganization."

Lastly, don't disrespect the teacher. Anything you wouldn't say or do to your parents is similarly inappropriate towards Mr. Wan.

After two hours of embarrassing miscommunication, I officially completed my first day of Chinese school. Safe to say I will not be returning anytime soon.

—Akshara Sekar

## TOP 6

DON'T

YOU EVER

- |   |                                                                |   |                                              |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Disrespecting Mr. Wan (the teacher)                            | 4 | Looking away from your textbook              |
| 2 | Forgetting your signed homework                                | 5 | Using a colored pen that isn't blue or black |
| 3 | Talking to your neighbor whether or not the teacher is talking | 6 | Speaking in English while on the premisis    |

Source: Akshara Sekar, Abigail Lin, and Lauren Kuan

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Chinese School

# BALLET: A MAN'S SPORT

Sophomore **boy** crosses all borders of **masculinity**, leaping into a defining experience of dance. Who knew that **ballet** is the manliest sport of them all?

Since the beginning of time, men have always had ways to prove their bravery and valor, such as emerging victorious from a fierce battle, or surviving a dreadful winter with nothing but their wits to aid them. In these modern times, however, men must find other outlets to vent their competitive streaks.

Due to there being no immediate danger present in day to day life, men turn to something new to prove themselves: sports. However, only some sports were deemed 'manly' enough to partake in; others were cast aside as 'weak' sports. Even I believed in this sports hierarchy, I thought only a certain selection of sports were fit for real men to partake in.

I was never so wrong in my life. Over the past few days, I have had some amazing experiences with one of the toughest, most complex sports in the entire world: ballet.

When sophomore Meghan McGinnis, my friend and expert on the sport, invited me to try it out, I jumped at the chance. Not only was I excited to try something new, I was also eager to prove to her that ballet wasn't as hard as she always depicted it as and that a 'manly' man such as myself could easily conquer it within a few days.

I was in for the surprise of my life. Early on a Saturday morning, I met up with my new mentor. The first step was dressing appropriately; by the time Meghan was done with me I was fully garbed in ballet apparel, including a tight tank top and a very becoming tutu. To top it all off came the ballet shoes, which were extremely tight and squashed your toes into pink paste if you attempted to stand 'on point' for too long.

After choosing a suitable location, and learning a few basic moves, Meghan and I jumped into action. Within minutes, however, I was panting for breath and unable to keep up with the sheer complexity of moves, as well as not having the endurance required to perform them adequately.

I lay immobile on the ground for most of the dance session,

dripping with sweat, before jumping up again and attempting to twist and twirl in ways I never thought was possible for a human being. Ballet required a stupendous amount of strength and discipline; I looked at Meghan with new admiration as she elegantly flowed from move to move. Her never ending dance was both beautiful and symbolic, I watched with my mouth agape as she spun gracefully through the air.

Ever so often, Meghan would turn to me with a mocking smirk and say, "Neal...I thought ballet was a sport for women... yet even you, the manliest man of them all, couldn't keep up!" Sadly, I had to take these remarks in turn, because I had been bested by this ballet expert.

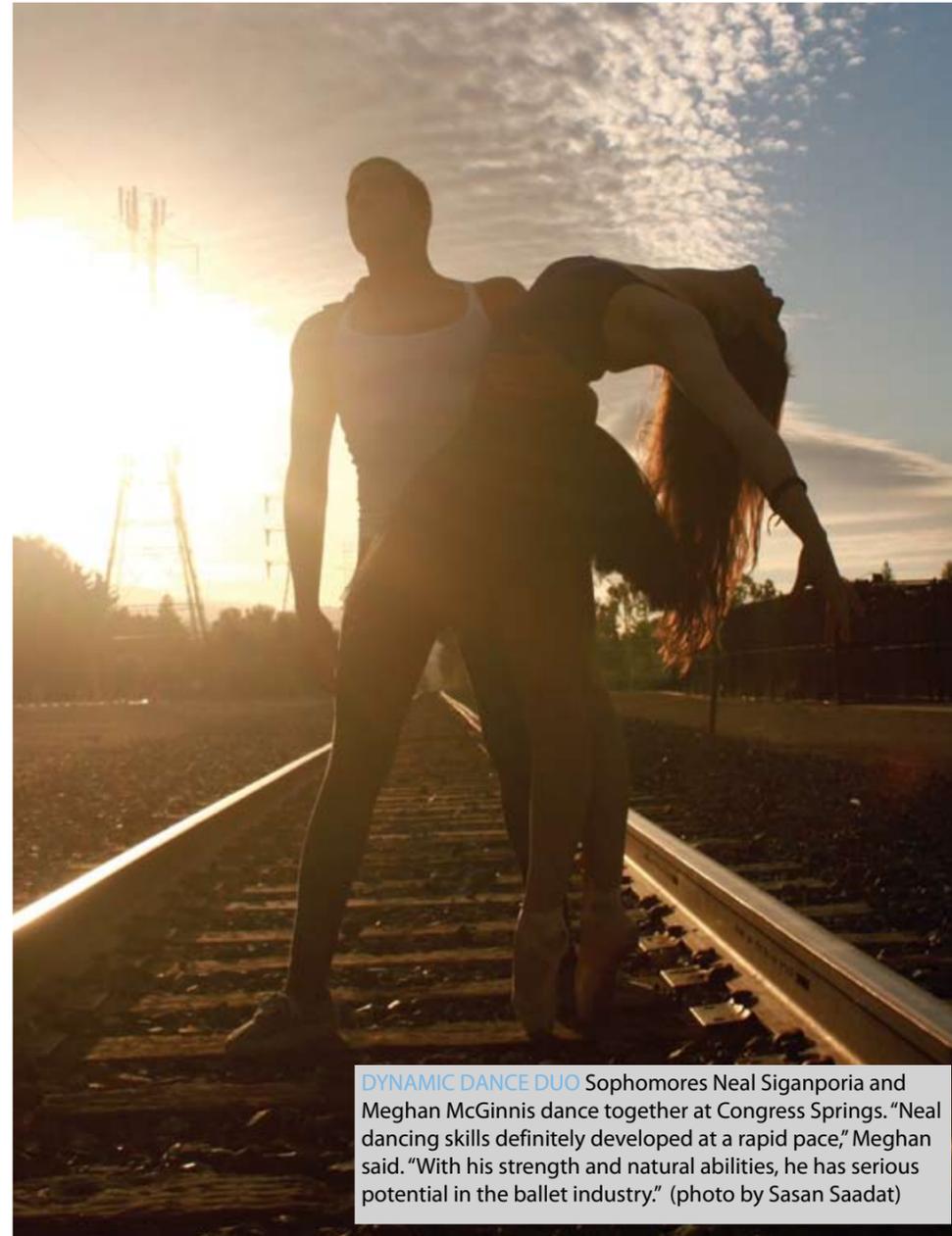
When our dance session was over and I had poured countless glasses of ice cold water down my parched throat, I eagerly asked Meghan a few questions about her dance career. Meghan is part of an organization known as the San Francisco Ballet, one of the most intense dance companies in California. I wanted to know if her commitment to dance was really worth it.

San Francisco ballet demands more than ten hours a week of practice and dedication; for this reason Meghan can only take two regular classes at Saratoga High School, which limits her social life, and means she must be privately tutored in her free time. Also, for the last year Meghan has been troubled by her right foot, which she recently found out was broken.

"Though ballet consumes my entire life, I have never regretted a single moment of it," Meghan said. "My injury is only a minor setback; no matter how long it takes to heal I will eventually return to doing what I love most: dancing."

My dance experiences and Meghan's commitment truly opened my eyes, I vowed to never judge something before trying it myself. Who would have guessed that ballet is the 'manliest' sport of them all!

—Neal Siganporia



**DYNAMIC DANCE DUO** Sophomores Neal Siganporia and Meghan McGinnis dance together at Congress Springs. "Neal dancing skills definitely developed at a rapid pace," Meghan said. "With his strength and natural abilities, he has serious potential in the ballet industry." (photo by Sasan Saadat)

**PERFECTLY ON POINT** Sophomore Kendall Cichanowicz performs an arabesque at her dance studio in Los Gatos. This move is particularly difficult because it involves standing "on point" for extended periods of time, which can be extremely painful. (photo courtesy of Kendall Cichanowicz)



**LIFTED TO THE SKY** Sophomore Meghan McGinnis soars into the air in a graceful pose with the help of a male ballerina at her dance company, the San Francisco Ballet. Lifts are very prevalent in ballet; this particular lift is a complex move called the Blue Jay Lift. (photo courtesy of Meghan McGinnis)

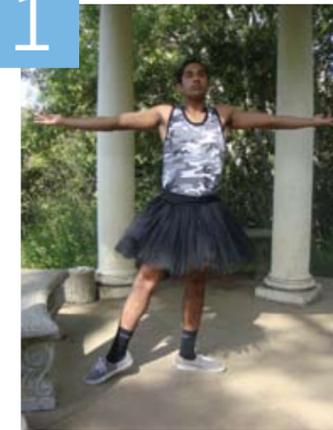


**A LEAP OF FATE** Sophomore Neal Siganporia expertly flows through the air in the acclaimed move, the "Saut de Chat" at Congress Springs. Dedication and God-given flexibility allows him to pull off such complex techniques. (photo by Sasan Saadat)

**GRACEFUL AS A SWAN** Sophomore Meghan McGinnis elegantly flows into the pinnacle move of her dance, the "Fourth Position en Pointe," at her dance studio, one of the most prestigious institutes in America. (photo courtesy of Meghan McGinnis)

## HOW TO DO A PIROUETTE

1



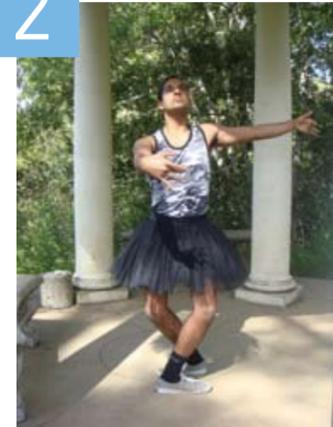
First, stand in the classic ballet pose with one foot extended to the side, toes pointed outwards. Make your other foot parallel with your body, and extend your arms gracefully.

3



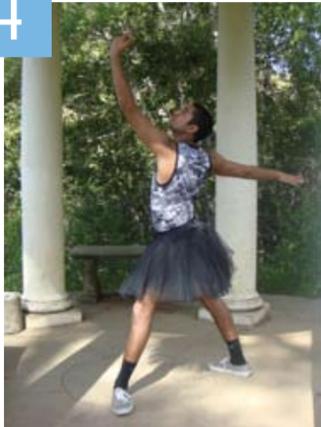
Lift the back foot off the ground and move it up your base leg, balancing on one foot. Bring your hands fully together; both arms should now be in the bowl shaped pose.

2



Cross the leg that was extended behind your base foot, while elegantly twirling the same sided hand into a bowl shaped pose.

4



Rapidly spin as many times as possible before turning your body outward in an exquisite finishing stride.

# BACK TO THE FUTURE

A freshman assumes the role of being a preschool teacher after wanting to experience the effort and commitment required to take care of many kids.

I walked up the porch of the Saratoga Parent Nursery School and opened the door reading "Keep doors closed. Children inside." As I stepped into the room, I smelled the familiar scent of play dough and paint. Pictures of stick figures and scribbles covered the walls and mini tables and chairs stood in the middle of the room. Children ran back and forth giggling as they tossed their Dora and Spongebob backpacks into their cubbies and ran outside to play.

Wanting to experience what it was like to teach preschoolers, I quickly walked over to the teacher when small boy stood in front of me and said, "Do you like my picture? It's a cow!" I stared at the picture and saw a circle with two lines sticking out of the sides. Marker smears edged the paper and dark zigzag lines of crayon were scribbled over the drawing. I chuckled to myself as he smiled and skipped away.

I talked to the teacher, Prudence Kolano, and asked her what I was supposed to do and she said, "Well first, we gather the kids up and have circle time. Why don't you go and get the kids."

Eager to start I called the kids, but no one responded. I assumed that being a preschool teacher wouldn't be very difficult and that it would all be fun and games, but my assumption was wrong. The girls continued to play in the mini kitchen while the boys ran up and down the play structure, leaving long trails of sand behind them.

Struggling to get their attention, I decided to call them again, but the noise and commotion only became louder. I walked up to them and they looked up at me slightly intimidated. Finally after a little persuasion and bribing, the kids listened and marched inside.

"The kids love to play outside, and it's just so hard to make them come in, but they are just little kids and that is what anyone would expect from these cuties," says Kolano.

After rounding up the kids, I sat down to read a book called

The Hungry Caterpillar to the kids. Mrs. Kolano got up and introduced me, and I was surprisingly nervous to read to the children. She immediately said, "Remember to sit criss cross applesauce and no talking while the story is being read." The children gazed at me intently as I read the book. They were amazed by all the color and pictures, but my lifeless voice made it hard for them to concentrate and in almost no time, they became agitated and restless.

I stopped to let the teacher read the rest of the book and I was astonished by how her voice and face were full of enthusiasm and expression.

The kids responded by smiling and laughing along with the teacher.

"The more I get into the story, the more the kids will. How much fun the kids have and how much they learn at this school all depends on the teacher so I try my best to keep them engaged so that they will look forward to coming to school," said Kolano.

After leading several small activities and games it was free time, and for many of the kids it meant going back outside and jumping around in the sand or on the playground. I took this as an opportunity to introduce myself and get myself acquainted with the children. I ran up to them trying to be as enthusiastic and dynamic as possible and led them to the playground where we pretended to be aliens from outer space. Soon enough, all the kids were trailing behind my back making car and spaceship noises.

After seemingly only a few hours, the day was over and it was time to go home. As I was leaving the room, all the kids circled around me and gave me a hug and I realized that nothing is as easy as it seems, especially if it is being a preschool teacher.

"The kids are so affectionate and full of innocence. It makes me feel like I have the best job in the world," said Kolano.

—Anu Sreedhara

## DESCRIPTIVE DESCRIPTION

### PRUDENCE KOLANO



Prudence Kolano has worked at the Saratoga Parent Nursery School for over five years. She holds a degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology, but the most emphasis is on Child Development. She has worked with children in a variety of settings for nearly ten years.

As a teacher, she has a philosophy about teaching that has helped her throughout her career.

"My philosophy of teaching centers around my true belief that children learn by doing."

Kolano has also faced many difficulties, but faces them head on and encourages her students constantly.

"We are faced with challenging behaviors on a daily basis. I believe that these challenging behaviors and/or incidents provide our children with the opportunity to learn."



**HOLDING HANDS** Ronit Bector (left), Ryder Pierce (center), and Varun Sreedhara (right) hold hands while playing ring around the rosies in the backyard of the Saratoga Parent nursery school on June 1. (photo by Anu Sreedhara)



**TUNNELING THROUGH** Varun Sreedhara (left), Govind Singh (right), and Anu Sreedhara (right) pretend to be aliens in a tunnel. "Playing with kids brings back memories," said Anu Sreedhara. (photo by Uma Sreedhara)



**HOMEMADE LEMONADE YUM!** Jeremy Thorp (age 4) sips sweet lemonade that he made on his own. "Lemonade is my favorite!" said Jeremy. (photo by Anu Sreedhara)

**ALMOST AT THE FINISH LINE** Saratoga Parent Nursery School preschoolers practice sitting down quietly for their graduation on a sunny afternoon. (photo by Anu Sreedhara)

# MEET YOUR MEAT

Many people have been against animal cruelty. Here's how some become vegetarians because of a click of a button

W

"When I say Hilshire, you say farms; HILSHIRE! FARMS! GO MEAT!"

These are the words that every vegetarian who opposes killing of animals for food just cringe when they hear it.

Before becoming a temporary vegetarian, I never really cared about the killing of animals for food. I was always a meat lover. I just couldn't resist taking a bite off that thick, tender, and juicy fillet. Yum.

"I think that since most humans are perfectly able to survive without meat, it's morally incorrect to kill animals just because they taste good," sophomore Jenny Guarino said.

These days, many people are becoming vegetarians ever since learning about the harsh treatment of animals.

"My grandpa has a farm that we always go to," junior Chelsie Steele said, "but one day he killed a pig in front of my sister and me and ever since then, we didn't have the stomach for eating any meat."

Others have stumbled upon a shocking video called "Meet your Meat" on YouTube, which shows the horrors of how animals are brutally raised and slaughtered. That video and the images it presents made me think about the positive aspects of becoming a vegetarian.

These animals in the slaughter houses are dealt with in a way you can never imagine. While the animals are clinging on to their lives, the calves attempt to hide from the farmers as they bury themselves under their mothers. But the calves are later torn apart from their mothers as they scream helplessly. The mothers lay there trying to call out for their young yet knowing their lives are to end as well. The farmers hang them alive on their hind legs ripping their muscles and finishing them off by slashing their throat.

"Seeing the treatment of animals and the torture they endure just to maximize profits was unbearable, so I really felt like I couldn't support such a cruel industry," sophomore Sasan Saadat said.

All in all, living the life of a vegetarian isn't as tough as people say. After all, it's only the meat that you're giving up. Being a vegetarian may be hard at first, but it has been proven that vegetarians are less likely to be obese, have high blood pressure, diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, or colon cancer. They are also less likely to die from heart disease. After getting tips from friends and family I even got great ideas for vegetarian meals that still let me get the same meat taste without the meat!

"I think people should at the very least try to take vegetarian options when possible, because, quite honestly, there are some really great veggie meals such as veggie burgers that I'd choose over real meat even if I still ate it," Sasan said.

So I say, "Viva la veggies!" The "other" meat.

—Candice Suh



**CHEW CHEW CHEW IT WELL** Junior Anika Jhalani eats a vegetarian style chicken panini outside during a weekend. Photo courtesy of Anika Jhalani.



**OLD MCDONALD** Many farms that raise mostly cows, are treated in the most cruel ways in very harsh environments. Photo courtesy of PETA.

**GO FOR VEGGIE** Sophomore Eric Tang and Derek Chao go for the vegetarian option as they choose plain pasta with pesto sauce and no meat. Photo courtesy of Noy

## TIPS FOR STARTER VEGETARIANS

1



Getting your day started can be tough. Eating these fruits such as peaches and oranges can help you get pumped up for the day.

2



Still want that sample of tasty meat in your diet? Then try eating a salad with veggie chickens. Veggie chickens aren't made with meat but with tofu.

3



A lot of those vegetables out there don't get you the tasty flavors you get. Try some fruit that are in season like these strawberries to get that sweet taste.

## HOW TO PLAY CHORDS

1



**A-CHORD** Place your 3rd finger across the 2nd three strings from the bottom of the guitar on the 2nd bar. Proceed to strum the bottom five chords, leaving out the sixth one.

2



**D-CHORD** Put your 1st and 2nd finger on the 2nd bar. The 1st finger should be placed on the 3rd string from the bottom and the 2nd finger should be on 1st string. The 3rd finger should be on the 3rd bar on the 2nd string. Strum the bottom five strings.

3



**E-CHORD** Place your 2nd finger on the 1st bar and the 3rd string from the bottom. Put your 3rd and 4th finger on the 2nd bar on the 5th and 4th string respectively. Strum all the strings.



**WHY IS THIS SO DIFFICULT?** Freshman Krishna Unadkat (09) concentrates while playing her guitar. "Playing the guitar was a lot harder than I expected," Krishna said. (photo by Paras Unadkat)



**COPY-CAT** Music teacher Brian Hackett plays a chord and Krishna Unadkat (09) copies. (photo by Paras Unadkat)

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT** Krishna Unadkat (09) practices playing chords at home after her guitar lesson. (photo by Dhiren Unadkat)



# MUSIC TO MY FEARS

A freshman learns **how to play** a new instrument from a music teacher who plays multiple instruments and usually teaches her a **different instrument**.

I sat in my car, having done my everyday routine; I went to school, I did my homework, and I was now on the way to my music class. It was just like any other day. I jumped out of the car and walked into the small, cluttered room, taking in the familiar surroundings. After greeting my teacher, Brian Hackett, I proceeded to take a seat. But instead of sitting at my usual spot by the drums, I took a seat next to the large amplifier in the corner. For the first time, my drums teacher was going to teach me how to play the guitar. Being highly unaccustomed to this, I could not help being a little uncomfortable.

Leaving my drum sticks on the side and picking up my brother's old guitar, I realized just how different this was going to be. With directions from Brian, I plugged the red and black electric guitar into the amplifier.

After listening to me randomly strumming the strings for a few minutes, he cringed and told me they needed to be tuned. He then played each string on his guitar and told me to repeat after him so I could hear what it was supposed to sound like.

I watched fascinated as he loosened and tightened each string on my guitar. We then repeated this procedure to make sure the strings were all in tune.

"Anything you play just won't sound good unless the strings are in tune," Brian informed me, explaining why he was taking such painstaking care.

Brian then quickly played a simple chord and told me to watch and play it after him. I wasn't able to play it the first time, but as he slowed down and patiently showed me where

to put my fingers, I caught on.

Instead of playing the same chord over and over again, I wanted to play a song, but Brian dissuaded me from doing so.

"Chords are the basis of songs," he said. "If you want to learn how to play the guitar, you have to know how to play basic chords."

Brian handed me a sheet of paper filled with drawings of different chords. At first they seemed confusing, but after he explained what the numbers and the symbols meant I was gradually able to play each chord without his help.

After playing for a while, I looked down at the sore fingers on my left hand. They were red and covered with indented lines from where I had pushed down on the guitar strings.

"That stops happening after you get used to playing," said my brother, junior Paras Unadkat, when I got home.

Having long nails was quite an obstruction to playing the guitar. When I pushed down on the strings, my nails touched the other strings and prevented them from vibrating.

Despite the fact that they got in the way, my nails served as a reminder to use my finger tips instead of flattening my fingers, as suggested by Brian, which would have extended them to the adjacent strings.

Although playing the guitar was difficult, I thought it was a lot of fun. After this experience and much encouragement from Brian, I decided I would like to continue playing guitar in the future.

"You never know. You can go far with this. You might be the next Taylor Swift," said Brian.

—Krishna Unadkat

## UP CLOSE WITH... BRIAN HACKETT



Brian Hackett started teaching students how to play the guitar around 10 years ago, in 2001. Displeased by his previous experiences with music teachers when he was in high school, he felt he needed to provide students an opportunity to learn how to play instruments in a friendly environment.

"Learning how to play the guitar was not a good experience for me," said Brian. "The only reason I continued was I loved the guitar so much. I don't want it to be like that for other kids."

Along with playing the guitar, in 2005, he started playing the drums. Two years later, he started teaching students how to play drums as well.

With this multitude of instruments available for students to learn, Brian receives around 60-100 students a week.

"It's great! Even though it takes up a lot of time and sometimes conflicts with band practices, teaching these students is worth the time!"

# DANCE YOUR HEART OUT

A freshman went into the adventurous world of **aerobics** to see what the craze about **Zumba** was all about. Yay!

The doors finally swing open, and the line starts inching forward. As we pass through the entryway, orange cards are handed to the bouncer-like staff member regulating the flow of people, making sure nobody had cut into the line.

As the instructor arrives, she begins with a hearty, "Heyyy, how's everyone doing tonight? Good, like me?" She then proceeds to enthusiastically interact with the crowd, put on some music, and start grooving.

This is the world of Zumba, an aerobics class with Latin dancing incorporated into it. As a newcomer, I was pleasantly surprised at the variety of participants and their enthusiasm for this newest craze in aerobics.

I arrived at YMCA around 6:50 pm, for the 7:30 pm class, expecting to be the first in line. Surprisingly, a crowd was already gathering into a pretty strong line.

The more dedicated attendants came even earlier, at around 6:30, in order to snag a seat on the waiting bench to collect the orange entry cards and to stand in the front, next to the instructor. The unluckier ones, no matter how few unfortunate seconds they lagged behind—it could have been 10 seconds, 60 seconds, or even just half a second—would have to painstakingly stand the next hour or so, as the line quickly fills up the lobby and bends around the next corner.

"It's a matter of ten minutes, the whole thing gets all the way over there," the lady in front of me said, pointing to a far corner.

As soon as the cards were passed out and the competition for spots in the class had disappeared, everyone began to act as a family—a family united by a common purpose: to dance (and lose weight while doing so).

Reasons varied from Zumba being an "efficient weight-losing workout" to "makes me feel young again." The people

who were doing Zumba that evening were equally as diverse. There were middle-aged parents eager to shed off some pounds, a couple retired elderly who came to have fun, and even small children tagging along and dancing their hearts out.

The big family interacted well together. We socialized, shared food, and I discussed acne and men with the bubbly lady next to me.

The instructor (and my personal mentor), Lisa Liu, also a student at the French Culinary Institute, is the caring motherly figure of this big, accepting family.

"Lisa always feeds us," says the retired French teacher behind me, passing me a sugar-free cake that Liu had brought over from her culinary classes.

Liu is a feisty and energetic mother of three who is not only a Zumba instructor and a culinary student, but also a DJ on the weekends.

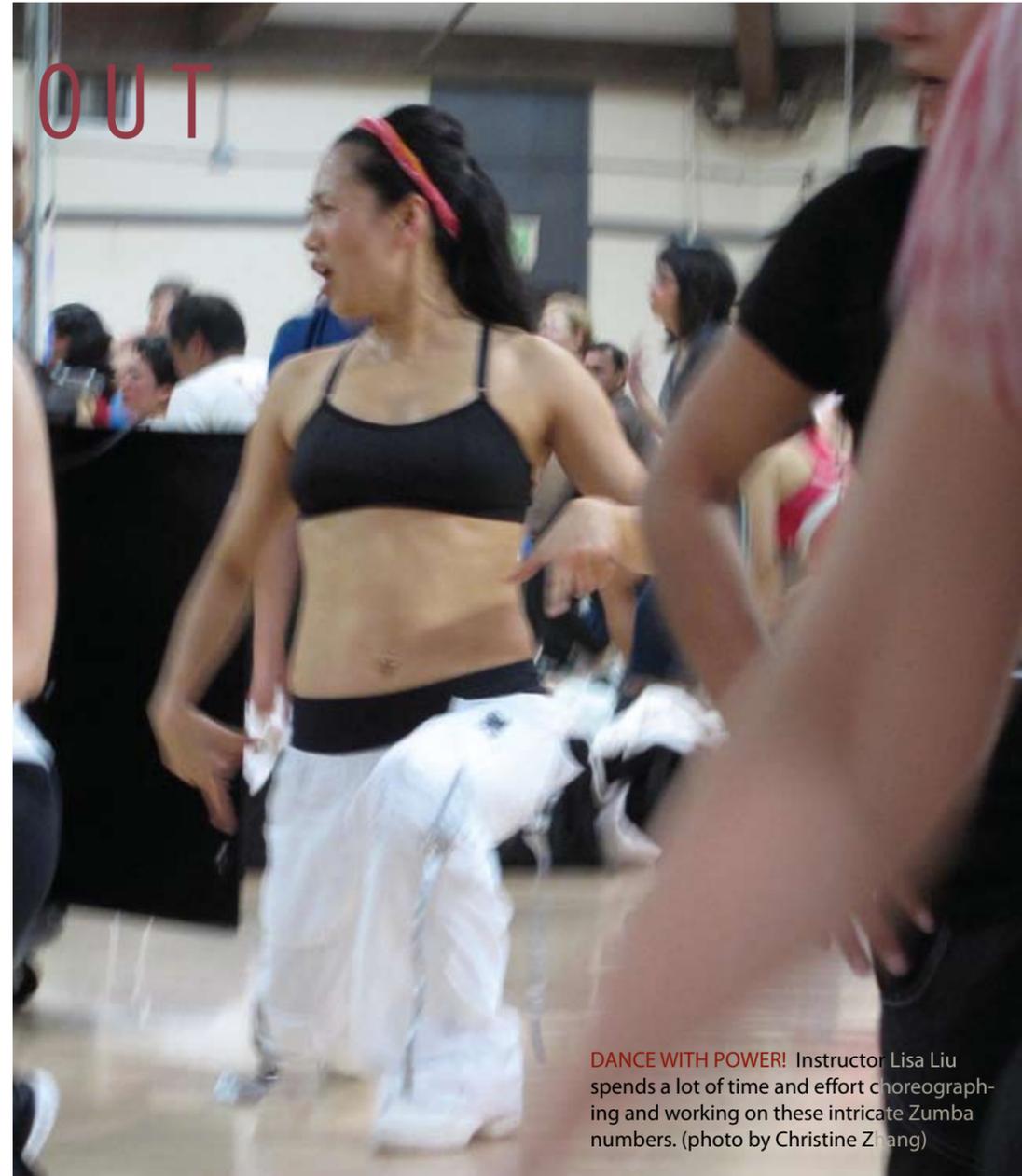
Liu says she does Zumba for fun and for workouts, and that it's a good way to express herself. She became a Zumba instructor because Zumba allows her to express her passion for dance and being the instructor gives her control over the music that is played.

During the hour of fast-paced dancing, I wondered why I could not keep up while an elderly woman in front of me was doing the steps so well. The hour whizzed by very quickly, and before I knew it, I had received a good workout and had fun hanging out with the gang.

I can see why everyone is so crazy about Zumba—besides Liu's care and good humor, Zumba is a fun, hour-long workout that nurtures a happy atmosphere.

Liu says, "I cannot make people like it, they have to like it first," but she welcomes everyone to come try it out.

—Christine Zhang



**DANCE WITH POWER!** Instructor Lisa Liu spends a lot of time and effort choreographing and working on these intricate Zumba numbers. (photo by Christine Zhang)

## THE PROCESS OF ZUMBA

1



First, you wait in line. Often times, you wait for an hour to get into Zumba. Some people even wait two hours! That's a workout itself!

2



Next, file into the dance room. Hurry, or all the good spots will be taken. RUN!

3



Finally, go and get lost! Don't worry, it's normal for first timers to be lost. Just remember to have fun and know that you're not the only one! Good luck!

## GET TO KNOW LISA LIU



Meet Lisa Liu, the ambitious Zumba instructor at YMCA. She teaches classes almost everyday from 7:30 to 8:30.

Besides doing Zumba, Liu also attends the French Culinary Institute and DJ's on weekends. Her hobbies include Zumba, baking, and gardening.

Liu started Zumba in 2006, through the introduction from several of her colleagues and friends.

She likes the fact that being the instructor gives her the freedom to play the music, and that she can express herself when she choreographs the dances.

Liu is a mother of three, but you would never guess it when you look at her slim figure and the way she dances.



**LIKE A BIG FAMILY** Everyone is accepted into this big, sharing family. "Lisa always feeds us," says a retired French teacher. (photo by Christine Zhang)

**DIVERSITY** There is a surprising amount of diversity. Both young and old, men and woman, and fit and the not-so-fit, everyone participates. (photo by Christine Zhang)

# I LIKE TO CODE

Freshman begins on his journey to learn about the vast knowledge surrounding computer programming by learning first-hand from a experienced programmer.

The large room is deathly quiet, except for the sharp clickety-clack of the keyboards and the occasional cough that lingers in the air. Surrounding me are dull white cubicles lined in countless pods of eight spread through out the room, creating an endless labyrinth of steel and vinyl. I remember thinking to myself how people could bear being cooped up in a place like this for over nine hours a day, and five days a week.

I peek over into one of the adjacent cubicles and see one of my father's co-workers, Sean Chiu, working on an extensive computer program; the screen is full of seemingly meaningless combinations of numbers and letters, but Sean continues typing long sequences, undeterred by the vast amount of symbols on his monitor.

To most people, computer programming seems like a tedious and monotonous activity full of mind-numbing computer work. Sean, a senior software engineer at Marvell Semiconductor, agrees that programming can be dull sometimes, especially when faced with a large bug (a logic error/syntax error) in the code.

To begin with, programmers must first understand the product requirements, and then move onto creating the entire software scheme.

Next, the programmers work on detailed design, and then write the code for the product. For the average computer programmer, this translates to roughly 45 hours per week of problem solving and software analysis.

Along with this process, programmers are required to spend huge amounts of time poring over immense amounts of existing code created by hundreds of other programmers, in order to interface with the new code.

But as an experienced computer programmer, having programmed for a lengthy 25 years,

Sean still has no regrets of having chosen the path of computer programming. "I actually do like programming, so it's not so bad. It's great to see the product we work on actually ships... [even] when that [the product] does not work out, there's always the pay check..." says Sean with a smile.

Although computer programming seems like a gargantuan task to regular people, it is easy to learn as long as one has a huge interest in problem solving and is willing to work for a long time on a single gigantic project. "Only do it though if you truly like tinkering with computers. Otherwise it's quite dry," says Sean.

After listening to Sean's valuable insight and advice, I felt a little more comfortable about programming--but only slightly. When I got home, I decided to try to write a program using the Unix operating system, the predecessor of Linux. I started by opening up a DOS (Disk Operating System) window on my computer, and began to type in bits of code under my father's supervision.

I was first introduced to a multitude of Unix jargon and procedures, such as the recompilation of code after editing, and then the endless amounts of supposedly basic Unix commands. I consider myself a quite competent computer user, but I sure had a lot of trouble with basic computer programming. I got numerous execute commands mixed up with others, and many times, was on the verge of tearing my hair out. After this experience, I now consider computer programmers to be among the most hard-working and patient individuals the world has to offer.

It took a while, but after half an hour of staring fixedly at a computer screen while hunched over a desk, I finally finished my first computer program. After listening to Chiu's positive experiences about computer programming, I had expected that computer programming would have magically made sense to me. Unfortunately, I was to be sadly disappointed. I inputted about four lines of code, and in multiple instances, ended up with numerous error messages, a "buggy" program.

After painstakingly editing the code over and over again, my end result was only a miniscule gray line of text that read, "Hello World." It felt almost unfair that such a long input sequence would result in such a small output, though I suppose I should have seen it coming.

Welcome to the wonderful world of computer programming.

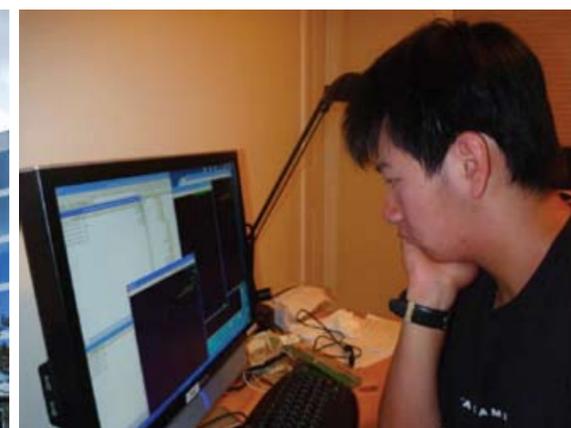
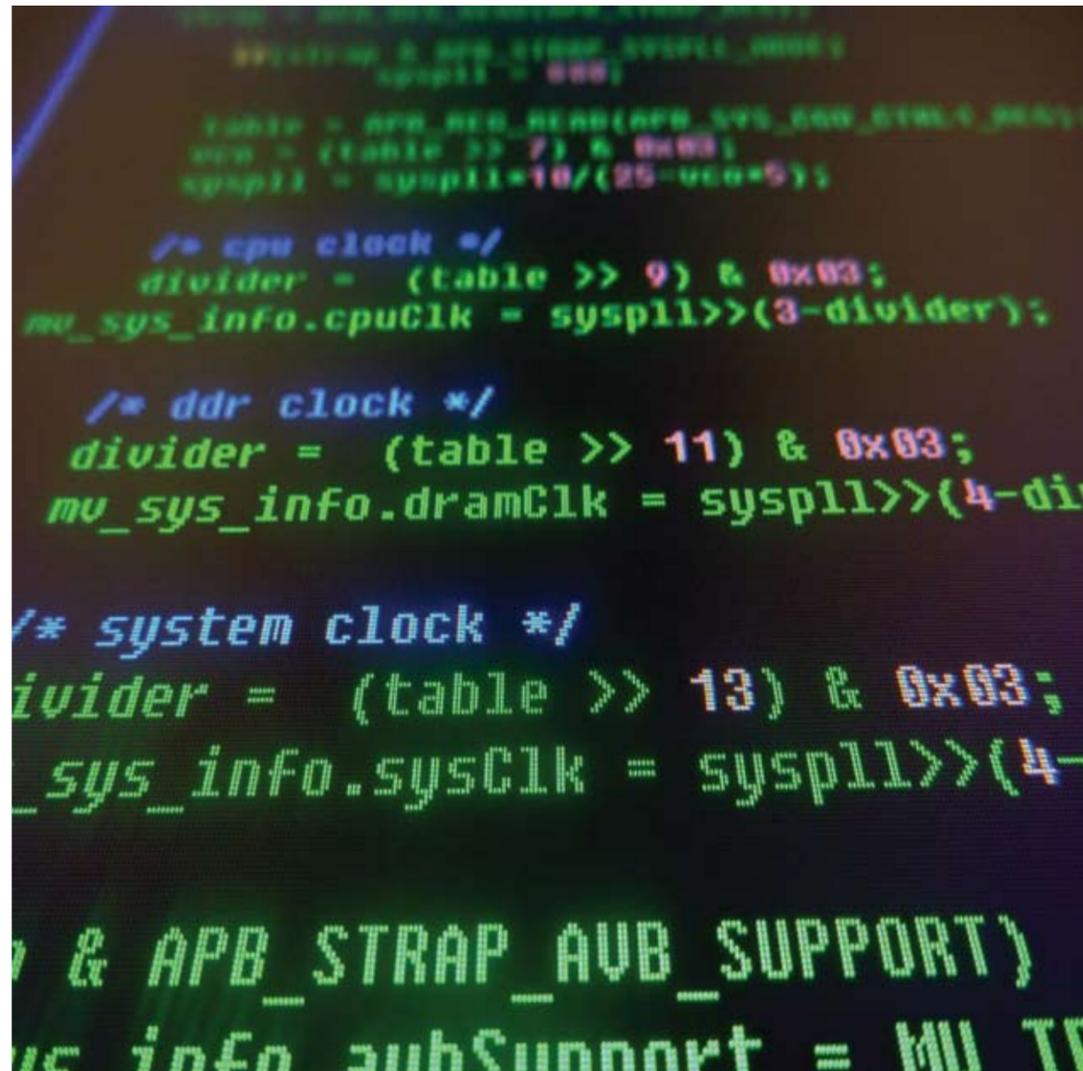
—Nicholas Chow

## THE TENURED PROGRAMMER



Sean Chiu has been programming since the age of 10, having programmed for a lengthy 25 years. He started with the programming language BASIC.

Sean is now the senior software engineer at Marvell Semiconductor. He says that he very much enjoys computer programming, but says, "Only do it though if you truly like tinkering with computers. Otherwise it's quite dry."



**DEBUGGING** Nicholas Chow stares at the program, trying to find out what went wrong. (photo by Nicholas Chow)

**MARVELLOUS MARVELL** Marvell Semiconductor is home to about 2500 computer programmers. (photo by Nicholas Chow)

## HOW TO BE A PROGRAMMER

1



Read a whole lot of programming books. You're going to need to know a lot about C++, Java, and all of those other programming languages in order to succeed.

2



Get accustomed to spending hours in a cubicle. You're going to be living most of your life there now.

3



Practice, practice, practice. Practice, especially in computer programming, results in perfection. But only after thousands of hours programming. Have fun!

# HOOP DREAMS

Freshman challenges his **childhood passion** to a game of one on one when he **revisits** basketball at an **open gym session** with the **Saratoga** team.

I sprinted with my tennis shoes screeching across the floor of the gym as I shouted, "Ball!"

My teammate, eyes wide with anticipation for a lurking opponent, stepped towards me and extended his lanky arms. The ball flew out of his hands, but was intercepted by an agile defender. Another fast break ensued, and the constant motion that is basketball continued on.

When I set out to re-live my childhood passion of basketball at a Saratoga High open gym session, I knew I was about to play with the top tier of basketball players at the school. Athletes who practice the sport everyday were there and I had to compete with and against them.

According to freshman basketball player **Daniel Martin**, "Basketball is all about practice and hard work. You have to want it and you have to work for perfection."

Daniel is right. My experience at the open gym session proved his point to be true.

Not only did we scrimmage, but we also conditioned our stamina by running liners, or sprints back and forth on the court in different sequences. Each burst off the baseline tested my physical and mental endurance. Sweat dripped down my temple to the cuff of my neck. After pushing myself to the limit, the whistle blew, signaling a water break. I sighed in relief.

Throughout the scrimmage and the conditioning I knew who the advanced players were. They were the ones who rarely lost focus and always seemed to be working hard.

During the water break, I asked the better and more experienced players how many hours they practice a week. Their responses were significantly higher than the players who didn't appear to be as good.

"Most weeks I try to hit the gym one to two hours a day," sophomore JV player **Jonathan Boldt** said.

I was here once before at this level of competition. I used to be on an all-net basketball team. After not playing for four years, I played again at the open gym. The experience was humbling for me. I couldn't shoot the way I used to and I wasn't as quick with the ball as I was before. Dribbling the ball even felt unnatural to me, which took me some time to get accustomed to.

The pace of the game was so sporadic, that it was hard to keep up at times.

One moment, the ball would lazily move from one player to another, and the next moment, all ten players are sprinting to the other side of the court for a fast break.

No wonder Coach Carter made his team do so many liners.

Playing with the school team was bittersweet. It reminded me of all the good times I had playing the sport, while at the same time I realized how much I missed it.

As I walked away from the gym, my right hand aching from a collision with the ball and my legs sore from running up and down the court, I thought about how much I miss the game. In the end, I truly regret giving up basketball.

—Nikhil Goel

When I set out to re-live my childhood passion of basketball at a Saratoga High open gym session, I knew I was about to play with the top tier of basketball players at the school.

## HOW TO SHOOT A FREE THROW



1 First, line yourself up with the hoop with your feet about shoulder-length apart. Make sure not to step over the free throw line or the shot will not count.



2 Next, bounce the ball a couple of times until you are relaxed. A couple of deep breaths should help if you are winded from running up and down the court.

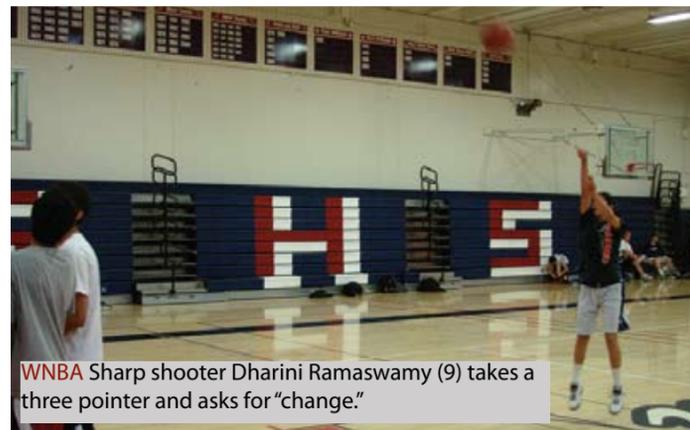


3 Finally, bend your knees and extend your body upwards without jumping. It's more classy if you don't jump. Release the ball of your shooting hand with your other hand as a guide.



4 Finally, bend your knees and extend your body upwards without jumping. Release the ball of your shooting hand with your other hand as a guide.

**ANKLE BREAKER** Freshman basketball player Daniel Martin dribbles past teammate Jonathan Young (9) on a one v. one drill. (photo by Nikhil Goel)



**WNBA** Sharp shooter Dharini Ramaswamy (9) takes a three pointer and asks for "change."



**JUMP SHOT** Freshman Nikhil Goel attempts a jump shot over Daniel Martin (9) during a scrimmage. (photo by Raj Thakker)



**BIG MAN CAN SHOOT** Hareet Jhutti (9) isn't afraid to shoot a jumper from the free throw line. "I like to shoot from outside the key and be a post player," Hareet said. (photo by Jonathan Young)



**TRIPLE THREAT** Raj Thakker (9) prepares to pass, dribble, or shoot the ball by switching to the triple threat stance. (photo by Nikhil Goel)

# SPLITTING NOTES

Freshman band member attends **drumline tryouts** to learn about the bass line's **unity & cohesion**, which leads to the band's success during the season.

**KEEPING IT CLEAN** Graham Grant (9) and Mahir Jethanandani (8) work to clean the spacing between their notes. (photo by Lena Jewler)

**QUICK BREAK** Instructor Leah Mamaril explains the next exercise as the drumline takes a quick break. Drumming for long periods of time hurt your wrists and forearms, so drummers worked on building "chops", or endurance. (photo by Lena Jewler)



What has 26 legs, near-perfect synergy, and tryouts? The Saratoga High School drumline is an elite group in the world of marching band, and it was this group I briefly became a part of one windy Thursday afternoon in May.

After hearing the bass drums echoing from Benny Pierce field every summer and fall for the past three years, I wanted to know how the group worked together to achieve such great heights by the end of the marching season. It was with this mentality that I attended the first day of drumline workshops, which worked as a sort of tryout process.

Before tryouts even started, I was handed a packet containing the music I was supposed to know for the first day, along with a note from the percussion instructor. "If you are new, please acquaint yourself as quickly as possible to basic fundamentals that may be different or challenging to you," it said, among other things. "If you feel pressure to learn a lot, that's good. You will receive lots of information at each rehearsal and may very well feel overwhelmed at times." Reading this made me nervous I was dabbling in an activity a little too far out of my league.

On the day I attended tryouts, we were separated depending on what instrument we wanted to play. I accompanied the rest of the bass drummers to the grassy patch at the front of the school. The veterans showed us rookies how to set up our stands and put our drums on top. The bass drum instructor, Leah Mamaril, took control from there.

First, Leah went through introductions, then she made sure everyone knew how to hold their drumstick, or mallet. "Hold it like a soda can, so that the bottom of your palm is in line with the bottom of the mallet," she said. "Make sure your hand is relaxed. Your thumb should rest between your first two fingers, so that they make a fulcrum."

I hastened to do as she said, and listened as she explained to everyone how to hit the drum correctly, how to stand, and what the "set" position looked like. After she finished with the basics of technique, we got to play for the first time.

It started off simply, with everyone playing the same part together. We played quarter notes and eighth notes in time with the metronome. This was relatively easy for me, since I already had a good sense of rhythm from being in band. However, she soon had us move on to something more challenging.

"The thing that makes the bass drums cooler than and different from the other types of drums is that each bass drummer has a different part, so no one plays exactly the same thing as anyone else," Leah explained. Each bass drum created a different pitch, so when they were played in sequence, the sound climbed one note at a time. When the drummers switched off beats with each other, it was called splitting notes.

According to drumline veteran Raiza de Vera, splitting notes was one of the most important parts of playing the bass drum. "Splitting notes enables us to play faster, more interesting music, and create melodies rather than just playing rhythms," she said. "It also helps us become more united as a section, because splitting notes well requires us to anticipate each other's beats."

Before I knew it, the two-hour session was over. With a few parting words of wisdom, the instructors released us to go put our drums and stands away.

Reflecting back on the experience, I learned what I set out to and more. As well as acquiring a basic knowledge of how to play the bass drum, I realized how the drumline became the experts they were. A solid mix of quality instructors, long hours of practice with an unparalleled work ethic, and a determination to be the best of the best were the keys to the success of the drumline.

—Lena Jewler

**CLARIFYING QUESTIONS** Raiza de Vera (9) asks the instructor a question about the passage they were about to play. "Asking questions when I needed help was part of the reason I made drumline as a freshman," said de Vera. (photo by Lena Jewler)



**SNAPPY SOLUTION** Lena Jewler (9) assumes the "set" position. Instructors would call "set" to get the drumline's attention back when they started talking or goofing off, as they would have to snap to position. (photo by Raiza de Vera)

## DIFFERENT DRUM, DIFFERENT JOB

- 1<sup>ST</sup>** Has the highest pitch; normally starts or ends phrases. —Max Workman (12)
- 2<sup>ND</sup>** Known for being the most musically challenging part. —Dylan Reader (12)
- 3<sup>RD</sup>** Middle drum; keeps the low and high drums united. —Raiza de Vera (9)
- 4<sup>TH</sup>** Similar to 5th, but plays more "off the beat" —Adrian Yen (10)
- 5<sup>TH</sup>** Maintains the pulse; called the "heartbeat" of the group. —TerranceWang (10)