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FREAKING OUT

The administration has been fighting a losing battle against inappropriate student dancing for years. This year, it's taking new steps to tackle the issue.



This picture was taken by the Talisman staff during the 2007 Winter Formal.

Robotics team lacks funds

by Kevin Mu

With a shortage of sponsors and funds, the Robotics club is struggling so far this year; its 20 active members need to raise thousands of dollars before the start of the season in January.

According to president junior Erika Ye, the club needs about \$15,000 to \$20,000 in order for their season to run successfully. From membership fees alone, Robotics has \$6,000 to \$7,000.

In order to fill the money gap, the club is applying for grants from Rotary and PTSO and looking for sponsors in organizations such as Google and NASA. A school-wide e-mail was sent out asking for student support and parent donations for the team. The club is also considering starting a Robotics Boosters program to host fundraising events and to sell merchandise.

In previous years, Berger Manufacturing, one of the club's major sponsors, has provided the team with materials like sheet metal to build their robots. This year, however, Berger discontinued its sponsorship, leaving the club in a difficult position. No official reason was given for the withdrawal, but Ye thinks it is a result of economic problems.

"Without [Berger], we're in trouble," Ye said. And without enough funds, "we won't have a season," said vice president Cordell Hollingsworth; however, he feels confident that the club will fulfill their quota by the start of the season.

Several club members also expressed their frustration with the club's lack of money.

"We need better [supplies] to build a better robot," said sophomore Amish Rohatgi. "I'm disappointed that we don't have enough money to get the appropriate materials." ♦

School seeks students' advice on dance issues

by Lyka Sethi

Students' suggestive dance styles have been an issue for several years. However, concern over the problem heightened after the Homecoming dance in October, when several parents who chaperoned the dance expressed their complaints.

Assistant principal Karen Hyde is among those who hope to curb the trends of

"freaking" and drinking. After taking a look at the way other schools in the area deal with such student behavior, she decided to create a student task force to look at this and other issues.

"Homecoming was a definite impetus for us to take action," said Hyde. "Parents who chaperoned the dance noticed a lot of crude behavior,

see TASK FORCE, p. 3

Local high schools enact policies to stop trend

by Karen Lyu

For schools in the Bay Area and those across the nation, the popular dance style of freaking has increasingly become an area of concern. Staff members, parents and other adults are struggling to crack down, but it has ultimately proved to be difficult.

Schools all over have tried different ways to put a stop

to freaking, dealing out detentions and suspensions or canceling dances.

"[We] have 'freak police' but they're just students and don't really do anything. Sometimes, [the teachers] break people apart, but mostly they just talk to each other," said Los Gatos High junior Kristen Lee.

Lynbrook senior Anna Chou, who said that students

see DANCES, p. 3

Students speak about block schedule at LGHS

by Ben Clement

Six Saratoga High students, joined by two Los Gatos students who had transferred from schools with a block schedule, congregated at Los Gatos High on Oct. 20 to speak about the benefits and drawbacks of a block schedule and to answer the questions of Los Gatos' faculty.

A primary concern that Los Gatos teachers had was the increased workload if a student missed a block day.

"[The panel] concluded that missing a block day is like missing a day of the regu-

lar schedule. At that point, you're doing the homework for all your classes in one night," said senior Melissa Lin.

The extended length of each period in the block schedule was another issue for many teachers, who worried about filling up the time for a longer period.

To address this concern, the panel noted that it is easier for teachers to plan

more involved, more interesting lessons and simulations with an extended time period, providing a better learning experience for students.

Language teachers were concerned about whether students would continue to practicing using a foreign language every day if they did not meet for class.

"The panel said that the block schedule actually helps language students more to

concentrate for an hour and half solid," said Lin. "Also, students still have to practice speaking skills through homework."

Although the Los Gatos faculty had many concerns, seven of the eight students on the panel advocated the block schedule and emphasized its benefits.

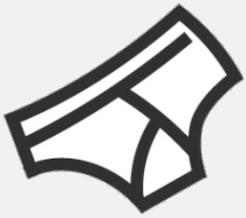
"I think we were able to convince them," said Lin. "The seven of us made a strong case for the switch."

Los Gatos assistant principal Markus Autrey said that the block schedule issue is still being debated among the school faculty and administration. ♦

"I think we were able to convince them. The seven of us made a strong case."

—senior Melissa Lin

NEWS BRIEFS



“Romeo and Juliet” prepares for opening night

With less than two weeks left until opening night, the cast of “Romeo and Juliet” is busy with preparations. The rehearsals are coming to a close and all the cast members are looking forward to their upcoming performance.

“We’re all very excited. We have a great cast and it should be a great show,” said senior James Arroyo, who plays Friar Lawrence.

The actors are not the only ones preparing; set designers are busy building and painting the sets. The sets have been painted in an eccentric trans-era type theme. Director Chris Mahle has decided to construct sets that could be used to represent any time period in order to make the production more original.

“Bringing Shakespeare into a more present day era is challenging, but at the same time it is extremely fun and exciting,” said Arroyo.

“Romeo and Juliet” is set to open the week before Thanksgiving. Opening night is Nov. 20 in the McAfee Center with the play to be performed every evening throughout the week. The closing show will be a matinee on Nov. 23.

Poetry, Sutton commended by City Council

The English Department and English teacher Judith Sutton received commendations on Nov. 5, at the Saratoga City Council for their work with the award-winning poetry program at the high school.

The program was recognized for the positive impact it has made on the school and community. Under Sutton’s guidance, poetry at Saratoga has long been sponsored and supported by the English Department.

Creative writing funding was cut in 1978, but the English department and Sutton eventually helped to bring it back 10 years ago.

Mayor Ann Waltonsmith had heard about high school poetry around the community for some time and approached Sutton to find out more.

Waltonsmith took time out of her busy schedule to attend one of the field trips with the poetry class. She also made a point of learning as much as possible about the poetry program and Sutton herself as a poet.

“It’s an important quality in a leader—to investigate aspects of importance in the community and to stay in touch,” said Sutton.

Sutton said that she deeply appreciated the mayor and City Council for making the commendation.

“It’s nice to have recognition towards the end of your career—as well as the in the beginning and middle stages—as I have been fortunate to have,” said Sutton. “To still be recognized for excellence in my work with the written word really means a great deal to me.”

Hard work pays off for speech and debate team

The speech and debate team looked to follow up a successful first tournament of the year as their season progressed at their next two tournaments at Palo Alto and Leland High School.

The team excelled the Palo Alto High School Congress Tournament held on Oct. 29 with junior Varun Parmar placing second and senior Farid Jiandani placing fourth overall. In addition, the majority of the team placed in their respective Congress houses.

The team also has success at the Leland Novice Individual Events Tournament, held on Oct. 18, with five out of the eight participating team members advancing to the finals, and the rest advancing to the semi-finals.

“The tournaments ran really smoothly and all of the freshmen did well,” said Jiandani. “I’m really confident about our team this year.”

The team’s next tournament will be at Milpitas High School on Nov. 16.

—by Shannon Galvin, Pia Mishra and Abhishek Venkataramana

CORRECTIONS

• A student was wrongly quoted on the front page of the Oct. 24 issue. Senior Hana Pruzansky should’ve been quoted as saying that she thought both presidential candidates were poor choices and that she had to choose the one who was “less bad.”

• In the Toga IQ quiz, three of the answers were wrong. The answer to #8 was C, #10 was B and #27 was B.

• The quote attributed to teacher Bill Peck, “It made my week. It made me feel special because out of all the teachers I had been chosen,” was actually said by assistant principal Joe Bosco.

New signs guide drivers

by Sulmaan Hassan

To combat the challenges regarding the flow of traffic in the parking lot, the school has installed new signs throughout the front parking lot signaling special traffic rules such as “One Way,” “Left Turn Only” and “Do Not Enter.”

For years, there have been faded out arrows along the roads indicating the direction cars should go in the parking lot. However, because of recurring traffic violations, the administration has put in new traffic signs to make these directions more visible.

“Traffic in the parking lot seems so chaotic, so the signs were a good thing to clarify where cars should and should not go,” said assistant principal Joe Bosco.

Many students have violated

traffic rules in the past, causing trouble with traffic flow, which is crucial in the parking lot in order to avoid clashes between cars. Some students say their disregard of the flow of traffic was due to the confusion caused by the lack of signs indicating the proper routes.

“I don’t really see any signs indicating where I should go,” said junior Nick Olsen, “so I just turn wherever I want.”

According to Bosco, traffic violations in the parking lot have been common sight in past years, and the administration does not condone this behavior.

“Traffic rules have been made for safety purposes, and we expect that all students abide by them,” said Bosco.

There were no specific incidents leading to the installments of these new signs. They were



Theresa Yeh

New traffic signs were recently installed in the parking lot.

put in to ensure safety and to regulate the flow of traffic. The administration hopes to see an improvement in students’ driving as a result of these signs. ♦

Parlez-vous Français?

STUDENTS FROM SCHOOLS AROUND THE AREA GATHER TO DEBATE ISSUES OF GLOBAL IMPORTANCE IN FRENCH

by Mary Mykhaylova and Anna Shen

A unique student debate took place on Oct. 26—and no, it had nothing to do with the current presidential election. The debaters who participated did the usual—introduction, rebuttal and counterattacks, but in French.

The debate took place at Monta Vista High School on Oct. 26, with an audience of 40 and a team of 18 formally dressed, fluent French students from Lynbrook, Monta Vista and Saratoga High School.

The organizers of this debate were the students of the French Clubs from each school.

The topics up for debate were centered around the topics of global warming and the current financial crisis.

The Saratoga students who

participated in this French debate were juniors Felix Chiu, Jan Iyer, Annie Lee, Mary Mykhaylova and Alison Wustrow, and seniors Sophia Balogh, Lisa Chang and Megha Raghavan.

The judge panel consisted of five adults; three were teachers, including Laura Lizundia,

who teaches French 4 and AP French Language at Saratoga High. Lizundia, along with the other judges who were pres-

ent, was given a rubric that measured content, mechanics and communication skills.

“[The speakers] were really impressive, because none of them are native speakers,” said Lizundia. “Their French is at a really high level, and it was quite fun to watch.”

The 18 French speakers were divided into three teams.

Each team was integrated with students from all three

schools.

“At first, I was intimidated, because most of the students were really good at French,” said Lee, “but after we started talking, I [was] really glad that I met [them].”

The members of the winning team each received a ten-dollar Jamba Juice gift card. Chiu was the only Saratoga student who was on the winning team.

The French debate helped the students understand the challenges of speaking a foreign language in a setting other than in a classroom.

“[Debating in French] was a lot more difficult than I thought it would be,” said Iyer. “There’s a huge difference between speaking French in a classroom setting versus [speaking French in a] real world situation.”

With this success, the French clubs from the three schools are planning to hold one debate per semester.

“The debate was a lot of fun and a great experience,” said Iyer. “I will definitely go back next year if we are given the opportunity.” ♦

Falcon Photo of the Week | by Amanda Yi



After showing their “immaturity,” the male rally commissioners dance to the tunes of Ghost Busters during the Halloween rally, which replaced the traditional Los Gatos football game rally.



Amanda Yi

Newly recruited task force members meet during lunch on Oct. 30 with assistant principal Karen Hyde to give advice and hammer out solutions to school problems.

TASK FORCE | New solutions

continued from pg. 1

which isn't new to the rest of us, but it seemed to be a huge concern."

Other issues that arose during Homecoming week caused the administration to look for a new approach in dealing with problems on campus such as racial stereotyping. The task force will conduct surveys, analyze data and discuss solutions to issues.

"Do I think that we can eliminate freak dancing and other issues we have at this school? No. But, I definitely think that by changing up the way we do things around here, we can start an ongoing process that will bring about the side of the problems that we as administrators don't see," said Hyde.

The group will provide insight into students' views that the ASB cannot obtain by itself. The task force will act as an advisory board to the administration but will not be a decision-making body.

Hyde looked for a diverse group of students to be a part of the task force to ensure a broad perspective and different ideas. She has chosen about 16 students of all grade levels to be involved.

"The ASB has tried to enact some type of student to student surveying and

discussion board, but because of the numerous other responsibilities it maintains, that proved difficult," said Hyde. "Thus, we created this task force, but we still want to keep a connection between it and ASB."

Senior Corey Rateau also showed a great deal of interest in the task force because the school board asked him to conduct a survey regarding racial issues at school. Although he will not be an official member of the task force, he will help keep information flowing between the school and the school board.

"I'm pretty excited about this endeavor," said Rateau. "It'll bring new perspectives and help the school decide what the next step in dealing with problems should be."

According to Rateau, because of the multitude of issues that the school needs to address, including stereotyping and misconceived notions, it will be beneficial to gather data on student opinions to figure out the truth and take action.

"I think that any opportunity for students to have a voice in these matters is important," said Rateau. "Every decision the school makes affects someone, so having direct communication with students is crucial." ♦

Bell schedules for Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Week

Nov. 10-14

Monday (Tuesday Schedule)

- 1 7:50 - 9:25 (95)
- B 9:25 - 9:35 (10)
- 2 9:40 - 11:15 (95)
- L 11:15 - 11:55 (40)
- 3 12:00 - 1:35 (95)
- 7 1:40 - 3:15 (95)

Tuesday

Holiday—no school

Wednesday, Thursday,

Friday

Regular schedule

Thanksgiving Week

Monday, November 24

- C 7:50 - 8:45 (55)
- 4 8:50 - 10:25 (95)
- B 10:25 - 10:35 (10)
- 5 10:40 - 12:15 (95)
- L 12:15 - 12:55 (40)
- 6 1:00 - 2:35 (95)
- T 2:40 - 3:10 (30)

Tuesday, November 25

- 1 7:50 - 9:10 (80)
- B 9:10 - 9:20 (10)
- 2 9:25 - 10:45 (80)
- 3 10:50 - 11:50 (60) Code Red
- L 11:50 - 12:20 (30)
- 3 12:25 - 1:45 (80)
- 7 1:50 - 3:10 (80)

Wednesday-Friday:
No school

FALCONFOCUS

Senior works on film on North Korean orphanage

by Lyka Sethi

When senior Yeun Byun started working with a community service foundation called the Digital Clubhouse Network at the beginning of her high school career, her intention was to gain new experiences that would continue to inspire her dream of becoming a politician.

Little did she know that through the program she would realize that her true passion was not for politics, but for film.

Byun found the perfect opportunity to foster her hobby when she heard about the Han-Schneider Foundation, which provides health-care and basic necessities to struggling orphanages in North Korea. The foundation was looking for people to get footage from North Korean orphanages to prove that its assistance was being used effectively.

"I was pretty excited but nervous about this project," said Byun. "I really wanted to do it because it's an important issue, so I jumped at the chance."

Byun took a week off from school in October to fly to South Korea to work on the film. However, she was not able to physically go to North Korea and visit the orphanages due to safety issues, so she had to use pictures and footage given to her by various people such as doctors and escapees who had traveled north.

However, Byun might have never had this opportunity if she hadn't joined the Digital Clubhouse Network. After joining, she quickly began to enjoy meeting politicians and other people with interesting stories to tell. She received the opportunity to interview all kinds of people with different problems, such as war veterans and victims of terminal illnesses.

With her work, Byun then created

short documentaries for them as a part of their healing processes. The students involved in the foundation were also allowed the opportunity to showcase their work to city council members and other public forums to raise awareness about issues.

"I really enjoyed meeting so many new and inspiring people," said Byun. "Even though my original intent was to gain a little insight into the world of politics, I started to realize that what I really had fun with was the storytelling process."

After making about 11 films with the Digital Clubhouse Network, Byun decided that she needed to move on to something that could further stimulate her creative senses and become a more personal project.

She decided that for her junior and senior years of high school, she wanted to start a project on her own, which was when her recent project in Korea came into play.

"By the end of my stay with [the Digital Clubhouse Network], I knew that I wanted to major in film and that I aspired to be a documentary filmmaker," said Byun. "But I was just ready for something new."

Now that she has returned from her trip, Byun is working diligently on editing the footage she captured to create a 10-minute long documentary.

"It's definitely been a lot of work, so I hope this film turns out well," said Byun.

Byun is confident that she'll eventually achieve her goal of becoming a documentary filmmaker. Her innate interest in politics is a huge part of this aspiration because she hopes to address global political issues in the work that she does in the future.

"In the end, just like everyone else, I want to spark change in the world," said Byun. "Everyone has their own way of trying to make a difference, and filmmaking is mine." ♦



BYUN

DANCES | Outside policies

continued from pg. 1

dance in the same way at her school, sided against implementing school rules against freaking, echoing the opinions of many of her peers.

"You can't stop kids from freaking by controlling them or setting laws against them," said Chou.

"If you do that, the kids will just do it even more. Teachers [and parent chaperones] at our school just push students apart and [say] 'Don't do that.' That's basically it."

After being interrupted by chaperones during a school event, Monta Vista senior Jonathan Chen told *The Falcon* that in cases like his, students "just wait 30 seconds and go back to doing what they were doing before. It doesn't really work."

However, many other neighboring high schools have already taken active steps towards curbing this trend in student dancing.

In addition to listing all the policies for school dances clearly for students, Archbishop Mitty High School Dean of Students Jim Fallis said that he adamant-

ly enforces rules about the way students can dance in several ways.

"[To prevent] inappropriate dancing, we [first] communicate the expectations for the students early. [After that], they are assigned a Saturday detention, and the parents are notified with a letter," he said. "They are warned that if it happens

"I'm not talking about the administration getting up there, but maybe students teaching [other] students."

—Archbishop Mitty Dean of Students Jim Fallis

again, they will lose the privilege of going to the next dance."

Fallis said that he understands students' need to have fun at dances, but he believes that too often, students just "do what they see," and

this is the reason why inappropriate dancing has become such a problem in high schools.

Fallis's proposed solution to freaking is that schools help their students learn how to dance in a more appropriate manner.

"I'm not talking about the administration getting up there, but maybe students teaching [other] students," said Fallis. "[For example], the show America's Best Dance Crew. They're not bumping and grinding. Why don't the students do that? Because they don't know how." ♦

Oral interpretation class holds 'scary story' night

Students read and present scary stories to audience

by Nandini Ruparel
and Abhi Venkataramana

The oral interpretation class held a "Scary Story" event on Oct. 24 and Oct. 25 to showcase the work they had been doing in the class. The event, which was about an hour long, consisted of students reading and enacting scary literature in front of an audience of students and parents in the Little Theater.

While scary stories emerge every Halloween, some of these stories had a twist.

"[The students performed] things that are either scary because they are actually frightening works written by the likes of H.P.

Lovecraft or Edgar Allen Poe, or scary in ways that they are really badly written examples of literature that are not very good, but funny to hear," said oral interpretation and drama teacher Chris Mahle.

Each student was required to perform their scary stories in front of the audience for a total of 10 minutes, according to Mahle. During some performances, other students on stage acted out what was being read.

"I originally came to the performance only because my friend was performing and I really didn't have high expectations for it," said sophomore

Navneet Ramesh. "But after watching the program, I was really impressed with all of the performances"

Around 35 students attended the performance on Friday, which was free of charge. The Little Theatre was decorated with "scary" props, including plastic bloody heads and fog machines.

"Sound and lights [were] provided by the advanced drama class, who supported [the oral interpretation class] and helped make their production as professional as possible," said Mahle.

Students involved in the performance came prepared with a book full of their respective roles.

"We had to get material together from scary stories or poorly written pieces of literature, put it together in a black binder and then rehearse it multiple times

on the stage," said sophomore Keerti Shukla, who was one of the students who performed in the event.

The class, which was newly introduced this year for freshmen and sophomores, will continue to put on performances throughout the year, including a more formal oral interpretation presentation in the McAfee towards the end of first semester.

"I thought the event was a great success overall," said sophomore Soorya Rangan, who also participated in the event. "I was a little nervous at first, but when I started, I found that it was really a lot of fun. I can't wait for the next presentation." ♦

Students involved in the performance came prepared with a book full of their respective roles.



Falcon Archive

The Decathlon Club, above, is no longer going to be the location of Winter Formal.

Winter Ball to be on campus

by Neyha Bhat
and Kelly Lambie

This year, Winter Ball is getting a makeover. Because of the high price of renting the Decathlon Club last year combined with low attendance in the past few years, the event has lost more money than it has earned.

This year, in an effort to make Winter Ball more profitable and well attended, ASB is holding Winter Ball in the gym on Dec. 13.

The new location will bring the cost of a bid down from around \$50 to only \$15, said ASB secretary Felix Tuan.

"Normally it's iffy if I'll even go because you have to buy a corsage plus rent a tux plus bids and soon enough it's \$300 for one night, but because it's so much cheaper this year, who could resist the urge to get their groove on?" said senior Scott Thoren.

By not spending as much money on the location, ASB will have more money to spend on decorations.

A professional decorator is being

hired to transform the gym into a winter wonderland. The tentative theme is "A Night in St. Petersburg."

"We want to go all out on decorations because we have the extra money to do so," said Tuan.

Although the dance will be more informal than before, ASB wants to keep the dance classy. Girls will be asked to wear a dress or skirt, while boys will be required to wear slacks, a nice shirt and a tie.

Students are still encouraged to bring dates to maintain the atmosphere, but the ASB hopes that the pressure stigma attached to coming alone will lessen because of the new, more casual location, resulting in higher attendance.

"Winter Ball usually has such a small number of people that come because of the pressure to bring or have dates," said Tuan. "I think people won't feel that as much with the changes."

Tuan and the rest of the ASB hope the new Winter Ball will prove to be a success and reap benefits for both the school and students. ♦



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School constitution undergoes revision

by Anna Shen
and Abhi Venkataramana

The ASB recently handpicked a committee of students to start revising the outdated school constitution, a document written when the school opened almost 50 years ago in order to maintain a set of requirements for those students who wanted to run for student council.

Revisions of the constitution take place every four to five years due to changes in school policy. The most recent revision took place during the fall of 2004. However, the constitution was subsequently lost, so this year's changes will be made to the constitution from the late '90s.

"[The SHS constitution] is a little outdated," said assistant principal Karen Hyde. "Time has changed, and it has a lot of things that don't exist anymore."

The committee of student amenders consists of freshman Mac Hyde, sophomores Lauren Kuan and Tim Rollinson, junior Sophia Cooper and seniors Mabel Hsu and Satomi Ishikawa. These students propose revisions to the ASB, who will then consider them and make the final decisions.

"We toss out ideas," said Mac Hyde. "If we have some ideas we like, we expand on them."

The ASB, along with the student committee, has already finalized its decision on a couple of issues: an impeachment policy and mandated class representation. The ASB hopes to never use the impeachment policy, which states that if an officer misses two ASB meetings, they are put on

probation. If they miss four, they are sent through the impeachment process—the ASB is the judge panel for class officers, while the administration is the judge panel for ASB officers.

The class representation policy hopes to give students "more voice in student government." There will be two class representatives from each grade and also two academic class representatives from every third-period class.

The committee has also cut many obsolete commissions such as the Entertainment commission, and created the Constitution commission.

Even with all the recent changes, the revision process is far from done. The committee had two meetings and is unsure of when their work will be completed.

"I want to say [the revision process will be done] hopefully before December," said Mac Hyde, "but definitely not before November."

The reason many students may be unaware of the SHS constitution is that it is most often used within the student council.

"[Students do not know about SHS constitution] because many kids are just doing school and not living school," said Ms. Hyde. "I would love [for] more people to know about it [and] to be involved in student government."

Because the ASB and administration feels the constitution has been "flaky," they feel it is imperative to revise it.

"[The SHS constitution] is just like [the United States] constitution," said Ms. Hyde. "Without it, people would be running into doors." ♦



Amanda Yi

Men's choir sings "Don't Fence Me In" at the McAfee Center on Oct. 30. "We only sang one song because it's hard to have the whole group sing and know multiple pieces," said junior Victor Wong. Other groups of the music department have also begun to put on their first performances. Women's Choir and Cantare Choir held performances in the McAfee Center on Oct. 28 and Oct. 30, respectively, and the String Orchestra traveled to Los Altos High on Nov. 1 to partake in an exchange concert.

Marching band works toward getting in sync

by Elizabeth Cheng
and Kirstie Lee

After working hard to improve their field show, Mirror Images, the 215 members of the marching band placed third and first place at Gilroy High School and Foothill High School competitions, respectively.

The performance at Gilroy High School, held on Oct. 18, was run by the Western Band Association, and is the category of competitions the marching band regularly participates in, while the Northern California Band Association ran the competition at Foothill High School on Oct.

25, according to band director John Zarco.

Although the contest at Foothill was less competitive, the marching band "always performs with the same standards," said Zarco.

The band had been struggling with musical alignment on field. As the members move around on field, the distance the sounds have to travel, differ from person to person. This means that the tubas at the back of the field need to play ahead of the percussion up front in order for the audience to hear one synchronized

sound.

At Foothill, the music aligned well and the band avoided "tears," when different sections are out of sync musically with each other. Though there can still be improvements, Zarco called the performance the "best yet this season."

"There were a lot of [parts in the show] that were giving us trouble, but we finally did better this time," said Zarco. "We did really well."

Senior Color Guard captain Nikki Chang agreed.

"We practiced a lot, with an intense practice Saturday morning. Everyone was really tired after, but by the competition everyone was rejuvenated."

—Color Guard captain Nikki Chang

"It went really well. We practiced a lot, with an intense practice Saturday morning. Everyone was really tired after, but by the competition everyone was rejuvenated," said Chang.

Despite the success, both Chang and Zarco agree that there is room for improvement.

"The ending part we just learned still needs a lot of attention; it's really new. It's not perfect yet, so we still have a lot to do," said Zarco.

Chang said that although the band has areas that need some work, she is optimistic for their next competition, which is tomorrow at Valley Christian High School. Next week, they will travel to Logan to compete one last time before WBA championships on Nov. 22 and 23 at Diablo Valley College. ♦

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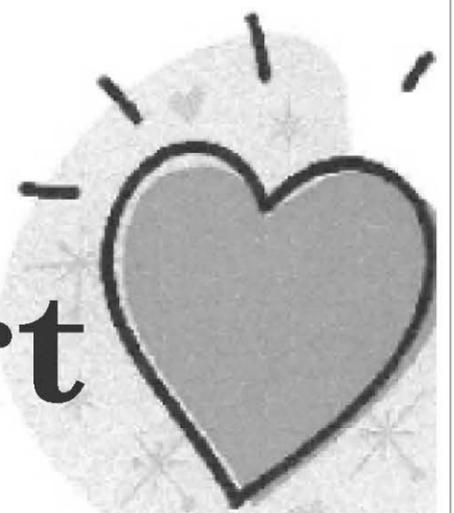
Post comments on <http://heartskate.blogspot.com>

Faculty advisor: Mr. Arnaldo Rodriguex

SHS Skating Club: pres: Catherine Wang, Class of 2009

May 2009

heart
skate





Theresa Yeh

English teacher Ken Nguyen talks in the Research and Writing Center on Oct. 30.

Renovated Research and Writing Center opened

by Vijay Menon

Walking into the school library this year, students will find a new and improved resource to take advantage of—the newly renovated Research and Writing Center. According to principal Jeff Anderson, the school and the Saratoga High Foundation, a parent group that helps support the school, split the approximate \$64,000 cost equally.

According to district application support analyst Julianne Yeaman, the old computers were “outdated” and crashed often. There are now 62 new Dell PCs running on Windows XP in the center.

Although the center has been around for approximately seven years, it has been scarcely used in the past few years due to the old computers, according to librarian Kevin Heyman. He expects that to change following the renovation.

“I expect there to be a dramatic increase in the use of this facility,” said Heyman.

While the old systems were frequently noted to crash or freeze, Heyman said the renovated center will be able to meet the rising demand for online research by students.

“One of the reasons that the old com-

puters were so ineffective was because they ran on thin client, which was an older technology that was pretty cumbersome to use,” said Heyman. “Now every student work station has its own brand new PC.”

Heyman said he expects teachers to bring in their classes and use the center more frequently than in past years.

“I’ve talked to some of the teachers about it and I know many of them are going to be bringing their classes in here,” said Heyman. “I expect as the school year goes on other teachers will also be bringing their students down here.”

Besides online research, the center will also have other

uses, according to Heyman.

“These computers are a lot more powerful than the ones we used before,” said Heyman. “There may even be a possibility of using them for limited graphics design or other art-related projects.”

The school hopes that the renovation will make the center a valuable utility.

“Teachers in the past said that it was very difficult to use these computers,” said Heyman. “Hopefully, with the renovation, I believe it will solve all those problems, everything will work, and it will be fast enough to meet the needs of the students.” ♦

“I expect there to be a dramatic increase in the use of this facility.”

—librarian Kevin Heyman

Mock trial roster finalized after intensive tryouts

by Anna Shen
and Abhi Venkataramana

After four days of waiting, 24 anxious students rushed to the door of English teacher Bill Peck’s room on Oct. 17 to learn if they had been selected as participants of the 2008 mock trial team.

Finalizing the team

Tryouts took place in Peck’s room on Oct. 13, with 24 students vying for 20 slots. Each student played the role of three different positions—witness, prosecution attorney and defense attorney—in order to simulate an actual mock trial.

“Many people signed up for mock trial this year, so tryouts were much more competitive than in past years,” said co-captain senior Rishi Taggarsi. “The tryouts were very cutthroat, but I know that the resulting team will be very well-qualified for the competition

in February.”

The Coaches

Besides Peck, who has four years of coaching experience, the team is coached by Dr. Hubert Roberts, a retired attorney who has been a part of the Saratoga High team since its formation, chose the new team members based on their performances in personifying assigned witnesses and their abilities to adapt to new situations quickly.

Based on students’ strengths, they were selected to take on the role of either a witness or a prosecution, defense or pre-trial attorney.

Peck is looking forward to a successful year based on the tryouts.

“I definitely saw a lot of raw talent,” said Peck. “This season looks really promising.”

2008 Mock Trial Case

This year’s case is an arson trial in-

Policy causes lack of TAs, more work for teachers

by Elizabeth Lee
and Theresa Yeh

Last year, the administration implemented a new policy that took away the applied arts credit for being an office aide (OA) or teacher’s aide (TA).

Now, in order obtain these credits, students must enroll in a class that falls under the applied arts category and in addition has a career element to it. For this reason, the number of TAs and OAs has steadily decreased since last year, going from 143 students to an all-time low of 94 students, according to assistant principal Brian Safine.

In previous years, being a TA or OA was a popular way to fulfill the requirements; however, with the change in policy, students are now forced to find alternative ways to receive the same credits. One department hit hard by the new policy is the science department.

“It has been more difficult, particularly as a lab science teacher, because we have used TAs for 15 years here,” said earth science and biology teacher Lisa Cochrum, “and I’m not even sure I realized what a benefit TAs were until the number decreased.”

In previous years, the science teachers have used a system of sharing TAs when they needed to set up a lab or to move equipment.

According to Cochrum, this year the science department is continuing this tradition of sending TAs to neighboring teachers, but fewer TAs have made this hard.

On the other hand, some teachers have not been affected by the new

policy.

“I haven’t been impacted that much since I really don’t know how to use TAs that well. I have one and that’s sufficient,” said physics and business teacher Kirk Davis.

Safine said the heart of the issue lies within the California Education Code, which decrees that the TA and OA positions are not career-oriented courses and therefore cannot be counted for applied arts credits. The law does not state specifically that TAs and OAs should not receive credit, but it has a set of standards that schools must abide by.

Last year, the administration determined that being a TA or OA was not appropriate as an applied arts course and therefore should not earn credit.

According to Safine, “this rule has been up since the beginning of public education” and it is just a tradition that is being passed down.

For example, Los Gatos High School has never given its students credit for being TAs or OAs.

Instead of being TAs, it has become increasingly popular for students to take only five or six periods, which allows them to either sleep in on some mornings or go home early when others have a seventh period.

Thus, many teachers feel that without proper incentive, the problem of the lack of TAs and OAs may persist a long time before more students take up those positions again.

“I think we’re managing and I think we’re going to figure it out, but it has been more complicated than it has been in previous years,” said Cochrum. ♦

The number of TAs and OAs has decreased from 143 students last year to 94 this year.

TOGATALKS

How did the T.A. policy affect you?



senior Michael Huang

[Being a TA] is disappointing, because I do a lot of work.

The incentive isn’t as real anymore. You have to really like the teacher to [be a TA].



senior Farid Jiandani

Labs require so much setup, [so] I depend heavily on my TAs.



teacher Kathy Chang

TRIAL ROSTER

Prosecution Attorneys: Rishi Taggarsi, Saniha Shankar and Shannon Galvin

Defense Attorneys: Varun Parmar, Kavya Nagarajan, Flora Chang and Lisa Chang

Pre-trial Attorneys: Vijay Menon and Navneet Ramesh

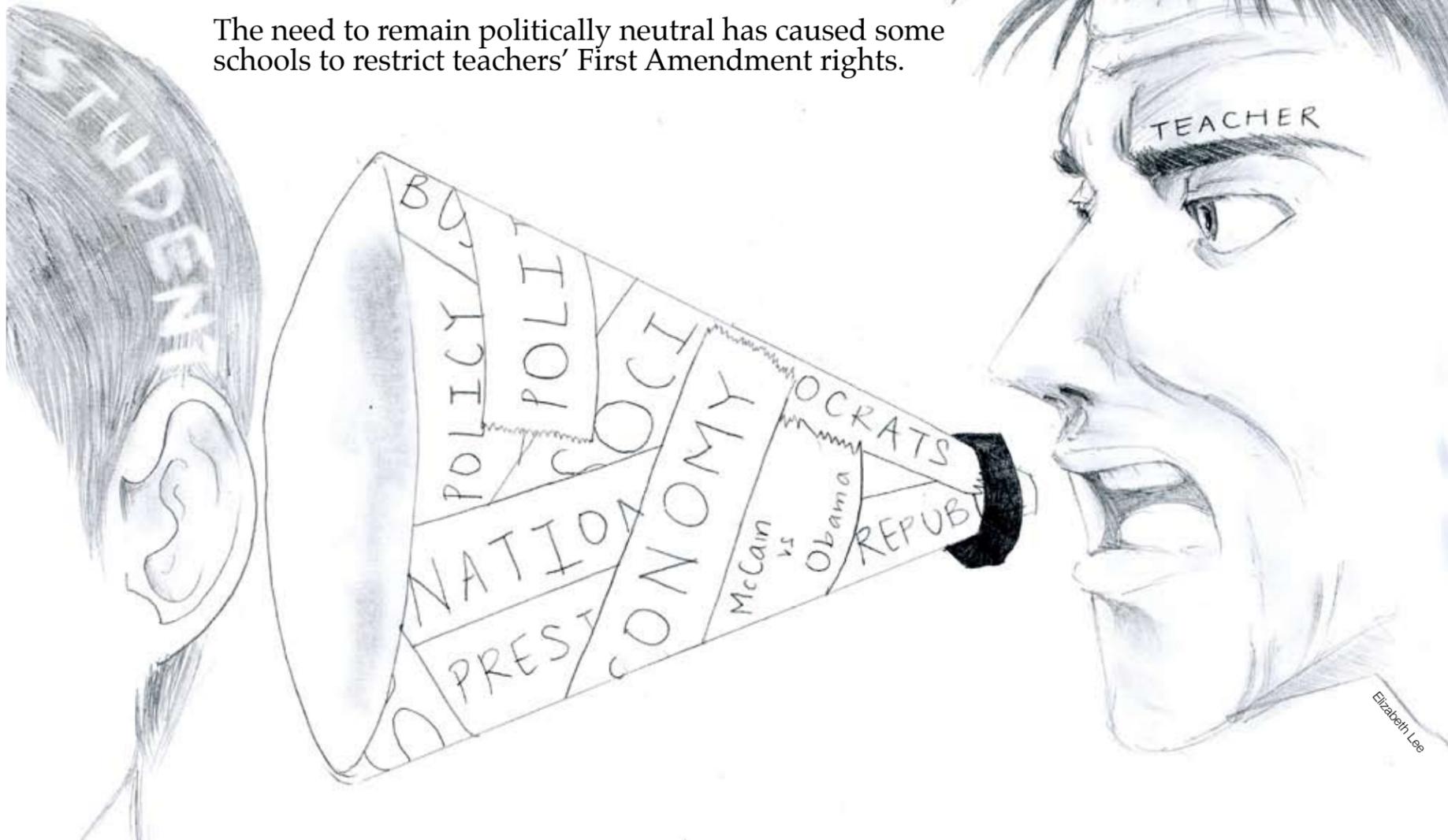
Witnesses: Nikil Balakrishnan, Guy Quanrud, Tim Tsai, Derrick Chen, Alex Song, Vance Lindholm, Soorya Rangan, Tim Rollinson and Abhishek Venkataramana

Bailiff: Jason Yoon

Clerk: Nandini Ruparel

Political turmoil

The need to remain politically neutral has caused some schools to restrict teachers' First Amendment rights.



Schools face tough choices during political season

by Ren Norris

Politics and the classroom have always been controversial, and this year is no exception: The First Amendment Center Online said that in New York City, the United Federation of Teachers headed by Randi Weingarten accused the city of oppressing teachers' political views by banning Obama and McCain buttons in school.

At the University of Oklahoma, a letter of protest was sent after staff and students were directed not to use university e-mail to support or oppose a candidate.

There was also an uprising at the University of Illinois after an Obama rally was held, and the school sent an official statement that banned staff from participating in political activities on campus. All of these incidents challenge the students' and staff's First Amendment rights.

People have the right of expression

Freedom of speech: a right guaran-

teed to every citizen, allowing people to express their religion, protest, criticize the government and even publish their opinions. This freedom is exercised in stating political views as well. Being a teacher shouldn't mean having to be totally neutral while on campus.

Although the schools in New York, Oklahoma and Illinois were only trying to maintain a politically neutral and educational environment for their students, it is still unfair that teachers and administrators cannot wear things such as simple buttons and exercise their right to express opinions.

Many people say that teachers can persuade students into supporting one political party by showing their own beliefs. However, there is a big difference between teachers expressing their own opinions and telling pupils that they have to vote for a candidate.

Weingarten was correct when she stated in the First Amendment Center that "students can only benefit from be-

ing exposed to and engaged in a dialogue about current events, civic responsibilities and the political process." In a classroom, students must learn about what is happening now in their government and use the information presented to them by teachers in order to form opinions and views. Teachers wearing buttons is not a strong enough statement to sway students in any given political direction.

Authorities' opinions can be harmful

But in the classroom, teachers can take their opinions too far. If a teacher is a fervent supporter of one political side, students will feel silenced, intimidated and afraid to share their views. Since the teacher is the authority figure, and not to mention the person who is giving out grades for the class, students could be afraid to state their own views and oppose the teacher.

The point of classes such as history or government is to allow students to form their own opinions about government,

and having a teacher who only states their own views could prohibit students from choosing their own side.

Finding middle ground

In order to give the best education for students, teachers need to find the balance between giving students samples of their political ideas, via the First Amendment, and going overboard and being true advocates.

Social studies teacher Kirk Abe says he tries to keep that balance in mind.

"Teachers shouldn't influence students on political ideas because of their own opinion," said Abe. "I try to stay in the middle and state both sides, even if I don't believe in them personally."

Even so, the occasional presence of an Obama or McCain button on a teacher's shirt shouldn't be a big deal.

Whether it's happening in New York City or here, teachers should be able to show their political views and use their First Amendment rights. ♦

OFFICIALS' KIDS NOT BATTLEFIELD CELEBRITIES

by Alex Sclavos

War between nations takes a toll on all civilians, but it most directly affects the families of soldiers who are fighting in the war. These soldiers are voluntarily—when there is no draft—risking their lives for their countries every day without hesitation. With the current shortage of troops, it is important for the military to use every man or woman they have to fight, and that includes the children of politicians.

Children of government officials who are serving in the armed forces should not be exempt from the horrors of war because their parents hold an important office nor should they be offered easier posts or safer deployments.

In the case of the country ever reverting back to a draft, it would be fair to say that

these children should not be the only ones who do not have to participate, when the rest of the country is forced to.

If these officials are prepared to send countless citizens into the war and make life-threatening decisions for them, they should be prepared to send their own family members who are serving into the exact same situations.

Unfortunately, though there are many people in government who are for the war, less than a handful of government officials are willing to send their own children into battle.

Vice-Presidential candidates Sen. Joseph Biden and Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin both have children who are serving in

the Army. Presidential candidate John McCain has a son in the Marine Corps, who is subject to deployment to Iraq at any time. These children have decided on their own to show their patriotism for the

United States, and with that should be allowed to go and do their part, rather than be held at desk jobs because of their prominent status.

Controversy that has recently been aroused concerning government

officials' children in Iraq is that they are a target and are putting the rest of their battalion in more danger than if they were not serving in battle at all.

This is blown out of proportion by the press; if they did not constantly write about these high profile children serving

in Iraq, the dangers would be greatly reduced.

For example, when Prince Harry served in Afghanistan, the press reported the news, and his troop had to worry more about protecting him than fighting for the cause. Believing that children of prominent government officials mean more to the United States because of their parents is not a fair judgment.

Civilians believe that if a government official's child were in the war, the leader would not be able to focus on helping the nation because they would constantly be worried about their son or daughter on the front lines. This runs contrary to our most basic belief: that everyone in the United States is created equal.

Until all people serve equally, we won't be able to truly say this country is based on equality. ♦

Less than a handful of government officials are willing to send their own children into battle.

Younger drinking age would lower teen death rates

by Alex Sclavos

157 deaths for people ages 18-23 in six years. This statistic, as reported by the *New York Times*, shows the grim reality of binge drinking in America. College students here often find that while alcohol is a part of school culture and surrounds them from their freshman year, national laws prevent them from drinking until they are 21.

This often results in teens drinking far more to excess, leading to problems from drunken driving to alcohol poisoning.

In contrast, teenagers in Europe are allowed to experience their first taste of alcohol alongside their parents, either at family dinners or restaurants as drinking ages in Europe are usually 16 or 18 and are rarely enforced within the family.

This more relaxed approach appears to be working: The concept of teens secretly drinking or binge drinking to get drunk is foreign to most European youth.

It is this different approach, according to the *Times*, that 123 college presi-

dents across the nation appear to be considering as they appeal via petition for a decrease in the legal drinking age. By allowing students to drink at 18, college officials hope to lower the use of fake ID cards and the intensity surrounding binge drinking at

many universities.

They hope students will enter college with a healthier view of alcohol and a better knowledge of their limits. They believe this will stop students from viewing drinking as a forbidden pleasure; instead, it will simply become a normal yet controlled part of college life.

Many are in support of this controversial move. The current War on Terror throws into light a paradox of American government: despite the fact that they may fight for their country, adults under the age of 21 are still not allowed to drink. Other than drinking, turning 18 means entering adulthood.

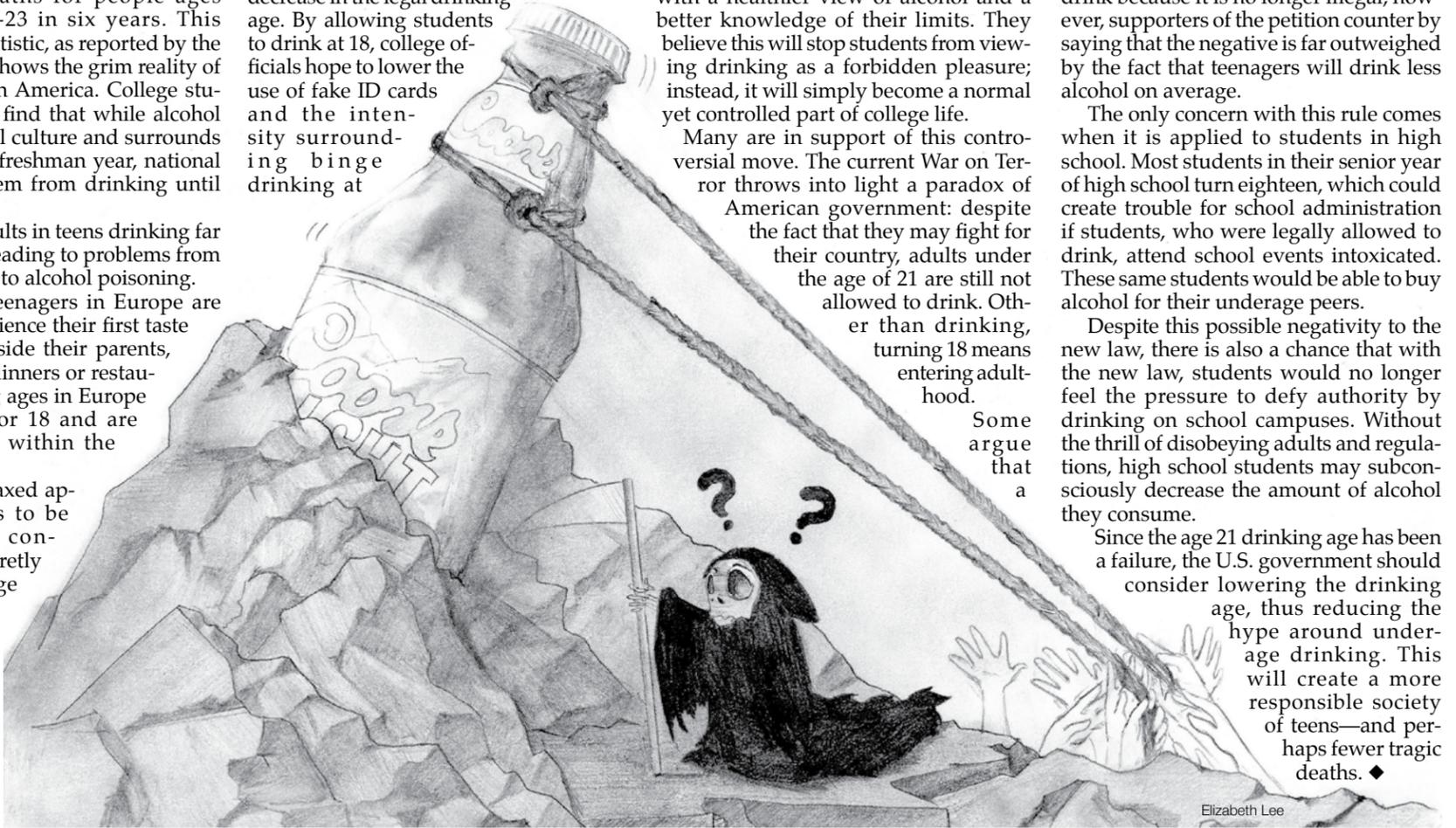
Some argue that a

lower drinking age will cause an increase in the percent of 18 to 20-year-olds who drink because it is no longer illegal; however, supporters of the petition counter by saying that the negative is far outweighed by the fact that teenagers will drink less alcohol on average.

The only concern with this rule comes when it is applied to students in high school. Most students in their senior year of high school turn eighteen, which could create trouble for school administration if students, who were legally allowed to drink, attend school events intoxicated. These same students would be able to buy alcohol for their underage peers.

Despite this possible negativity to the new law, there is also a chance that with the new law, students would no longer feel the pressure to defy authority by drinking on school campuses. Without the thrill of disobeying adults and regulations, high school students may subconsciously decrease the amount of alcohol they consume.

Since the age 21 drinking age has been a failure, the U.S. government should consider lowering the drinking age, thus reducing the hype around underage drinking. This will create a more responsible society of teens—and perhaps fewer tragic deaths. ♦



Parents raise pointless concerns about freaking

Battle to curb influences of popular culture bound to fail; drinking problem deserves greater attention

After the recent Homecoming dance, some parent chaperones expressed outrage at the manner in which students chose to dance, a form commonly known as "freaking." This is a sexually suggestive form of dancing. While this style of dancing may be offensive to parents, they should understand that there is no way to change teen culture.

Inappropriate dancing is everywhere. It is a huge part of mainstream entertainment and is prevalent on TV through music videos on channels like MTV and VH1. When teens are influenced so strongly by different forms of media, parents can hardly be surprised at dances when their children emulate what they see on TV.

Trying to stop a certain kind of dancing may give parents peace of mind, but it will have negative effects for the

school. If the administration tries too hard to regulate what students can and cannot do when dancing, attendance at school events will plummet.

Enforcing unrealistic rules at dances will only further harm the poor state of school spirit. There is no way to change an entire generation's culture, so parents should adopt another method instead: if you don't want to see how students dance, don't come to the dances.

The amount of concern expressed over a simple type of dancing comes from the fact that Saratoga is a more sheltered community, a term that not only applies to students, but to their

parents as well.

Other public schools located in lower income areas have dancing that is far more provocative than what parents deem inappropriate at Saratoga High dances.

Dancing at SHS is worse only in comparison to traditionally stricter private schools. The measures these schools take to keep their dances are understandable, because many parents send their children to private schools for the wholesome, religious values they offer.

Parents who wish for the same restraint at Saratoga High should not expect it: Saratoga is a public school and

cannot be held to the same standard that private schools are able to maintain for dances.

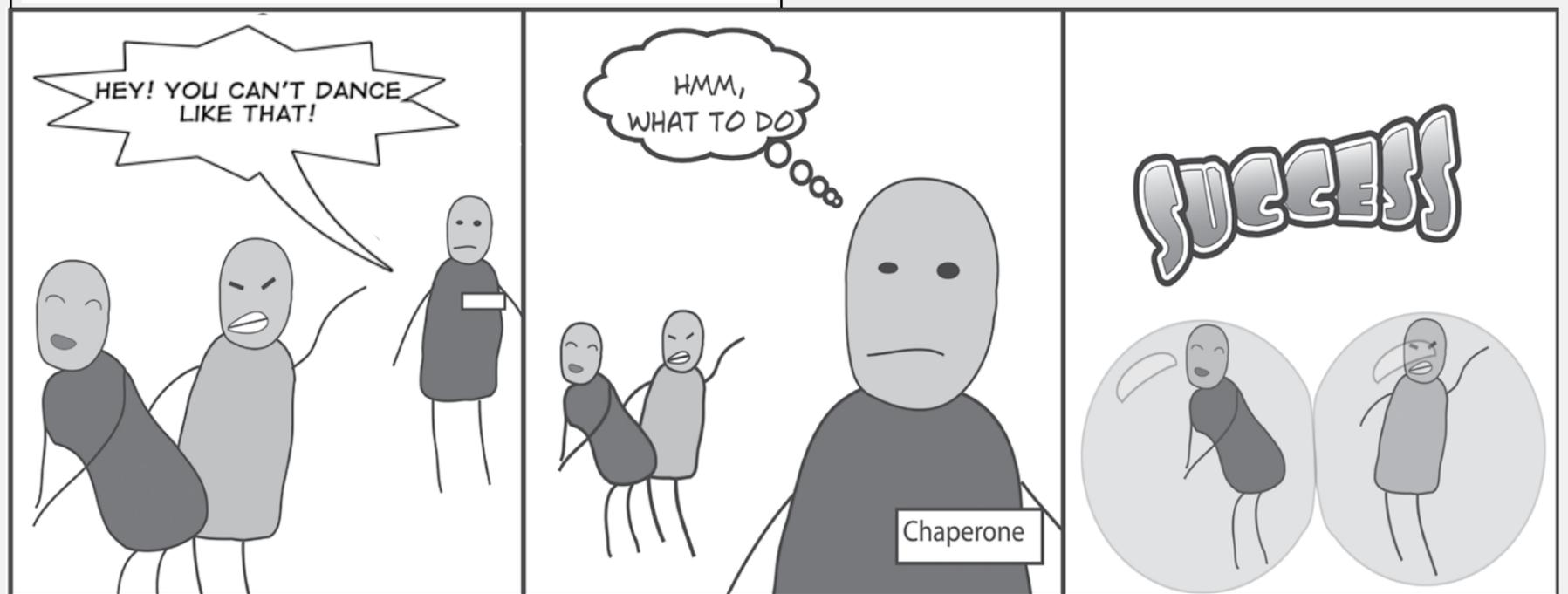
Overprotective parents need to realize that inappropriate dancing is not the most serious problem at Saratoga. The administration's time would be better spent focusing on more important problems, such as eliminating drinking at school functions.

If the administration continues to enforce a no alcohol policy at dances, parents should be content that their children are able to have fun in a safe, monitored environment.

In comparison to the more serious problems that the administration is forced to deal with, inappropriate dancing should not be a priority, because it really isn't harming anyone, and it is an unstoppable part of modern teen culture. ♦

STAFF EDITORIAL
Opinion of *The Falcon*
editorial board

Mr. Chaperone comes to the rescue! | by Alex Song



The Saratoga Falcon

STAFF POLICY

The Saratoga Falcon is published five times per semester by the Advanced Journalism classes of Saratoga High School, 20300 Herriman Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070.

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

MISSION STATEMENT

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

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The Saratoga Falcon welcomes all signed letters of opinion, which are subject to editing for length, accuracy and grammar. Please send them to editor@saratogafalcon.org. For ad information, phone (408) 867-3411, ext. 222.

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Solution to U.S math shortcomings: emphasis on critical thinking skills

by Albert Gu

Numerous studies done over the past few years have shown that the United States is significantly lagging behind other countries in math throughout grades 7-12.

The U.S. was ranked 24th out of 29 countries in a study of world's wealthiest countries regarding the math literacy of 15-year-olds. How can it be that the richest country in the world, a society that places intense pressures on its children to be educated, is being overtaken by other countries in math?

The biggest problems hindering the quality of math education here are American culture and our education system. In American society, math is something that only the very top students do.

Students are less motivated to succeed mathematically because of the low respect it receives culturally. This common but incorrect perception is reflected in the way math is taught in elementary, middle and even high schools.

Math classes throughout middle and high school do not teach students how to apply deeper concepts. They mainly involve the memorization of techniques and formulas.

Teachers are primarily concerned with performance on tests rather than with students' mathematical development and creativity.

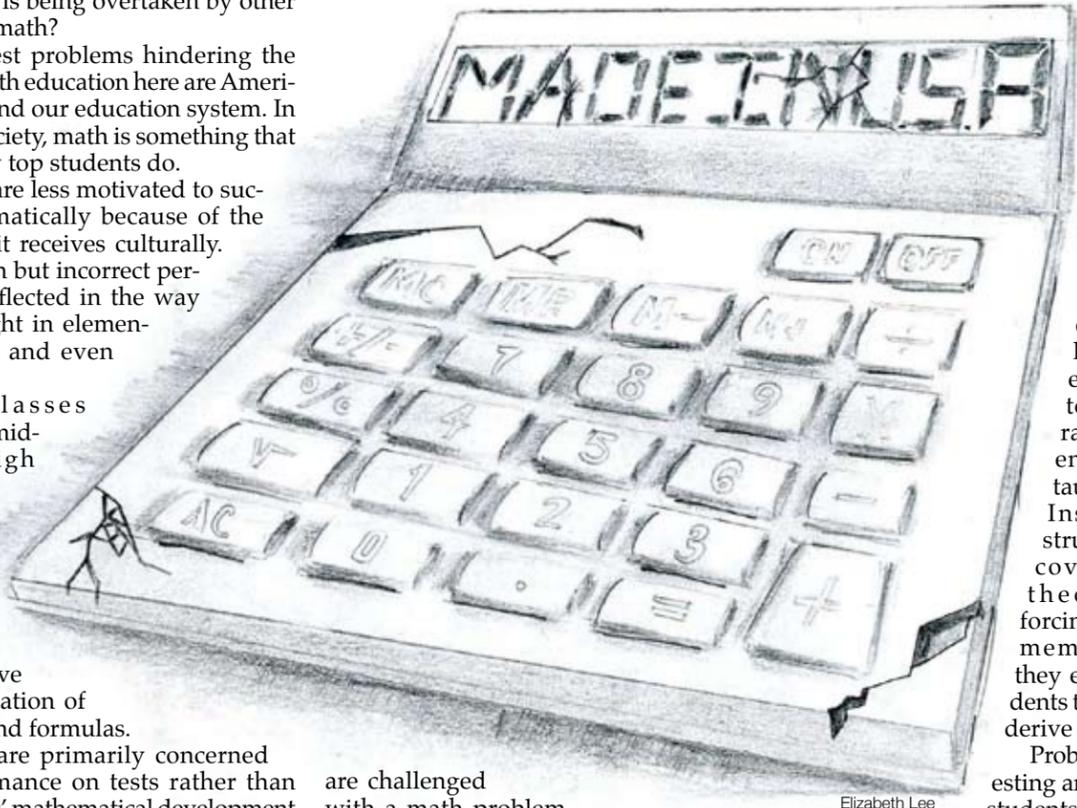
As a result, difficult problems become foreign and unsolvable unless the teacher gives a direct solution for students to follow. This method of presenting detailed answers to students leads to a deficiency of problem-solving skills and creative thinking.

Classes that follow this format are not only uninteresting for students but also foster a strong dislike for math. Students who did not understand the material in the first place are unable to improve, and

those who understand the material complain that the class is nothing but busy-work. This dislike has caused a decline in student effort to pursue math outside of school, lessening the chances for success in related fields.

This issue persists even at strongly academic institutions like Saratoga High. At first glance, we seem better off; students are accelerated many levels higher than the state and national requirements and still seem to understand the material.

However, when students at Saratoga



Elizabeth Lee

are challenged with a math problem that requires more logic than memorization, even students who have advanced as far as calculus are often unsure of how to proceed.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way for Saratoga High, or any other school, to solve these issues. In order to correct these flaws in the mathematical education, a change in the education system is necessary.

Instead of addressing a problem rooted at the core of the education system by making only minimal changes, the United

States should attempt to create new programs that help build deeper problem-solving abilities earlier.

One of these solutions is easy. In China, schools start kids in preparing for rigorous math competitions in kindergarten. Without going to such extremes, America can still encourage younger children to start learning math by including creative logic puzzles in the kindergarten and elementary school math curriculum. Similar to how starting musical instruments early helps children development better musical

abilities, this will help students develop a stronger base of logic and creative problem-solving skills.

At math camps and extracurricular math classes I've gone to, classes are radically different from those taught at school. Instead of instructors rapidly covering many theorems and forcing students to memorize them, they encourage students to learn how to derive them.

Problems are interesting and varied, and students actually enjoy trying to solve them instead of treating them as grueling work.

Middle and high school classes can follow this example and start including more creative problem-solving sessions rather than monotonous lectures and identical problems day after day.

By engaging students more actively, educators will help students to think more positively about math. If the United States wants to begin churning out top students again, it needs to reform its education system. And that begins with math. ♦

College website gives honest reviews

Unigo.com offers unbiased information about colleges for prospective students

by Aditi Jayaraman

Forget heavy guidebooks, biased pamphlets and costly travels around the nation. If you want a completely free database of documents, reviews and videos on any of the nation's top 225 colleges, merely click a button and check out Unigo.com. Unigo.com is the brainchild of Jordan Goldman.

Unigo.com is a student-driven site that targets high school students. It provides candid insight from college students about their experiences at their respective universities.

High school students can create profiles that allow them to interact with other high school students and college students.

To add to its student-run credibility, the site has completely avoided procuring information directly from colleges through often biased pamphlets.

Through discerning articles on various aspects of a university such as college life, academics, ratings, writing samples and statistics, Unigo gives perspectives you might not get elsewhere. However, the site also benefits college

students, in that they have the ability to learn more about their own college and explore its different facets.

Studies show that nearly a third of today's college freshmen are unhappy with the schools they are attending and wish to transfer, perhaps because of misleading information they must have received about the college before enrolling.

On the other hand, because the information posted on Unigo.com is posted by students, it may be partial to their own school or include negative comments about rival colleges.

The benefits of this system far outweigh the risks. Since there are so many posts, a few biased pieces of information will not make a difference.

Students check out Unigo.com not to view a college's academic rankings, but rather to get more subjective impressions from college students.

The forum also offers reviews from students who are categorized by their interests; in other words, students can

search Unigo for more information about a college from the perspective of a student with similar interests as their own, thereby giving a more accurate representation of the kind of experience a student would have at that specific college. Another benefit

of Unigo.com is that it provides students the ability to fully analyze a school, through resources and links like campus tour videos, without forcing them to leave their homes.

In this respect, Unigo is convenient, simple and cheap to use.

As of now, colleges seem to be indifferent about new student-driven sites like Unigo.com. Authorities say that because parents recognize big names like "The Princeton Review" and turn to this class of resources before looking into the relatively new and small college guides, colleges feel no threat. Regardless, student-driven sites, like Unigo.com, are continuously gaining greater student followings.

Even now, Unigo.com is a useful resource for college-bound students. ♦

Unigo.com provides students with the ability to analyze schools through online resources.

Bush's North Korean deal will bring trouble

by Gautham Ganesan

With the Bush administration coming to a merciful close Jan. 20, one would envision a smooth ride out of the tunnel of decrepit financial policies, steady decline in individual liberties and unnecessary war that has encapsulated the last eight morbid years.

But alas, the engine has sputtered one last time as, in one of his final acts as commander-in-chief, Bush has feebly strung together a deal with North Korea that appears shortsighted at best and significantly detrimental to American efforts in that region at worst.

Given the President's track record, the latter seems more likely.

The crux of the deal is that the United States will agree to shamelessly strike off North Korea from a comprehensive list of official state sponsors of terrorism, the motive for which ostensibly being the attempted salvation of a failing pact precluding North Korean nuclear activity.

For America to willingly consider an unstable dictatorial regime currently harboring an unknown quantity of nuclear weapons no longer a legitimate terrorist threat is unfathomable.

The stupidity of the move is further exacerbated by North Korea's active attempts to try and shield their nuclear program from international inspectors.

Bush himself has decried the nation as a prominent member of the "axis of evil," yet is now bending far too easily to North Korea in a painfully transparent attempt to redeem some semblance of foreign policy credibility.

The deal has elicited a variety of criticism, most notably from presidential

nominee and Sen. John McCain, who is rightfully skeptical of whether or not the North Koreans will carry out their alleged plans to denuclearize.

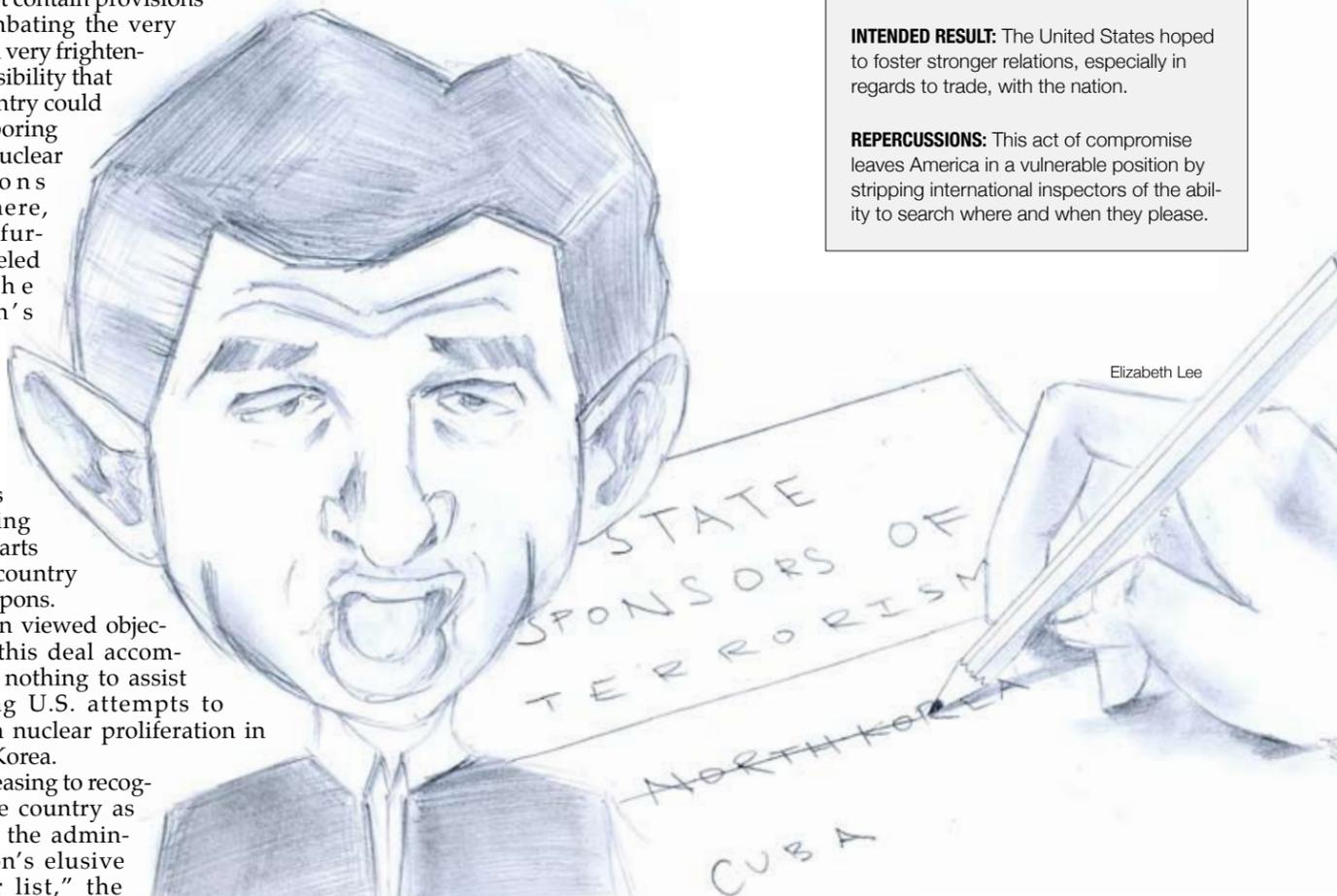
While the deal stipulates that American inspectors are entitled to examine a specific nuclear compound in Yongbyon, it does not contain provisions for combating the very real and very frightening possibility that the country could be harboring other nuclear weapons elsewhere, a fear further fueled by the nation's vehement resistance to inspectors patrolling other parts of the country for weapons.

When viewed objectively, this deal accomplishes nothing to assist ongoing U.S. attempts to staunch nuclear proliferation in North Korea.

In ceasing to recognize the country as part of the administration's elusive "terror list," the

deal in fact encourages North Korea to further its illicit endeavors.

Of course, for a regime that has been wrought with amountable irresponsible foreign policy blunders, this counterproductive measure serves as a fitting swan song. ♦



THE BIG IDEA | NORTH KOREA

ACTION: Bush administration removed North Korea from state sponsored terrorism list, implemented more lenient nuclear program inspection policies.

INTENDED RESULT: The United States hoped to foster stronger relations, especially in regards to trade, with the nation.

REPERCUSSIONS: This act of compromise leaves America in a vulnerable position by stripping international inspectors of the ability to search where and when they please.

UPS & DOWNS

↓ **The election**
Results could not be printed due to publication deadlines

↔ **Veteran's Day**
Finally, a day off... on a Tuesday.

↑ **Winter Ball**
Bids: \$15, Heels: \$50, Spilling chocolate on your brand new outfit: priceless

↔ **Thanksgiving**
Remember to bring your SAT book to family functions, juniors.

↓ **Midterms on Halloween**
Trick or treat, here's your F!

—by Dorey Schranz

Plan to de-emphasize SATs reduces stress

by Maggie Lin

As high school students enter their junior year, dread of late nights filled with SAT practice exams is a primary concern.

With a recent announcement by colleges across America, however, relief from this source of stress may be on the horizon.

A year-long study led by the dean of admissions and financial aid at Harvard has concluded that the reasoning test is not an accurate depiction of student ability. Harvard, along with other universities, has announced that they plan to begin placing less emphasis on standardized testing when reviewing applications.

This decision was made after studies released by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) stated that SAT reasoning and ACT scores do not determine student success in college.

Proof that the NACAC has diagnosed the effectiveness of standardized testing can be seen at Saratoga High.

Students with strong SAT and ACT scores do not always have grades that reflect the same high academic standard. In the same way, students who perform badly on standardized tests may have strong grades.

These inaccurate results at Saratoga High may be attributed to the test prep

classes all over the Bay Area. Students who attend SAT classes are accustomed to the test and learn ways to "beat" the SAT.

In contrast, students who do not take practice exams or classes before sometimes perform poorly on the SAT Reasoning exam, a test that is heavily weighted when considering college applications.

The SAT reasoning test is also a poor gauge of ability, because it does not align with the state standards that teachers are required to teach.

SAT II subject tests focus on specific subjects and tests in detail, presenting a more accurate view of a student's knowledge.

With less emphasis placed on the SAT, students will also have more time to focus on their classes.

In placing more importance on school grades, colleges will help students learn study habits before college, something that the SAT does not achieve.

Students can use time they would have spent studying for the exam to engage in extracurricular activities.

Minimizing the importance of the SAT is just a step ahead of making it optional.

With less emphasis on the reasoning test, students will be able to pursue their passions and enjoy their last two years of high school. ♦

SHS students gain edge with SAT reasoning test

by Brandon Yang

Upperclassmen at Saratoga High often complain about the stress associated with the SAT and ACT. Some universities have recently announced that they are placing less importance on these tests for admission or not requiring students to take either test at all.

The disappearance of these tests would bring joy to all students who have yet to take them.

However, SHS students do not realize the consequences if such changes were to occur; although it seems

appealing, the removal is not beneficial.

This change appears to benefit high school students, but will only bring problems to both colleges and the students applying.

The removal of these tests will also create issues at schools across the nation. Not only will the lightening of SAT requirements result with a dramatic increase in applicants, but it will also give colleges less to compare among prospective students.

Currently, the SAT is given so much weight, because it is standard—no one can complain that they had a tougher test, resulting in a lower score.

Eliminating the importance of the SAT

in the admissions process simply places more weight on a student's GPA, which is not a standardized measurement.

This is especially troublesome, because some schools have more difficult classes than others, making it hard to compare GPAs of two top students from different schools.

This will create trouble for applicants from rigorous schools, including SHS, where high grades in classes are harder to obtain.

Course rigor, resulting from the high performance level of students at Saratoga, is significantly more difficult than at other high schools across America, resulting in lower GPAs by comparison.

Without the SAT, a crucial element for students to prove their learning and intelligence, the percentage of Saratoga High students who are likely to attend a highly competitive college may significantly decrease.

Standardized tests have always given students here equal opportunity to exhibit their abilities, despite the different teachers who teach the different courses.

With the removal of the importance given to these tests, Saratoga students will be less distinctive when applying to colleges.

Though students may wish to be free of these stressful exams, many of them will not benefit from this when they apply to college. ♦

PRO CON

C⁶₁₂ CARBON FOOTPRINTS

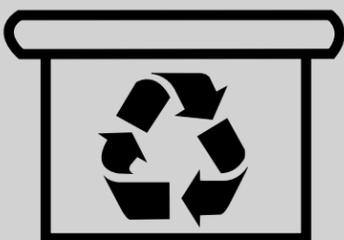
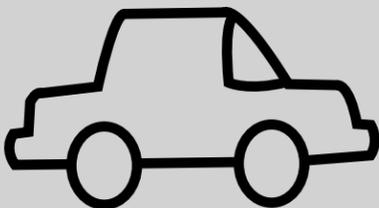
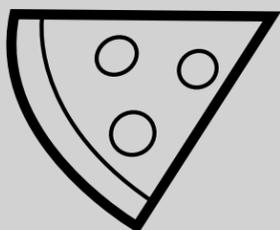
These three students were brave enough to see their effect on our environment. See how your carbon footprint compares to theirs at carbonfootprints.com



Erica Ye

Vishal Goel

Shea Sullivan



Flights per year: 1-2

Number of people in house: 8

Electricity Bill: \$150

Meat consumption: Fish and white meat

Eating habits: Buys food grown closer to home and grows own food

Number of cars: 3

Annual Mileage: 50 miles

Manufacturer: Toyota

Shopping habits: Only buys second-hand/ buys new clothes when needed

Recycling: Most waste is recycled

Packaging: Purchases things with very little packaging

Flights per year: 1-2

Number of people in house: 4

Electricity Bill: \$500-900

Meat consumption: Vegetarian

Eating habits: Only buys in-season food at stores closer to home

Number of cars: 3

Annual Mileage: 16,600 miles

Manufacturer: Dodge Caravan

Shopping habits: Buys new clothes when needed

Recycling: Most waste is recycled

Packaging: Purchases things with very little packaging

Flights per year: 5

Number of people in house: 3

Electricity Bill: \$900

Meat consumption: Red/white meat.

Eating habits: Doesn't pay attention to where foods are from

Number of cars: 7

Annual Mileage: 25,000 miles

Manufacturer: Volvo SUV

Shopping habits: Buys new clothes when needed

Recycling: Everything is recycled

Packaging: Purchases things with very little packaging

total

3.2 tonnes

It is safe to say that Erika Ye is extremely energy efficient. Although her average is well above the world target, it pales in comparison to the country average. Her secret? She grows some of her own food in a family garden, and she uses her car for only 50 miles a year.

10.7 tonnes

In comparison to our county average, Vishal Goel is very green by driving less often and eating organic food, but when it comes to the world target and world average he is well above them. Despite his environmentally conscious lifestyle, there is room for improvement.

23.4 tonnes

Shea Sullivan is above both the country and world average. She could be working to reduce her effect on the ozone layer by decreasing the amount of time she spends in the car and the number of trips she takes.

Hearts,
stars and
horseshoes!

Clovers and
blue moons!

Everyone can use a little luck now and then. These students find comfort in depending on superstitions and good luck charms.



Finding solace in three lucky charms



Alicia Lee
Peek-A-Boo

Throw a penny overboard while traveling on sea? Bon voyage. Toss a penny over the left shoulder and into a wishing well? Best wishes. Find a heads-up penny? Mazal tov! When pennies come to mind, a wave of lucky air rises and floats about. Rather than simply being the loose change found at the bottom of a purse or scattered around the car floor, I think pennies can bring faith and hope for chances. Because pennies are so devalued, the person picking a penny off the ground doesn't seek material gain over other benefits, making them luckier than ever. It's the magic of believing in their luck that makes everything a little bit more fun in my life.

Ever since watching the episode of *Even Stevens* in which Louis finds a lucky penny on the ground, I knew I wanted one as well. But I knew stumbling upon a lonely penny on the asphalt would be difficult, so instead, I now believe in carrying a penny minted in my birth year in my left pocket every single day. After reading about it in a magazine during the spring of sophomore year, my search for a

1992 penny began.

The idea of a lucky penny came on time, since I was overwhelmed with school. When the day of finding that one shiny penny in a pile of coins came about, dreams of getting an A on a chemistry test or an extra bag of chips from the vending machine seemed in much closer reach than they had been before. As cheesy as it sounds, I began to believe in my penny's luck.

But pennies just are not enough sometimes. Whenever I lack confidence about something that happened that day, I refer to another lucky charm.

Simply known as "The Cat," a gold keychain in the shape of a cat, it provides me with answers in four simple replies like a magic 8-ball: no chance, small chance, medium chance and big chance.

Once, upon asking it whether I would finish my *Othello* essay before 4 a.m. the day it was due, it replied with big chance. Just the thought in the back of my mind that I would finish the rough draft and still end up with time for two measly hours of sleep before school pushed me to write more. To my luck, I finished it exactly three minutes before 4 a.m. that Monday morning.

It might be childish to still believe in good luck charms, but it's better than not believing in anything. It's almost as if these charms are powers from above, guiding my life towards the better. Besides, without them, I'd be just another paranoid junior. ♦



Albert Gu



Amanda Yi

Senior Chris Chung follows a specific schedule before every one of his soccer games in hopes that it will provide him with good luck.

Midfielder's rituals ensure good game

by Lyka Sethi

It's the day of a season-defining soccer game and senior center midfielder Chris Chung is pumped and ready to get started on his routine pre-game rituals.

He begins his preparation the night before by sleeping with his window open to relax and avoid anxiety. The next day, he tapes his right finger despite a lack of injury.

"Taping my finger has become a habit because I jammed it once and now I just feel comfortable having it taped," said Chung.

Chung has a set schedule for everything he does on game day.

"If I don't do everything right, I feel like I'm missing something," said Chung.

Four hours before the game, Chung eats pasta with meat sauce and two hours later he drinks two bottles of water. He always puts his right shoe on first and avoids shaving on game days.

"When I don't shave it makes me feel more intimidating to the other team," said Chung. "It gives me a more

grizzly appearance, and since there aren't many girls there, why shave?"

According to Chung, one key to success is self-confidence.

"One of the key things I do before the game is stare at myself in the mirror for a really long time," he said. "I just think of everything I'm capable of doing, and it psyches me up."

However, Chung's good luck charms go beyond personal idiosyncrasies.

The most important thing he does before a game is to call his grandparents and give his mom a hug, especially when he leaves for a game that's out of town.

"Getting good luck wishes from my parents and grandparents is really important. If I don't talk to them, I feel unworthy of playing," said Chung.

Although Chung does not rely on his good luck rituals for his performance at soccer games, he truly believes that they help him play harder.

"I have to eat certain foods so I can be properly energized," said Chung, "but the other stuff is just out of habit and for good luck. It makes me feel more comfortable, balanced and lucky." ♦

Charms

Pots of gold
and
rainbows...

...and me
red balloons!

Students look to Buddha for luck

by Maggie Lin

In need of some luck? Look no further than sophomore Aditya Dev's locker.

Dev and fellow sophomores Chris Chung and Kevin Darchuk rub their lucky Buddha idol "Charleston" regularly before tests. Rubbing this plastic idol was inspired from an episode on the TV show "Scrubs" in which the janitor carries around a Buddha for luck.

"It started as a joke. We started last year towards the end of the year," said Chung. "Aditya got it as a joke for a present, and he decided to name it Charleston."

Taking the fun even further, Dev made a spot in his locker for Charleston. Darchuk and Dev took the idol to tests.

"Last year we used to keep it on this tiny swing that we made in my lock-

er and we used to keep it on our desks during tests," said Dev.

Rubbing the Buddha before tests and quizzes grew into a tradition when various

successes proved that the Buddha was lucky.

"Aditya and Kevin rubbed it one day before a Bio test and ac-

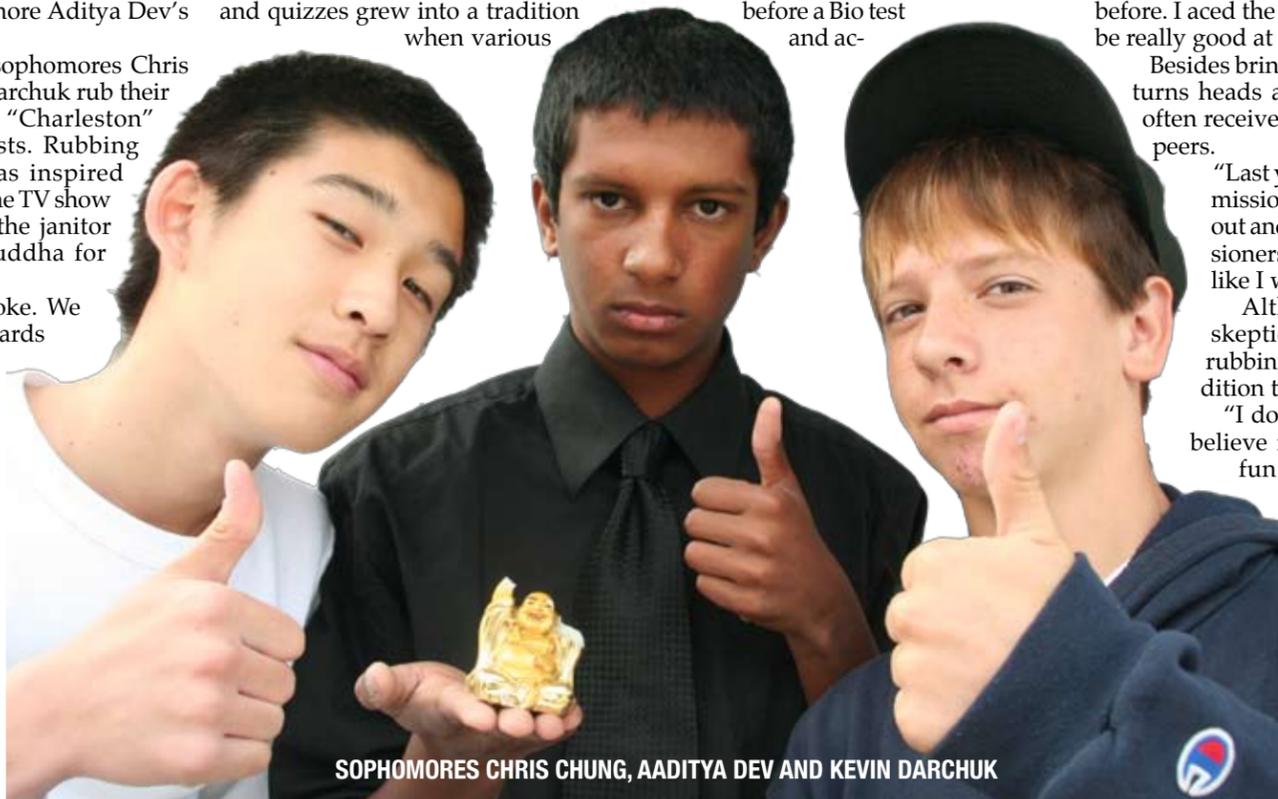
tually did well," Chung said. "I did it once right before a reading quiz when I forgot to read the chapter the night before. I aced the quiz, but I might just be really good at guessing."

Besides bringing luck, their ritual turns heads as well. The Buddha often received strange looks from peers.

"Last year for the rally commission interview I took it out and all the rally commissioners were looking at me like I was crazy," said Dev.

Although the boys are skeptical of its good luck, rubbing the Buddha is a tradition they have fun with.

"I don't think we actually believe in it, but it's always fun just to joke around and ask [Dev] to open his locker before a test so we can 'rub Charleston,'" said Chung. "We're not the type of people to slack off on studying, so it's just kind of a fun, funny ritual to follow when we're stressed." ♦



SOPHOMORES CHRIS CHUNG, ADITYA DEV AND KEVIN DARCHUK

Amanda Yi

Water provides fountain of success

by Aditi Jayaraman
and Kirstie Lee

It was the beginning of her first economics midterm and senior Cynthia Zhao took a water bottle, unscrewed the cap, lifted the bottle up to her mouth and took a sip—seven times.

Classmates seated around her looked in inquiry, but Zhao's friends paid no attention.

To them, this ritual was the norm, and ironically, it would be the absence of the strange habit that would draw their eyes.

"It's just a ritual. It makes me feel better before any kind of test, so I just do it," said Zhao.

Zhao has been practicing her peculiar good luck ritual for exams since before middle school.

"It's pretty much become a part of my life and my routine before I take a test," said Zhao.

She has always taken precisely seven gulps and "it can't be any less or any more, because seven is my lucky number," said Zhao.

Although Zhao admits that the practice is perhaps not effective all the time, she cannot take a test in peace

if she does not drink seven gulps beforehand.

"It really doesn't have to just be water. Seven gulps of any kind of drink works," said Zhao.

It has been more than eight years since Zhao has last taken a test without this good luck charm in mind, and she is not about to let it die—no matter how many times she receives curious stares from her peers and teachers.

"I will definitely take this ritual on through college—until I finally do well on a test without taking seven gulps beforehand," said Zhao. ♦



SENIOR CYNTHIA ZHAO

Amanda Yi

Let's Rally

The Rally Commission works hard to bring various events around school to life. But the seemingly simple rallies take more than the average group project. Find out just what the commissioners do behind the scenes.



Photos by Amanda Yi

Commission strives to entertain, foster school spirit

by Robin Liu

Students enter the gym, wearing their class T-shirts and yelling. Suddenly, the lights go off. Music blasts from the speakers. Light reappears and the gym erupts with cheers. This is the thrill that motivates people to become rally commissioners.

Every year at up to six events, the commission, this year composed of seniors Joey Avery, Katie Gasik, Michael Guercio, Laura Ruddy and Mat Spencer, juniors Melissa Archer and Chelsea Sabella and sophomore Aditya Dev, puts together 30 minutes or more of nonstop fun. From the opening dance to the ending class cheers, rallies hold the attention of the school, but few realize the effort that goes into each one.

The commission begins preparations for each rally by brainstorming ideas and working together to pick the best themes and games. From the Beijing Olympics to traveling around the world, themes are always developed in an entertaining way.

"We'll usually just be in a circle and everyone will be putting out ideas," said Gasik. "Someone will start with a little, tiny idea, and it'll explode to a really good idea."

However, throughout the planning process the rally commission sometimes runs into trouble when thinking of ideas that will both satisfy students and appease administrators.

Because so many of their ideas are either too wild or impossible to execute in the gym, the commission ends up spending a lot of time trying to get ideas that are feasible.

After organizing a general outline of the rally, they spend hours on preparations, working whenever they can.

"On weeks leading up to [the rally], we'll have meetings on the weekends," said Avery. "On the weeknights, sometimes meetings last up to five hours."

Weekdays are usually reserved for planning the games, while weekends are spent preparing everything else.

"We usually start a week or two in advance," said Gasik. "On the weekends, we spend all Saturday and Sunday from noon to 10 at night [preparing], and a run-through the Wednesday night before, which is [around] four hours."

"My favorite part is when the lights go off and everyone is cheering. You feel like a celebrity. It's really awesome."

—senior Katie Gasik

In addition to games and dances, the commission often opens rallies with a video. For example, the night rally on Oct. 1 began with a video of the girl commissioners traveling around the world looking for authentic clothes to wear to the dance.

"We spent a long time [working on the video]," said Sabella, "probably 10 hours total."

All the pressures of preparation can make it hard for the commissioners to cooperate. However, they manage to pull through and still get along after each rally.

"It's a really stressful situation, so everyone is just yelling at each other," said Gasik. "We all hate each other during the rally, but at the end, everyone is like, 'Oh, we love each other. We're all friends.'"

Despite the extensive preparation that goes into every rally, Gasik feels their efforts are not fully appreciated by most.

"We put a lot of work into each rally, and not a lot of people take that into consideration," said Gasik. "They just go, 'Oh, that rally sucked', but really we spent 40

to 50 hours on that 'bad' rally."

Even so, she loves working with friends and being in front of the whole student body. The rally commission provides an exciting way to spend tutorial and is the main promoter of school spirit on campus. Even though this is challenging, Avery believes he can contribute his effort through the rally commission.

"There isn't a whole lot of school spirit here," said Avery. "I thought that this would be a good chance to create it."

Many of the rally commissioners also enjoy being able to work with each other and perform in front of everyone. And of course the notoriety that comes from being part of one of the funniest groups on campus.

"It looked like the people in the rally commission were just really good, down-to-earth kids. It seemed like a lot of fun, and I wanted to be in front of the entire school," said Gasik. "I really like being in front of a lot of people [and] entertaining [them]."

For Gasik, being part of the commission will leave many lasting memories.

"My favorite part is when the lights go off and everyone is cheering. You feel like a celebrity," said Gasik. "It's really awesome." ♦

Five Ps to rally success

1. Plan

Over 24 hours of preparation are devoted to each rally, from start to finish. This first step usually consists of the eight members of the Rally Commission sitting down and cranking out ideas for the coming rally. Laura Ruddy, a senior rally commissioner, sees the rally commission as a family who fights, especially during times of planning, but not too much.

"[Preparing for] a rally is a very interesting process," said Ruddy. "It consists of screaming, swearing and throwing things at each other."

Such 'planning' sessions are usually held at a location known as "Rally Haven," aka senior rally commissioner Katie Gasik's Cabaña House, which was the case for the Homecoming night rally.

"We go there whenever we have anything to do with rally commission," said Ruddy. "We trash it and eat a lot of junk food."

The Rally Commission is one of the more visible commissions on campus, but the truth is, most of their time is spent away from their peers, planning, arguing, debating and thinking. But those hours are not ill spent, as can be seen by any rally. Neither are those hours a complete mystery anymore, as shown in 5 STEPS TO MAKE A RALLY:

2. Pre-record

For the rally video, the rally commission splits into two groups according to gender and goes in search of costumes and props, wherever they can find them. Once all the necessary clothing and other items are found, the rally video is then made. The video is shot in one day, usually the weekend before the rally, and edited throughout the week.

"We have to do it in one day otherwise we'd never get it done," said Ruddy.

3. Play

The bulk of most rallies consists of games, which Ruddy claims are one of the most difficult aspects of a rally to come up with. Because of this, many games are usually all planned at once, and then used on rallies throughout the year if the game is not specifically themed for a particular rally. Ruddy admits that some of the games don't go quite as they planned, although the rally commission tests each game before utilizing it. She says that when the rally commissioners try out the game they always are fun and exciting—but when their peers take part in the games, sometimes things get messy.

"When other people do them, they never work quite right," said Ruddy.

4. Proofread

But just because a rally is planned doesn't mean that a rally is even close to finished. Each rally, video, game and skit must be passed under the magnifying glass of the administration, which is not always easy. Ruddy says that would-be rally components get shot down in this way "all the time, always."

An example is a collection of footage taken when homecoming decorations were being put up that Ruddy took, and planned to use in the homecoming rally's video. But the administration did not approve, because they found there to be a bias towards the seniors when looking at how much each class was shown in the video. Ruddy admits that there is truth in that, but she did not mind, saying that the clips were "wholesome and interesting."

Ruddy says that such critique from the administration also impacts how games are played such as during the homecoming rally when assistant principal Joe Bosco's face experienced a hasty and brief, yet intimate, relationship with a pie.

"We're not allowed to have any food in the gym unless we beg," said Ruddy. "[Bosco's event] took ages."

5. Perform

The Rally Commission may have a difficult road to travel, but at the end of that road lies a reward reserved for them and them only. The school shows its appreciation each rally as the rally commissioners are showered with cheers when they run onto the gym floor, little less than celebrities in the eyes of their peers.

The reward may be bright and clear, but the road is confusing and sometimes random, said Ruddy. She said that the biggest challenge of any rally is getting the eight commissioners to sit down and be civil while the rally is molded.

"I don't really know how rallies get planned," said Ruddy. "I'm still baffled."

NIGHT RALLY CALENDAR:

9/20 (Sat.)	Rally Commission spent two to three hours at senior Katie Gasik's house to talk about ideas for the video and games.
9/26 (Fri.)	Rally Commission walked around campus during tutorial promoting the wish box and asking for wishes.
9/27 (Sat.)	Rally Commission met at Gasik's house from around 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. to film most of the video and go through the wishes and choose which ones to use. "A couple of times we forgot to take the lens cap off," said senior Michael Guercio. "[Senior] Mat [Spencer] was filming and started complaining to [senior] Laura [Ruddy] about how she forgot to charge it. Then he realized he forgot to take the lens cap off."
9/28 (Sun.)	Rally Commission met at senior Laura Ruddy's house from around 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. to film the rest of the video, edit the video and finalize all games and wishes. "There's always something funny that happens," said junior Chelsea Sabella. "We were considering for a while for someone to film us the whole time we were practicing, like a 'Day in the Life of the Rally Commission,' because the things we do are more funny than anything we put into the video."
9/29 (Mon.)	Rally Commission met at Ruddy's house for about two and a half hours at night to edit the video and plan games. "We were trying to put on the pokemon theme song," said sophomore Aditya Dev. "But we couldn't download it, so we just ended up taping it on the TV."
9/30 (Tues.)	Rally Commission met at Ruddy's house for another two and a half hours at night to finalize things.
10/1 (Wed.)	Rally Commission met at the school gym at 5 p.m. to set up and deal with last minute issues like not having a projector or speakers. They weren't able to leave until after the rally at around 8 p.m.

WITH THE MIXED RACE BARACK OBAMA EMERGING AS A KEY POLITICAL FIGURE, *THE FALCON* EXAMINES ISSUES FACED BY MULTIRACIAL STUDENTS AS THEY ATTEMPT TO PERFORM...

THE BIRACIAL BALANCING ACT



Brandon Yang

BIRACIALTIMELINE



1999

Halle Berry becomes the first actress of diverse descent to receive Academy Award for Best Actress.



2000

New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter becomes first multiracial World Series MVP in baseball history.



2001

Golfer Tiger Woods becomes first PGA championship of mixed race in league history.



2008

Illinois Sen. Barack Obama becomes first biracial Presidential candidate for a major political party.

Biracial students strive to define their identities

The presidential campaign of Barack Obama is the ultimate indicator of a nationwide increase in racial dilution. Obama's half-African, half-Caucasian ethnicity serves as proof of an overall broadening of racial horizons. The proliferation of multiracial individuals is also evident at Saratoga High, where individuals whose ethnicities are combinations of a variety of races are present in large numbers.

Although there are many similar traits between the four students interviewed who shared their views on being biracial, one of the more significant factors was the ethnicity that the students relate more toward.

Factors such as languages and when parents immigrated to the United States determine which ethnicity biracial students identify themselves more with, according to students that were interviewed.

Senior Alan Menezes, who is half Caucasian and half Indian, and junior Dale Everett, who is half Caucasian and half Chinese, both relate more to their Caucasian roots because their non-Caucasian parents immigrated to the United States early in their lives.

"I relate more to Caucasians because my Indian parent has lived in North America since he was 11," said Menezes.

Also, students said that language had a lot to do with what ethnicity they find themselves relating more to. Most students related more to a certain background because they were more comfortable with that language.

"My mom is Chinese, and I can read, write, and speak Mandarin fluently," said sophomore Nina Mohanty, who is half Indian and half Chinese. "I think I actually started learning Chinese before English. I went to Chinese school every day after school until sixth grade, which sucked! My dad is Indian and I never really picked up his language."

Language also proves a problem for some students like senior Alyssa Hoffman, whose father is Caucasian while her mother is Filipino, who admits that it is sometimes difficult to relate to the Filipino side of her family.

"When I get together with the Filipino half of my family, I sometimes feel lost because I never learned to speak the language," said Hoffman, who is more influenced by the Caucasian side of her family.

On the other hand, some who do know or study both languages like senior Christina Yoshihara, who is half Caucasian and half Japanese, can use their knowledge in their native languages to communicate to their family.

"My relatives in Japan don't speak English very well," said Yoshihara, who takes Japanese 3 at school. "We have to meet somewhere in the middle, but we manage to communicate."

Students have agreed that being multicultural has broadened their outlook on other cultures, imbuing them with a sense of acceptance of different ideologies and customs.

"Being biracial has helped me to understand and be open to other perspectives and cultures," said Menezes. "I think it's because I have always had more than one cultural influence."

All biracial students interviewed also agreed that coming from two or more different backgrounds means getting the best of both worlds.

"I'm completely immersed in culture," said Mohanty. "I consider myself very lucky."

However, students from multiple

backgrounds admitted that being biracial or multiracial causes discomfort to the student because he or she does not give one a strong sense of cultural identity. Torn between the cultures of which they are comprised, a specific persona seems unattainable.

"The worst part is that sometimes you have a loss of who you are," said Everett. "If they ask you to mark your ethnicity on a form, and you need to mark other or something, you feel kind of weird."

Because students come from two different backgrounds, they do not have a strong sense of cultural identity.

"[A problem of being biracial is] the idea of not fitting into one [race] or another really well, but instead you're just there," said junior Jian Lee, whose father is Korean and mother is a mix of ethnicities. "You don't really feel complete in one group."

Some conflicts within biracial families, however, are of a slightly lighter nature.

"I get pressure from both sides expecting different things, which sucks when it comes to liking guys," said Mohanty. "My mom wants me to like a Chinese guy, but my dad insists upon an Indian guy. Kind of a problem!" ♦

—by Grishma Athavale, James Jiang, Tiffany Tseng and Amanda Yi

“Being biracial has helped me to understand and be open to other perspectives and cultures.”

—senior Alan Menezes

TOGATALKS

What is the hardest thing about being biracial?

Getting discriminated [against] by other people.



junior Zachary Smead



sophomore Joyee Woodrow

Feeling different in Chinese class for being part white.

The boxes it puts around us. To them, it's either "I'm Asian or I'm not Asian." It's really frustrating.



junior Jamie Gee

—by Amanda Yi

Blend of worlds causes confusion



Guy Quanrud

It's a Guy Thing

Born to a Norwegian-American father and a Japanese mother, I realize I'm different than most other people in that my background is a combination of races. There are several public figures who are biracial much like me, including Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter, actress Halle Berry and golfer Tiger Woods. The difference between them and me is that they move past common biracial stereotypes through their fame and money, but I face these stereotypes every day.

Since I am half-Japanese, common Asian stereotypes affect me. I'm supposed to get all A's, know all the answers and get into the best colleges. Running in contrast to these conventions about Asians are the white stereotypes that I'm also subjected to as a result of being half-Caucasian. In accordance with these stereotypes, I'm required to be athletic, less smart

than Asians and have an affinity for mayonnaise. However, I find myself not subscribing to either of these sets of prejudices and instead simply being average. I do well in school, but I'm not an outstanding student and I'm on the water polo team but am not a phenomenal athlete.

My cultural composition also makes for several awkward situations. For example, during the Junior quad day last month, I wasn't sure whether to reflect my Caucasian half and laugh at the contrived Asian stereotypes on display or honor my Japanese side and stand up against the horrendous and objectionable racism being perpetuated. I ended up doing neither.

Since I am half-Japanese, common Asian stereotypes affect me while being half-Caucasian subjects me to white stereotypes.

This paradox of my contrasting multicultural makeup is perhaps best summed up in my name, Guy. My parents told me it was a common European name and it was creative because it could be said in both Japanese and English. However, I have come to the conclusion that it best reflects who I am. The word Guy is meant to describe a man, a boy, essentially any run-of-the-mill, average person. The mixture of the two disparate worlds of which I am comprised creates this average person, a Guy, me. ♦

FALCONFOCUS

Junior struggles due to his unique cultural composition

KHAN UNDER 'CONFUSION' ABOUT CUSTOMS, VALUES

by Gautham Ganesan and Sulmaan Hassan

Imagine being part Indian, part Pakistani and part white. Junior Zakir Khan is comprised of these cultures and has lived his life with this unusual tri-racial background.

Khan routinely experiences unique challenges in attempting to blend together his three cultures.

"[My cultural obstacles] are definitely more than just deciding what type of food to eat for dinner," said Khan. "Sometimes there's confusion in my family about our values in general."

Born to an Indian mother and a half-Caucasian, half-Pakistani father, and currently living with his Caucasian grandmother, Khan grew up torn between identification with each of the three races.

"There are different cultural values [in] my family, and when I was younger I pretty much accepted all of them," said Khan. "Now that I'm older, I make conscious choices about what cultures [I

draw from]."

Despite his Caucasian and Pakistani heritage, Khan claims to identify himself primarily as Indian.

"I think of myself as Indian because it relates more to my life," said Khan. "I'm half-Indian and [when] I go to the mosque, most of the kids there are Indian Muslims."

In addition to Khan's multiracial background, his extended family also contains other ethnicities.

"I have half-Pakistani, black and Arab cousins," said Khan, "and it's really weird being related to all these people, but being so different at the same

“It's kind of weird having an Indian community that I know very well and at the same time a white community.”

—junior Zakir Khan

time."

Because of his different heritages, Khan is a member of a multiple-racial communities, serving to augment his connections while at the same time furthering his cultural confusion.



KHAN

Junior, who is comprised of Pakistani, Indian and Caucasian races, feels

a pull in three disparate directions that regard to matters of cultural identification and values.

"It's kind of weird having an Indian community that I know very well and at the same time [being in] a white community," said Khan.

While earlier in his life Khan had to deal with problems resulting from his various background differences, he has come to embrace his unique confluence of cultures while at the same time realizing that being multiracial, while an integral facet of his life, is not what defines him.

"I guess everyone has something unique about them," said Khan, "and for me it's [being multiracial], but there are definitely more important things in my life than race." ♦

Triple act: signed bands gather at SJSU for concert

by Maggie Lin
and Mary Mykhaylova

“Does anyone want anything un-beer-related?” the concession stand guy asked. Everyone in the line shook their head, “no,” as we shyly raised our hands in the hopes of getting a churro.

We were at the SJSU Events center on Oct. 18, waiting for The Roots, featuring Gym Class Heroes and Estelle concert to commence. Although these bands are popular among high school students, the scene consisted mostly of college students.

Both of us were a bit skeptical at first, since we didn't come across any kids our age in the auditorium. However, we were still

undaunted and attempted to get as close to the front as we could in order to get a better view.

Estelle opened the show charismatically and was the most interactive of all the acts that night. She conversed with the audience between songs. Estelle made a point of telling us all to vote for Obama, and, on a lighter note, gave all the girls a tip on what to do if a guy breaks up with them: Don't stalk or break windows, just make a YouTube video of yourself singing instead.

“I hate you, so I'm putting it on YouTube,” were her suggested lyrics. During her performance, Estelle also pulled a guy from the front row to dance with her. He

seemed shy at first but loosened up and wasn't half bad. Learn from him, boys!

Gym Class Heroes were up next, and they seemed to be the ones most welcomed by the crowd. Their vocalist, Travis McCoy, had already made an appearance during Estelle's performance, and the audience was glad to see him back on stage.

McCoy kicked off by requesting that everyone in the crowd to introduce themselves to a stranger nearby and hug them.

At the end of Gym Class Heroes' performance, drummer Matt McGinley traditionally flung his drumsticks at the audience.

One of the two squarely made its way towards us and descended into our hands,

One of the [drumsticks] descended into our hands, but a psycho fan next to us jerked it away.

but a psycho fan next to us jerked it away.

Finally, The Roots performed, demonstrating the versatility of their instrumentalists, by playing not only guitar solos, but tuba solos as well. Their music was a blend of African, jazz and modern. The performance as a whole was enticing but long.

To sum it up, the concert as a whole was outstanding, and we considered ourselves lucky to be so close to the stage, even though this blessing soon became a curse since we were parched, and too far from the exit to the concession stand. Water bottles, now those would have been a blessing. ♦



johnthelegend.com

Singer Estelle Swaray was one of the three acts of the concert at SJSU concert at Oct. 18.

WEBSITESPOTLIGHT ElectricSheep.org

Electric sheep help computers to sleep

by Holden Sparacino

ElectricSheep.org is essentially a website with a downloadable screen saver. But this is not your average screen saver. This website features a screensaver with beautiful swirls, transformations, colors, and other components of psychedelic madness. ElectricSheep.org uses torrent to download “sheep” or short clips of animation that together form the screensaver.

Around 60-100 unique sheep exist on the server at any time. While the users computer is displaying the screensaver, the computer is also communicating with the server and downloading more sheep. Therefore, the longer the screen saver is in use, the more sheep will be downloaded, and eventually the entire “flock” or the collective group of sheep existing on the server at any time, will be downloaded, creating a more diverse screen saver.

A user can vote for a certain sheep while it is being played via the up or down keys on the keyboard while the

sheep is being displayed. The highest rated sheep live the longest, but all sheep are susceptible to “mutations” sheep may change over time because of these randomly generated changes in algorithms no matter what they are rated, according to the website. Users also can view a sheep's family tree through the website.

Also, ElectricSheep.org includes links to download programs that allow users to create their own sheep or take existing sheep and merge and edit them.

Before downloading the program, check out the website, watch the demo videos provided and take these videos with a grain of salt since the graphics are not as good as the ones displayed in some of the videos. Also, know that since the computer is using torrent to download while the screensaver is on, after the screensaver has been on for a while the computer's internet may run a little slower.

But other than that, the screensaver is incredibly fantastic. This is a completely new type of interactive screensaver which could become very interesting if this up and coming website gets enough people involved in the creation of sheep. ♦



Amanda Yi

Junior Tara Fatemi gazes at the captivating screen as it animates abstract swirls.

Local underage clubs receive varying reviews from students

by Lyka Sethi

Imagine a typical weekend: you and all your friends are trying to find new ways to keep yourselves occupied. The boredom that ensues staying close to home seems unappealing, but it seems like the only option.

Little do you know that you don't have to go far to meet new people in a different environment; many students have connected with people from all over the Bay Area through clubs for 14-18 year olds such as The Glow in Sunnyvale and Klub Ice in Palo Alto.

Senior Heraa Hyder first attended an underage club when she visited The Glow on New Years Eve in 2007.

“A bunch of close friends and I decided to spend our New Years at The Glow,” she said. “At first I couldn't decide if I wanted to go because I had heard that it wasn't that fun but I wanted find out for myself.”

Despite hearing rumors about The Glow, Hyder and her friends paid the \$15 entrance fee to attend the New Years party with high expectations.

“I expected [the club] to have a lot of people just hanging out and having a good time,” said Hyder. “I just wanted to let loose.”

The club, however, fell short of Hyder's expectations. “It was fun, but [my friends and I] had to try hard to make it that way,” said Hyder. “The crowd was a little weird because there were people from all over, and it wasn't a very comfort-

able environment for me.”

Hyder tried to ignore the people around her and enjoy dancing on her night out with her friends, but it proved to be a difficult task.

“Dancing was hard because the floor was really crowded and gross and the deejays weren't that good,” said Hyder. “But I have to give it some credit because it was a really nicely designed place.”

Hyder mentioned the large number of “younger people” in the crowd as one of the main reasons for her disinterest. After attending several other clubs, including the aforementioned Klub Ice, Hyder's opinion has remained unchanged.

“My advice is that if you really want to check it out, go with a good group of friends,”

said Hyder. “But going to an underage club isn't really something to look forward to.”

Not all students who attend under-18

clubs, however, dislike them. According to senior Kathleen Roberts, these clubs provide a break from regular weekend activities.

“[The Glow] is a good place to go when you're bored and are tired of just going to the movies on the weekends,” said Roberts. “It's something new and interesting to do.”

Roberts, who has attended The Glow twice in the past year, says that meeting a “variety of new people” is the most fun part of the experience, and that she really enjoys going.

“I go there to have a good time,” said Roberts. “It starts off kind of slow, but once I get into it it's really fun and it definitely meets my expectations.” ♦

“The Glow is a good place to go when you're bored and tired of just going to the movies.”

—senior Kathleen Roberts

Windows takes a bite out of Apple

by Albert Gu
and Kevin Mu

The war between Macs and PCs has been raging for more than two decades, but PCs continue to dominate the market. This is for good reason; there are many important factors that contribute to the PC's overall appeal and popularity.

The first major difference between an Apple and a PC is price. Because only one company makes Macs, they usually come considerably more expensive than expected.

On the other hand, countless manufacturers make computers that run on Windows. This competition not only means that PC users will have more choice while buying a computer, but also that PCs will probably come hundreds of dollars cheaper than Macs for the same, if not better, specs.

For sophomore Cassie Tran, price and portability were two big considerations while choosing a computer. Her PC was "[a couple hundred dollars] cheaper than the Mac, and the Mac was a lot heavier."

Many students also choose PCs because they say that PCs are easier to use and that they are more comfortable with them.

"Macs look better and their interface is pretty, but I think they're harder to navigate around on," said Tran.

One of the advantages Macs hold over PCs that attracts student buyers is their sleek and seamless design. However, in recent years, PCs have also evolved to sport a wide variety of new looks.

"The Apple design is still better, but PCs are definitely catching up," junior Ryan Gambord said. "And you can always modify how a PC looks, but you can't do that on a Mac."

For computer experts, Windows PCs have another edge over Macs because they offer flexibility and are designed to run all sorts of hardware from many manufacturers, while Apple computers can only run Apple hardware.

"I like PCs because you can upgrade them," Gambord said. "Mac's only work with certain hardware, but on PCs you can put any hardware you want and it

will always work."

PCs also have a greater appeal to students because there are a wider variety of applications that are compatible with it. For example, PCs hold a huge edge over Macs when it comes to computer gaming.

Many computer games come out on the PC but not on Apple, and games overall are faster and have better graphics when played on Windows PCs.

Sophomore Jeffrey Kuo owns both a PC and a

Mac, but he prefers playing computer games like Warcraft 3 on his PC because many of his favorite games are only available on PCs.

"PC's are more built for gaming," Kuo said, "while Apples are built for office use."

With advantages such as flexibility and ease of use, wider variety of applications for tasks like gaming and a more economical price tag, it's easy to see why most students still prefer PCs. ♦

Apple is gorgeous both inside and out

by Ben Clement
and Anna Shen

As the seniors begin the college application process, some are also beginning to look at new computers, entering the Mac vs. PC dilemma. Although the Mac may not be quite as cheap, this reason for superior

sleek,

With the Mac's sophisticated display and brilliantly designed, easy to use software, buying a Mac is really the only way to go.

Over the past few decades, the PC had monopolized the computer industry; this began to change when Apple switched over to Intel chips, taking some of the PCs consumer base.

"I've been using [Macs] since 1983; it's just now people are starting to fully recognize how good they are," said art teacher Steve McQue,

who worked at Apple after finishing college.

Before the switch, many people when comparing Macs and PCs tended to lean more towards a PC, because people did not want to spend their time learning how to work the Macs, which use a totally different operating system.

The newest version of the Mac operating system, OSX Leopard, allows the user to install Windows XP or Windows Vista

on their Mac computer using a special application called Boot Camp, making Macs much more versatile than PCs, and solving many compatibility problems.

The iPod also helped to attract more consumers to Macs, because it had resulted in windows users' becoming more acquainted with Apple products, primarily iTunes, and made consumers more familiar with the straightforwardness of Apple software.

Easy file transfer available

Another concern for many consumers, who want to make the switch, was whether or not they would be able to transfer their files from their old PC to their new Mac. Luckily, the Apple store will transfer your files for you when you buy a new computer.

Yes, you can get a windows laptop for around \$400, but at that point, the computer is so basic that it really isn't even worth the money.

To get a laptop capable of meeting the needs of computer users today, you need to spend closer to the \$900+ range, and at that point, why not spend the extra \$200 for a computer that will last a lot longer than a PC.

"Leopard is pleasant to use, and it's stupid proof," said sophomore Anthony Sutardja. "I haven't experienced any [viruses] yet, but on [my PC], I have one every week."

Free, easy to use software

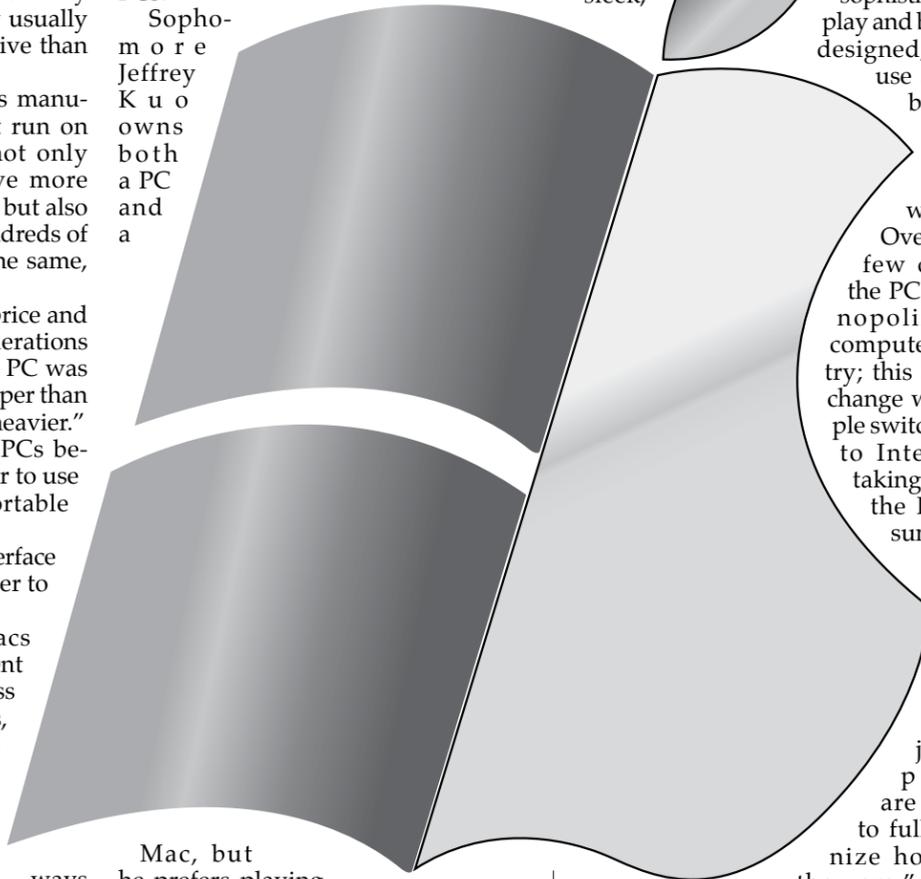
Along with a Mac, one receives many additional programs that cannot be downloaded on or do not come with a PC, such as Photobooth, iChat, iMovie, iPhoto, and Widget.

"After a while, I got tired of the various effects on Photobooth, so I downloaded new ones," said sophomore Joyee Woodrow.

When it comes down to buying either a PC or a Mac, choices differ from person to person; but if you are looking for a versatile, sophisticated, and extremely simple computer, then Apple's Mac is the perfect choice.

"You [would] have to whoop out a lot of cash for a PC with the same quality as a Mac," said Sutardja.

Macs can do everything a PC can do, except they do it better, as well as look great while doing it. ♦



TOGATALKS

Do you prefer Macs or PCs and why?

PCs, since they are easier to customize and use.



junior Sandeep Ramakabir



senior Matthew Brading

There's benefits to both; I have a PC and my friends have Macs, and I use both.

Definitely Macs, since they're a lot more fun to use.



sophomore Nikki Fukuda

Apple and Windows battle it out in TV commercials

by Amalie MacGowan

Two men appear on the TV screen. One is a young man adorning casual, stylish clothes, and the other is an overweight, middle-aged man with an old-fashioned suit, awkward glasses swiped from the 1970s and a wretched comb-over.

Sound familiar? The young man claims, "I'm a Mac," while the older man says "I'm a PC" and the two begin to banter. It is easy to recognize this short as an Apple advertisement. The stuffy and out-of-touch older man represents the common PC, and the casually cool, young man

represents a Mac, showing that Macs are not only superior to PCs but ultimately cooler.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the spectrum, in an ad for PCs, people of all shapes and sizes appear, artistically claiming, "I'm a PC," one after the other, purposely meant to counter the Apple ad by showing that not only out-of-date old men use PCs. Bill Gates, Eva Longoria, and many others are included in the commercial, hoping to prove that PCs will never go completely out of style.

All computer companies, PC and Apple alike, strive to use unique advertising to their ad-

vantage in hopes that a well-off teenager will be sitting cross-legged in front of the television with their eyes glued to the screen thinking, "Wow! I have to get my own computer!"

Personal computer companies labor to make their advertising show that people can still be up-to-date with a PC.

They also use celebrities in their commercials, such as Gwen Stefani or Jay-Z, who talk about all the great features available on their PC.

Apple's advertising is focused on proving that Macs are clean, sleek and the most modern option available. Apple is the

pinnacle of technology, and is eminently well known thanks to the iPod. Apple's advertising is known to be effective, but the company still struggles to surpass the dominance of PCs.

"I definitely think that Apple computers are targeted towards our generation," says sophomore Chase Slabaugh. "Personally, I like them based on their functionality, since I usually work with videos, music, and photos."

The younger generation has been enamored with the iPod for years, and one thing led to the next. After the iPod proved to be a tremendous success, teens

began to look into purchasing an Apple laptop to go along with it. Many students these days look no further than the Macbook, in all of its either pearl or ebony ingenuity. Apple's popularity has morphed into an immortal fad, a "hip" thing for students.

By contrast, PC followers tend to lean toward familiarity and simple function.

For years, people have been accustomed to using computers with provided, easy-to-use Microsoft software. In the meantime, it seems that both markets, Apple and PC alike, will continue to meet the needs of their followers. ♦

BOYS' WATER POLO

Brotherly bonding leads to team's success



Felix Tuan

Senior co-captain Arian Mahini attempts to pass in a game on Oct. 21 against Los Altos.

by Kevin Mu
and Guy Quanrud

The boys' water polo team is like a family in more ways than one. Their 12-1 league record is a testament to not only powerful and effective teamwork, but also the team's brotherly bonds. Team members junior Kevin Rollinson and sophomore Tim Rollinson are brothers both in and out of the pool, while team captains seniors Arian Mahini and Nick Mortazavi have played together so long they could be considered brothers.

"[Arian and I] know each other's moves, and we can predict where we're going to be in the water," Mortazavi said. "That's why we can give a lot of assists to each other."

In a game against Harker on Oct. 23, for example, Mahini and Mortazavi paired up to create a scoring machine; they managed to execute plays requiring extreme preciseness with ease, earning multiple points for their team and leading the team to a 15-9 victory.

"[Mahini] and I have these 'Persian connection plays'," Mortazavi joked.

The two captains' partnership has brought their teamwork to a new level in the pool.

"[Mortazavi] and I have been playing [together] for such a long time," Mahini added, "that when I play with him I get a different feeling than when I play with other players."

Similarly, the Rollinsons believe they also have an edge since they know each other better than anyone else.

"Tim and I, we've got some 'BCP's: Bro-Connection Plays," Kevin joked, referring to Mahini and Mortazavi's Persian connection plays.

The brothers team up during games and assist one another to score goals: in their cross-pass play, one brother passes across the pool where the other one shoots, throwing off the goalie and successfully scoring a goal. Playing water polo together isn't just good for the team. It has also allowed the brothers to connect more and spend more time with

each other.

"We hang out during team dinners, and I drive him to morning practices," he said, "so we've definitely bonded." This year, the team members are extremely close and display extraordinary teamwork in the pool.

"Some of the team members have been playing together for a couple years," Rollinson said. "It's really brought us closer."

With the team's fraternal bonds providing the players with camaraderie, teamwork and a couple of BCP's, the Falcons are set and ready to glide through the rest of their already successful season. They are one of the most viable contenders to win league finals and are hoping to make CCS possibly within the next week.

Their final game of the season was a heated battle against the Wilcox Chargers,

but the Falcons prevailed 8-7 in overtime, with Mortazavi scoring the game-winning goal in the final two seconds. With this victory the Falcons claimed first place in the El Camino league, a fitting end to their tremendous

"[Mortazavi] and I have been playing [together] for such a long time, that when I play with him I get a different feeling than when I play with other players."

—senior Arian Mahini

season.

The Falcons faced the Cupertino High Pioneers on Oct. 28 in a sloppy and confusing game. Normally, a player is allowed three ejections, or fouls, before they are suspended from the game; however, referees claimed that Saratoga senior John Chen had four ejections, which is over the limit.

As a result, the game was turned back in time and a goal was deducted from the Falcons' total score.

However, the Falcons managed to overcome this obstacle and defeat the Prospectors 9-7.

"We played [pretty well]," said Mortazavi. "I think we played some good defense, so that helped a lot."

If the first-place Falcons win the El Camino league tournament that took place this week, they should make the CCS tournament. Unfortunately, due to printing deadlines results of the tournament could not be published. ♦

GIRLS' TENNIS

Junior helps Lady Falcons destroy rival Matadors

by Kelly Lamble
and Annie Lee

The Monta Vista Matadors were in for a surprise when they arrived at Saratoga on Oct. 21 to find junior Mika Padmanabhan dressed in uniform. The Falcons had unleashed their secret weapon.

The addition of Padmanabhan was all it took to push the team over the edge to victory. They lost 3-4 earlier this season to the Matadors, but with the addition of the talented junior they were able to turn the tables and come out on top, 5-2.

Padmanabhan was put into the lineup at No. 3 singles behind senior co-captain Lindsey Marsh and sophomore Catherine Nguyen at No. 1 and No. 2 singles, respectively. Although she lost her match 6-2, 6-2, everybody below her moved down, adding to the depth of the overall team.

"Even though she lost her individual match, she helped out the team in terms of strengthening our line-up," said coach

Tom Uyehara.

Padmanabhan, who originally elected not to play for the school this year due to the academic stress of junior year, decided that she really missed being on the team.

"I had to focus more on academics this year," said Padmanabhan. "At the beginning of the year, I was really frustrated [because I wasn't on the team], but now I'm really glad that I can help out and play on the team again."

Although Padmanabhan is an accomplished player, she adds much more to the team than her skill.

"She has a lot of enthusiasm on and off the court," said Uyehara. "With the chemistry we have on the team right now, I think she is a perfect fit."

The win was especially gratifying for the team because they have been close to beating powerhouse Monta Vista several

times in the past few years, but have repeatedly come up short.

"We were all pumped up and we came out ready to play and determined to win," said Uyehara. "We wanted it just a little bit more than they did this time. The curse has been broken."



Padmanabhan

Saratoga's victory was not entirely Padmanabhan's doing, however. Without a concentrated team effort, the win would not have been possible. Although doubles had been a weakness of them earlier, the doubles teams came out swinging in this match.

"A lot of the credit has to go to our doubles because we were able to sweep them in straight sets," said Uyehara. "I think it was some of the best doubles we've played all season long."

No. 1 doubles team junior Annie Lee and freshman Sarah Lum won their match 6-3, 6-2, while No. 2 doubles team freshman Crystal Yen and junior Samantha

Tsang coasted to a 6-2, 6-2 victory. Although they had a bit tougher time, No. 3 doubles team sophomore Mary Edman and freshman Lisa Asai pulled out their match 7-5, 6-3.

The girls are now in a position to win the league championship. They are currently first in league ahead of Palo Alto, but if they lose their match against Paly, they will be tied. The match was originally scheduled for Oct. 30, but rain delay moved it to Nov. 3. Due to publication deadlines, the results of the match were unable to be printed.

The girls, however, beat Palo Alto earlier this season 4-3. If they can repeat that victory, they will win the El Camino Division. If not, they will have to play Palo Alto again to determine the league winner.

With pivotal wins over powerhouse Monta Vista, all the girls need is a win over Palo Alto to take the league title and earn the No. 2 slot in the CCS Championships behind Archbishop Mitty. ♦

FOOTBALL



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang

Top: Coach Tim Lugo talks to players after their disappointing 10-7 loss to Los Gatos on Oct. 24. Left: Senior running back Mat Spencer evades Los Gatos' defenders on his way to scoring the first touchdown of the game against the Wildcats.

Saratoga suffers heartbreak vs. LG

by Rahul Thakker

For about 46 minutes on Oct. 24 it seemed this year's Falcons would make history. For 46 minutes it seemed Saratoga would finally be able to celebrate a victory over the Wildcats for the first time in 29 years.

But a football game is 48 minutes long.

Tied at seven with just two minutes left in the game, the Falcons were driving. The defense had played a phenomenal game, sacking Los Gatos quarterback Nick Hirschman several times and holding his potent offense scoreless until there were just six minutes left in the game. Saratoga had gotten a touchdown from senior running back Mat Spencer midway through the third quarter on a pressured throw from senior quarterback Michael Guercio. Unfortunately for the Falcons, Los Gatos had come back with a score of their own on a deep pass from Hirschman to wide open receiver Andrew Berg after blown coverage by the Falcon defense.

Now, the Saratoga offense was in a position to seal the deal. Close to—if not already in—field goal range, the Falcons just needed to run down the clock and hope senior kicker Chris Chung could boot the ball through the uprights to win the game.

On third down, senior running back Tim Yen received a pitch from junior quarterback Vincent Carstens...and dropped it. The Wildcats pounced on the fumble and Hirschman led his team down the field to the Saratoga 5-yard line, where kicker Pat Impey knocked in a field goal and gave his team a 10-7 lead with just 23 seconds left.

At that point it seemed all but over, yet the Falcons stormed down the field again. They recovered a short kickoff at their own 45-yard line and drove about 25 yards in just 18 seconds. Still not in Chung's range, they tried just one more short pass to Spencer, but having used all of their timeouts, the coaches could not stop the clock and Saratoga walked off the field just short and disappointed once again.

"While we are disappointed that we could not close [the game] out with a win, we re-established Saratoga as a competitive football program," said head coach Tim Lugo. "Our players have been told by everyone in this community that they can not compete in the De Anza division, [but] anyone who watched the game Friday night will now believe in what we are trying to build here. I knew we were the better team before the game and I still feel we are the better team afterwards, regardless of the score." ♦

CCS dreams still in reach

by Karthik Annamalai
and Abhi Venkataramana

When Tim Lugo took over as head football coach at the beginning of the school year, his goal for the team was to make CCS playoffs. At the time, many felt that would be impossible, as the Falcons were entering the tough De Anza Division, a league studded with powerhouse teams such as Los Gatos and Palo Alto. However, depending on the outcomes of the next two games, Lugo's wish could come true.

"If I had told the guys when I first walked through the door last May that we would still be in playoff contention in weeks nine and 10, everyone would have thought I was crazy," said Lugo.

After beating the Cupertino Pioneers 46-12 at Cupertino on Oct. 30, with a strong running game and stellar defense, the Falcons will have to beat either the 7-1 Milpitas Trojans, or the 3-4 Wilcox Chargers, both talented De Anza Division teams, in order to have a shot at CCS.

"If we beat one of two teams, then we have a chance of making the playoffs, but if we win both games then we are in for sure," said Lugo.

The Falcons play against the Trojans tonight at 7 p.m. at Milpitas, and against the Chargers at home on Nov. 14.

"These games are going to be the most important games of our season," said Lugo. "It's going to be tough, but I definitely think we can compete with them."

The Falcons will have a challenge tonight against the Trojans, currently in first place in the De Anza Division. The Falcon offense, which depends on a strong running game, will be facing off against one of the De Anza Division's toughest defenses, led by line backer Steve Fauna who averages more than 11 tackles a game. In addition, Trojan quarterback Cameron Hernandez and wide receiver Chris Albright team up to create a lethal passing game, which the Falcon defense

must overcome in order to win.

"Milpitas is a phenomenally athletic team that is really big up front and has players recruited by almost every Pac-10 school," said Lugo. "But we can beat them, by executing our offense the way we have been practicing and by being disciplined on defense. Being athletic, they take a lot of risks, so with our defense we can put them in a bad position."

So far in the season, the Falcon offense has been led by the running backs, consisting of senior Mat Spencer, fifth in the league in rushing yards, junior Grant Thomas and seniors Tim Yen and Casey Farmer, who are currently seventh, eighth, and ninth, in rushing yards. In addition, quarterbacks senior Michael Guercio and junior Vincent Carstens have had success behind a strong offensive line due to standout performances by the team's receivers. The defense has been led by defensive linemen senior Jasper Loren, fifth in the league in tackles, and senior Jens Karen, who averages five sacks a game.

The Wilcox game comes at a crucial time because if the Falcons lose to Milpitas today, winning this game will put them on the bubble to making CCS. If the Falcons beat Milpitas, winning this game could clinch a playoff spot.

"[Wilcox] already beat Milpitas and they already beat Palo Alto," said Lugo, "so they are definitely a good football team, but just by looking at their film, I am sure we can compete with them."

Even if they don't make the playoffs, the Falcons have accomplished a lot, including coming to closest to beating Los Gatos in years. Lugo hopes to build off of this year's success and continue to grow the Saratoga football program.

"We're continuing to get better," said Lugo. "I am proud of our guys. They trusted me and they worked hard and it shows on the field." ♦

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FIELD HOCKEY

Despite tough loss to Los Gatos, girls advance to CCS

by Shannon Galvin
and Ren Norris

Even after losing to Los Gatos on Oct. 31, field hockey is in great shape for CCS, having defeated Mitty and tied St. Francis in recent weeks.

Against Mitty, under the lights on Oct. 22, players found themselves in a tough position as many short corners were called against Saratoga.

Short corners occur when a foul is called in the goal circle, and the offense gets a free shot while only four defenders and the goalie can try to stop it.

The Falcon defense was able to hold off Mitty's countless short corners, ending the first half 0-0.

"Of course I was nervous about the short corners, but I trust my defense to get the ball out of the circle," said senior goalie Stephanie Douglass.

In the second half, Saratoga went on the attack. Senior co-captain Kelly Darchuk dribbled through the Mitty defenders to the goal line and passed it back to senior Claire Marsh who scored.

"We played intensely and well when we were working as a team," said coach Amber Wilson.

The game ended in a 1-0 victory for Saratoga.

The team also tied St. Francis on Oct. 29 with a score of 1-1.

However, this Halloween was haunting for the team.

They lost their first game of the season to rival Los Gatos with a score of 3-1, and lost their first place position in league.

Los Gatos's physical play helped the Wildcats hit in two goals in the first half.

Saratoga put forth a great effort with their goal by senior Claire Marsh, with an assist by sophomore Vanessa Block.

However, Los Gatos stayed on offense in the second half and finished the game 3-1.

Even with this brutal loss to Los Gatos, the team is confident as they go into the CCS championships starting on Nov. 13.

A big part of this confidence comes from a strong defense headed by Douglass.

"No matter how tough the offense is, or how many short corners they have, I'm confident in the defense and [Douglass] to have an awesome game," said Wilson.

Douglass has played goalie on varsity since sophomore year and is hoping to continue her field hockey career throughout college.

Douglass's teammates respect her and rely on her to pull out saves in important games.

"She's a team player and is good at communicating from the back," said senior co-captain Laura Ruddy.

"Plus, she makes wicked crazy saves," added Darchuk.

Other players draw inspiration from Douglass' hard work and determination.

"[Douglass] always pushes me to try my best when I play goalie with her," said junior Madeline Rothenberg, the other goalie on the team.

With a positive attitude and a solid defense, the team is ready for CCS.

"We still need to work hard but the team really wants [to win], and since everyone has a winning mindset, I don't have to motivate anyone," said Wilson.

The girls hope to win the CCS championships this year after losing in the semi-finals last year to Los Gatos.

"I think we're ready because we're the best out there. Teams should fear our intensity," said junior midfielder Samantha Li.

For the seniors, this is the last chance for them to win a CCS championship, and they believe they can pull out a victory.

"I'm confident going into CCS. This is the year," said Douglass. ♦



Amanda Yi

Junior Jordan Leonard passes the ball under the defender's stick at the game vs. St. Francis on Oct. 29.

SCOREBOARD | Field Hockey

10/24 Saratoga 2, Los Altos 1

This was not the simple win for the Falcons for which they had hoped. Instead, Los Altos stayed in the game, making for an intense match. Both goals were scored by Claire Marsh, with assists from Kelly Darchuk and Katie Marsh.

10/29 Saratoga 1, St. Francis 1

Despite the Falcons starting off strong, St. Francis scored off a short corner at the end of the first half, making it a 1-0 halftime score. In the last three minutes, Laura Ruddy scored off a short corner (hit in by Claire Marsh, and stopped by Kelly Darchuk) tying the score. The game went into overtime, and no one scored leaving the game at a 1-1 tie. The game ended dramatically as the St. Francis offense scored in the last two seconds, but the goal was not counted because the St. Francis forward shot from outside of the goal circle.

10/31 Saratoga 1, Los Gatos 3

The girls played a frustrating Halloween game, where they lost for the first time all season against Los Gatos. The Wildcats scored early on in the first half, but the Falcons soon retaliated with a goal by Claire Marsh off of a free hit taken by Vanessa Block. However, Los Gatos tapped in a goal at the end of the first half, making the halftime score 2-1 for Los Gatos. The second half was scoreless for Saratoga, and Los Gatos scored one more, ending the game 3-1. Saratoga will get a chance to face Los Gatos one more time in CCS.

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

Wai works toward state

by Ashley Chou

Since freshman year, junior Karen Wai has been a cross country stand-out. She easily became a key runner among a varsity team of underclassmen during their first timed mile.

Without her, the team would have never placed second in the 2006 CCS tournament or been just one spot away from the State meet that year.

Two years later, Wai's determined to make it to State alongside senior Katie Nast, a veteran of cutthroat competition. Nast has made it to State for the past two seasons.

Despite her junior year schedule, Wai still manages to balance cross country alongside a slew of other extracurriculars, including marching band.

"I'm more devoted to running," said Wai. "[Even] if I'm really busy, I still try to make time for running."

So far, the effort has paid off. Wai's times for most meets have been dropping, with the largest being a 10-second cut from her personal record at the 2.95 mile Crystal Springs.

"My season's gone pretty well, but it

still feels like it's been short," said Wai.

Though CCS will be held at Toro Park in Salinas this year, Wai intends to use the multiple Crystal Springs meets to her advantage. The long dirt slopes mimic Toro Park's rolling hills and sudden steep inclines.



Wai

"I haven't really been doing more workouts, but I've been running with more intensity," said Wai.

To individually make it to State, Wai has to place within the top five in the varsity girls' race during CCS on Nov. 15.

Her chances this year for making it are much higher than that of last; Wai is currently ranked fourth individually.

"I've been running more hills than I usually do and just generally putting in more mileage to prepare," said Wai.

During the Lynbrook meet, Wai placed fourth in the varsity race.

Though she didn't PR, the race itself went relatively for Wai, even with the rain.

Her main focus now is preparing for Leagues on Nov. 4, which will be her last chance to run at Crystal Springs for the remainder of the season. ♦

GIRLS' WATER POLO

SCVAL final chance for team

by Amalie MacGowan
and Pia Mishra

With Santa Clara Valley Athletic League finals beginning on Nov. 4, the water polo girls said they couldn't be more prepared for the games to come.

Senior co-captain Alison Norris said the team has drastically improved its play and might be able to beat tough opponents like Los Gatos and Los Altos.

And, going into the league tournament, playing in CCS was still in the picture.

"I think that if we do well in this tournament, we have a possibility of contending for CCS," said senior Casey Long. "We've improved so much over the season, so I'm hoping that we can make [going to CCS] a reality."

The league tournament will be a triple round-robin format, meaning that the Falcons play each team for the third time this season.

Prior to the tournament, the girls said they were looking forward to defeating their tough opponents from past games, including long-time rival Los Gatos, as well as Los Altos and Palo Alto.

Junior Sarah Knysh said that the team has been consistent throughout its games,

and the players are hoping to amp up their performance for these last few games.

"Many players have become much stronger shooters," said Norris. "We have a gifted offense and a strong defense, so we will hopefully catapult our playing to the next level."

The girls won their recent games against Mountain View on Oct. 23 and Homestead on Oct. 25 by scores of 11-4 and 12-9 respectively. Norris scored five goals in each victory. The team also faced Palo Alto on Oct. 30, winning 16-7.

Since this is the last season for Norris and her fellow seniors Kaylee Pettingill, Amanda Murabito and Casey Long, they hope this will be one of their best and most memorable tournaments. The team finished with a league record of 6-6.

"So far we have had a pretty average season, but we are hoping to make a good comeback and win in this next tournament," said Norris.

Coach Courtney Crase believes that the team can come out on top in the league finals.

"The girls have learned so much in this past season," said Crase. "I know that they will try their hardest in these upcoming games, which means we have a good chance of succeeding." ♦

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Senior night spirit is not enough to stop losing streak

by James Jiang

With the exception of occasional dances and rallies, the walls of the gym are usually bare. On Oct. 29, however, the gym underwent a transformation as the juniors of the varsity volleyball team tacked up "Mystery Inc." and "Scooby Doo" posters for the senior game.

"That was our theme [for senior night] because there are five seniors, so we tried to find things that were five and Scooby Doo has five people," said junior Alysia Patel.

In the first game against Palo Alto, played by all seniors, the girls lost 14-25. The second game, played by the usual starting line up, resulted in a 17-25 loss. In the final game, the Falcons were leading 20-16 until a series of unlucky touches gave Paly the win at 21-25.

The five seniors are Kate Stewart, Kathleen Roberts, Sami Lovelady, Kiersten Dolbec and Katherine Moran.

"I feel very disappointed [that we lost our senior game], but at the same time I feel that we advanced fairly well during the season," said Roberts, who was given the title "Velma" in honor of Scooby Doo.

Dozens of students came to support the team, leaping to their feet and cheer-

ing whenever the Falcons scored a point. This loud cheering gave the girls more incentive to play well but also created added pressures.

"I get sort of nervous when other people come," said Patel, "but it was nice, because we don't get cheering at many games."

The team had a rough season, winning only one league game in the 12 played so far. Even so, they still have a shot at making CCS because of their dominant pre-season play and tournament placings. CCS takes into account several of the previous tournaments and counts those points.

"I'd feel really awesome [if we go to CCS] and we'd probably do way better," said Roberts. "We always do better in tournaments."

Although the girls have not done well in the upper A-league, they have come a long way in terms of team unity.

"I think a lot of people were thinking individually but we finally started to act like a team towards the end," said Roberts.

The team has won a total of 20 games, including the tournaments and preseason plays. Their last league game was scheduled for Nov. 4, playing against Palo Alto. Due to the publication deadlines, the scores are unable to be published. ♦



Amanda Yi

Seniors Kathleen Roberts and Sami Lovelady jump simultaneously to block the ball in the senior game against Palo Alto on Oct. 29.

GIRLS' GOLF

Swinging to a halt

Team finishes 1st season, individual CCS next on agenda

by Tim Rollinson
and Uttara Sivaram

The first girls' golf team is winding down as the members play their last matches for the season. As a pioneer team for the school, the players have enjoyed a solid, though not an undefeated season.

"At first, I really had no idea what to expect," said the No. 5 golfer junior Natasha Aleksic, "so every game we won was a bonus."

In the girls' last match on Oct. 15, they faced off against three teams—Burlingame, Capuchino, and rival Los Gatos at Poplar Creek. The No. 1 and No. 2 golfers sophomores Uttara Sivaram and Analiene Parker tied, each with a score of 45, while the No. 4 golfer, freshman Jayten Weiss, shot a solid 50.

"I think we played well," said Aleksic. "We ended on a good note."

The flat terrain and wide fairways kept the girls' scores low with a 195 overall. However, Burlingame beat Saratoga by a mere couple of strokes while Los Gatos took the crown, scoring a 176. Though disappointed by this loss, the Falcons were heartened by their victory over Capuchino.

Previously, the team had played Aragon, Mills and Capuchino in another three-way match on Oct. 13. Due to the recently aerated greens however, the course was in a bad condition, with sandy greens and large obstructions on every fairway—mounds of uprooted soil, bumpy greens, and caution tape.

This, along with the usual difficulties posed by Saratoga's hilly home course caused uncharacteristically high scores on all sides.

Saratoga failed to take first, losing to Mills, who shot a 203. However, they did beat Aragon and Capuchino by fairly

large margins.

While the team's season was over after Oct. 15, two individuals, Sivaram and Parker, continued onto CCS Qualifiers at Poplar Creek on Oct. 23.

"It was exciting just to be able to compete for CCS," said Parker.

The two played 18 holes at the match against familiar faces from Aragon, Menlo-Atherton, Los Gatos, Burlingame and other teams that the Falcons had played earlier.

This time, however, the girls' had to play from the men's tees in order to qualify, and post a score of 93 or below.

Sivaram and Parker were confident at the end of nine holes with scores in the

low 40s, but they both faltered during the back nine. They shot slightly higher than usual, due to both the unfamiliarity of the last nine holes and the tension

caused by fervent competition among the girls. Parker missed the mark by a few shots while Sivaram qualified with a teetering 92.

"The fact that I had to keep track of what I was shooting and what I had to shoot to qualify was pretty straining," Parker said. "That was what bothered me the most."

Sivaram participated in the CCS championships on Nov. 4, held at Monterey's Rancho Cañada. She will be the only representative for the Saratoga golf team competing in CCS. Results were unable to be printed due to publication deadlines.

Although all the individuals in the team were not able to compete in CCS, the girls have enjoyed a memorable year of new beginnings, nostalgia and anticipation for the upcoming season.

"The best part of [the season] was being with the team," No. 7 golfer junior Sharon Kikinis said. "We had a really fun group and we were constantly laughing—that was the best." ♦

"We had a really fun group and we were constantly laughing—that was the best."

—junior Sharon Kikinis

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

Team races less to avoid injuries, get ready for CCS

by Sophia Cooper
and Kelly Lambie

While most sports teams are caught up in the frenzy of end-of-season games, boys' cross country is taking a different approach. Instead of racing at a slew of meets for league finals, they are racing less to ensure that their bodies are in optimal condition for the races that count.

"We aren't racing all of the small meets, so that we can focus more on workouts so that at the end of the season we can perform better at the big meets like CCS," said senior co-captain Kian Banks.

Part of the reason for this cautious strategy is that the entire varsity team, with the exception of senior James Arroyo, has been injured at some point this season.

Both senior co-captains Banks and Alan Menezes battled with recurring knee injuries, while junior Kyle Borch and sophomore Kyle Fukui dealt with shin splints. In addition, junior Nick Olsen was out almost the entire season due to a strained IT band.

"Everyone seems to be getting totally random injuries," said Banks. "It's just really bad luck."

The boys hope to be healthy by Nov. 4 for the De Anza League Finals. As they are the only Division III team in the DAL, the boys are automati-

cally qualified for CCS. However, they are planning on doing a lot more than merely qualifying for CCS.

"If we are all feeling strong, we have a good chance at winning league finals," said Banks.

Although the boys are racing less, they did compete in the Lynbrook Invitational on Oct. 30, using the race as a 2.1 mile warm-up. Menezes got out kicked in the last 100m, placing second in 10:20, three seconds behind the winner. Banks came in second for Saratoga in sixth place and 10:54.

Borch finished in 11:07 for a twelfth place finish, and Fukui came in at 11:29 in 25th place. Freshman Harry Curtis ran strong with a time of 11:40, while James Arroyo finished in 11:49.

Olsen struggled in his first race since tearing his IT band a few months ago.

"[Olsen] had to run because he had to run in a league meet to be eligible to run at CCS and state," said Banks.

The team placed second overall at the meet, losing to Lynbrook. The two teams were tied up to the fifth man so the score went to a sixth-man tiebreaker, where they lost by one point, 75-76.

Due to publication deadlines, the results of the race were unable to be printed. While league finals is the first of the races that counts for continuing on with its season, the team is already looking ahead to CCS Championships, where they have to place in the top four to make the state championships. ♦

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buzzworthy

Senior hoped to top past Halloween costumes

While for some students, Halloween is easy to dismiss as childish, or is just an excuse to dress more skimpily than usual, others take Halloween to the next level.

This year, Chapin Griffith, famous for his astounding Halloween costume creations year after year, decided to adorn himself as "Bubble Boy," from the popular cult-classic starring Jake Gyllenhaal.



"This costume is much more complex and difficult than my previous costumes," Griffith said. "It came together pretty well, though I, as always, completed most of it on Thursday night. It took me about 15 hours to create."

Griffith has cherished Halloween and the designing costumes to receiving gobs of candy from a young age. Since eighth grade, he made it a point to create unique and "elaborate costumes."

His first commendable conquest was during his freshman year, when he took Ronald McDonald. Since then, he has been Beetle Juice and a Gorilla.

"Ever since then, I've been trying to out do myself," he said, "and over time, this has proven to be increasingly difficult."

Griffith hopes to leave a lasting memory of his Halloween accomplishments.

"I'm hoping that this year people will realize the effort and skill that I've put into this costume," he said. "And with a bit of luck, it might just be a bigger hit than Ronald McDonald."

Student novelist casts own magic with published book

Senior Ketaki Shriram self-published her first novel "Sorceress of the Himalayas" in May.

"Sorceress of the Himalayas" follows the adventures of Tien Ming, a young woman who must find a spell book that will bring her family back to life. Shriram wrote the first draft when she was 13.

Editing the story to its published version took three years. After completing the final draft, Shriram found some interesting parallels between Tien's world and her own.

"Tien possesses qualities that I also see in myself, but I don't think she is completely like me," said Shriram. "Some of the characters in the novel ended up resembling people who impacted me when I was writing the book. I didn't realize that parts of the novel were similar to my life until I reread the book after its publication."

To publicize her novel, Shriram has had book signings in the area. She also has had both locals radio and TV interviews.



For more information on the "Sorceress of the Himalayas," visit <http://www.sorceressofthehimalayas.com>.

-by Mary Mykaylova, Brian Tsai, Amanda Yi

FALCON FREEZE FRAME



Amanda Yi



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **ON TRIAL** JUNIORS LAWRENCE CHOU AND TOM HEAD PARTICIPATE IN KERRY MOHNIKE'S ENGLISH 11 HONORS "SCARLET LETTER" TRIALS. **TOUGH COMPETITION** 12 BAND MEMBERS JOIN TOGETHER TO ADORN A COLOSSAL DRAGON COSTUME TO DEFEAT FELLOW COSTUME WEARERS. **CRUNCH TIME** GUIDANCE SECRETARY SHARON FONG SITS AMONG PILES OF SENIOR TEACHER RECOMMENDATION PACKETS **TRICK-OR-TREAT** TEACHER YUKO AOKI HANDS CANDY TO A BOY WHO ATTENDS "WORLD OF DISCOVERY PRESCHOOL." **GOOD SPORTS** VARSITY FOOTBALL PLAYERS SHAKE THE HANDS OF RIVAL LOS GATOS PLAYERS AFTER A DISAPPOINTING LOSS ON OCT. 24.

TOPTEN

WORST PICK-UP LINES

- 10 How much does a polar bear weigh?
- 9 Enough to break the ice, my name's _____. Hey, it's your lucky day...
- 8 Of all the girls here, I chose to talk to you. So you're a girl, right?
- 7 You must be tired, because you've been running through my mind all day.
- 6 Can I take a picture of you?
- 5 So I can show Santa what I want for Christmas. Excuse me ma'am. May I see your tickets?
- 4 Tickets to the gun show. Do you have a boyfriend?
- 3 Yes? Well, when you want a MANfriend, come talk
- 2 Is your dad a baker?
- 1 Do you believe in love at first sight?
- 0 Or do you need me to walk by again?
- 1 You must be jelly.

- by Benjamin Clement and Sulmaan Hassan

Columnist starts quest for happiness



Mabel Hsu
In Love with Happiness

This week I found myself thinking, "Wow, this week is going to kill me. I've got college applications to work on, three big tests in school, SATs to study for and on top of all that, homework and extracurricular. At least it'll be better next week." And therein lies the problem: I thought the exact same thing the week before, and the week before that. It seems to me there are no breaks for teenagers. Weekdays are for crying and weekends are for dying. Then there's winter break, but it conveniently falls right before finals.

While I don't see school as my No. 1 priority (sorry, teachers!), it does seem to take up most of my time. I'm not saying that college isn't important, just that it's not the *most* important. I want to be able to sleep before 3 a.m., not stressed over the work I haven't finished. If time is my most precious resource, am I not wasting the few precious years I still have left as a teenager? My weeks seem to always consist of next-week-will-be-better weeks, and I am not OK with that. I've decided I need to go out, relax and enjoy the life I have now. I'm looking for a balance between work and play, even it means my GPA won't be 4.6.

Sometimes I'm reminded about what's really important when I look out the window and see an elderly grandmother in a wheelchair. She is comfortable as her equally elderly husband often takes her out for a stroll in my neighborhood.

As he pushes her wheelchair, he pushes it backwards so that her back is to the road and her face is to the one she loves most. Sometimes they have quiet talks while walking and the man says something to make the woman laugh, and sometimes they don't talk at all. She just watches her husband as he pushes the wheelchair. I don't think I have ever seen happiness and love more apparently.

That couple is now enjoying their life, with the person who truly matters most to them. I don't think it's wrong to say, "Hey, I want to be happy now, at 17." Whether I am 17 or 70, happiness is an emotion I want in my life.

So while I may not be going to Harvard and enjoying the fruits of my labor in 20 years as the CEO of a big company, I am trying to enjoy my weekends as of right now. I will still grow up, go to college and be all right in the end—diploma from Stanford or not. ♦