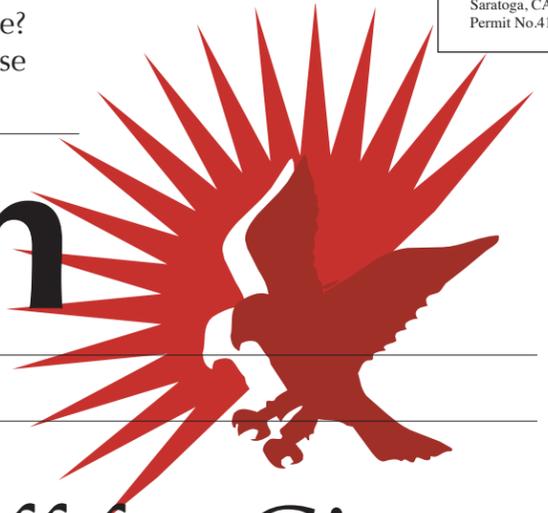


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THE saratogafalcon



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WORLD SERIES VICTORY

Seniors' playoff beards pay off for Giants

BY Brandon Judoprasertijo & Elijah Yi

As the San Francisco Giants fought their way into the playoffs and battled the Atlanta Braves and the Philadelphia Phillies for a spot in the World Series, seniors Kent Paisley and Greg Johnson showed their support by sporting a "playoff beard."

According to Paisley, playoff

beards have been around for as long as he can remember. Playoffs in most sports are synonymous with playoff beards, he said.

Both Paisley and Johnson have been fans of the Giants "since they were born."

"I've gone to some games at Candlestick Park, and I was there at a playoffs game," said Johnson. "I saw JT Snow hit a game-winning home run when

I was 4."

With 4-1 series victory over the Texas Rangers, the Giants have secured their first championship since 1954 when they were in New York and their first as the San Francisco Giants. This is a dream come true for diehard fans like Paisley and Johnson, especially because the Giants were regarded as under-



Courtesy of KENT PAISLEY



FALCON // LILLIAN CHEN

It took a month for senior Kent Paisley's playoff beard (left) to look like this, while it only took senior Greg Johnson (right) three weeks.

>> GIANTS on pg. 7

CLASS CUP

Hogwarts inspires class contest

BY Paul Jung & Anshu Siripurapu

In an effort to improve school spirit, the ASB, along with the spirit, rally and spring fling commissions, have brought a little bit of Hogwarts magic to SHS by introducing a "class cup" to foster friendly competition between the classes.

"The point of the class cup is to get more kids involved in the school," said rally commissioner Aditya Dev, a senior. "We wanted to work together with ASB, rally commission, and spirit commission to make something new. Usually we're always separate and don't really work together."

Dev, along with ASB president David Mandell, drew their inspiration for the cup from "Harry Potter," the popular series in which the different "houses" compete to earn points for the house cup at the end of the year. In keeping with

>> CUP on pg. 6



FALCON // LILLIAN CHEN

In June, the class with the most points will have their year engraved into the class cup.



enters classrooms

STUDENTS TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FACEBOOK GROUPS TO STUDY FOR THEIR AP CLASSES

BY Lillian Chen & Allison Toh

On a Thursday night, junior Varsha Ramesh looked at her chemistry homework and sighed in frustration. It was the night before her AP Chemistry quiz. Completely confused, Ramesh decided to open up Facebook, but not to write on someone's wall, browse photos or chat away. Instead, Ramesh clicked on the AP Chem group and opened the group chat and typed, "Did anyone get the right answer to No. 8 on the equilibrium worksheet?" In an instant, five people replied and explained their answers.

Facebook is known for its dynamic and constantly changing designs regarding chat applications and home feed layouts. While some of these alterations have brought about complaints, the newest ones on the social network has been met with success. The new Facebook groups keep the standard system of allowing users to post comments or questions on the group wall, as well as to upload pictures or videos. But as of mid October, users are now also able to chat with all members of the group at once, thanks to the new option dubbed "group chatting."

Many students have started to use the new version of groups as a way to study and

communicate with each other all at once. For classes such as AP Biology and AP Chemistry, students have created groups so others can ask curriculum-related questions and receive help on homework. Not only useful for homework, the site has also proven to be a forum for jokes and memorable events, especially for the AP Physics students, who post quotes from teacher Bill Drennan and pictures of his fish on the site.

"It's great that students are using these Facebook groups to study. It's great how helpful it is for them."

>> Teacher Kathy Nakamatsu

"I think it's great that students are using these Facebook groups to study," said AP Chemistry and Honors Chemistry teacher Kathy Nakamatsu. "It's great how helpful it is for them."

The trend of using Facebook groups as modern-day study groups was brought to Saratoga High when Ramesh read an article about how the newly updated Facebook groups now enable group chatting. Ramesh thought it would be convenient for people to use for academics. "After I made it, people were just added to it, and it developed into a really organized study group," said Ramesh.

"I made one for AP Calc and it was really popular, so I thought why not for Chem?" said Ramesh, who thinks that the group has helped herself and other students study more efficiently.

>> GROUP on pg. 6

>> the big idea

Facebook Groups

What: Facebook has created a new chat applet for its groups

Pros: Social networking now works hand-in-hand with academics

Cons: New additions prove distracting for some students

falcon figures

4 The number of students in the AP Biology group on Facebook.

31 The number of students in the AP Chem group.

33 The number of students in the AP Calc BC group.

35 The number of students in the AP Physics group.

>> Jenny Zhang

>> howto

Navigate the Facebook groups

On the page: Ask a question, share a link or post a photo. Read others' posts.

Chat: Use the group chat to discuss concepts in real time.

>> online extra

For more stories, photos and daily updates on student academic life, visit:

www.saratogafalcon.org

COLLEGE TREND

UC schools lose their luster

BY Jason Wu

Growing up, senior Chris Chung knew almost from day one that he wanted to attend UCLA. Fast forward to his senior year, however, and he seems a bit unsure about what school he wants to be heading to come next fall.

"Right now I'm definitely applying to more privates than I ever expected to early on in high school," he said. "The top UCs were my targets, but you just don't know what's going to happen with acceptances so I've decided to apply broadly to out of states and privates."

>> COLLEGE on pg. 3

>> upcoming events

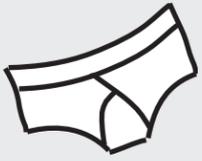
Tonight SHS vs. Palo Alto
Come support the Falcons on senior night. JV is at 5 and varsity starts at 7:30.

Nov. 20-22 WBA Championship
Good luck, marching band, at Fresno!

Nov. 24-26 Thanksgiving
Be thankful for these three days of no school.

inside the falcon

News	1-8
Opinion	9-13
Entertainment	14-15
In-Depth	16-17
School Scope	18-19
Life	20-22
Sports	23-27
Backpage	28



news >> **briefs**

Secret Exchange Program helps to unify

Everyone loves to get spontaneous presents on special holidays, which is exactly what the Secret Exchange Pal Program allows students and teachers to do. This program, created last year by the ASB, is being continued this year by ASB secretary Pamela Lee in an effort to promote more school spirit.

Lee sent teachers e-mails at the beginning of the school year with questions about their ideal presents. Organizers gave students their corresponding teachers' surveys to make specialized gift bags and baskets during major holidays such as Halloween, winter break, Valentine's day and spring. In addition, teachers receive a list of a students' interests and prepare presents for their own student, who is chosen by luck. Gifts are simple, generally costing from \$5 to \$10.

So far, 22 teachers have replied to Lee's e-mail. In addition to teachers signing up, many students have signed up as well.

"I did Secret Pals last year, and it's just a really nice break from school. It's a relief giving and receiving presents on occasions," said senior Nina Mohanty.

The many exchanges made during the major holidays are completely anonymous, but at the end of the year there is a luncheon where students and teachers reveal the identity of their secret pals.

"This is just a fun system," said assistant principal Karen Hyde. "I get so excited to go to the store and buy my pal their present!"

—Olivia Chock

Fall election brings new board member

The Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District school board will have one new member—a former Los Gatos High principal—following the Nov. 2 elections.

The candidates who will be on the five-member LG-SUHSD school board are Cynthia Chang, who was re-elected with 28.21 percent of the votes; Doug Ramezane, former Los Gatos High School principal, who won 27.29 percent of the votes; and Michele Van Zuiden, an educator whose two children graduated from Los Gatos High School, who was re-elected with 26.24 percent of the votes. Parent and sales director Neil Green fell short with 18.25 percent of the votes.

The new members of the Saratoga Union School District school board are Patty Buchanan and Michael A. Gipe, who were re-elected, winning 34.25 percent and 30.18 percent of the votes, respectively, and Paige Berardo, who won 23.73 percent of the votes. Candidate Ashley Chao fell short with 11.83 percent of the votes.

By a mere 40 votes out of almost 10,000 cast, Saratoga voters voted no on Measure Q, which would have limited commercial buildings downtown to two stories. At the statewide level, Proposition 19, which proposed the legalization of marijuana, also narrowly failed to pass with 51.86 percent of voters rejecting the controversial measure.

—Denise Lin

APES students visit recycling plant

Three students from the AP Environmental Science classes have been selected to tour a recycling plant of Green Waste Recovery, a waste management firm that provides services in Northern California, in order to learn more about the process of recycling.

The students, seniors Walter Hsiang and Nikki Fukuda and junior Mac Hyde were scheduled to be joined by three students from Los Gatos High on their tour during 6th period on Nov. 10.

The trip was suggested by district superintendent Cary Matsuoka, who was informed about the facility by a retiring Monte Sereno city council member. Matsuoka said he hoped the trip would help the students better understand the problem of waste management and inspire them to increase recycling on campus.

Hyde said he thinks that trip is a good way to improve the school's efforts to recycle and provide ideas on how to involve more students.

Both Hyde and Matsuoka said many students are unaware of which products are actually recyclable, which leads to a large amount of unneeded waste.

"Hopefully [the plant] can show us how to be more effective with placement of receptacles as well as understand what is truly recyclable," said Hyde.

—Anshu Siripurapu

>> **picturethis**

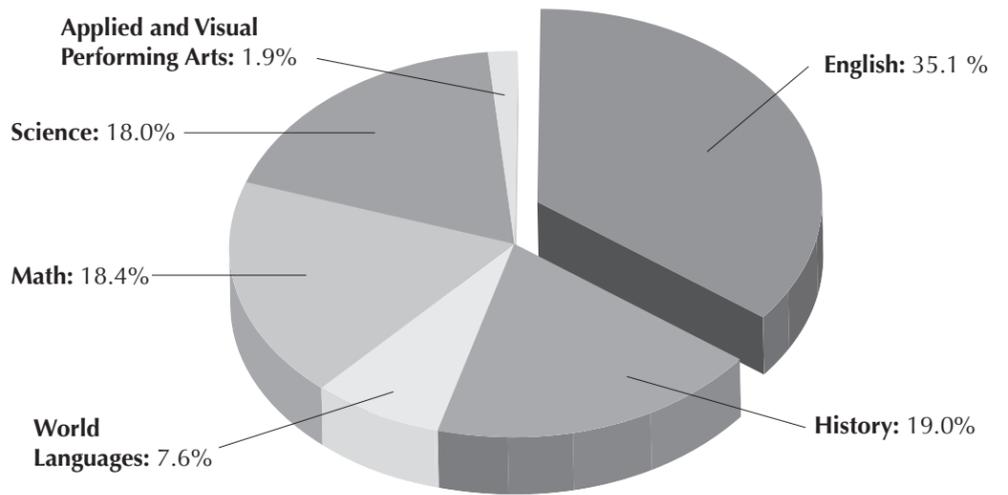


TALISMAN // SALMAAN JAVED

Members of Code Red perform a cheer at the girls' field hockey senior night on Nov. 2. The team played its last home game of the season against Presentation High School, losing 1-0 in overtime.

falconfigures <<

Number of college recommendation letters written:



Based on a survey of teachers and students.

—Arnav Dugar

>> **falconfocus**

Jaycie Luo: Possible recruit to the girls' Chinese ice hockey team

By Brandon **Judoprasertijo** & Lauren **Kuan**

It was like any other day at ice hockey practice, executing drills and scrimmaging with teammates, when freshman Jaycie Luo noticed her dad talking with men in red and yellow warm-up suits. Shortly after, she found out that the Chinese Olympic Team had offered to allow her to practice with them and possibly later get recruited depending on her performance.

"I had no idea that I would join the China team until they showed up at practice and talked to me about it. I was so surprised and happy when they did though," said Luo.

Luo's dad first started talking to the manager of the China team on Sept. 12, and then they began talking about Luo and possible recruitment. Her parents want her to connect to and be more immersed in her Chinese culture since she was born in the U.S. Luo may go to China this summer to practice with the team and possibly join their practices when they are in the United States. If she performs well, Luo will get recruited for and play in the 2014 Winter Olympics.

Luo has been playing ice hockey for nine years. She attends practices at the Logitech Ice Rink three to four times a week for 1.5 to 3 hours. She is currently part of the San



Courtesy of JAYCIE LUO

Freshman Jaycie Luo breaks away with the puck. Luo currently plays on the San Jose Junior Sharks Team.

Jose Junior Sharks Team in the 14-year-old group.

"I'm pretty serious about [hockey]," said Luo. "When I grow up, I still want to be involved with hockey and inspire others."

Ice hockey has played a positive role in Luo's life. It has not only allowed her to meet new friends, but has also strengthened her mentally.

"It has made me a stronger minded person and it motivates me to always do my best and to fulfill all my dreams," said Luo.

Luo's interest in ice hockey first started when she was 5.

"I hated figure skating," said Luo. "I saw another girl play hockey and I decided to

give it a try. I think it's challenging, which makes it more fun and exciting having to cooperate with your teammates."

Luo said that her parents and her coach were the biggest motivators and contributors to her development as a player.

"My parents always told me to work hard and always took me to practices and games. My coach helps me improve on my skills, too," said Luo. "They're always cheering me on."

Of course, Luo's parents are extremely proud of their daughter.

"Jaycie loves hockey and it is part of her life," said Zhen Zhen Li, Luo's mother. "She has grown up with it and I am so proud of her." ♦

MATH CONTEST

Math star dominates in national contests

BY Stanley Yip

Albert Gu laughed when he opened a letter over the summer to find a certificate with the words "Congratulations to Albert Gu from Lynbrook High School."

The senior had claimed first place in the Asian-Pacific Math Olympiad (APMO) contest on March 8 to win this award, placing him among the top high school mathematicians in the entire United States.

Gu and junior Brian Wai decided to take the test at Lynbrook.

The four-hour test consisted of five questions designed for the top math geniuses of each country in the Asian-Pacific Rim.

Thirty-three countries participated in APMO with the U.S. placing 3rd overall behind Russia and Korea. Each country wins at most one gold, two silver and four bronze medals. Gu has taken the test twice, claiming silver last year and the gold medal for the U.S. this year.

"I was somewhat surprised to have done better than my peers," Gu said.

Gu said he went to Romania for the Romanian Masters in Mathematics (RMM) competition where he was part of a six-person team representing the U.S.

Going into the test, Gu said he didn't concentrate on competing with others.

"You kind of have to be lucky on [contest days] because how well you do depends on your [brain function] that day," Gu said. After the test, Gu said he felt confident that he did well. He said he fully solved four problems and made significant progress on the fifth; most contestants from the U.S. solved three.

Math teacher and math club adviser PJ Yim said he was happy for Gu



Albert Gu works on a problem during the Mandelbrot math contest on Nov. 2.

but not surprised by the results.

Yim said Gu is a determined person who works hard and has always been excellent at math. Gu's achievement is just another example of Saratoga students' talent.

"[Gu's victory] is another example of the excellence that all Saratoga students strive for," Yim said.

In order to even have the opportunity to take the APMO, Gu had to score high on several other math contests. Five hundred people are selected to participate in the USA Math Olympiad (USAMO) based on American Mathematics Competition (AMC) scores. Fifty-five of those chosen are allowed to participate in the Math Olympiad Summer Program (MOSP) in Lincoln, Neb.

From there, the selection becomes critical on who will advance to APMO. Gu said he will continue to practice math, but balancing schoolwork and college applications has become a challenge lately.

"I haven't worked in a while because of apps," Gu said. "But I hope to perform well in contests next semester." ♦

COLLEGE APPS

Online rec letters save time, money

BY Priyanka Nookala

As September turned into October, English teacher Suzanne Herzman was extremely busy grading almost 90 essays from her English 11 Honors students. At the same time, she was writing many college recommendation letters for the early action applicants. By late October Herzman still had 25 letters to write for her students who chose to follow the regular decision timeline for applications.

In the past, this would mean hours spent stuffing and stamping envelopes to dozens of schools.

This year, at least for some students, she and other teachers are getting a break because those recommendations are now being submitted electronically.

Guidance counselor Alinna Satake is the driving force in pioneering the system of online college recommendation letters at SHS.

"We wanted to wait until some of the kinks had been worked out and it also helps that our sister school Los Gatos started last year, so that we have support and resources to help us," said Satake.

Satake has yet to work out all the details, but she has established the basic structure of how the online recommendations work.

Students use Naviance, an online college planning program, to keep a list of the colleges they are applying to. Then teachers write and share letters using the Common Application, a system for sending the same letters to dozens of different schools.

Although this system will save a lot of time for staff and students, Satake feels

there are still some key factors in making sure the system works.

"This only works if students are up to date with following the directions and keeping on top of their Naviance accounts," Satake said.

Senior Kaitna Shankar thinks it is not particularly difficult to keep the Naviance accounts updated.

According to Satake, online submissions save teachers countless hours of photocopying papers as well as mailing, stuffing, and sending envelopes. This system also saves the school hundreds of dollars on materials.

Herzman agrees that the new system is efficient.

"[Having rec letters online] saves time and thwarts frustration."

>> teacher Suzanne Herzman

"It saves time—and thwarts frustration. I can focus on writing rather than collating, copying, clipping, [and] sorting," Herzman said.

Senior Sumant Sabada finds that online recommen-

dations have many benefits which are useful and does not foresee any real challenges.

"[The online system is] pretty straightforward. I guess something can go wrong electronically, though I don't think that it'll happen, but I guess that's the only worry I'd have," said Sabada.

The system for online recommendation letters is not fool-proof, but Satake is confident it saves resources and time while making the process of applying to college a lot easier.

"I'm grateful that so many of these students have taken the risk to pilot the online app. I would encourage all students and letter writers to jump on board," Herzman said. ♦

COLLEGE >> Going private

continued from pg. 1

His change of heart stems partly from the budget cuts in the UC school system that have caused an increase in class sizes.

"Now that I realize how crowded the UCs are, I'm leaning towards private schools because they offer the opportunity to study more closely with professors," he said.

Chung's dilemma reflects a trend in which seniors are increasingly exploring alternatives to UC schools.

In 2010, 33 percent of students attended UCs compared to 39 percent in 2008. Private school attendance increased from 24 percent in 2008 to 30 percent in 2010.

Assistant principal Brian Safine attributes this change to a combination of three factors: students applying to a broader range of colleges, the poor economic environment and the decreased acceptance rates among the UC schools.

"When the students compare other financial aid packages from private schools, there doesn't seem to be as much of a difference as there used to be," Safine said.

The University of California's Board of Regents approved a plan to raise undergraduate fees 32 percent in 2009. However, not all students believe that this increase is significantly impacting their college ambitions.

"I'm not bothered by the tuition increase as much as the increase in [college] class sizes and their cutting down on programs," said senior David Zeng.

Senior Eric Chuang likewise sees the

tuition increase as only a minor concern when weighed against other factors. Chuang cites California's weather and the proximity of UC schools to his home as major selling points.

Although the impact of the UC tuition increase may be overestimated, SHS graduates in the past few years have nonetheless begun taking a greater interest in private colleges.

"I can't speak for everyone, but I guess some people did feel like private schools were becoming a better choice," said 2010 alumnus and current Carnegie Mellon freshman Felix Chiu.

Although many of Chiu's friends still went on to attend UC schools, he said he had already decided before applying that he would attend a private college over a UC if given the opportunity.

Although Carnegie Mellon's total expenses are about \$55,000 compared with Berkeley's \$35,000 for in-state residents, Chiu believes that the extra cost has paid off for itself.

Despite having been accepted to several UC schools, Chiu does not regret his decision and said that "it felt like it was becoming more competitive so I wanted someplace where I could still make an impact."

With the UC school system struggling under nearly \$450 million in debt, he also does not foresee a quick recovery.

Regardless of whether the UC situation improves or not, Chung's mind has been made up:

"If I get the chance to attend a top-notch private like USC, I'm definitely going to go that way." ♦

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English 9 MAP has new options for freshman

BY WillEdman

Amid the budget cuts and financial difficulties that face the school, the Media Arts Program has continued to move ahead. Now in its third year, MAP has created new English 9 MAP classes this year.

During MAP's first two years, MAP classes were only available to sophomores and juniors with electives available to seniors. This gave students a chance to judge their high school experience before choosing whether they would dedicate themselves to media arts.

However, with the fruition of English 9 MAP, students can be immersed in the world of multimedia even at the start of their high school careers.

"The major reason the English 9 MAP class was created was to help bridge the excitement coming out of the successful Redwood media program with the 10th grade fully integrated program here at SHS,"

said MAP program coordinator Kerry Mohnike. "Also, we saw a lot of interest this past year at the sophomore level and we were looking for ways to build skills and meet interests."

The available classes include five periods, three taught by Cathy Head and two by Suzanne Herzman. More than 100 freshman students are in the classes.

According to Herzman, the curriculum offered in the English 9 MAP class meets three basic standards: to teach aesthetic principles, to develop and practice collaborative skills and to provide increased opportunity for multimedia projects.

"By the end of the year, students should have the foundation in place for success in MAP and can make an informed decision about whether to continue with the program," said Herzman.

The new curriculum found in this class has been a boon to many students who find that

they excel more in a group-based environment, while increasing their knowledge in media and technology at the same time.

"We do a lot more group activities and get to utilize media much more than in a normal class," said freshman Ben Smerdon.

This departure from the curriculum of a normal English class was also noted by freshman Yashaswini Vuruputoor.

"It's interesting how media arts and technology can be incorporated into a regular curriculum," she said.

Freshmen are not alone in their new experiences. Since English 9 MAP is being taught for the first time, teachers have had to learn teaching methods and other aspects of MAP.

"I've been doing more media work myself to prepare to teach this class," said Herzman. "At a professional development workshop in September, I planned, filmed and edited a



FALCON // Grishma Athavale

Students in Herzman English 9 MAP class grade their homework.

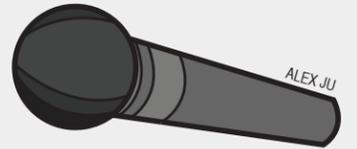
short film—and learned a great deal from the experience."

Although it has been a mere two months since its start, English 9 MAP has proven to be successful for both teachers and students.

"While students in the course

have no way of comparing it to the traditional English 9 course, the teachers who have taught the traditional classes see that students are producing good work and learning all of the fundamental skills needed to move on to the next level." ♦

Media Arts Program MAP EXPANDS IN ITS THIRD YEAR



Meet the Team



Tony Palma
Adviser

"[I] provide guidance to the publication and maintain all the equipment."



Alex Chan
Head Producer

"I have to tidy everything up to make sure everything is ready to go for the public to see."



Abner Inzunza
Section Producer

"I design the t-shirts and collaborate with Alex for intro ideas and songs."

Senior



Jocelyn Takahashi
Section Producer

"I am currently in charge of making the 'About Us' page on the website."

Junior



Nicole Shadman
Section Producer

"I teach people how to edit videos and give them advice on their productions."

Junior



Talia Sisco
Associate Producer

"I am a part-time producer and part-time reporter."

Junior



Priyanka Arunkumar
Associate Producer

"I'm in charge of keeping people on track and helping out others."

Junior



Zara Sheikh
Associate Producer

"When I'm a producer, I help others with their stories. I'm also in charge of the Facebook page."

Junior

New building enables faster progress for SHSTV

BY IzzyAlbert
& WillEdman

"And we're on in three, two..."

Juniors Nicole Shadman and Talia Sisco sit in movie director chairs, reporting news that will soon stream throughout the school. Accompanied by the wide green screen walls and supplied with the necessary new technology to create a video report, students in the Multimedia Journalism staff feel as if they're in a professional television studio.

With the addition of the high-tech MAP building to campus, Saratoga High School TV hopes to improve its news videos as students begin to make the first stories in the program's second year of existence. SHSTV, with a staff of sophomores, juniors and seniors, was started last year as a third student-run journalism program, in addition to the Falcon newspaper and Talisman yearbook staffs. Now that its experimental inaugural year has ended, SHSTV can begin to function as an established school-wide institution.

"We are a lot more organized this year," said Tony Palma, SHSTV's adviser and teacher. "Our videos will be made with the same idea as last year, but now that we have a year's experience, we have the opportunity to be much better."

Many members of SHSTV's original staff have returned from last year, and the program is led by head producer senior Alex Chan, section producers senior Abner Inzunza, junior Nicole Shadman and junior Jocelyn Takahashi, and associate

producers junior Priyanka Arunkumar, junior Zara Sheikh and junior Talia Sisco, all of whom except for Takahashi were on the 2009-2010 staff.

Yet although there are many familiar faces in the Multimedia Journalism class, SHSTV's second year has been largely affected by the new additions.

"We have new producers, a new website, and obviously, a new building," said Palma. "We spent the first few months of school introducing and acclimating the staff members to the new MAP building, and we will continue to do this every year so that the building can be properly used."

The new building, with its spectrum of media and technological tools, has opened many opportunities for SHSTV.

"We got three new studio cameras that allow us to do live shows," said Chan. "There are green screens everywhere, so we can do weather reports and anything else that might require it. Also, the recording studio gives us a place to record voice-overs."

According to Chan, a newly designed version of SHSTV's website, www.shstv.org, that will include short biographies of the staff members will be up and running soon, and will have a live streaming feed that students, parents and teachers can watch at any time.

The staff of SHSTV is excited at the prospect of a successful year, where the program's exposure can be increased and news in the form of multimedia can be spread to the entire school. ♦

>> togatalks

What do you think of the MAP program?

"The MAP program has taught me to use skills from one class and to apply it to all of my classes."



sophomore Sarika Kathuria

"The teachers are amazing and inspirational."



junior Stefanie Tanaka

"It is a program with a really good vision of its goal."



junior Kevin Lee

MUSIC

Orchestra exchange opens eyes

BY Vivien Lu

Inspiration comes in many places for musicians. For the new members of the school's orchestra, inspiration recently came with a collaboration with Lynbrook High School Chamber Orchestra, which took place in the McAfee Center on Oct. 29.

"The exchange concert every year is a great outlet for students to share with another school," music director Michael Boitz said. "By adding an orchestra, it makes good interaction."

Being able to watch another school perform gave students a chance to learn from others.

"My favorite part was meeting new people," junior violinist Lisa Asai said. "During dinner, which is made by the moms, we talk to the people from Lyn-

brook as we eat with them in the cafeteria."

Besides being more social, students can learn from watching their peers.

"It was a good experience for the new people in our orchestra because they have never played with a different school before," junior violist Carolyn Choi said. "By playing with another group, they could see the differences between the two."

There were a variety of pieces performed, which ranged from Respighi and Bloch to Led Zeppelin.

The SHS orchestra rehearsed every Tuesday to prepare. At the event, the two schools performed separately.

"We played different genres like rock and classical, which made the performance interesting," said Choi.

In addition, the performance featured

piano soloist Emily Hsu, a 2001 graduate and full-time choir accompanist who played Tchaikovsky's mvt. IV Finale.

"Overall, considering how much time we sacrifice and how hard we work," Asai said, "I thought we played very well as a group and as an audience I thought we were respectful too."

Marching Band Performs at Fresno

The same weekend, there was a marching band state competition at Fresno High School on Saturday, Oct. 30.

Saratoga placed 3rd in its division overall, with a score of 79.

"We did well in our music category, but we didn't do very well in the marching aspect," junior flutist Matthew Opatry said. "The field was a college field and the hash marks confused people, and some based their marching off the

wrong hashes, messing up the forms."

This is the first time the marching band incorporated props into their performance.

"We got a higher score in general because the judges actually understood what we were doing," Opatry said. "There were ramps for us to march on and scaffolding for the guard to go up on. Everything was more exciting because it popped."

Last weekend, the marching band hosted a senior night on Benny Pierce Field with Homestead High School and Los Gatos High School, where all three performed and announced the seniors that participated in marching band this year. This celebration allowed all of the family and friends of band members, as well as community member to come and see their field shows. ♦

SPEECH AND DEBATE

Former athlete tries new type of coaching

BY Karthik Annaamalai & Abhi Venkataramana

When he was at John F. Kennedy high school in Richmond, Steve Clemens played four sports: football, track and field, tennis and basketball. At UC Irvine, Clemens continued his passion for sports by playing football and water polo.

But now, years down the road, Clemens has been hired by Saratoga High's speech and debate program to be the head debate coach, along with returning speech coach Erick Rector. Clemens, a veteran debater, brings years of high school and collegiate debate experience as well as coaching experience, having been a forensics coach for Harker Middle School.

"I like what debate does for young minds," said Clemens. "It's a great training ground for students and it gave me many opportunities. I also believe that it can be rewarding."

Clemens made the transition from Harker Middle School to Saratoga High because he felt that "fortune met opportunity."

"It was a good offer," said Clemens, "at a time where I was looking for a new opportunity. The two met and here I am now, ready to coach."

In addition to coaching the debate team, Clemens also juggles two other consulting jobs. As a consultant, Clemens works with the Santa Clara debate team as well as with Expedia's boutique travel agencies.

Despite coaching here for just over a

month, Clemens has high expectations for the team this debate season. He hopes to see students not only become better debaters, but also better think-

ers as they slowly determine their career paths.

"After learning about the students' commitment and desire, I think my expectations are relatively realistic," said Clemens. "I expect to qualify at least one team from each of the debate events to states as well as three or four extemp students. The end of the season will show whether I'm right or not, but I have high hopes."

The team will compete in its second league tournament of the year this weekend at Milpitas High school. ♦

"I expect to qualify at least one team from each of the debate events to states."

>> Steve Clemens

HALL OF FAME

Yearbook receives top honor from press group

BY Rohan Rajeev

The school's yearbook, the Talisman, was recently inducted to the National Scholastic Press Association's All-American Hall of Fame for having received the highest quality rating in the association's annual critiques for the past decade.

To be inducted into the Hall of Fame, a school needs to receive an All-American rating for its publications in 10 out of 11 years.

Members of the staff may go to the spring NSPA conference in Anaheim to accept the award.

Senior Grace Kim, an editor of the Talisman, feels that the award reflects on the hard work of the staff.

Kim said that the fact that a different staff could collaborate and create a well-critiqued yearbook every year was fantastic.

In annual critiques by a variety of judges, the Talisman scored at or well above the "Very Good" mark in all five criteria, which include categories such as overall design and content.

The publication also earned a mark of distinction from the NSPA in four of those categories, earning the yearbook its 10th All-American in 10 years.

Yearbook adviser Mike Tyler said that it's not an easy achievement.

"I'm most happy about the fact that different groups of students can work cohesively and produce a good yearbook year after year," Tyler said. ♦

STUDENT BUSINESS



Seniors Brian Vo and Jesse Yung hand out meals and drinks at lunch on Nov. 5.

Econ project inspires student catering

BY Joanna Lee & Michelle Shu

When their economics teacher Kim Anzalone assigned seniors Brian Vo and Jesse Yung a project to put together a business proposal earlier in the semester, they not only completed the assignment but also decided to put it into action. The two started a catering business in mid-October where they retrieve lunches from outside restaurants to deliver to students on campus for a small fee.

Vo and Yung have eaten off campus since last year, but they thought it would be more interesting going to unusual restaurants to buy lunch this year. When their friends spotted them with their new lunches like pho noodles from Pho Saigon and Vietnamese sandwiches from Lee's Sandwiches, they soon brought back food for their friends, which inspired their idea of starting a business.

"What really pushed us over the edge to make our adventures into a business was our Econ teacher, Mrs. Anzalone," said Yung. "She gave us a big project to build a hypothetical business, and Brian and I thought that this was a chance to really put our service out there."

Anzalone had her students put together a business proposal to present in

front of the class where their classmates would decide whether their business would be successful or not.

Currently, Vo and Yung are trying to think of more restaurants that would catch the interest of new customers, but at the moment they regularly go to the conveniently close Pho Saigon, a cozy Vietnamese restaurant and Lee's Sandwiches, a shop that offers a variety of sandwiches, every Tuesday and Thursday. However, if they decide to order from a place farther away, like In N' Out, they notify their customers about eating in third period.

The pair places the orders during break so the food is easy to retrieve during lunch. Charging an extra dollar per customer, the pair tries to collect money before lunch; however, if they are unable to, customers pay when receiving their lunch.

"If business gets better, as we hope it will, then we might be willing to deliver maybe five days a week," said Yung.

Even with business just starting up, the two earned a total \$25 in their first week, the week of Oct. 18.

While they currently don't have regular buyers since they have just started for the year, Vo and Yung are "hoping to build good relationships with our customers in order to encourage them to let us deliver their food for them." ♦

COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER

CCC contains oodles of handy resources

BY Denise Lin & Kelly Liu

Around campus, many students, especially upperclassmen, seem to be stressing about how to get into the right college, how to find the right college and how to find out more information about potential careers.

They are sometimes confused and don't realize the answers to many of their questions can be found in the College and Career Center, located near the main office and special education classrooms.

The CCC is run by about 50 dedicated parent volunteers, who work scheduled shifts each week. About 50 speakers from various colleges present at the center each year.

"I don't think [the CCC] is advertised as well...[but] there are so many scholarship opportunities, volunteer opportunities, and internship opportunities," said Rashmi Shah, a parent volunteer of the CCC.

Students can take advantage of these opportunities by getting more familiar with the variety of resources available in the CCC.

For example, there is a file for volunteer, internship and job opportunities, a job board and work permits, financial aid and scholarship information and a file for summer programs and opportunities.

In addition, the CCC contains an abundance of resources for the SAT and ACT. Registration information and applications for the SAT and ACT can be found at the CCC, as well as a list of preparation programs and prep books.

The center schedules visits by college representatives who talk about their schools and answer questions, something that can help college-bound

students know what to expect from college.

"The college speakers from different universities are really helpful because they [give] perspective on what to expect and what I'm shooting for," said junior Sophie Kang. "It's kind of daunting at first because they tell you what they want, but it's good to have knowledge of what I'll be doing in one year."

Kang finds other features of the CCC valuable as well.

"Other than college speakers there are job opportunities and college fares...SAT study guides and stuff, [which] is always nice," said Kang.

To help students as they apply for college, the CCC provides applications for community colleges, various public and private colleges and universities, and the Common Application. Application workshops for UCs and CSUs are also available.

A bounty of reference materials are also available. The CCC stores reference materials about careers, colleges, and scholarships and test preparation. College reference books and other materials are available for checking out. Computers in the CCC provide access to college and career databases and student planner information.

The CCC also has a web page on the guidance page for students to easily access. The abundance of resources CCC provides can help students pave their future outside of high school, whether it may be for college admission help, SAT preparation and other various internship, volunteer and job opportunities. ♦

College speakers prove useful in admissions process

BY Pia Mishra

As seniors begin the college application process this fall, they face the tough decision of choosing which colleges will be right for them come fall 2011. However, the College and Career Center has made the decision a little easier for the seniors by hosting college speakers every week.

Beginning in early September, the CCC, with help from guidance secretary Bonnie Sheikh, lines up speakers to give 45-50 minute presentation on their schools in order to give students more information as they begin to compile a list of schools. These speakers, usually regional admission representatives from their respective colleges, speak about the student life and admissions process and answer any questions from the students.

"The college speakers are actually really helpful for me," said senior Kaitna Shankar. "It gives me a chance to learn about the specific admissions process for each college and what exactly I need to do."

Often, the representatives who come to speak are the same admissions officers who will review the freshman applications later in the year.

"A lot of the students do not realize that if they make an effort to come and attend these visits, the admissions representatives may remember them when it comes time to apply," said Sheikh.

"The representatives are also extremely accessible; they give out their cards and encourage contacting them through email if students have any questions."

Recently, the CCC has been focusing on some of the smaller universities to expose students to the unique programs or professors these schools offer.

"There are a lot of cool things that these smaller colleges are doing that students don't usually know or hear about until they learn more," said Sheikh.

The CCC has also tried to keep students informed by sending information through Naviance and e-mails. Anytime the students select a college on Naviance that they are interested in learning about or applying to, they receive an automatic e-mail when the speaker from that particular college is visiting.

"I usually hear about the college speakers through Naviance. My counselor lets me know when the colleges I'm interested in are coming to visit," said senior Alison Buchanan.

The college visits are scheduled during the second half of classes throughout the day. Students are required to get a pink permission slip from the CCC and have it signed by their teachers to miss class time.

More information regarding the time and date of speakers from different colleges can be found both on the board outside the CCC and inside the CCC, on the daily announcements, through Naviance, PTSO e-mails and the online CCC calendar. ♦



A speaker from NYU makes a presentation in the research center on Sept 30.

FALCON // JORDAN WAITE

GROUP >> Using Facebook groups for academics has its benefits

continued from pg. 1

"It's really helpful to have a group of people already organized so you can ask questions. This way, I don't have to try to remember who is in [AP Chemistry]," said Ramesh.

Students in Bob Kucer's AP Biology classes have also begun to utilize groups as a helpful tool.

"We made the Bio group because we

knew it would help us," said junior Priyanka Arunkumar. "We usually all get in one chat group anyway and try to solve the problem, but then [chatting] got kind of confusing because you can't Facebook chat a bunch of people at the same time unless you have [group chat]."

Although having these Facebook groups is helpful, there is a downfall. Many users have said the group chat can get annoying since some members spam

the chat and the conversation always pops up, according to Ramesh.

"Every time there's homework due, I see [the group chat] pop up at around 8 p.m. and it goes till around 11 p.m., sometimes even midnight," said junior Viraj Parmar, who is also a member of the AP Chemistry Facebook group. "I guess it's useful, but the chat gets really annoying because it pops up even when you don't want it to."

Even with the groups' faults, many students have expressed their liking for Facebook's new addition.

"I think the Facebook groups are pretty helpful because they let various people communicate together and share information for a certain purpose" said Arunkumar. "Also anything can be shared on a Facebook group like photos, links, documents, and videos to help each other out." ♦

CUP >> Competition for class cup works to boost class spirit

continued from pg. 1

this theme, rally commission constructed a 6-foot cup from old school trophies on which the winning class' name will be inscribed.

"We knew that the first rally was going to be Harry Potter themed," said Dev. "We thought introducing the class cup at the rally would be a good idea."

Spirit commissioner Shir Nehama believes that the friendly competition over the cup will increase school spirit.

"I think that everyone has that competitiveness inside of them, so people have a motivation to dress up other than it just being fun," said Nehama.

The main concern so far is that not many people are aware of the class cup

competition.

"Since it's new, people aren't really getting into it yet," said Dev. "But hopefully once it gets further into school and points start tallying up, people will become more aware of it."

The trophy is located in the office, along with four jugs filled with marbles representing the number of points each class has. Before points from homecoming were added, the seniors were in first place with 81 points, followed by the juniors with 70, sophomores with 55 and freshmen with 33.

Classes can earn points through spirit activities. Winning games at rallies, Homecoming participation, dressing up for spirit days, participating in school activities and showing class spirit on rally

days are just some of the ways to earn points for the class cup.

According to Mandell, anything related to school spirit can earn points toward the class cup, which are tabulated by the ASB, and rally and spirit commissions.

This new system does not mean that the seniors have a guaranteed win, however. The point totals are carefully judged and added so that the seniors will not have an automatic advantage over the other classes, Mandell said.

"In previous rallies, seniors would always win," said Dev. "This year we have to be careful about letting other classes get a chance."

Dev anticipates that as it gets closer to the end of the year, more people will

know about the class cup.

"It's still kind of under the radar," said Dev, "but hopefully we'll get there."

Despite its lack of publicity, Nehama has seen an increase in spirit after the introduction of the class cup.

"I've definitely seen an increase in spirit," said Nehama, "particularly the red pride for our Los Gatos game and our College Apparel Day where we had over 400 kids dress up, which is a huge step up from where we were."

Mandell is also optimistic about the success of the cup.

"This is the first year we've done the class cup," said Mandell. "I think it will help our classes get more involved, which is something we've lost sight of over the years." ♦

INDIAN BENEFIT

Indian community dances the night away

BY Apeksha Sharma

Brightly colored clothing and loud traditional Indian music filled the Redwood Middle School gym as dozens of members of Saratoga's Indian community gathered to participate in a traditional dance called Dandiya on Oct. 15.

Dandiya, also referred to as "garba," is a playful dance that embodies the devotion the people have for their God.

Senior Kaitna Shankar was one of the organizers who put the event together, which attracted many Saratoga High students.

"The event took place to get away from the stresses of daily life and to have fun and dance together," said Shankar.

The night also lent a helpful hand to the senior citizens in Saratoga.

"[We] had fun together and danced, and we donated proceeds to Saratoga Area Senior Council (SASC)," said Shankar.

Senior Shir Nehama found herself having a good time at the event.

"What I liked the most about the Dandiya event was that I got exposed and learned about the traditional Indian dance," said Nehama. "Everyone

seemed so cheerful to get to spend time with their friends and family."

The event also served as a dedication to the late Susie Nagpal, a former Saratoga City Council member who started the idea for the dance a year ago and passed away from cancer last spring.

"She worked to make the dream of the Dandiya actually become a reality," said Shankar. "It's sad she wasn't here for the second year to see how much of a success it has become, but we know she would've been proud."

With live music, good food, and an unforgettable crowd, Shankar was able

to deem the night a success.

"I think it went well because a ton of people showed up," said Shankar. "It was great to see people trying something new and different."

Nehama was also impressed with the outcome and effort that was put into the event.

"The food was really amazing and the traditional outfits the women wore were beautiful," said Nehama. "I think every student should have the opportunity to learn about cultures other than their own since we live in such a diverse community." ♦

FOOTBALL

LG game Facebook group brings about controversy

WILDCAT PLAYERS PUNISHED FOR USING UNSPORTSMANLIKE LANGUAGE

BY Sabrina Cismas

With the football team ending its 27-year regular season losing streak to Los Gatos on Oct. 22, happiness and pride still radiate throughout the school. However, unsportsmanlike conduct on Facebook centered around a handful of Los Gatos players highlighted the trouble that this rivalry could bring.

Seniors Kevin Darchuk and Tim Lycurgus formed a group on Facebook in the week before the game, hoping to garner more excitement and school spirit.

"It just started out pretty normal," Darchuk said. "We only invited kids from Saratoga, but then the Los Gatos kids found out about it and they started joining and writing things on the wall."

Principal Jeff Anderson said a few Los Gatos players crossed the line with overzealous foul language and racist remarks against the Saratoga players on the site.

Anderson said that once the Los Gatos players got involved in the group, SHS students responded with only one negative comment.

"[The comment] was pretty innocuous, and it wasn't focused on anybody's race and it wasn't profane," Anderson said. "It wasn't in the same league as

the comments that were coming from Los Gatos."

Assistant principal Karen Hyde was concerned about the group even before the worst of the remarks were said, but she did not think that intervention was necessary at that point.

"It wasn't the school's Facebook [group], so the school isn't responsible for it," Hyde said. The Saratoga administration was unaware of the group's existence until the Los Gatos administration got involved.

The Thursday before the game, once the comments had been posted, Hyde said she got a call from the Los Gatos administration who had learned about the controversial group and wanted the creator of the group to delete it.

No SHS football players or students were punished, as none of them were at fault, Hyde said. Anderson was unable to confirm what punishments the Los Gatos players received.

Whatever those punishments were, all the Los Gatos players still played against Saratoga on Oct. 22. Anderson speculated the event may have occurred because of desperation and nervousness. For a team that has beaten Saratoga for so long, Los Gatos should have been confident in its ability, he said.

"Because they came back so venomously [on the group], I think they might have known in the back of their minds that they might have had a chance of being defeated," Anderson said.

In the end, Darchuk said, the Los Gatos players were forced to apologize to him and Lycurgus. ♦

Unsportsmanlike conduct on Facebook highlighted the trouble this rivalry could bring.

FITNESS



FALCON // VIVIEN LU

Sophomore Victor Wang (center) practices his form in PE on Nov. 8. PE teachers are promoting the Fittest Athlete competition by holding fitness challenges on Fridays.

Athletes strive for title

BY Sabrina Cismas

Don't be surprised if you start to see pieces of fitness equipment in the quad in the next few weeks and students cranking out repetitions.

In an effort to spur interest in November's Fittest Athlete competition, an event that will determine the school's fittest students, the physical education department will be holding fitness challenges during lunch on Fridays.

Athletics director Peter Jordan said the purpose of the session is promote a fitter lifestyle.

The revitalized PE department is entering its second year of a new fitness program called CrossFit, which consists of different workouts that target many areas of exercise such as weight-lifting and conditioning.

The program is integrated in PE classes and in conditioning programs for student athletes. Students who are interested in getting a little more exer-

cise also stop by the weight room after school to participate in CrossFit.

"We would like more people to know about the program [CrossFit] and participate in it, so we thought the fitness challenge would stimulate some interest in it," Jordan said.

The lunchtime challenges will consist of activities such as pull-ups, which would be done on portable pull-up bars in the quad.

"Each subsequent Friday we'll build [the challenge] up a little more until everybody is talking about it; then we'll hold the Fittest Athlete competition," Jordan said.

The original date of the competition was scheduled to be on Nov. 6, but because of additional lunch challenges, the date is still being decided upon.

Jordan said the competition is going to be a co-ed event, and two winners, a boy and a girl, will be chosen from each grade level as the fittest students.

"Anybody can participate," Jordan said, "and the more, the better." ♦

GIANTS >> Fear the beard

continued from page 1

dogs throughout most of the playoffs. They are well known for their immensely close games that many fans call "torture baseball."

Some of the favorite misfit players include Cody Ross (Ross the boss), Pat Burrell (Pat the bat) and the closer Brian Wilson, whose unique beard has started the catchphrase "fear the beard."

"[My] favorite player is Buster Posey. When you're down in the 9th, who are you going to call? Call Buster!" said Paisley.

Paisley and Johnson both received mixed reactions to their growing facial hair.

"Most of the other students yelled 'shave' whenever I walked around

school," said Paisley, who finally shaved following the team's series victory on Nov. 2. "But my fellow Giants fans were big fans of it."

After the Giants finally beat the Rangers and won the World Series, both Johnson and Paisley went crazy.

"I was pumped and excited right when Brian Wilson struck out that last batter," Johnson said. "I stood up, yelled and gave my dad a high-five."

The victory was thrilling but also sad. Johnson had grown out his playoff beard for three weeks and Paisley almost a month before they decided to shave.

"It was sad to see it go, but I have to move on from the Giants," Paisley said. "Now it's time to see the 49ers struggle." ♦

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Application makes access to online database easier

BY Amy Jan

With the new Access My Library app, students can now check information on the Saratoga High's online database from iPhones, iPads and iTouch devices.

Having an online database with filtered information helps students to retrieve knowledge from reliable sources. Now students can log onto the school's database from anywhere.

"As everyone knows information is becoming digital at an ever increasing rate," librarian Kevin Heyman said. "One important source of scholarly information is online databases."

Heyman registered the school's library database for the App by contacting Gale, the provider of most of the school's databases, and requesting access.

Gale created the "Access My Library" app. It is available for students and staff to

download on the Apple App Store for free. The password to the online database only has to be entered in when using the new app.

"It's important to provide students with as many options as possible when it comes to accessing high quality, academic information," Heyman said. "Having an app provides students with one more access point to the library's databases."

"Students already have 24/7 access to the databases from any computer," Heyman said. "The App makes it possible to connect to the Saratoga High School Library's databases from anywhere."

One of the first people to download the app was teacher Jeffrey Scott. He first heard about this app when Heyman e-mailed the staff about its release.

"It is much easier than having to go through the library website," said Scott.



The new Access My Library application allows iPod touch and iPhone users access to the SHS library database.

With the addition of this new app, Scott is debating whether he should try to implement the use of this in his classes. The problem with this app is the number of students who may not have a device that can access it. If the number is low, Scott will "definitely find a way" to use the app in his classes.

"I hope to use it in the near future for topics relating to my World History and Geography classes," said Scott. ♦

Students mourn recent gay suicides

BY Megan Benzing & Olivia Chock

On Oct. 20, people around the world mourned for the recent suicides across the country due to gay abuse, including the students of Saratoga High.

When someone created a Facebook event asking people to wear purple to bring awareness to these suicides, everyone wanted to be involved. So on Wednesday the 20th, many students wore purple, including senior Hannah Harter and sophomore Kaitlin Finch.

"The first time I saw the huge Facebook event saying to wear purple, I was already signed up," said Finch. "I wore my 'I <3 Roma' shirt and at the bottom I added a post it note saying 'and all sexual orientations.'"

This event is confirmed as the day to mourn and remember recent gay suicides when a passionate speaker blogged about the issue of gay abuse on Twitter. He specifically honored six people in the news recently who were so

abused they decided to take their own lives: Tyler Clementi, Asher Brown, Seth Walsh, Justin Aaberg, Raymond Chase and Billy Lucas.

Finch could hardly believe this had happened.

"I have a few friends that are homosexual and hearing about the suicides horrified me," said Finch. "I don't know what I would do if I ever found out that bullying caused them to take their lives."

Harter strongly agrees that the disdain and disapproval that people display towards homosexuality is unacceptable.

"I don't necessarily think everyone has to be OK with gay people, but they should at least be open to them," said Harter. "It's already enough of a baggage for people to have to come out to the world and confess that they are gay."

Considering the possible ways to take action, Finch said, "I do think that teenagers need to understand that 'silly' jokes can actually affect some one's life. I'm not sure what we can do quite yet, but wearing the purple shirts was a huge step." ♦

DRAMA

Professional actors perform student-written plays

BY Anika Jhalani

With fresh off performances of the fall play "Our Town" and the student production "Women in Black," students in the drama department are now showing off their talent for play writing.

From the middle of September until early November, the drama students participated in a workshop held by the Mountain View Theatre Company.

By the end of the workshop the students managed to have professional actors sign to perform their original scripts.

The seven playwrights whose works were chosen to be performed were juniors Ariella Yendler, Penny Burgess, Joshua Harris, sophomores Pavi Sadras, Chris Zhao, Laura Hannibal and senior Mikaela Burton.

These plays spanned from psychological thrillers to family comedies. Yendler's piece about a young boy's

memories after finding the body of his suicidal mother highlights the creativity involved with producing the plays, all around 10 to 15 minutes long.

"What is interesting about the workshop is that we are able to go all out," said Yendler. "None of us had to hold back with what we wanted to write, or perform, and we were rewarded with the number of plays we had signed to be performed by such talented professionals."

Although this is not the first year of trying the workshop, this year has been the first one that professionals have decided to perform the plays.

On Nov. 3, all the drama classes headed to the Mountain View Theatre to see their productions.

Burgess seconds Yendler's opinion of the freedom the playwrights can enjoy while writing their plays.

"It is a great feeling to be able to work with professionals and then have

them agree to perform our plays," said Burgess. "Some of us are aspiring to be future playwrights ourselves, and it is great to meet and spend a day with people who are representing and living our future."

Drama teacher Kerry Mohnike said she is proud of the work the students put in to their plays.

"Each of the seven plays performed were brilliantly done," she said.

Although the second workshop, this is the first year that the student-written plays have been chosen to be performed, she said.

The theatre workshop was a six-week program in which students practiced their play-writing abilities.

A professional playwright from Theatre Works, Jake Arky, came to train each of the drama classes about the art of play writing.

"We had a huge number of plays that ended up being performed," said

>> **bigidea**

Student playwrights

Who: Ariella Yendler, Penny Burgess, Joshua Harris, Pavi Sadras, Chris Zhao, Laura Hannibal, Mikaela Burton

What: 10-15 minute student-written performances in the Mountain View Theater

Mohnike. "Each play was great in its own way. Play writing is a whole different and new experience. It was an awesome way for students to learn both sides of the art."

Two of the plays were also recorded in the new multimedia facility and Mohnike plans to showcase them.

"The entire experience was really amazing," said Yendler. "We improved so much more this year, and many of us discovered a new passion for play writing." ♦

BACK TO SCHOOL

Retired teachers substitute for new mothers

BY Grishma Athavale & Aanchal Mohan

Former Saratoga High teachers Paul Page and Larry Bingham never thought that they would come back to SHS after they retired at the end of the 2008-09 school year, but they are back, a year later, to help out former colleagues who are having babies this fall.

"Mrs. [Natasha] Ritchie asked me to sub for her for six weeks while she was on maternity leave," said Page. "I wanted to do her a favor."

Page taught at Saratoga for 36 years as a choir and orchestra director, English teacher and journalism teacher.

"I did not think that I would come back and teach again," said Page. "I wouldn't even con-

sider it for a full year. I wanted to take a year to see how things would play out."

During his year off, Page has been spending more time with his grandchildren and developing his music. According to Page, he has released a new CD of instrumental music and recently in October released a new CD of piano etudes.

"Every day I have the freedom to do whatever I want," said Page.

Bingham will be substituting for 10 weeks for math teacher Jennifer Mantle.

Bingham retired over one year ago. Going into retirement, he was hoping to become a conductor engineer. Bingham's fascination with railroads has been an abundant part of his entire life. For example, he has volun-

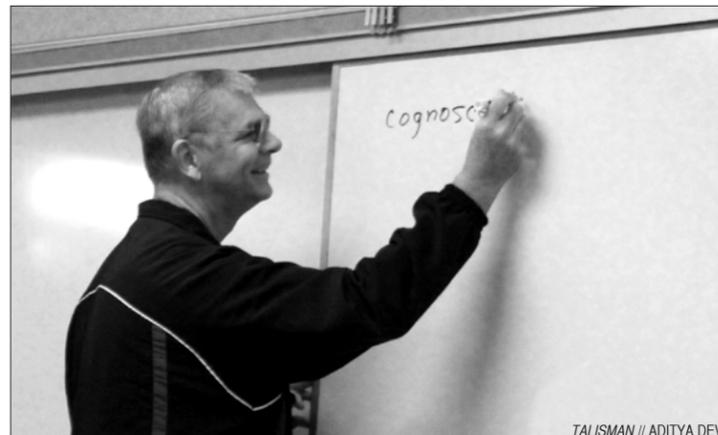
teered to drive antique trolleys in historical San Jose.

As it turned out, Bingham's life on the tracks was not so easy. Conductor engineers were on call 24-7 with the engineer mandated to report for the job within two hours of the call. Bingham said the job was more demanding than he initially thought.

"The job required me to be at the tracks at the oddest hours," said Bingham. "It wasn't right for me."

Though his dream of becoming a conductor did not work out, Bingham has managed to keep himself occupied in his free time.

"I have been taking part-time classes on wood crafting," said Bingham. "I have been keeping myself busy with other inter-



Page explains the usage of the Latin root -cog- while substituting for Natasha Ritchie's fifth period English 11 Honors class.

ests."

Though Bingham and Page have retired from teaching, they still miss the chance to get

to know their students.

"I miss teaching," said Bingham. "But that phase of my life is over. It's like I grew up." ♦



JOANNA LEE

There's a new bully on the block

CYBER-BULLYING ESCALATES BEHIND INCREASED USE OF ANONYMITY

BY Paul Jung & Anshu Siripurapu

The stereotypical high school bully is a staple of American media. Everyone recognizes the burly teenager shaking down slight-framed freshmen for lunch money. However, these bullies may now be looked upon with a sense of nostalgia as opposed to fear.

These days, a new form of bullying, even more sinister and harmful has taken root: cyber-bullying. Its tragic consequences are chronicled in the terrible story of Alexis Pilkington. A 17-year-old soccer star living in the town of West Islip, N.Y., Pilkington committed suicide after being mercilessly tormented by her classmates.

Unlike previous cases, the bullying took the form of hurtful messages posted on her Facebook and Formspring accounts. Even more horrifying, the attacks didn't stop with her death, and derogatory and lewd messages appeared on her Facebook memorial page.

Pilkington's story represents the shift of bullying away from physical intimidation to Internet hazing. With the growing popularity of social networking sites, it is becoming easier to take personal information about people and turn it into harassment.

According to the Pew Research

Group, a think tank based in Washington, D.C, 93 percent of American teens between 12-17 are online, and of those, 32 percent have experienced some form of online harassment. "Adina's Deck," an independent documentary on cyber-bullying created by a Stanford student, Debbie Heimowitz, puts the number at nearly 60 percent, based on research at three California middle schools.

These statistics illustrate the ubiquity of the problem of cyber-bullying. In addition, these studies also indicate that a large percentage of victims of cyber-bullying do not inform any authority. It is imperative that the methods for dealing with these harassers also evolve to keep up with the changing times, so students know where to turn.

Using the Internet as a veil for their identities and an outlet for dealing with their own insecurities, people send venomous messages to others through the web that they would not dare to say in person. Formspring, a relative newcomer to the social media market, is a website that allows people to send and receive anonymous questions on their profiles. Another example of a website that provides the opportunity for anonymity abuse is Chatroulette, a site that allows users to video chat with random strangers. Unfortunately, the anonymity afforded by these websites is often

abused, and harassers use it as a shield to protect themselves from the repercussions of making offensive and hurtful comments.

Proponents of Formspring argue that it facilitates the free exchange of ideas, since people feel free to ask their friends questions without pressure or fear of backlash. While this is certainly a noble sentiment, few students utilize Formspring for its intended purpose.

The effects of this kind of bullying on teens are troubling. Anonymous comments are even more potent than open insults because they leave students without a venue to face their tormentors. Students, parents and administrators alike have no way of identifying the culprits behind the bullying and so these students have to suffer the anonymous harassment without relief.

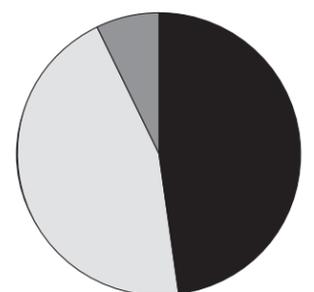
Numerous studies have shown the correlation between bullying and lowered self-esteem, depression and suicidal tendencies. With no way of confronting their tormentors to resolve conflict or seek help from authorities in preventing the bullying, students are forced to take Pilkington's solution of suicide to escape the effects of this problem.

The invention of new websites that allow Internet anonymity have given rise to a new form of bullying that causes much more harm than "traditional" bul-

lying. Unfortunately, most schools' disciplinary measures have failed to keep up with the spread of this new medium of harassment. To promote the well-being of our students, authorities need to take more active measures to apprehend and stop cyber bullies the same way they can to the local lunch money collector. ♦

>> falconpoll

Have you ever been cyber-bullied?



47% Yes
40% No
13% Not disclosed

The Falcon polled 100 SHS students

by Karthik Annaamalai

Classroom participation grades unfair

BY Cecilia Hollenhorst
& Alex Ju

In a classroom, there are always the students who constantly talk, the students with hands shooting up to answer every question and the students who shy away from even the idea of standing in front of the class. To fix this imbalance, many teachers choose to use a participation grade. Although scoring participation can encourage students to engage in discussions, it is often harmful to the classroom overall.

Participating for points can be disruptive to other students' learning experiences. Students who feel forced to participate solely to improve their grades usually fail to bring insightful comments to the table. The drive to receive a high grade can induce pointless questions that waste class time, eliminating opportunities for those interested in.

Many teachers, particularly in English, foreign language and social studies, have a participation element to grading. Despite its sizable influence on a student's marks, it is hard to determine an exact system of measurement.

Ambiguity in grading

The grading of class participation tends to be ambiguous. It is nearly impossible to grade insight objectively. In addition, simply recording the number of times a person participates fails to capture the nature of what was said by the student.

Such logic fails to consider the different learning styles of students. Whether a student is unwilling or unable to speak in class does not always show a lack of care, since all students function differently. For example, for some students it takes a while for the information to register, and by the time they have conceived something to say, the teacher has moved on to new material or another student has raised his or her hand.

Many teachers believe that students cannot truly understand material unless they are able to explain it aloud. This may be true in world languages that require specific pronunciation training, it is not the case in subjects such as English and history where a student's knowledge can be displayed in written form.

Class discussion is necessary for an engaging class environment, and many talkative students will ask and respond to questions unprompted. However, for shyer students, verbal participation can be stressful. Participation should be formatted so that both confident and reserved students can excel. The opportunity to participate should be presented but not mandatory.

Unfair advantages

In some classes, points are deducted from participation because of absences, even those that are excused. Although these teachers often allow students to regain lost participation points outside of class, the system forces students to choose between attending class while sick and losing points while staying at home. It is already difficult for students to keep up with the workload when returning from an illness and many cannot make up both tests and participation points.

Some teachers tweak participation grades to bump a student's score a letter grade, such as a B+ to an A-. The participation grade leaves too much room for change, especially when a portion of the grade is dependent on just the teacher's opinion of students' behavior in class.

While necessary for learning in world languages, verbal participation is not essential for all students in subjects such as math and history. It should be assessed in a more balanced manner so that all students, whether shy or social, can succeed equally. ♦

Real love rejected worldwide

BY Anika Jhalani

"Toot it and boot it." "Take it and break it." "Love it then shove it." Clearly, everlasting love is mundane; Sinatra has been replaced with Soulja Boy, movies like "Borat" are rented over "Breakfast at Tiffany's" and engagement rings are now rare commodities.

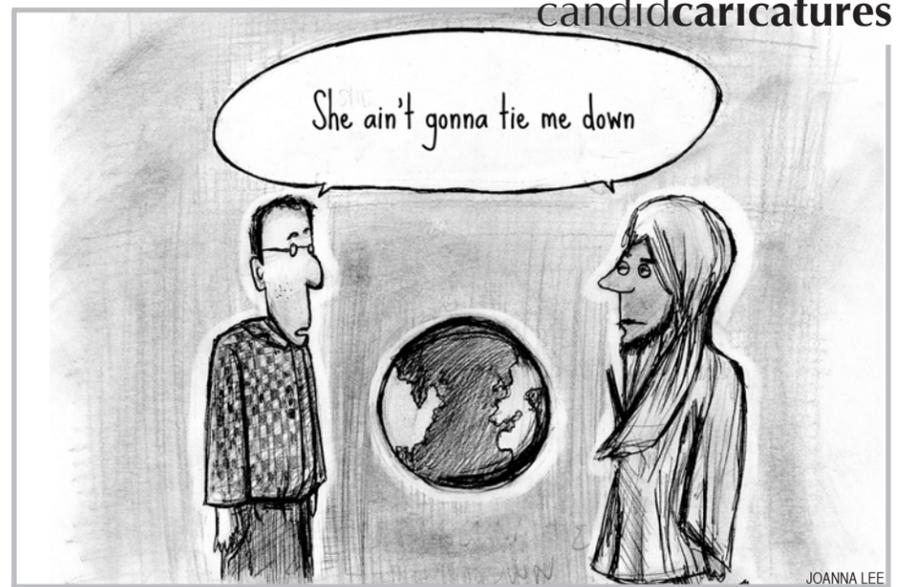
Halfway across the world, the same problem exists but with a different approach. It seems as if Shiite Muslim men can't buy enough diamond rings. In order to satisfy their desire for many women, Shiite men have practiced temporary marriage for centuries. This kind marriage, referred to as Muta'a, the Arabic word for pleasure, allows Muslim men to marry any woman who accepts their offer for any period of time, and then take a divorce and move on.

Recently, reporting on this sensitive issue has been broadcast by international news groups. The National Public Radio investigated cases of Muta'a in Najaf, Iraq, by following the stories of several women who suffered from this practice. Some women wished to stay anonymous as they told their stories. They described it as their only choice.

One woman, Kawthar Kadhim, explained her story of approaching a religious scholar to help her tuberculosis infected father and being turned down unless she entered Muta'a.

The initial reaction Americans have to the practice of Muta'a is shock. These marriages can last for several hours to months. The women who agree to it are so impoverished that they must accept the proposal to survive. However, many people in Muslim communities accept Muta'a as part of their culture.

According to interpretations of the Koran, the prophet Muhammed told his travelers that they could enter into temporary marriage with other women for a couple ounces of dates. Nowadays,



women are simply offered a home or a job depending on the man they marry through Muta'a. Some religious leaders claim Muta'a is a legitimate practice since no woman is forced to enter into it, but there are those who abuse it.

Muta'a marriage is controversial because it is abused to the point where it is borderline rape or prostitution. Corrupt religious figures refuse to give women jobs unless they enter into Muta'a. When women come to religious places for guidance, they receive seminars on the benefits of Muta'a marriage and are brainwashed into thinking it is the right, and often the only choice.

Many Americans may view this practice as grotesque, but Muta'a is not very different from "romantic" endeavors here in our nation. People have started to set aside love and look at marriage as either a fiscal arrangement or a completely outdated custom.

We are often quick to judge other

cultures, even when our own are not so different. It is time to be introspective rather than judgemental; Muta'a and romantic relationships in America are similar, just with different labels. If we choose to question foreign practices, we should try to fix those in our nation.

Whether it be in Shi'ite Iran or here at home, love needs a comeback. Women shouldn't be forced into Muta'a, and the Judge Judy divorce court shouldn't be on prime-time television. The attraction techniques used by men are slow and outdated, but whatever kind of date they use to reel her in, women deserve more than a "hit it and quit it."

Where is the love? Soul mates should not be as extinct as dinosaurs, and the Shane Company shouldn't be filing for bankruptcy. Whether it be in Shiite communities or American ones, marriage should not be temporary or taken lightly. Forget New Boyz; she is going to, and should, tie them down. ♦

Police must be educated to deal with mentally ill

BY Aanchal Mohan
& Allison Toh

People often see police as the heroes of a community. Officers are the embodiment of justice and security, giving equal treatment to all people and ensuring safety within the community.

On Sept. 26, such was not the case when it came to 43-year-old Michael Lee, who had a history of drug abuse and mental illness.

A complaint regarding loud music was filed against Lee with the San Francisco Police department. The department responded to the complaint, but the handling of the situation has raised concerns regarding treatment of the mentally ill. Lee was in bed when the officers entered, and after a heated argument, Lee was dead in his own room, shot by an officer.

In Lee's situation, the officer not only barged into the private room without his consent but also shot him, acting with poor judgment. Even if Lee was not mentally ill, the officer's actions are not justifiable.

According to a story in "The New York Times," one out of the 10 people the police deal with are mentally ill. As part of the officers' training, they should be taught how to act in these situations. And police

shouldn't be allowed to say that they were unaware of a person's condition. When a schizophrenic man was killed in 2001 by the police, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors ordered the police department to have all officers attend special training to avoid disasters.

Due to budget cuts, the training has been suspended from the department. Even before the elimination of such training, the department never had a separate unit of officers to deal with calls of the mentally ill.

Lee's case turned from a someone playing his music too loud to an innocent life being taken. While the officer has not commented on the matter, action needs to be taken against the department by issuing a warning to the department's attention that it needs to create an individual unit. Other cities have this development, and the San Francisco police department should follow.

If actions are taken against the department, the derogatory mindset of the public concerning the mentally ill must be altered for the safety of other handicapped individuals. Though there would be increases in finance, having a separate division dealing with issues of the mentally ill would be beneficial to the safety of all persons alike. ♦

>> THE big idea

Police Training

What: Police need training for how to deal with situations involving the mentally ill

Why: They can't have excuses for killing innocent people just because they don't know the person's condition

THE saratoga falcon >>

FOURTH PERIOD

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.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Colleges too tolerant of fraternity hazing

BY Cecilia **Hollenhorst**
& Michelle **Shu**

At 18, Nicholas Brown almost died. Brown, a student from the University of Arkansas, slipped into a coma with a blood alcohol level of 0.68 last November. Brown had been participating in a pledge event at the Phi Delta Theta fraternity house where he was allegedly forced to endure hours of verbal and physical abuse, as well as a challenge to drink as much alcohol as possible.

Brown is only one of many victims of dangerous hazing rituals present in fraternity and sorority culture. These risky behaviors can only be stopped in one way: colleges need to buckle down and enforce explicit rules regarding initiation into fraternities and sororities.

Despite its risks, underage drinking is a generally accepted part of college fraternities and sororities. According to the Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study, four out

of five students who live in fraternities or sororities are binge drinkers. While many colleges have implemented rules regarding drinking in fraternities and sororities, few actually step in to penalize those choosing to go against school policy. Some colleges choose to turn a blind eye to the illegal actions, but others simply make rules that either cannot be enforced or do not solve the problem.

For example, some colleges do not allow keg deliveries to fraternities and sororities. Yet this rule is completely ineffective against underage drinking. Many students have kegs delivered to different locations or even drive while under the influence to get more alcohol.

Enclosed in their own houses, fraternities and sororities have almost complete freedom over the conduct of hazing rituals. In reality, schools often have a policy of ignoring what goes on behind closed doors.

Fraternities and sororities across the country employ

rituals ranging from harmless pranks to near-deadly tests of "loyalty." Common hazing practices include branding (permanently burning a mark into the person's skin), extreme alcohol consumption, sleep deprivation and forms of public humiliation.

Not everyone understands what a large problem hazing has become. According to the National Study of Student Hazing, over half of college students involved in a team, club or organization have experienced some form of this dangerous initiation.

With 40 percent of students admitting to this type of abuse, colleges should adopt less tolerant policies toward hazing. Any report or suspicion of hazing should be followed with an investigation and threat to the organization of losing their privileges to a house or participation in school-sponsored events.

It is true that many incidences of hazing go unreported, but instead of implementing



JOANNA LEE

vague and useless policies as figure heads for justice, colleges should keep an even closer eye on organizations at risk of hazing. According to the University of Connecticut, at least one death per year since 1970 has been directly linked to hazing on U.S. college campuses. Waiting until the next hospitalization or death is waiting too long for action.

In the case of Nicholas Brown, several administrators were aware of the hazing prior to its occurrence and did nothing to stop it. This clear lack of attention to a major problem is unacceptable. If hazing is treated as a more serious offense, something life threatening instead of something tolerated by students and adults alike, it can eventually be reduced. ♦

Public homophobia undermines gay rights

BY Anika **Jhalani**

"They wear these little Speedos and they grind against each other and it's just a terrible thing," said Republican New York gubernatorial candidate Carl Paladino as he recently described gay pride parades.

It is appalling that a high-profile man like Paladino would dare to disparage and embarrass an entire community. Yet his discrimination has roots beyond politics, stemming from the education system, where students are growing up with the ignorance that forces most homosexuals to stay quiet about their sexuality.

The derogatory slurs against gays have turned into an unstoppable force of bullying. The worst part is that it is often unintentional. Some of these words are obviously referring to homosexuals, such as "that's so gay" and "homo." However, other words' meanings and origins, like flammers, are more obscure. Most

people do not know that the words "faggot" and "flamer" both loosely refer to the burning at the stake of homosexuals; "faggots" were bundles of sticks used to set the flame, and "flamers" obviously refer to the flames of the fire.

Unfortunately, these words have been weaved into our vernacular and are being accepted as normal. Cussing is frowned upon, but derogatory words slamming homosexuals are accepted as a fad among teens. In our own school, using the f-word can prompt a visit to the assistant principal's office, whereas using a slur against gays often goes unnoticed.

Derogatory language is responsible for the segregation of homo and heterosexuals. These words, which are all used to describe something negative, constantly link negativity with homosexuality. Words like these are the cause for gays to "stay in the closet." They are so fearful of how they will be perceived because the world portrays homosexuality as a horrible and forbidden path.

Fear of this discrimination has pro-

duced unfair policies such as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," which expels gays and lesbians from the military if they reveal their sexual orientation. This policy not only inhibits individuals' right to freedom of expression but also darkens the line between acceptance of homosexuality and utter denial. It is hard to imagine that someone would serve a country that forbids him or her to be themselves, but many closeted gays continue to loyally serve this nation. To date, more than 13,000 gays have been discharged from the army because of their refusal to live a life in secret. The requirement that all homosexuals must stay quiet about their sexuality is ridiculous; it fuels further discrimination against gays.

A recent and tragic example of the fear of homosexuality is the story of Tyler Clementi, a student who committed suicide after his roommate, Dharun Ravi, secretly recorded and streamed a video of Clementi's intimate encounter with another man. Later that night, a man believed to be Clementi entered a gay chat forum and expressed his disbelief with the fact that people were sympathizing with Ravi because he had to "deal with" a gay roommate, when the focus of the situation should have been on Clementi's violated privacy. If Clementi had been kissing a female student, would this have been an issue at all? This heartbreaking story highlights our society's grotesque homophobia and the bullying that stems from it.

Unfortunately, the rights for homosexuals are often compromised because of public fear. The slurs against gays needs to be punished, especially in the classroom. We cannot afford to have our future leaders believe that bullying homosexuals is acceptable. The issue of gay rights has transcended from one of granting tangible rights to freedom of speech, work and marriage to one of granting the birthright of human safety and acceptance. The issue of gay rights is debatable, but openly attacking homosexuals is intolerable, and this bullying must stop. ♦

The derogatory slurs against gays have turned into an unstoppable force of bullying.

Big brother is not the only one watching

FACEBOOK'S VIOLATION OF PRIVACY SETTINGS CAUSES UNEASE FOR USERS

In an age where social interaction has shifted increasingly to the digital sphere, the issue of privacy becomes especially controversial. How much privacy is guaranteed online? What information can or cannot be shared?

Most social networking sites, such as Facebook, have policies for protecting the data users share on their profiles. However, a recent investigation conducted by the Wall Street Journal found that hundreds of the applications available on Facebook, such as the popular game "Farmville," were secretly transmitting user data to advertising firms in clear violation of Facebook's privacy policies. With such revelations coming out regularly, Facebook has indeed gone too far in profiting off of user information.

In May, the web site rewrote its rules to allow its users to keep personal information confidential, but that effort has clearly had little impact.

The main problem lies with Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, who believes that his users, all 500 million of them, should be more open with their information. Although many of his employees disagree with his principles, Zuckerberg decided to implement the "Friendship" page, making it easier for the increasingly addictive "Facebook stalking" by publicizing conversations and photos between users. Friendship pages, originally created to "blossom friendships," have faced much opposition from the social networking

community.

The web site has been working on revamping its privacy settings, but the issue of third-party applications extracting information remains a problem.

While applications do play an integral role in the social networking experience by transforming Facebook into a hub for all kinds of activity apps, it is important that the company regulates the information shared. Applications, used by over 70 percent of users according to Facebook, are considered an important way for Facebook to extend the usefulness of its network. Unfortunately, each application has its own unique privacy settings, creating a jumble of conflicting policies.

The information being shared is one of Facebook's basic building blocks: the unique "Facebook ID" number assigned to every user on the site. The Facebook ID, which is different for every user, contains all the information a user has added onto his or her profile. Since the user ID is a public part of every Facebook profile, anyone can use an ID number to look up a person's name, even if that person has set all of his or her Facebook information to be private, clearly a violation of user's rights.

To regain the trust of its users, the company must prevent third-party applications from taking advantage of unaware Facebook users and create an online environment in which every user is comfortable with the privacy settings. ♦



STAFFEDITORIAL

>> **Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board**

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Anoop Galivanche
Anshu Siripurapu
Jason Wu

The Saratoga Falcon voted 30-5 that Facebook's privacy setting is too lax.

China, Japan spar over insignificant islands

BY Stanley Yip

Most of us have allowed some insignificant dilemma escalate into a massive problem. This is potentially the situation in the latest schism between China and Japan.

On Sept. 7, a Chinese fishing trawler crashed into two Japanese Coast Guard patrol boats in disputed territory. This crash has re-sparked arguments over the sovereignty of islands in this area.

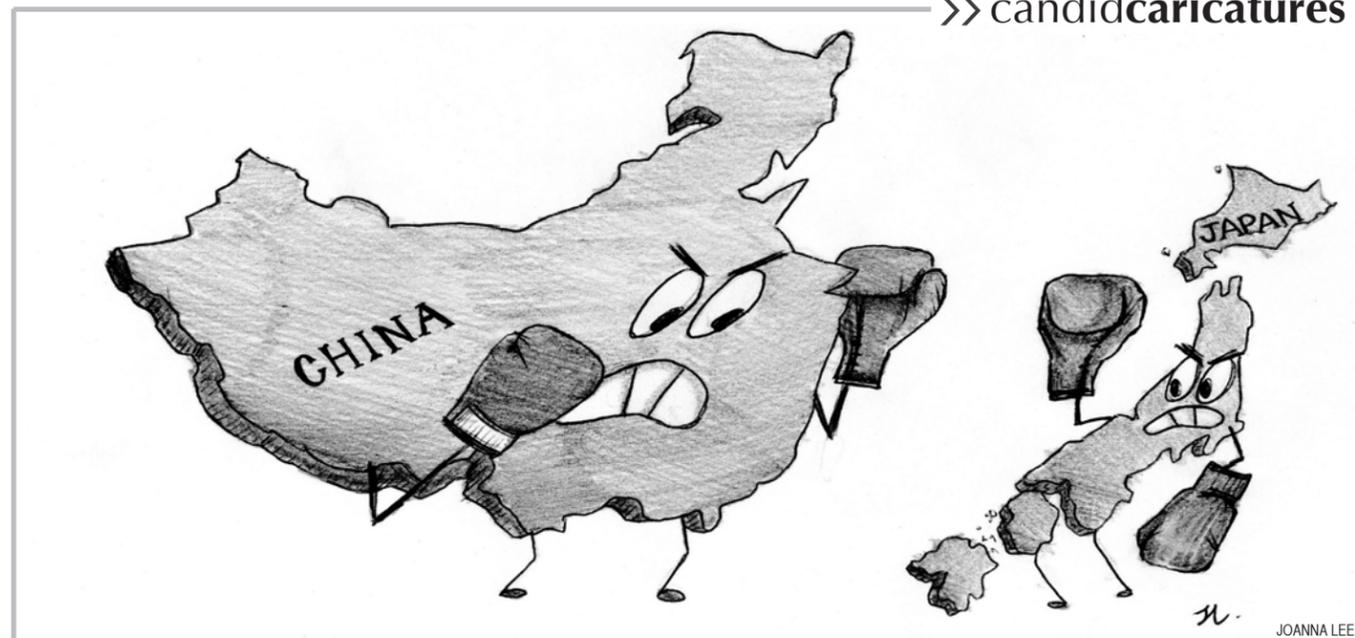
Known as the Senkaku Islands to the Japanese and the Diaoyu Islands to the Chinese, the uninhabited islands in the East China Sea had little importance to the international community until this incident.

The dilemma over the ownership of the islands began in 1937 during the Sino-Japanese War. Japan originally claimed the islands because no substantial evidence supported the Qing empire's control.

After Japan's victory in the war, the Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed, ceding Taiwan and its associated islands to Japan. However, after Japan's defeat in WWII, the Treaty of San Francisco nullified all prior treaties of Japan, including the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

The dispute lies in whether the islands were part of Taiwan. If they were not, Japan would still hold its ownership even after the nullification of the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

But, on the other hand, if they were,



>> candid caricatures

then the floor is empty for debate on who should claim the islands.

Tensions have risen over this point with large-scale protests against the opposite country on both sides. Warfare is becoming more likely since both sides refuse to compromise.

If fighting does occur, the U.S. would become embroiled in the dispute because of the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty of 1960, which states that the U.S. will come to Japan's aid if areas under Japan's admin-

istration are under threat.

Officially, the U.S. holds no position on the matter currently, which contradicts the treaty. But should fighting occur, diplomatic ties on both sides for the U.S. would become stretched to the breaking point.

In the current global situation, a dispute over uninhabited islands that could escalate into war seems childish. The territory contains only five islands and three rocks with a total area of seven

square kilometers, less than a quarter of the area of Saratoga.

With that in mind, why would two global powers let something so minuscule evolve into a global catastrophe? More pressing matters demand greater attention than a few pieces of remote land.

Both countries should simply agree to a joint ownership of the islands or just drop the entire ordeal and assume no ownership at all. ♦

The beauty and danger of classroom controversy

BY Denise Lin

During her English class, junior Ailene Nguyen found herself participating in a discussion about Proposition 19, the ballot measure that would have legalized marijuana. The dispute grew as the students' opinions clashed, and the situation may have seemed like an intellectual battlefield.

Debates like these allow students to analyze current events and better identify their stance on certain issues. However, many schools are forced to consider just how much controversy in the classroom is too much. Such issues can cause concern especially in English and social science classes, where teachers' viewpoints about sensitive topics such as gay rights, abortion and religion can affect the students.

For instance, if a student disagrees with the teacher about something, he or she may pretend that his or her viewpoints coincide with those of the teacher, out of fear that the teacher could become offended and penalize them.

Conservative students may hide their opinions from a liberal teacher. However, clashing opinions in the classroom can be a gift, if they are dealt with properly. Just as a flesh wound stings when it is being cleaned, bringing uncomfortable issues into the open is necessary to understand these issues.

For example, if a student is prejudiced against a particular religious group, an honest discussion about that

group's ways may help to at least temper the animosity. It's better to face controversy in an educational environment rather than "on the streets," where simple misunderstanding has long been the culprit of serious harassment. For instance, Muslims are often unjustly labeled "terrorists" due to their appearance.

These problems can be reduced if discussed in a productive manner. It would be permissible to debate the ethics of a religious practice, but it would be improper to denounce a religion.

During classroom discussions, teachers' concerns may bring a fresh perspective to an issue. As a teacher makes clear what is purely his or her opinion, and opens all the perspectives of an issue to debate, the discussion will remain productive. It's important to realize if teachers pass off their opinions as fact, some students will have the erroneous impression any opinion diverging from that of the teacher's is incorrect.

Students need to possess a degree of awareness themselves so they can get the most out of sensitive discussions in class. They must be aware that societal factors, such as a liberal community, contribute to the direction of a discussion. They should realize that all humans have beliefs.

Ultimately, it is up to the teachers to choose whether they will use controversial subjects to create unnecessary tension or enlighten people. ♦

Green initiatives must be viewed cautiously

DUE TO RECENT BUDGET CUTS, ENERGY UPGRADES SHOULD PAY FOR THEMSELVES

BY Brandon Judoprasertijo

While the school is struggling to maintain a stable financial status, it is taking admirable strides ahead in trying to become more efficient and greener than in the past. However, in tough financial times, the upgrades must be made wisely.

A major change in the school is the installation of smart meters. The meters track the school's power usage and prevent unnecessary use of power and are also expected to save the school 10 percent of its \$800,000 annual electricity bill. Within a year, the savings made by the meters will make up for its \$40,000 cost and continue to salvage more money in the future.

In contrast, there are the new water fountains that were installed at the end of last year. The goal was to cut the use of non-reuseable water bottles by offering clean, filtered water. Although the quality of the water has improved, it certainly is not the right time to be paying \$13,000 for them. Having fewer water bottles on campus may be helping the earth, but the budget deficit next year should be given priority.

The idea of solar power has also been taken into great consideration by the school. A major part of the school's energy bill consists of heating the pool,

so plans are under review to install solar panels in order to use solar energy as regular heating. Some people have even looked at solar panels installed in parking lots of schools in the Fremont Union district and wondered if the same thing could be done here.

Agreed, solar power is one of the most popular methods of alternative energy, but the main downfall of such technology is the enormous installation cost, which often takes years for compensation.

The cost of powering the school through solar power is still unknown, but it is estimated that it will take eight years to make up for the cost. Since we have a budget deficit next year, solar power may be too costly for our school now.

The school's decision to go more green has good intentions, but the course of action that it takes is crucial. As things are right now, the school seems to be focused on reducing its carbon footprint, while it should actually be paying more attention to the problems that affect the education that the school provides.

With a budget deficit looming large next year, the district must spend every penny wisely; otherwise, we'll have bigger problems on our hands than global warming. ♦

>> togatalks

What is your opinion on the results of the gubernatorial elections for California?



sophomore Spencer Goldman

"I'm glad that Jerry Brown won because I was not a big fan of Meg Whitman. But I thought he was the lesser of two evils, because I never liked either of them."



junior Sophie Kang

"It was kind of obvious that Meg Whitman was going to lose if you saw all the mudslinging campaigns. I never really liked her from the beginning and she had a bad reputation."

Fewer students go to UCs, but is it wise?

BY Sabrina Cismas

With the application season in full swing, seniors are faced with the daunting task of mapping out their futures through their decisions of which colleges to apply to.

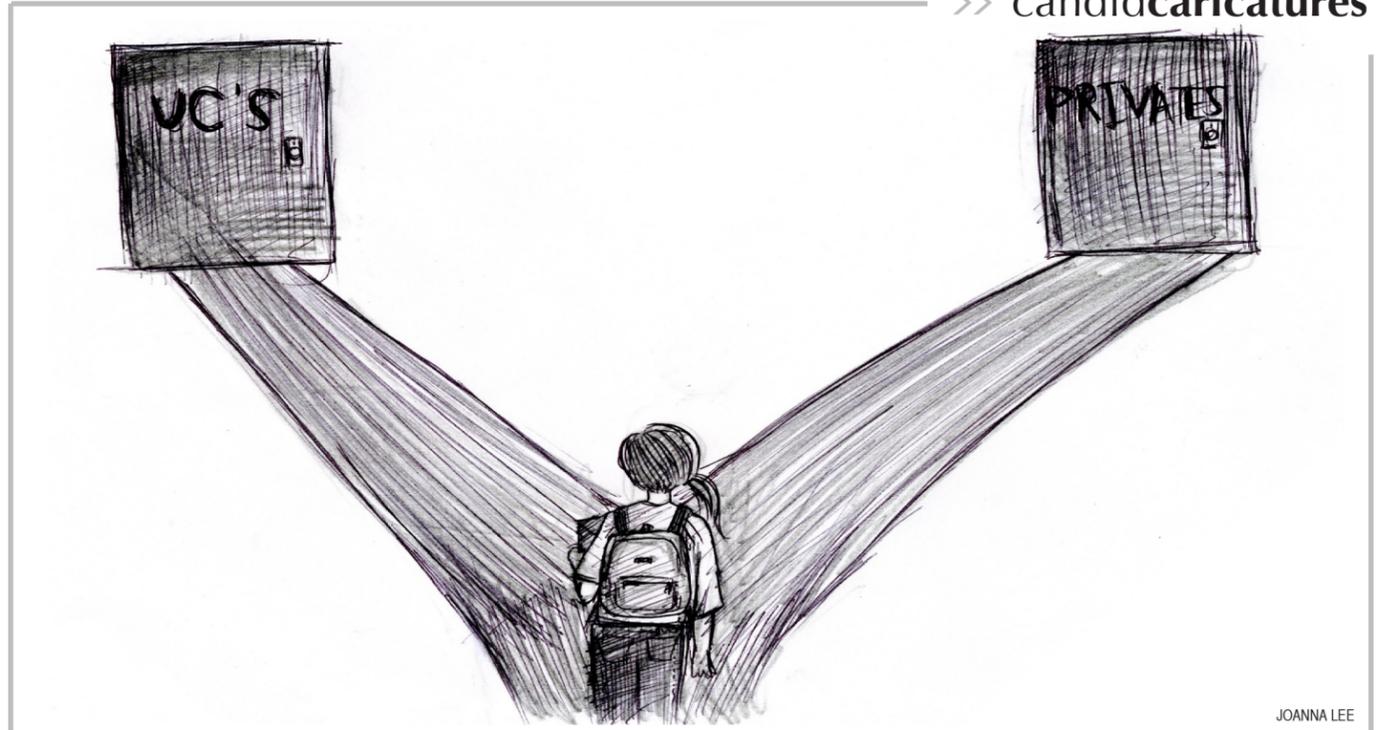
A popular choice has always been to apply to the UCs, but with California's financial crisis and UC tuition costs on the rise, future graduating classes are expected to stray off the usual beaten path of enrolling at a UC.

Before the recession, tuition for UCs hovered at \$10,000-\$20,000, but once the reserve funds exhausted, the tuition shot up to \$30,000.

With California still heading toward the possibility of bankruptcy, and speculation running rampant over whether the UCs will ever be sufficiently funded in the near future, many rumors are circulating that students should consider private colleges over entering the uncertain territory of a UC education.

This fear has made many people ignorant of the reality of the situation. According to the guidance department, 1,068 UC applications were made by the class of 2009, with an acceptance rate of 53 percent. The class of 2010 dropped slightly to 1,021 applications, but 608 of them were still accepted with a total acceptance rate of 54 percent. Furthermore, in the past three years, actual enrollment to UCs have dropped 4 percent, while for private colleges has increased by 6 percent. With a stable UC acceptance rate, but a decreasing number of applications to these schools, UC selectivity is clearly not what is deterring students from enrollment.

Another contributing factor to the



>> candid caricatures

JOANNA LEE

lower enrollment is that UCs are losing their image of being the "comfort colleges." With a respectable education having been provided at the previous cost of just over 10 grand, students who did not want to drown themselves in financial debt after graduating relied greatly on the smaller financial burden of a UC tuition.

Today, however, UC tuition cost is approaching that of private colleges. With the gap between them steadily closing, students are more likely to be

less reliant on their UC cushion, and broaden their prospects to include other private colleges such as USC.

The dilemma caused by the financial situation of UCs is the real culprit behind students' apprehension to enroll at these schools.

However, while it is wise of students to do their homework before choosing which college to enroll at, excessive fear based on faulty assumptions can have them missing out at what still remains a good quality education. ♦

>> THE bigidea

Enrollment Trends

UC enrollment: the percentage of students attending UCs has dropped by 4%

Private enrollment: on the flip side, the number of students attending private schools has increased by 6%

Annual Cost of UC: has risen to almost \$30,000, a 30% increase.

>> togatalks

Are you more likely to go to a private school due to increased UC tuition?

"Probably not. If private schools don't give much financial aid, I will probably go to a UC instead."



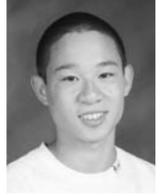
senior Daryl Chang

"My concern about the UCs is more about getting classes than tuition. I would go to either private or UC."



senior Shea Sullivan

"I'm applying to more privates than I probably would have because the cost between the two is so small."



senior Tyler Jew

Being 5 makes sense for kindergarten

RESOLUTION MOVES IN RIGHT DIRECTION WITH LATE BIRTHDAY KIDS

BY Paul Jung

The California Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010 has passed both houses of the legislature and is currently awaiting the sign off from Gov. Schwarzenegger. This measure, written by State Sen. Joe Simitian, will increase the minimum age for entering kindergarten from 5 by Dec. 2 to 5 by Sept. 1 of the school year.

Previously, there were a variety of different ages in the same grade, ranging from 4-year olds to 6-year-olds in kindergarten. This act will ensure that a single grade will not have students too young to keep up with the rest of the class.

The problem before was that a grade would contain too many different ages of children to fully accommodate the needs of them all.

While the youngest children would require teachers to "dumb-down" the content of the class, the oldest students in class would intimidate the younger ones and have an unfair advantage over them.

In collegiate sports, many coaches "red-shirt" their younger players, delaying their participation with the team in order for them to gain more experience and practice before joining.

Similarly, parents have been known

to "red-shirt" their kindergartners, holding them back a year in order to better prepare them for kindergarten, making them the oldest in the class.

There has always been a wide range of ages in this primary level: the youngest are 5 in December, and the oldest are already 6 by that time, having celebrated their birthdays in January, almost a year before their younger peers. The new act will shorten the age range for kindergartners, making sure that the only children in kindergarten are the ones who should be.

Having these older and younger students in class means that the teachers have to accommodate to the different levels of maturity by making the class more challenging. These accommodations can make school a frustrating experience for the students, who will be confused by the conflicting levels of maturity.

In addition, many older students have an academic advantage because they have had more time to hone their mental faculties and are thus better able to grasp more complicated concepts and ideas.

Putting these students in the same class as the younger ones force these youngsters to try to keep up with a standard ill-tailored to their own age group.

The social lives of students who are not the oldest in the class may also be affected. Kindergarten is a time of growth and development; all students should be going through the same awkwardness of the first year of school.

However, if there is an outspoken, older child in class, he may intimidate his younger classmates, hindering their social development.

As students get older and enter higher levels of education, these age differences can make all the difference in a student's life. In sports, students undergoing early growth spurts due to their age gain an advantage due to their size. They have a higher chance of qualifying for the teams they try out for, leaving the younger, smaller students with little chance to show the potential skill they may have.

On the other hand, there are also younger students who are surpassing their peers and taking higher level classes than students a grade above them. These students benefit from the accelerated curriculum and find the right class for them even if it is not with their age group.

However, unlike these exceptions, many younger students struggle more and more as they go on to high school

and college.

With the new Kindergarten Readiness Act, the next generation of kindergartners will be better prepared for kindergarten. There will no longer be 4-year-old kindergartners who are not yet ready to take on the emotional and mental demands of school.

California is one step closer toward having an equal classroom, where no one has an advantage or disadvantage due to age. Applying restrictions on the age that a kindergartner can enroll in school will help ensure that students will be of relatively the same level of academic performance. ♦

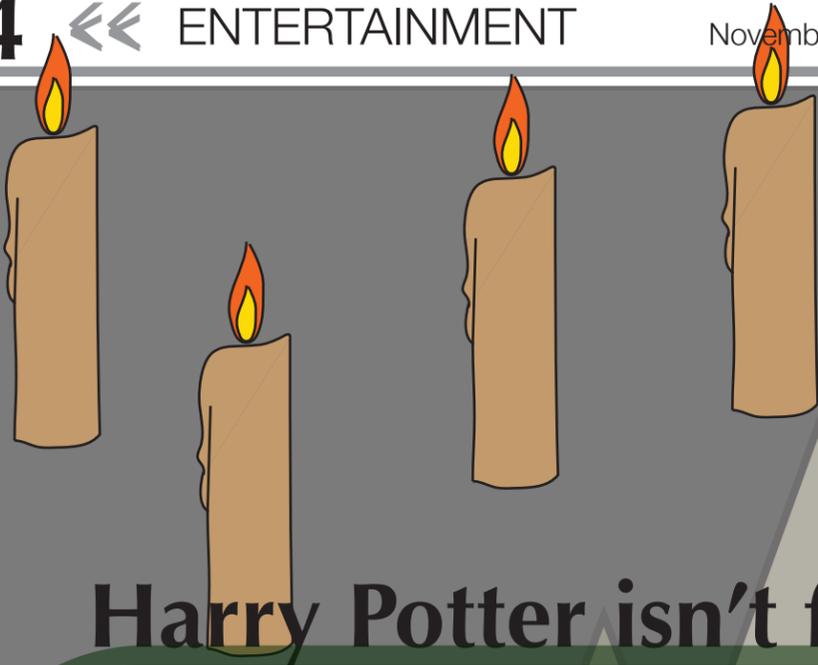
>> THE bigidea

California Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010

Pros: The same level is set for everyone, allowing children to learn at the same rate

Cons: Some parents feel that the act will force their unprepared children to enter kindergarten too early

Result: California is one step closer to achieving equality in classrooms



THE WIZARDING WORLD OF

Harry Potter isn't for everyone

BY Megan **Benzing**
& Aanchal **Mohan**

As the midnight premiere of "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Part 1," set for release on Nov. 18, comes closer, many teenagers are rushing to buy tickets.

It is part one of the dramatic close to the worldwide phenomenon and it has everyone excited and nostalgic. They have read all the books multiple times and cannot wait for it to debut on screen.

Yet for seniors Grace Kim and Andy Jan, this is not the case. The magical effect of Harry Potter just has not put them under the same spell as it has on all of the fans.

"It's not that I don't like the movies, it's just that I don't find them as entertaining as other movies," said Jan. "The magic and special effects are cool but I feel like the story is sometimes a little too complicated."

When it came to reading the books, both Jan and Kim began the first book "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" but eventually stopped because they became bored.

"I didn't find the first book that interesting," said Jan. "It was kind of long and I stopped in the middle of it."

Even though the books are normally known to be

better than their partner movies, this has not swayed either one to pick up the books once more and dive back into the world of Harry Potter.

"I'd like to read the books, but I just don't have enough time to read anymore because of college applications," said Kim. "If I start again, then I know that I will be sucked into it and then I will have to read all seven of the books at once."

Junior Darisha Jhutti, who has fostered a love for the series since her childhood, cannot imagine a world without Harry Potter.

"Harry Potter was my fantasy and my escape world as a kid; I cannot believe that someone would not like it!"

With all of their friends hyped up about Harry Potter, it is easy to feel a little left out when they are unfamiliar with the different spells and wizard terms.

"I do feel a little left out sometimes because my friends all share an excitement for something that I don't," said Jan. "They all know little and unique facts and stuff about the movies that I don't."

Although these "non-believers" miss out on their friends' magical world, they spend their time dealing with more important matters.

"When my friends go to watch the HP movie, I will stay at home," said Jan. "I'll probably work on my college apps because it is a better use of my time." ♦



Jan



Kim

HP casts spell on birthday party

BY Albert **Gu**
& Allison **Toh**

Just as football fans show their support for their sport by hosting Super Bowl parties, "Harry Potter fans" also display their love with their own festivities.

Last year, senior Kendra Joyee Woodrow decided to take her obsession to another level by hosting a Harry Potter-themed 17th birthday party.

"I'm a really big fan of Harry Potter," said Woodrow. "I was planning a birthday party one day, and thought of a Harry Potter theme. Originally it started as a joke, but then I got really excited about it and started researching decorations, and it went from there."

The decorations included a huge hand-drawn "Hogwarts" sign, which hung on the garage, dozens of LED candle lights hung from the ceiling, and the guests - each dressed up as a Potter character.

The food was just as magical: Chocolate frogs, "golden snitches" made out of red velvet cake and candy, and an assortment of "pasties," "banger rolls" and other British treats.

"The decorations were really cool and the food was exactly how it looked in the movie," said senior Kaitna Shankar, who dressed up as Hermione to the party. "I had a blast!"

The attendees watched some old Harry Potter films and played board games. Woodrow also tried to organize a game of Quidditch, but it did not go as well

as planned.

"I got hula hoops and we tried to set them up," said Woodrow. "But it didn't really work out so we gave up."

Woodrow has been a fan of Harry Potter ever since she first picked up "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" in 4th or 5th grade.

Even as seniors, Woodrow and Shankar feel they are never too old to enjoy favorite pastimes.

"I think [we're] never too old to enjoy Harry Potter," said Shankar.

Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint and Emma Watson are set to star in the final films of the Harry Potter series. The movie is to be divided into two parts, the first part premiering on Nov. 19 and the second to appear in theaters on July 15, 2011.

"I don't think having [the movie] divided into two parts is that bad," said Shankar. "There's going to be a wait between the two parts, which will probably be annoying, but it means the movie is longer. And longer is obviously better with the Harry Potter series!"

While both Shankar and Woodrow are unable to attend the midnight showing of the first installment of the seventh film because of the marching band final competition, they are still looking forward to the bittersweet ending of the series.

"I guess we all just really don't want the series to end," said Shankar. "The books are already done, and now the movies are ending too, so why not celebrate big!" ♦



Woodrow



Shankar

Harry Potter



With Part One of *The Deathly Hallows* premiering Nov. 19, students express their love for the series

Fans go wild over preview

BY Kelly Liu

If there is one thing in the world I absolutely cannot get enough of, it's Harry Potter and everything that has to do with Harry Potter. I don't mean the Harry Potter character himself—I much prefer Draco Malfoy or the Weasley twins—but the whole franchise itself. However, if there is one flaw in the perfect world of the Harry Potter franchise, it is the movies.

Because of the movies prior to the "Deathly Hallows Part One," I did not expect much out of it. But watching the trailer, perhaps over 100 times on YouTube, I cannot agree with my once-stubborn notions of the movies. I am as excited for this last (or second to last if you want to get literal about it) movie as I was the night I attended the Deathly Hallows midnight book release party at Barnes and Noble on July 21, 2007.

The movies are mediocre. The first two movies were mellow, never seeming to portray the haunting and bewitchingly magical side of Harry Potter and only stuck to key points of the books. The screenplay writers didn't do anything wrong for sticking to the basics of the books, but the very difficult question that the screenplay writers ask themselves are: What do you leave in and take out?

To the question stated above, the most a screenplay writer can do is to sadly guess. There could have been details omitted by the screenplay writers that were vital in the future movies/books. I grew up with a love for

the series because my sister used to quiz me every night before I went to sleep.

Because of this, I hated how the movies ignored the personal touches that made the Harry Potter books enjoyable and unique. Where were all of Peeve's cackling taunts and pranks? I did not sign up for the movies to see Harry merely caught in wimpy, wriggling vines in the maze of the Triwizard Tournament.

The little details would make the movies significantly more lovable. When I discovered on MuggleNet that the seventh movie would be split into two parts, I was overjoyed. I don't really care if the idea of splitting the movie into two was to rake in more money because now I know at least the last taste of Harry Potter I can experience will be sweet and detailed.

The seventh movie seems to be significantly better than its predecessors. When watching the Part One trailer, I noticed the trailer includes the breaking of the barrier of the Hogwarts castle, and the epic duels between Voldemort and Harry.

I thought the trailer was visually mind-blowing because it not only had the minor details, but also magnified the heroism and climax of the important parts of the book like the battles.

So mark your calendars for the Deathly Hallows Part One movie premiere on Thursday, Nov. 19, at midnight. I will be avoiding all social connections until I get my hands on some popcorn and a seat to the movie. ♦



Series holds portkey to our hearts



>> Jackie Gu and Aashna Mukerji
Harry's not the only one with a scar

Jackie

On my 11th birthday, the Hogwarts-embossed envelope I'd been expecting was missing from my mailbox. My chimney was free of owls and no hairy half-giants broke down my door to inform me I was a witch. I was heartbroken, but I haven't lost hope yet. I'm still waiting for the day the Ministry of Magic sends me an owl apologizing for the mistake they made four years ago for not recognizing I was clearly destined for the wizarding world.

I can't excuse my recent influx of Potter-related Facebook statuses or my ever-increasing flood of Pottermore obsession. If you see me update my Facebook status five times a day with "OMG I LOVE SEVERUS SNAPE," I'm sorry. Feel free to block me from your home page. In all honesty, I owe a long-overdue explanation of why I love this pop culture phenomenon more than I'll ever love any other. Where can I even begin to explain it?

I was something of a late bloomer. In early elementary school I can't recall the series having much of an impact on me, but soon afterwards my, well, *affliction* exploded. The summer between fourth and fifth grade, I devoured "Half-Blood Prince" in a day, and when "Deathly Hallows" was released, I cried. Throughout the series I anguished with Harry, raged at Umbridge and cried with Percy. The Pottermore became my go-to coping mechanism for any problems I had. I knew they would never hurt me like people would. Instead, they were a steady source of solace that would never let me down.

The nearing release of part one of the final movies, "the open of the close," will undoubtedly break my heart. Neither Aashna nor I are ready for it. In fact, we'll probably be sobbing by the opening credits. Despite the "official" end of the series, though, I have no doubt that the wizarding world will always be a part of my life. My future husband will have to live in constant paranoia—

because there's a very healthy chance that I'll leave him for Snape.

Aashna

Jittery anticipation woke me up at 8 a.m. on the morning of the best day of my life. The gargantuan butterflies in my stomach refused to subside as my sister and I took a train out to central London, growing increasingly restless at the prospect of being unable to sit down for the next nine hours. Packed like sardines between complete strangers and drenched by possibly the worst rainstorm in the history of time, I was nearing the end of my rope. And then the whole cast of "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" arrived.

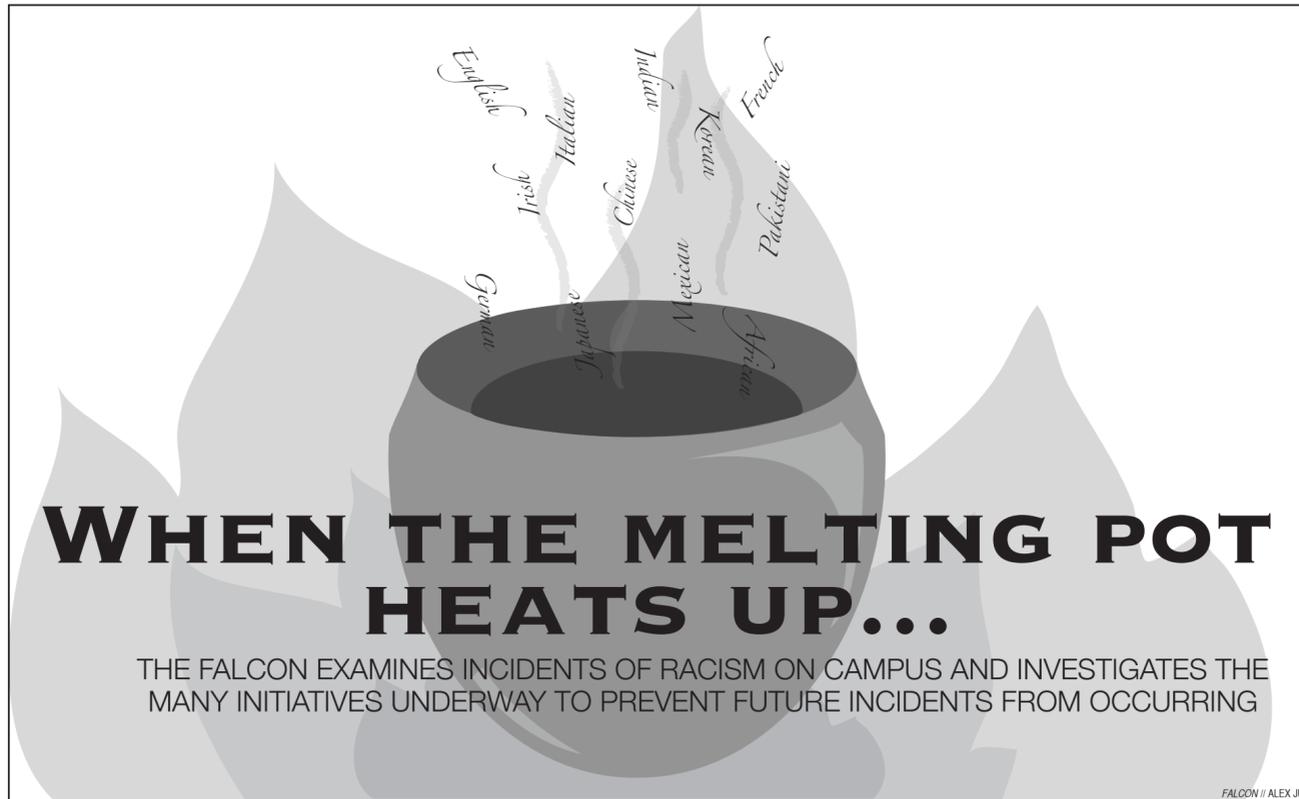
Since age 6, my life has been devoted to the Pottermore. My infatuation escalated to such extremes that I dreamed about going to Hogwarts. My room was littered with all things Harry Potter, from action figures to fake wands to fan-made illustrations of each House's common room tacked to my walls.

I had become the authority on everything Potter. Aside from being able to recite the books and movies backward, I made references to them at least seven times a day. Surprisingly, instead of driving my friends insane, my incessant Potter-y created something for us to bond over. We held 'HP sleepovers,' where we stayed up till 4 a.m. contemplating how to pull a Fred and get our siblings to eat an Acid Pop, in addition to other equally embarrassing activities like performing "Potter American Idol."

Don't get me wrong, I know being undefeated at Potter Scene-It isn't something to brag about. (Standing 5 feet away from the cast and getting their autographs, however, is a different story.) The Wizarding World is simply my escape from the monotony of everyday life—when I'm bored, I daydream about turning my enemies into ferrets or saving my godfather on a stolen hippogriff. In my mind, I'm the fourth member of the Harry-Ron-Hermione trio.

The books have had such an incredible impact on my life, Rowling's saga is finally ending—an idea that I instinctively reject. In part, this is because we know that Harry's door will always be open as long as the Pottermore continues to theorize. Though the thrill of midnight releases has run its course, the legend is far from over—Harry Potter will never be gone as long as his fans who remain are loyal to him. ♦





BY ANOOP Galivanche, Anika Jhalani, Kelly Liu, Anshu Siripurapu & Elijah Yi

Editor's note: This story contains offensive language that may be unsuitable for younger readers.

A few days prior to the highly anticipated football game between Saratoga High and crosstown rival Los Gatos, seniors Tim Lycurgus and Kevin Darchuck created a page on Facebook for Saratoga and Los Gatos students alike to discuss their sentiments regarding the game. The initial comments were harmless—one-liners poking fun at the opposing team.

But animosities began to flare, eventually providing for a sort of cyber battleground, with students making hateful and racist comments toward each other. One student from Los Gatos made derogatory comments about the large Asian population of Saratoga High, while another attacked two recent Saratoga alumni who had posted on the page—calling them “sand niggers.” Saratoga High officials, after being contacted by a concerned Los Gatos High administration, promptly asked Lycurgus and Darchuck to shut down the page.

Disturbing memories

For many Saratoga students, the Facebook page episode was painful, as it attacked the very ethnic diversity that the school prides itself on. While many Saratoga High students were stung by the racial slurs that were being employed to intimidate the school as a whole, junior Samantha Hoffman was particularly taken aback by the group's brazen and offensive comments.

“I saw the page and I saw the comments. It's one thing to make fun of the opposing team's mascot or something, but making fun of a person's religion or skin color is just plain disgusting,” said

Hoffman. Hoffman, whom her friend junior Sneha Shivkumar describes as “a very strong and emotionally resilient person,” said that she was particularly affected by the comments because they reminded her of a time when she experienced racism first hand on campus.

Hoffman recalls a time last year, as a sophomore, when she left a binder in her English class. When she went to retrieve it the next morning, she was relieved to have found it, but horrified when she found that it had been vandalized. A crude replica of the Star of David had been drawn on the cover, presumably a reference to Hoffman's religion, and the word “Jew” was scrawled in large lettering across the binder. A distraught Hoffman then attempted to show the binder to the substitute teacher for her class, but the teacher shrugged it off.

“She told me it was my fault, and that I shouldn't have left the binder there,” Hoffman said. “She glanced at the binder, saw what was on it and then resumed reading her book or whatever she was doing.”

Lack of reporting

Hoffman's case is unusual because although she reported the incident to an authority, no action was taken. According to a recent poll by the Falcon, the vast majority—95 percent—of cases concerning cultural misunderstandings go unreported because victims feel that the incidents are not serious enough to warrant any official action or because they do not want to publicize their prob-

lems. Such was the case for junior Nicole Borda, who is also Jewish.

“People make snide remarks about being Jewish, but most of their comments are just jokes. I've heard people make jokes about stereotypes to my other friends who aren't Jewish,” Borda said. “I've only really had one event where people crossed the line.”

This “one event” also occurred while Borda was a sophomore: a girl who Borda barely knew began making anti-Semitic comments to her when the class was supposed to be working in groups. Her comments followed the same progression as those on the Saratoga-Los Gatos Facebook group—starting out as harmless jokes about Jewish stereotypes but quickly turning into more serious accusations and offensive questions. By the end of the period, Borda was left confused and on the brink of tears.

“I had no idea why this girl who I barely knew was making these comments to me,” Borda said. “It would have almost hurt less if a friend made the same comments, but I barely knew her.”

Despite the emotional impact this incident had on Borda, she ultimately decided not to report it because she thought that doing so would prolong its impact.

“I didn't want to make a big deal out of it because I just wanted it to end,” Borda said. “I wanted to forget about it.” In a way, her strategy was effective. After a while, the memory of the incident became a mere blur; in fact, at the time of the interview, Borda admitted that she had not thought of the event in a few months.

Cultural implications

To Borda and her peers who witnessed the exchange, both Hoffman's and Borda's incidents underscore long standing cultural misunderstandings on campus. Senior Shir Nehama, the head of Multicultural Club, says these occurrences, which in many cases fall just shy of outright racism, result in part from the ethnic diversity on campus. Following this diversity are stereotypes that are so frequently perpetuated by students that, in spite of their racist undertones, have not become social taboos but instead become social norms.

Administrative action

Luckily for Hoffman, she received some closure soon after the incident. Her friends took her to see assistant principal Karen Hyde, who swiftly organized an administrative response to the substitute's impassivity.

Hyde remembers the aftermath of the incident vividly. “Sam came into my office with two of her friends, and she was very upset,” Hyde said. With other administrators, Hyde talked to the sub-

pertinent percentages

82.8% The percentage of people who said that they have experienced racism at least once on campus

95.3% The percentage of victims who said they have not reported their experiences to an administrator

60.4% The percentage of respondents who said that they believed racism was “a fact of life,” but reducible through cultural education

>> Anshu Siripurapu and Kelly Liu



“The diversity on campus is amazing because you're exposed to many different cultures,” said senior Heather Gummow, who converses with friends, above. On left, junior Samantha Hoffman makes a visit to Ms. Hyde's office. Hoffman found respite and guidance in Hyde's office after someone vandalized her binder with racist references.

stitute teacher who had dismissed Hoffman's pleas for help earlier that day. “She claimed not to know what the Star of David was,” Hyde said. To make matters worse, the teacher in question was hardly a neophyte instructor, Hyde explained. “The teacher wasn't a twenty-something in her first year of teaching. She was a very experienced teacher,” Hyde said.

Though Hoffman and the administration chose not to pursue any further recourse against the teacher, Hyde said that the administration discouraged the teacher from coming back to substitute. The greater part of the crime—the actual vandalism of her materials—was never resolved, despite the administration conducting an investigation into who may have done it.

Causes of racism

Like Nehama, Hyde also feels that the cultural misunderstandings that so frequently occur on campus are a direct result of two factors: the great ethnic diversity on campus and the limited exposure students have to other cultures at home.

“Racism is cultural judgment about external fact,” said Hyde. “Your basis of understanding other cultures is that by which you are raised. It's inevitable. We often don't go beyond what we are taught at home.” Unfortunately, she added, what students are taught at home is often very narrow in perspective—views inculcated from a young age about other cultures that may or not be accurate.

“Growing up, we are generally exposed to very few cultures thoroughly. You grow up with your one culture, and at Saratoga, you have all these kids that have grown up with different cultures coming together,” Hyde said. “That's a beautiful thing, but disagreements can occur.”

A survey put out by the Falcon in late October corroborated Hyde's insights. In nearly 270 responses, more than 80 percent of students polled said they had encountered racism on campus at least once in their high school careers. Of these people, more than 95 percent said they had never spoken to an administrator about it. Most interestingly, more than 60 percent of those polled believed that “racism is a fact of life, but education about stereotypes can help mitigate it.”

These stereotypes are what Nehama strives to combat through her work in

the multicultural club.

During a recent club meeting, members drew the flag of their ancestral country on note cards and made a quilt out of the cards. The members then shared a few facts about their country. The activity helped illustrate the unity that even the most diverse population can have, Nehama said.

Nehama fervently believes that educating people about cultures different from their own is the best antidote to racism. “When people don't know about a culture, they tend to rely on what they've heard on TV and the media about a culture,” Nehama said.

More often than not, these sources present information that is blatantly inaccurate and often inflammatory.

The effect of the media

A sophomore who requested anonymity pointed to shows like “South Park” when asked about his own cultural misgivings.

“I was obsessed with ‘South Park’ in middle school, and although I never really took any of it seriously, the stuff they say in the show eventually went to my head,” he explained. He said that, after a while, he too began harboring negative sentiments towards certain religions and cultures.

Though he said that he is now “past that phase,” he still warns his younger brother and cousins to stay staunch in their moral bearing.

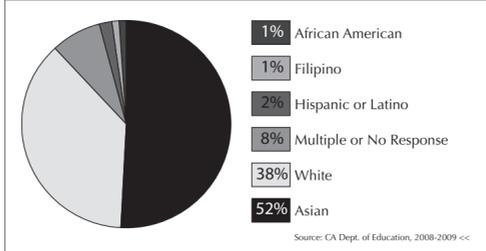
Nehama also advises her club's members to avoid television shows that “completely lack knowledge and tolerance” of different cultures and religions.

The fundamental problem

Yet however organized and passionate Nehama and her colleagues at the multicultural club are at fighting racism, they face one fundamental problem: the definition of racism itself.

As senior Angel Hernandez, who leads the Spanish Club on campus, said, there have not been any violent hate crimes or the like at Saratoga High, but there have still been episodes of racism.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF SHS



“Defining [racism] is a problem, because it means different things. People always say that some decision was un-

and Borda. Instead, he said that the subtle assumptions that people make about other people based on racial stereotypes are the most common.

“People assume a lot of stuff, maybe stuff I'm not even aware of. I don't think it's good, but I can't necessarily blame them, because they are fed a lot of garbage from different places,” said Hernandez.

Still, he believes that the willful malignity underlying more extreme forms of racism is far worse than the unintentional harm people may cause because of an innocent but insensitive comment.

“It's worse when people are trying to hurt you compared to when people hurt you unknowingly,” he said.

Hoffman agreed—saying that it's harder to justify the motivations behind such actions when it is clear that the perpetrator meant harm.

And this is why Hoffman believes that racism on campus is such an important issue for students and teachers to address.

Mainstream manifestations

The kind of racism Hernandez said is prevalent is not the overt offensiveness present in the experiences of Hoffman

“Racism is the elephant in the room,” she said, “and if we don't do something soon, it will most certainly stampede.”



Senior Shir Nehama leads a meeting of the Multicultural club on Nov. 3. The club, which meets every Wednesday, explores different cultures and promotes diversity through presentations and fundraisers. Nehama hopes to increase the club's membership this year.

>> togotalks

How big of a problem is racism on campus?

It's something that everyone knows is there, but no one talks about. I don't think many people feel comfortable discussing it.



senior David Chang

I have personally never experienced racism on campus that has hurt me greatly or anything. People say stupid things.



sophomore Rohil Taggarsi

If more people knew about different cultures, then I think they wouldn't make such uneducated statements.



freshman Rohan Jhalani

Sophomore year? No thanks, I'd rather be an upperclassman



>> **Brandon Judoprasertijo**
What's a Judoprasertijo?

Almost every class in high school can be categorized in some way. The freshmen are annoying and short, the juniors study 24/7 and the seniors dread college applications. However, one class seems to stand out awkwardly in high school hierarchy. It just so happens that I am part of this class—the sophomore class.

Being a sophomore is, of course, better than being a freshman, especially at rallies. We are no longer helpless fresh meat, victims to the notorious “go home, freshman” chants, and we actually know what to do when it comes time for us to yell our class cheer.

However, being on the underclassman side of the gym along with the freshmen isn't a great feeling, and we aren't anything

special at rallies as the upperclassmen and freshmen are. It also hurts when the upperclassmen are chanting “Go home, freshmen!” because it looks like they're yelling at us too.

Even though sophomores are seen in a better light compared to freshmen, we are still looked down upon by upperclassmen.

For one thing, our classes are more difficult compared to freshman year. However, juniors and seniors scoff at our hardships in making this transition and simply warn “wait until junior year, and then you'll really see.”

Another bad thing about sophomore classes is having to take P.E. During my freshman year, the majority of my P.E. class consisted of my fellow classmates.

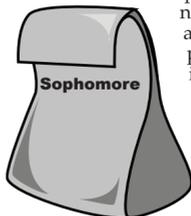
On the first day of P.E. in sophomore year, I realized that P.E. would be a lot lonelier this year. I walked inside the gym hoping to see my friends from my last year's P.E. class. Instead, I was met with a sea of freshmen and only about five sophomores. I soon discovered that I was now of the awkward “sophomores who are still in P.E.” group that always

sticks together in a corner of the large gym.

Becoming an upperclassman next year seems like something to look forward to. Sure, the academic level of classes will skyrocket. However, it seems like becoming an upperclassman will open many new doors in high school, like the adventures of asking people to prom in unforgettable ways or visitations to the College and Career Center to hear from college speakers from all around the nation.

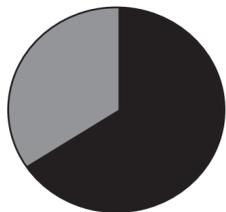
Being able to go off campus during lunch and gain more respect is exciting along with the thrill of being on the road in a car, too.

So let's not hate being sophomores too much. After all, it's only a matter of time before we're living the good life on the other side of the bleachers during rallies, eating delicious food from off-campus lunches and enjoying all the other perks that being an upperclassman has to offer. ♦



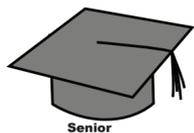
>> falcon poll

What percentage of upperclassmen have their licenses?



66.4% Upperclassmen with licenses
33.6% Upperclassmen without licenses

The Falcon polled 220 juniors and seniors



gnidotiW2 Classes

No license, no off-campus lunches

By Will Edman

On Wednesday, Oct. 20, junior Eric Wang walked out of his class five minutes into the lunch period and began to search the quad for friends to eat with. However, he found that all of his friends had already driven off campus, and he resigned to do homework in the library. Such a situation is all but routine for Wang, who, like many other upperclassmen, has no means of driving off campus at lunch.

“Every day, I have to walk home,” said Wang, who has a license but lacks a car. “Sometimes, I see my friends drive by and wave at me, but they can't give me rides because they haven't had their license for a year yet.”

Although most upperclassmen are older than 16, complications such as driving test appointments and the increasing price of insurance for teens make it difficult for many juniors and seniors to obtain licenses and cars.

“For some reason, the DMV cancelled my appointment, so I had to reschedule,” junior Ben Chung said. “Without my license, lunch is boring and monotonous. Also, I can never leave my house unless my brother gives me a ride.”

Wang agreed, saying, “I'll come into the quad during lunch and all my friends will be gone. Sometimes I have to eat my Cup of Noodles alone, and it

makes for a pensive time.”

Some seniors who don't have their licenses, such as Amol Aggarwal, do not experience the problems that juniors generally do during lunch.

“It's not that bad,” Aggarwal said. “I have plenty of friends who have their licenses and can just take me off with them.”

Although many upperclassmen without licenses do not enjoy the time they are forced to spend in the quad, some students who do have their licenses actually prefer to stay on campus for lunch.

“I usually don't go off because off-campus lunches are so expensive, and I stay on campus often to study for quizzes and tests,” said junior Annie Barco. “Also, a lot of my friends don't have their licenses, and since I don't want to break the law by driving them, I prefer to stay on campus with them.”

Chung maintains that off-campus lunches are worth the extra money.

“People will spend less than \$5 at the school, and off-campus they will spend more, like \$5 to \$9, so I save a lot more money than my friends,” he said. “But I still think the ability to go off campus would be worth the extra money, because the food is so much better.”

As the school year continues, the quad will begin to empty as more upperclassmen obtain the means to go off campus during lunch.

However, until then, juniors and seniors without licenses or cars will remain on campus, for better or for worse.

“I am sad that I can't drive my brother's sexy black cat,” said Chung. “But I will be able to some day.” ♦

THE InfoLoop

What: Many upperclassmen do not have their driver's licenses

Why: Problems with the DMV, failing the test, or simply a lack of motivation mean that many of them choose not to have licenses.

Result: Many upperclassmen must eat lunch alone or refrain from going off-campus to stay with their friends.

-Will Edman and Nandini Ruparel

Taking an early crack at the (P)SAT's

By Serena Chan

The dreaded SAT I test. High school students dedicate hundreds of hours to prepare for this one exam, sitting through prep classes, memorizing vocab and slaving away at practice tests. Taking the SAT I as an upperclassman is stressful enough; however, some students are getting a head start with this exam.

Most students begin their preparation by taking the shorter and tamer exam, the PSAT. Aside from the typical group of sophomores and juniors who register for the PSAT, a couple of freshmen sign up each year as well.

“We tend to discourage freshmen from taking the PSAT,” said College and Career Center coordinator Bonnie Sheikh. “Why pay \$25 to take the test? We have practice tests available in the guidance office.”

This year two freshmen registered for the PSAT, including Edgar Chen, who wanted to truly experience the PSAT for himself.

“My parents signed me up, and I was OK with taking it,” said Chen. “I don't think I did too well, but now I know what to study.”

Rather than the usual stack of prep books, Chen prepared by taking the practice test given to every student at registration. According to Chen, the PSAT was an early opportunity to figure out what to study for the SAT I. Chen does not yet know when he will be taking the test.

Some students take the SAT I as early as middle school.

“I took the SAT just to see where I was in terms of my academic level,” said sophomore Brian Kim, who took the exam in 8th grade. “Plus, the College Board drops scores before high school, so there was nothing to lose.”

Kim was able to experience the full test, which prepared him by showing what it would feel like if he were to take it again in high school. According to Kim, to improve his score, he will be retaking the SAT I.

Seniors who have already completed their share of the SAT I gave some advice to those beginning their preparation for the test.

“Definitely if you start learning how to take the SAT earlier, you can do better on it,” said senior Nick Renda, who first took the PSAT as a sophomore and the SAT I as a junior. “But as you get older, you do better and better just because you get more practice in your classes.”

Also, senior Brian Vo said, “You don't really need to worry about [the SAT I] until at least sophomore year. You're going to do fine.” Like Renda, Vo first took the PSAT and SAT I in his sophomore and junior year, respectively.

“You can't do well without studying hard,” said Renda. “[Students should do] whatever they want to do. I don't think you need to start working that hard too early.” ♦

THE InfoLoop

How many: From 1991-2001, more than 250,000 7th and 8th graders have taken the SAT.

Why: Most students take it to qualify for talent search programs at major universities like Johns Hopkins and Northwestern University.

Their scores?: Although the scores range from 200 all the way to 800, the mean scores of these kids are often lower than those of high school seniors.

-Source: the College Board website and NPR, 2006

>> togatalks

What do you think about students taking the SAT early?

It's better to start a little earlier like sophomore year. But 8th grade just seems really early.



senior Catherine Hu

I think 8th grade is a little early, but 9th grade is fine.



sophomore Lisa Porter

SOMETIMES, WE DON'T ACT OUR AGE. CAN UPPERCLASSMEN ACT LIKE UNDERCLASSMEN OR VICE-VERSA? THE FALCON INVESTIGATES.

Calculus easy as Pi for sophomores

By Priya Nookala

Sophomore Justin Chiang sits in his Calculus BC class working diligently to solve math problems. Of the six sophomores in calculus, Chiang is one of five sophomores in Calculus BC, the harder of the two calculus classes.

Chiang chose to take calculus because he completed Algebra 2 on his own while attending Redwood Middle School. He then studied Trigonometry/Pre-calculus Honors as a freshman.

“I didn't accelerate classes because it was necessarily ‘too easy’; rather, I felt like I had the capacity to handle a more advanced class,” Chiang said.

Most students who take Trigonometry/Pre-calculus Honors as freshmen have already taken accelerated math classes in middle school. Most sophomores taking calculus say they enjoy math.

“I chose this course because I wanted to take the class. I actually like math,” sophomore Amanda Chow said.

For Chiang, math not only stimulates him but also has practical applications, which he appreci-

ates.

“Math is good for developing logical reasoning skills and is applicable to life situations,” Chiang said.

According to teachers, sophomores taking calculus generally have no problem keeping up with the advanced class.

“Most people that are in the class are already at a really high level of math, [and] most of the kids are at about the same level with each other,” said Audrey Warmuth, who teaches Calculus BC.

Not only are these sophomores comfortable with the higher level of math, but they also say they rarely feel out of place in these classes.

“Sometimes the class may be considerably less interesting and socially ‘fun’ due to the lack of same-grade-level peers, but in general, I hardly notice the grade difference,” said Chiang.

Sophomores have proven to their teachers and friends that they really are socially well adjusted in this upper level course.

“I find that they fit right in,” said Warmuth. “They're respected by their fellow classmates for their ability.” ♦

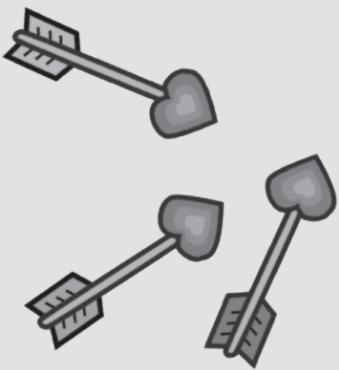
THE InfoLoop

What: More and more sophomores are starting to take Calculus BC, a class usually reserved for seniors and juniors.

Why: Many students have taken lower-level classes like Trig/Pre-Calc and Algebra 2 in private and moved ahead of the general curve.

How they fare: Although it is a difficult class, sophomores seem to be doing well—if not better than the others—and are succeeding in class.

-Priya Nookala and Nandini Ruparel



Date it and

Matchmakers: Apeksha Sharma, Pia Mishra
Reporters: Arnav Dugar, Olivia Chock, Sabrina Cismas, Vivien Lu.

The Falcon paired eight students on

Jhalani

Ingrid

Rohan

Hong

Freshmen



The Set-Up:

Rohan and Ingrid went to downtown Saratoga and enjoyed a lovely stroll at the park.

Q: What was something you noticed about Ingrid?

A: She smelled like Victoria's Secret Sensual Seduction perfume.

Q: What went well during your first date?

A: He was really funny and he wasn't awkward. We always had something to talk about.

Match Meter:



Amato

Lennie

Alex

Char

Juniors

The Set-Up:

Alex and Lennie ate their hearts out at Chipotle.



Q: What was something you noticed about Lennie?

A: She used a knife and fork while eating a burrito bowl. It was very classy.

Q: Will there be a second date?

A: It depends on her feelings.

Q: What did you like about him?

A: His sense of humor and his clean car!

Q: Will there be a second date?

A: I would say yes because everything went really well, except he didn't pay for me... The guy always has to pay!

Match Meter:



Rate it

on dates to see how compatible they are.



Alex Wang

Paige Kingston

Sophomores

The Set-Up:

Alex and Paige had a romantically awkward date on the lower field.

Q: How do you think the date went?

A: I think it went really well. It was a pretty solid date.

Q: Will you go out again?

A: Yeah, pretty much.

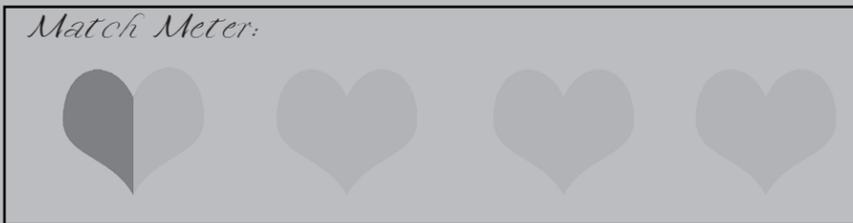
Q: How did the date go?

A: It was a little awkward.

Q: Will there be another date?

A: We probably won't go out again.

Match Meter:



Marcus Hoffman

Grace Kim

Seniors

The Set-Up:

Marcus, despite getting lost, picked Grace up and went for an enjoyable evening out.

Q: What was your favorite part of the date?

A: My favorite part was picking her up at her house.

Q: Will there be a second date?

A: Probably not.

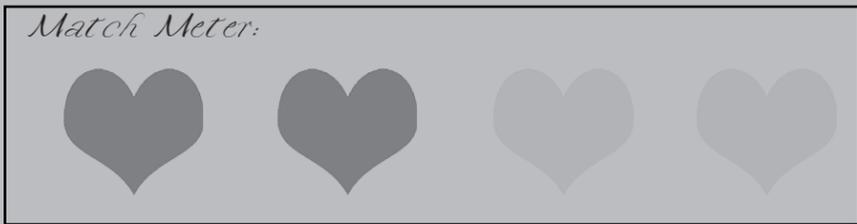
Q: What went well?

A: He was really sweet when he picked me up.

Q: Will there be a second date?

A: I think I see a beautiful friendship in the future.

Match Meter:



The Saratoga Scene: Halloween Happenings



TALISMAN // JAYA NARASIMHAN

Senior Tim Rollinson gives sophomore Neil Sigantoria a lift during tutorial on Friday Oct. 29. Sigantoria is dressed as one of Mr. Cerbone's wolves from the "Wolfpack Party", while Rollinson flexes his muscles as Nacho Libre. Work those costumes boys!

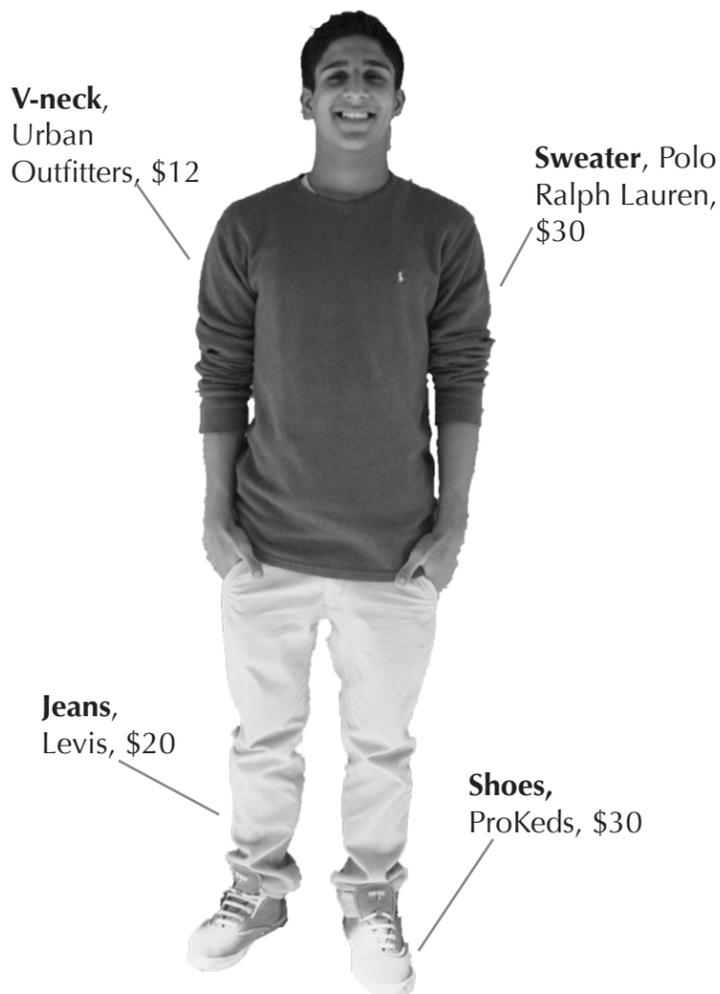


TALISMAN // JAYA NARASIMHAN

Junior Chelsie Steele hugs one of the children during the annual Child Psychology "Trick or Treat" on Oct. 29.

STYLE FILES

Sasan Saadat, 10



V-neck,
Urban
Outfitters, \$12

Sweater, Polo
Ralph Lauren,
\$30

Jeans,
Levis, \$20

Shoes,
ProKeds, \$30

How would you define your style?

Very relaxed and laid back. I don't like brand names, so I always look for things not a lot of people have.

Where do you usually shop?

I usually shop at Urban Outfitters, Zumiez, even Target! Anywhere I can find basics.

How much do you usually spend on clothes every month?

\$50-60

Reviewer sinks sweet tooth into local cake bakeries

VISIT TO LOS GATOS BAKERIES HELP COMPARE AND CONTRAST LOCAL TREATS

BY Vivien Lu

The scent of frosting and cakes permeate the bakeries and the heat from the freshly made desserts warm the surroundings. Both in Los Gatos downtown, Nothing Bundt Cakes and Icing On the Cake are widely known for their edible delicacies.

However, each bakery has its own idiosyncrasies that draw customers back. Nothing Bundt Cakes on North Santa Cruz Avenue across from Safeway sells solely bundt cakes. The must-have flavors are red velvet and chocolate chocolate chip, and the flavor of the month is pumpkin. The store sells sample sizes and miniature cakes, which

are about \$4 each.

The cakes are thick, making each bite more filling, and there is more content for the same price as a cupcake from Icing On the Cake.

The store also has a large menu filled with a variety of choices for decorated bundt cakes that are perfect for any occasion, such as birthday parties or holiday celebrations.

However, Icing On the Cake on West Main Street near Highway 17 is more for simple everyday pleasures. They are known for their banana products, as banana seems to be the most popular flavor, ranging from banana

bread to banana cupcakes.

The store will certainly satisfy a sweet tooth; one of their creamier desserts, the Swirly, is a chocolate cupcake filled with white butter cream, outlined in chocolate icing and dipped in chocolate pudding.

The whipped frosting on the cupcakes from Icing On the Cake is sweet, but the fluffy cupcake itself is so moist, that the two coincide to a well-balanced creation.

The bakery has an endless supply of sweets—cookies, pies, and mint chip and cookie dough cupcakes fill the shop.

In addition, Icing On the Cake is able to create the warm, freshly made atmosphere that Nothing Bundt Cakes seems

to lack.

The goal of both bakeries is to create a traditional setting by displaying artistic cupcake stands and shelves full of delicious and appetizing treats.

Icing on the Cake, especially, boasts a particularly friendly and knowledgeable staff, who know their desserts and assist people with a smile.

So to summarize, Icing On the Cake satisfies all standards of a good bakery experience, but Nothing Bundt Cakes gives a better deal on desserts that are often broader and more suitable arrangements for special occasions. ♦

Icing On the Cake



(OUT OF FOUR)

Where: 50 West Main Street
Los Gatos, CA 95030

What: Baked goods, pastries, cakes

Top Pick: the "Swirly"

Nothing Bundt Cakes



(OUT OF FOUR)

Where: 421 North Santa Cruz Avenue
Los Gatos, CA 95030

What: Baked goods, pastries, cakes

Top Pick: Red velvet cake

New York City: U.S. Open

by Christine Bancroft

Srinidhi Raghavan



>> Senior Srinidhi Raghavan

Traveled to the 2010 U.S. Open and witnessed matches between pros like Djokovic and Fish.

As most students were starting their first days of school in the week of Aug. 30, senior Srinidhi Raghavan was all the way across the country having the experience of a lifetime.

Raghavan spent a weekend in New York City before Labor Day, leaving Sept. 2 for New York,

and returning the following Tuesday to begin school. During those two weeks, she saw several matches, as well as a number of partial sets. These matches were a part of the annual U.S. Open, the fourth and final Grand Slam event of the year.

"I play tennis and it's a really big part of my life," said Raghavan. "I've always seen it on TV and it's always seemed amazing to go see it in person."

During the trip, she went from stadium to stadium to see as many matches as she could. Her favorite match was between Serbian player Novak Djokovic and American player Mardy Fish. Novak later got second place in the tournament, losing to Spain's Rafael Nadal.

"I had third row seats in the Arthur Ashe stadium," Raghavan said. "I was so close to the players and the game. It was ridiculous. Novak's my favorite player, and he won, so it was really exciting to be able to see that in person."

Raghavan went on the trip with her parents and brother, and is a tennis player herself for the school team.

She said the experience inspired her to work on her own skills.

"It impacted my tennis game," said Raghavan. "I feel motivated to work harder and try to emulate him. It was just an awesome experience. Watching tennis all day, the professionals, it was just a great trip and something I'll never forget."

She found that the players' commitment to their sport was unforgettable.

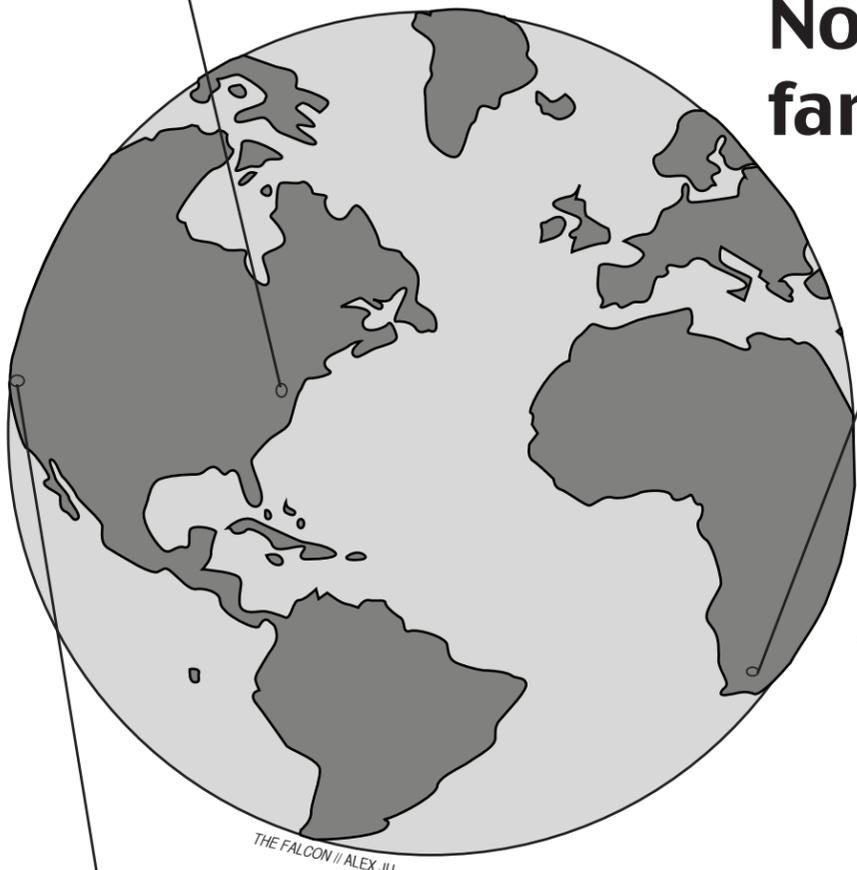
"The U.S. Open was an amazing experience for me; it made me realize and appreciate the hard work and dedication it takes to become a pro player."

Although she had to miss part of the first week of school, she doesn't regret a moment.

"There's no professional tennis tournament quite like the Open," said Raghavan. "It's one of the world's biggest tennis tournaments. Just being there with so many people in the stands, you just don't get that feeling normally at other tournaments. I would definitely go back, no question." ♦

Sports Destinations

No distance can stop these fans from enjoying their sport



Senior Aditya Dev

South Africa: World Cup

by Roy Bisht & Abhishek Venkataramana



>> Senior Aditya Dev

Attended three soccer matches of the 2010 FIFA World Cup over the summer

Dev's family coincidentally was taking a trip to India around the same time and was able to make a side-trip to South Africa to catch three matches.

The trip to the World Cup may have been a last minute decision for Dev's family, but, in his opinion, those three games of insanity were well worth it.

"I was really lucky that I went to the World Cup, especially considering that it was a last moment decision," said Dev.

Considering that this year's World Cup was expected to be the most-watched television event in history, the dedication of the fans at the game was something that did not go unnoticed for Dev.

The ultimate experience that he had in South Africa did more than just entertain him for a few games; the trip has turned him into an avid soccer fan.

"I'm wasn't really much of a soccer fan before, but now I really enjoy soccer. I definitely hope to go to another World Cup if I ever get the chance," said Dev. ♦

From June 11 to July 11, millions of fans worldwide tuned in to watch the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Among them was senior Aditya Dev, who was merely hundreds of feet away from some of the most talented soccer players on the planet.

"Everyone was decked out in their country's colors and blowing vuvuzela [horns]," said Dev. "I don't think that I'll ever be able to experience something like that again in my life."

Dev was able to attend the much-coveted event after his uncle, who works for a company that sponsored the matches, managed to get discounted tickets.

Santa Cruz: Local surf spots

by Jennifer Jin

Teacher Rick Ellis



>> Teacher Rick Ellis

Surfs at Santa Cruz spots such as Pleasure Point, Manresa Beach and Moss Landing

If you give world geography teacher Rick Ellis a map, he can point you to a lot more than just the Bering Strait, Zimbabwe or the Dead Sea. He can also show you some of best local spots to catch some waves.

Ellis, who has been surfing since he was a teenager in southern California,

manages to hit the waves at least two times a week, despite his heavy teaching load. Over the years, he has found some stellar beaches where he regularly surfs.

Ellis' destinations usually depend on the surf, but he usually goes to Pleasure Point. Some other beaches he goes to are Manresa Beach and Moss Landing.

Ellis lives in Watsonville, a city in southern Santa Cruz County. As a result, Ellis usually surfs at beaches nearby.

"If the waves are really good, I'll try to go before school, and after school sometimes, especially in the spring time. Since it gets darker later, I get into the water at 6 and surf until 7:30," said Ellis. "It really just depends on the windows of opportunity."

Although he likes to surf in the more popular places, he also likes to surf at some lesser known places as well.

"In the Santa Cruz area and Monterey, there's a lot of beach coastline. There's some typical surf spots like Pleasure Point which has a lot of surfers, but there's also a lot of beaches that people don't go to," said Ellis. "If you check it often enough and there's different kind of sandbars, you'll get lucky and have the waves all to yourself."

Although Ellis is content with surfing around Santa Cruz, he would also like to surf in other places as well.

"Hawaii would be a nice place to surf. I'd also like to go surfing in Mexico or Central America [since I've] never done that before," said Ellis. "We talk about Africa a lot in my geography classes. There's a lot of coastline along the continent Africa that's not surfed at all. That would be a pretty cool adventure, to go somewhere remote like that."

As for surf spots for new surfers, he advises them to follow some general guidelines.

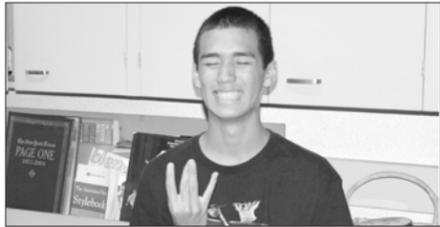
"[Beginners] should pick spots wisely, like go to places where beginners usually go. They should learn the etiquette of surfing, for example, the right of way, what type of surf board to use and how to hold onto your board," said Ellis. "You really need to know the ins and outs of surfing before you go paddle out cause chances are, someone might get hurt."

Ellis hopes that he will never have to stop surfing.

"It's an addicting activity," said Ellis. "I love the water, and it's just a lot of fun." ♦

Last week of October:

a sports fan's dream



>> Will Edman

Where there's a Will, there's a way

On Sunday, Oct. 24, I decided to sit down and plan my coming week. I tossed my homework aside and headed over to espn.com as the last week of October is not a normal week; it is the best week of a sports fanatic's year.

Only once during the 52-week year do all four major professional sports have games at the same time. That week, the NHL entered its third week of the season, the NBA played its opening games, the NFL approached mid-season, and of course, Brian Wilson's beard led the San Francisco Giants into its World Series matchup with the Texas Rangers.

As I prepared for this monumental week, I had my goals in mind: to watch every World Series game, see LeBron James and the

Although most people will wait 365 days for the next Christmas, I anticipate the next last week of October even more.

new Miami Heat dominate the NBA and watch my Denver Broncos beat some 49er butt on Sunday. Oh, and to win my fantasy football and basketball games that week.

During this impeccable planning, I somehow forgot that I am a junior, and there was no chance in the world that I would ever have 19.5 hours to watch TV during the week. But I promised myself that I would watch at least part of each important game.

My plan worked at first, as I was able to watch the opening basketball game on Tuesday and the first pitch of the Giants' game on Wednesday. I also caught the first inning of World Series Game 2, but because of my extracurriculars, I never saw a run scored in either of these games, and I felt left out of the Giants' hysteria.

However, I finished the week on a strong note as I watched Madison Bumgarner pitch an incredible game to take a 3-1 lead in the series. Luckily, I also missed the Broncos-49ers game, so instead of having to suffer the ineptitude of the Broncos, I would just have to take the abuse from all of my 49er-fan friends the next Monday.

Although I didn't get a chance to watch every big game, the week was a success as the Giants dominated and both of my fantasy sport teams roared victory. So, although most people will wait 365 days for the next Christmas, I will anticipate the next last week of October even more—the best week on the sports calendar. ♦

FOOTBALL



Courtesy of CAROLYN DOLES

Senior fullback Marcus Hoffman rushes down the field simultaneously avoiding two defenders in the Milpitas game on Nov. 5.

Falcons face undefeated Vikings

BY Karthik Annaamalai & Abhishek Venkataramana

Anything is possible. That's what coach Tim Lugo told his players when they beat Los Gatos 21-17 to end a 27-year losing streak. That's also what he's telling his players today as they look to beat the undefeated Palo Alto Vikings tonight at home, in the team's final regular season game of the year. After losing to Milpitas 7-0 on Nov. 5, tonight's game is a must-win for the Falcons to advance to CCS.

"This is perhaps our biggest game of the year," said senior captain and linebacker Marcus Hoffman. "People might say it was Los Gatos, but this decides whether or not we're advancing to the CCS playoffs, which is our ultimate goal."

For the Falcons to guarantee a CCS bid, they must either defeat or tie Palo Alto, a difficult task in itself. However, if Santa Teresa is able to upset Piedmont Hills, the Falcons will receive a bid regardless of the outcome of their game against Palo Alto.

The 5-4 Falcons have a clear challenge ahead of them tonight as they face the 9-0 Vikings, who are currently ranked fourth in CCS, in addition to leading the De Anza Division. The Vikings sport a potent offense and have come up with huge wins this season,

including a 42-0 win against Los Gatos and a 35-0 win against Milpitas.

"Our defense has been playing extremely well in the past few games, so I think we can match up well with Palo Alto," said senior captain and middle linebacker Greg Johnson.

In a battle of the quarterbacks, Milpitas quarterback Christoph Bono, who leads the league with 1580 passing yards will be pitted against senior quarterback Kevin Smith, who follows behind in the rankings with 1140 yards.

In addition to posing an offensive threat, the Vikings also command an impenetrable defense, which has shut out some of the league's most explosive offensive teams, including Los Gatos and Milpitas. Senior Palo Alto defensive end Kevin Anderson, a 6'4, 230 pound Stanford recruit, leads the league with 9 sacks, and must be contained in order for Saratoga to establish an offensive rhythm.

"Our offensive line has played really well so far this season, so this will be the final test for them," said Johnson.

The team lost to Milpitas 7-0 on Nov. 5 and 23-16 to Wilcox on Oct. 29. On Nov. 5, a stout Milpitas defense and a multitude of penalties left the Falcons scoreless for most of the game. With 4:26 left in the game Smith led his team into scoring position. However, the Milpitas defense pressured Smith to throw the ball

>> scoreboard

Nov. 5
Saratoga 0, Milpitas 7

Four turnovers resulted in a loss for the Falcons.

Oct. 29
Saratoga 16, Wilcox 23

Wilcox Chargers scored on three of five Falcon turnovers.

away on fourth down, dashing any hope of a comeback. Four costly turnovers resulted in the loss for the Falcons.

"The [Milpitas] game was a little bit of a disappointment," said Hoffman, "because they were a team we knew we could beat. We just lost focus and couldn't protect the ball. The most important thing for us to do [tonight] is play fundamental football without turning over the ball."

Similar problems with turnovers led to a 23-16 home loss against Wilcox on Oct. 29. The Falcons trailed just 16-14 until the Chargers managed to score with 2:44 left in the game. Saratoga turned the ball over five times, which cost them the game when the Chargers managed to score on three of them.

Kickoff is at 7:30 p.m. at the Benny Pierce field. ♦

FIELD HOCKEY

League season finishes with no CCS

BY Synthia Ling & Ren Norris

Players on the girls' field hockey team celebrated their senior day on Nov. 2 in style: decorations, gifts and speeches were showered upon the six graduating seniors who were dressed to the theme of "Looney Tunes."

"Senior day was amazing," said senior co-captain Vanessa Block. "The girls put a lot of work into it and it was a really nice way to celebrate our final season."

The senior game against Presentation was close, with a tied score of 0-0 at the end of regulation play. In the 7-minute overtime, Presentation slipped in a goal, winning 1-0.

Despite this tough loss that ruined the last hope the team had for making CCS, the girls and coaches felt proud of their last home game.

"All of us coaches were impressed with the quality of play on the field that night—the team stuck together,"

said head coach Staci Ljepava. "It could have been so easy for them to give up, but these girls showed a tremendous amount of integrity by not quitting."

The girls also faced Leigh on Nov. 4, and lost a close game 2-1. The Longhorns managed to score two quick goals in the first half. Saratoga rounded the corner when senior co-captain Ren Norris scored off a short corner, but it was not enough for a tie.

"It was a tough way to end the season, but we had some opportunities and finished the second half strong," said assistant coach Amber Wilson.

The last weeks of league play were disappointing as the girls lost 1-0 to Mitty on Oct. 26 and a 6-0 loss to rival Los Gatos on Oct. 28. Though the Falcons came up short in these big games, they felt their teamwork was still evident.

"We really came together and had fun at the end of the season and we're really a family now," said Ljepava. "We didn't achieve the goals we wanted to as we didn't win many games, but we did

achieve our goal to improve."

With an ending record of 1-11-2, their season wasn't the one they had envisioned, especially for a team that has enjoyed a lot of success in the past.

"It's been such a tough season for Toga hockey," said senior defender Colleen Garland. "We have always had such a great reputation and it's hard to be a senior on a team that did not uphold that reputation."

Despite this season's outcome, the girls were proud of their efforts.

"We really pushed ourselves at the end of the season," said senior co-captain and forward Kathryn Nobles. "Everyone worked hard on improving their skills and everyone stepped up."

For the seniors, not making CCS means their final season of Saratoga field hockey is shorter than anticipated.

"I love all the girls on the team so it's sad the season is over, but I have an awesome season to look back on," said Nobles. "I'll never forget all the good times we had." ♦

GIRLS' TENNIS

Girls hold coveted No. 1 spot in CCS

BY Lauren Kuan

On the day of perhaps the most important match of the season, one that would secure the No. 1 seed for the team in CCS, it wouldn't have been difficult to find girls running around on the tennis court in pajamas with fanny packs and visors.

The girls' tennis team not only hosted a lively senior day on Oct. 26, but also outplayed Monta Vista, beating them 5-2. This win led to their spot as No. 1 in the league and in CCS, which started this week. The girls were on top as the season ended, but it will be a challenge to stay there.

"It's good to be on top of the totem pole, but you also have a big target on your back. The other teams are working harder to knock you off," said head coach Tom Uyehara.

Although the players are excited about being the team to beat, many also have concerns about playing well and

staying humble.

"Being the No. 1 seed gives us the easy route, but we can't let it go to our heads because we are expecting a lot from us," said senior No. 2 doubles player Mary Edman.

Many are looking forward to how they will perform in the CCS where there are more challenging teams to play against.

"I am really excited for CCS, since it is my senior year and our team has been doing so well so far. Our team has the talent, we just need to all put it to good use," said Edman.

Junior No. 2 singles player Crystal Yen thinks that in the end, they will win CCS but not without some close matches against Menlo, Mitty and Monta Vista.

The individual SCVALS tournament took place on Nov. 2 and 3. Yen represented singles by placing first, beating the No. 1 Monta Vista singles player Sylvia Li, who has been recruited by Harvard.

"My serving game was especially good that day, and I was excited I won because Sylvia has won the tournament for the past two years now," said Yen.

Representing doubles, Edman and sophomore Nikki Bedekar performed well on the first day of SCVALS by beating the No. 2 seed in a three-set match.

"When we played Jodi and Kelsey, we didn't get into a groove right away but we eventually did. That was one of the best matches that we've ever played as a team. When I play better teams, I usually play much better and vice versa," said Edman.

Although they started off strongly,



FALCON // JORDAN WAITE

Junior Crystal Yen hits a forehand before their match against Monta Vista on Oct. 26.

Edman and Bedekar eventually fell to their demise when they played the Los Altos doubles team, and ended up placing fourth. The other doubles players, juniors Sarah Lum and Lisa Asai, placed third. ♦

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY



Courtesy of SIMON STEINFELD

Seniors Garrick Chan and Kyle Fukui run on Cardiac Hill, which is part of the Crystal Spring's meet. The meet took place on Nov. 2.

Season wraps up; CCS finals tomorrow

BY Brandon Judoprasertijo & Vijay Menon

After going through a season of hard work and success, runners on the boys' cross country team will see their season coming to an end soon. Looking back, senior co-captain Garrick Chan is pleased with the team's achievements.

"We're starting to race smarter," said Chan. "We're starting to have good tactics and we're improving individually."

Chan said the team has not only gotten faster but is noticeably stronger and more united during workouts.

"We are able to run as a group now during workouts," said Chan. "In the past, it would be just me and Kyle and in a few minutes later everyone else. Now we're all together."

Coach Dan Ambrico saw other senior co-captain Kyle Fukui and Chan as influential figures throughout the season.

"Kyle and Garrick are the heart and soul of the team," said Ambrico. "They set a strong example for our younger runners and set the bar high for hard work at practice."

Ambrico described freshman twins Will and Sam Guy along with sophomore David Zarrin as the rising stars of the team throughout the season.

"Sam and Will have broken most of the freshman records at Saratoga this year," said Ambrico. "David has a very promising future. I expect them to be the leaders of this team going forward."

The team recently competed in its final race before CCS at the league cham-

pionships at Crystal Springs in a 2.95 mile race on Nov. 2. Top results came from Chan, who finished 10th, and Fukui who finished 19th, with times of 16:45 and 17:22, respectively. Chan also earned the De Anza League All League Honors award.

"I did better than I thought because of the competition," said Chan. "I am happy with my time and glad that I am finally a DAL All Leaguer. I have totally redeemed myself from last year's race, where I did really badly."

Although Chan did well, he said that the weather conditions affected many racers.

"The race was killer because of the heat and competition," said Chan. "Many suffered heat exhaustion and the race had to be canceled after the varsity race."

The varsity squad now heads to its CCS competition at Toro Park in Salinas, where it will tackle a three mile race on Nov. 13. However, due to a broken ankle injury from a slide tackle during a soccer game, Sam Guy will be unable to race.

"We'll have to move on," said Chan. "Now everyone will have to take their game to another level."

Although hampered by Guy's injury, the team still hopes that it will be able to place in the top 3 at CCS and make the state championships, which will take place on Nov. 27 at Woodward Park in Fresno.

"I want the team to run all out on this. It's now or never," said Chan. ♦

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Falcons celebrate seniors with Harajuku

BY Amy Jan

Girls dressed up in shirts with the back saying "we love our seniors" and "Harajuku girls" could be seen walking around school in their home-made outfits. This group was the volleyball team who celebrated their seniors with a theme in keeping with Gwen Stefani's backup dancers: the Harajuku girls.

On Oct. 28, players held their senior day for seniors Megan Brading, Hanna Nielson, Raven Sisco and Sarah Blegen.

"Things won't be the same without them next year," said outside hitter sophomore Janelle Williams.

The team brought the seniors a breakfast of Starbucks and coffee cake. Younger players brought doughnuts to them in their first-period classes, and Chipotle was on the menu for lunch.

"Senior day was a very memorable one because we could tell the girls spent a lot of time on it, and it paid off because [the day] was amazing," said Nielson.

Later in the day, the girls had their senior game. They played Palo Alto, the first-place team, and just barely missed a victory. Nielson said it was a good way to end the last home game of the season.

Nielson said it was "fun to be captain" but there was also the responsibil-

ity that came with the role.

"I knew I had a responsibility on and off the court to be a leader. It was challenging at times when we would get down in games, but everyone worked hard in the end," Nielson said.

Despite the overall record of 1-10 and no CCS this season, the team had fun playing together.

"There were amazing games and embarrassing ones, but overall, it was fun, and I loved it," said Williams.

The team has come a long way because of all the effort they put into being the best they could be.

"This season was a really good learning experience for all of us and even though we didn't win as much as last year we all stuck together as a team and had a good time," said right outside hitter Talia Sisco, a junior.

The team bonded throughout the season during their practices.

"Sometimes the practices got a little goofy," Nielson said. "I have gotten to know all the girls better and we are all friends now."

The girls improved a lot this season, but will miss this year's seniors.

"It'll be a rough season next year, but we'll play hard and try our best," said Williams. "Who knows what might happen?" ♦

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BOYS' WATER POLO

Falcons end strong, just miss CCS



FALCON // VIVIAN LETRAN

Senior goalie Gavin Peake recovers the ball after a shot.

BY Will Edman

The boys' water polo team surged to a strong finish for the league season as they ended a successful year with a 9-3 record and a second-place finish heading into the De Anza league tournament.

"We're extremely happy with how we played this season," said sophomore field player Neal Siganporia. "Especially at the end of the season, we really stepped up."

Despite their strong finish, the Falcons will most likely miss CCS, as they tied for second-place in the league, and only first-place Wilcox will advance. However, Siganporia said the team was happy with their accomplishments.

The Falcons turned their season around on Oct. 26, when they played a pivotal game at Lynbrook. Until this point, they had maintained a third-place league standing, going undefeated except for two losses against first-place Wilcox and one versus second-place Lynbrook.

A strong performance on Oct. 26 resulted in a 15-10 win as the team leaped into a tie with Lynbrook for second place

in the league.

"The win against Lynbrook was huge, because we proved that we were the second best team in the league," said senior field player Will Tang. "Also, it was Lynbrook's senior day so it was additionally important."

Solid goal-scoring performances by field players senior Tim Rollinson and junior Nic Doyen, as well as a great effort by senior goalie Gavin Peake led to the biggest win of the season.

"[Rollinson] and [Doyen], as well as the rest of the team, came up huge," said Siganporia. "[Peake] also made some sick blocks to keep us in the competition, despite many leg cramps."

In addition to their performance in the pool, Rollinson and Peake also played key roles as the team's leaders and catalysts. "As captain and co captain, [Rollinson] and [Peake] pushed all members of the team to their maximum playing ability with inspirational speeches and harsh discipline," Siganporia said.

The water polo team began playing their league tournament the weekend of Nov 6, but results could not be printed due to printing deadlines. ♦

>>> scoreboard

Oct. 26

Saratoga 15, Lynbrook 10

The Falcons won on Lynbrook's senior day to tie for second in the league.

Nov. 6

Harker 9, Saratoga 8

Despite a strong effort, a loss to Harker to end the team's league tournament.

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

QUALIFICATION FOR STATES WITHIN REACH

BY Aanchal Mohan

The girls' cross country league season came to a dramatic close at course Crystal Springs on Nov. 2, with temperatures reaching 85 degrees. Officials canceled the last two races, the frosh-soph races, because paramedics were having to treat so many athletes who had fainted with heat exhaustion. The 2.96-mile course is notorious for its steep hills and tough conditions.

"It was crazy," said sophomore varsity runner Courtney Schlosareck. "We've run [Crystal Springs] multiple times before. Normally one or two people faint, but there have never been enough who do to cancel an entire race."

Luckily for them, the varsity girls raced before the paramedics forced the last few races to be canceled, allowing them to finish their race and see whether or not they would qualify for CCS.

"The race conditions were not ideal," said sophomore varsity runner Maya Nag. "But the team ran well and the varsity team has a good chance at going to CCS and maybe even state."

The team that will run at CCS, which will be run on Nov. 13 at Torro Park, will consist of sophomores Schlosareck, Nag, Caroline Chou,

juniors Emily Williams and Kristine Johnson and senior Mansie Cheung.

"CCS determines whether or not we will go to state as a team or individually," said Nag. "It's definitely more important than a league meet, but I'm trying hard not to stress over it."

Last year, Schlosareck, one of the top runners for the team, was two seconds off from qualifying for states. While her chances have improved this year for qualifying for state as an individual, she was plagued with

a recurring knee injury that began in the middle of the season.

"My knee has been bothering me for most of the season, and while I was running during the

league meet it almost felt as if my knee just slid out," said Schlosareck. "I've been icing and resting it so hopefully it won't bother me too much during CCS so that I can qualify for states."

While Schlosareck has a good chance at making it to states, the team as a whole also has a chance to qualify for states.

"In order to go to states we need to place third overall as a team at CCS," said co-captain Williams. "If we run our race at CCS we have just as good of a chance, possibly even better, as any other team." ♦

"It was crazy. People faint, but normally not enough to cancel a race."

>>> Sophomore Courtney Schlosareck

GIRLS' GOLF

Senior golfer competes in CCS

BY Apeksha Sharma & Samika Kumar

Senior Uttara Sivaram was the only SHS golfer to qualify for the individual CCS tournament last month, with younger golfers falling short of qualifying.

At CCS, Sivaram started out strong but fell short of her goals on a tough course.

"The first nine holes went really well for me," said Sivaram. "The back nine was torture, though; it seemed as if my ball was magnetically attracted to every tree on the course."

Sivaram competed in CCS on Nov. 2 at Rancho Cañada in Carmel. Although she had been to the tournament before, the weight of placing was still not lifted from her shoulders. Sivaram scored in the mid 80s.

"There's a bit more pressure involved with CCS, especially since every single stroke will mean a lot more," said Sivaram. "I [was] a bit nervous, but I've gone to CCS twice before, and I [knew] the course. I [knew I would] be OK."

In the weeks leading up to the final tournament, Sivaram worked on her swing.

"I'm playing a little more conservatively," said Sivaram. "The game is ultimately about scoring, so there's really no reason to take undue risks."

Sophomore Samika Kumar and freshman Hälle Champion didn't qualify for CCS at league finals at the Coyote Creek Golf Course on Oct. 27.

"I think I did [my best], but it was not the best I have ever done," said Champion. "On one hole, [I did not do well] because I was distracted and that messed me up."

The weather seemed against the tournament as winds hindered some of the



TALISMAN // ADITYA DEV

Senior Uttara Sivaram and teammates practice at the driving range in preparation for the league finals on Oct. 27.

girls' performances.

"It was kind of windy, so it would pick the ball up and move it to a different direction," said Champion. "The grass was very wet, too, so we had to really hit underneath the ball."

Sivaram, who admits that it is "a bit lonely" attending CCS by herself, remains fairly confident that the rest of the team will reach the tournament some day.

"Hopefully they'll be inspired to make CCS in the next couple of years," said Sivaram. "I know for sure they are capable of it."

Although this year's CCS was not Sivaram's best match, she still benefited from attending the event.

"The course was drenched, so I didn't really get maximum yardage," said Sivaram. "At least the weather was nice, and I got a day of Vitamin D instead of homework and classes." ♦

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WRESTLING

New coach provides fresh start to season

BY Brandon Judoprasertijo

The wrestling season began on Nov. 1 with a fresh source of motivation: a new coach. Joe Pele has coached the Lynbrook High team for four years and the Miller Middle School team for six years in the past and is now looking to guide the Falcons in wrestling.

As an unfamiliar face to the team, Pele said that earning the boys' trust can be a challenge. However, team members such as sophomore Tavius Woods are feeling good about new leadership and

already feel comfortable.

"I feel more comfortable around him than our former coach," said Woods. "As long as we try our best during matches, it doesn't matter if we win or not, while it felt like the opposite in the past."

Pele likes what he sees so far, commending experienced wrestlers such as senior Chris Burse and junior AJ Murabito for their leadership skills.

"Chris is knowledgeable and dedicated; he always works hard and is willing to help the younger guys. AJ shows great promise as a leader and is an extremely

skilled wrestler," said Pele.

Pele has also noticed several "blue chip" freshmen joining the team such as Graham Grant, Mike Fitzsimmons and Jason Li, all whom he describes as talented and focused.

The wrestling team is in the upper division of the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League, the De Anza League. To get into CCS, the team must place in the top three of its division, which is an extremely hard feat to accomplish, said Pele, who just wants his team members to try their hardest.

"I do not like to talk about what we can do, or what the wrestlers can do," said Pele. "As they say—talk is cheap. The Saratoga Falcons will let their wrestling do the talking."

Even before the season began, Pele had set a goal for the team: to build a "cohesive crew."

"I want our team to know that we have each others' backs," said Pele. "I want our team members to be able to look at each other and know, for a fact, that their teammate left it all on the mat!" ♦

What to expect this WINTER season

WITH THE WINTER SEASON AROUND THE CORNER, TEAMS BEGIN PREPARING FOR UPCOMING GAMES.

Alex Ju

GIRLS' SOCCER

3 seniors take charge

BY Shivani Chadha & Olivia Chock

This year, with key players senior Mckenzi Crase, senior Ren Norris, junior Kari Clark and junior Courtney Brandt returning, the girls' soccer team is confident that they will win the De Anza league and go to CCS as they did last year, despite a new coaching staff and only three returning seniors.

"We are definitely a younger team this year, but I think we can still make CCS," said Clark.

This year, there is a completely new coaching system, with coach Molly Flannigan leading the team. Flannigan, who played soccer at San Jose State and Menlo College, has been an experienced coach for several years.

She coached for the San Mateo Soccer Club for 5 years and for the MP Strikers for 3 years before joining Saratoga as the boys' varsity assistant last year. This will be her first year with the girls' team.

"I think we have a good chance this year because our new coach is also a club coach," said Crase.

Kim Anzalone, also an APUSH and history and film teacher, was the coach last year but is acting as a team manager

this year.

"For the girls, I felt I had taken the varsity team as far as I could, given the time involved in coaching while also teaching full time," Anzalone said. "I just felt that I could not put in the amount of time that it would take to really do justice to our girls."

One other change is that boys' varsity head coach Adam Clarke is now in charge of the whole soccer program.

The hope is to push all teams to a higher skill level and create better bonds between them.

"By supporting and training with each other, the players will get an experience that will only enrich any great coaching they get," Anzalone said.

Another big change this year is pre-season will be shorter than usual due to the girls' club tournaments for other sports at the end of November.

Tryouts started on Nov. 1 with the intent of having the final team decided by Nov. 12. The girls play their first pre-season game on Nov. 29 against Monte Vista, and their league play begins on Jan. 5.

"We lost a lot of good seniors last year, but we still have a lot of talented players," said Crase. ♦

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Younger team looks to 'out-hustle' league

BY Karthik Annaamalai & Roy Bisht

Returning to the El Camino league with three out of their five starters from last year, the boys' basketball team looks to improve from last year's mediocre season, in which they finished 5th place with a record of 9-15.

Sophomore starting center Steve Berman, one of two freshmen on varsity last year, believes this will be the year the Falcons turn around the program.

"The team is going to have to adjust if we want to win, but we're all confident in our abilities and our chances to win look much better this year," Berman said.

Last year, the Falcons' roster was unusually young, with just four seniors, along with nine juniors and two freshmen. This season, however, because the younger players had the opportunity to develop their skills at the varsity level last season, senior guard Tyler Jew hopes that the veteran team will have a greater chance of succeeding.

"It might be tough at first as we learn to play without last year's se-

niors, but we'll have a lot of talented players coming back," said Jew.

The team, led by returning third-year coach Trevor Naas, remains hopeful of winning the El Camino League—consisting of Monta Vista, Mountain View, Wilcox, Santa Clara, Milpitas and Fremont High Schools—and earning a spot in CCS.

After losing their top three scorers to graduation, the Falcons need their returning starters to step into scoring roles in order to achieve this goal.

The main concern for the Falcons this year is size as they currently rely on Berman, 6'1", for most of their inside game.

"We're smaller than most teams and we have to out-hustle teams in order to compete," said Berman.

Losing two 6 footers last year, Andy Johnson and Vinnie Carstens, the team may need to change its style, focusing on speed and the transition game rather than physical defense to set the tone of their games.

"We're looking forward to improving this year," said Berman. "We have the talent and skill to do well. All we need to do now is execute and win games." ♦

>> MEET The Athletes

WRESTLING

Chris Burse, Alfred Murabito

Senior Burse and Junior Murabito plan to utilize their strong leadership skills to motivate the team and intimidate their opponents

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Steve Berman, Kyle Dozier

Sophomores Berman and Dozier strive to overcome the lack of upperclass talent on the team to beat their 5th place finish last year

GIRLS' SOCCER

Courtney Brandt, Kari Clark

With Clark's defensive skills and Brandt's offensive talents, the pair of juniors hope to lead the team to CCS for another year in a row

>> online extra

Boys' Soccer

With pre-season games starting soon the team faces the challenge of filling the gap left behind by 2010 alumnus Sean Ashe. The team's offensive strategy will need to adapt to account for the loss of the team's best scorer. Along with losing Ashe, the boys face the challenge of moving up to the higher El Camino League.

Girls' Basketball

The girls' basketball team is readying themselves to face a season full of excitement and challenges. With the extra time to bond and play together, the girls are not afraid to play aggressively because they feel comfortable around each other. The girls hope to beat their rival Monta Vista this year.

To read the rest of the stories visit: www.saratogafalcon.org

>> photo reel



FALCON // GRISHMA ATHAVALE



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Courtesy of SARATOGAMUSIC.ORG

FRUITY SENSATION SENIOR TIM LYCURGUS SHOWS OFF HIS GRAPE COSTUME DURING THE HALLOWEEN CONTEST ON OCT. 29. **TAG YOU'RE IT** JUNIOR ANNIE BARCO, DRESSED AS MADONNA, CHASES SOPHOMORE NEHA VELLANKI, DRESSED AS JAFAR FROM ALADDIN, TO WARM UP FOR THE GIRLS' FIELD HOCKEY SENIOR PRACTICE ON NOV. 3. THE SENIORS MADE THEM DON CRAZY OUTFITS AS PART OF THE ANNUAL LAST PRACTICE TRADITION. **AUTOMATED** SENIOR HARSHIL SAHAI PLAYS WITH A "LANDROID" IN COMPUTER SCIENCE CLASS DURING THE PRESENTATION BY LOCKHEED MARTIN ON OCT. 18. **BLACK AND WHITE** THE SHS MARCHING BAND AND COLOR GUARD PERFORM IN THE FRESNO STATE SIERRA CUP CLASSIC ON OCT. 30.

Girl attempts No Shave November experiment



>> Anika Jhalani

Call me Neeks

"Are you French?"
 "No."
 "Are you, like, a hermaphrodite?"
 "Nope."
 "Well, then, what's up with that forest growing on your legs?"

No Shave November. The tradition started last year when a group of previously smooth-faced boys refused to shave for an entire month and therefore transformed into cavemen furrer than those in Geico commercials. It's a month Harrier than Potter, pricklier than a porcupine and, most important, supposedly limited to males. So I decided to challenge this rule by conducting a little social experiment: No Shave (first week of) November, female edition. The result: an overwhelmingly negative reaction.

Grins turned to grimaces as people glanced at my legs. Some called it "disgusting, and totally wrong." What I couldn't understand was the fuss over my somewhat carpeted limbs, when the guy next to me looked like he had been using "Rogaine" as a lotion substitute since 1999.

With such a small decision, I realized the

unsaid stereotypes that we are expected to adhere to, and how something as seemingly insignificant as not shaving my legs could bring about a tornado of caustic comments.

The reactions fall into three types: confusion, disgust and finally indifference (not always mutually exclusive.) Most guys didn't care, or chose not to show they did, probably because they don't shave themselves. Girls had an entirely different reaction. "Why, oh why would you *do* this to yourself?" Well, the answer is simple. I wanted to make a point.

Women shouldn't have to do everything we are told, for the sole sake of fulfilling "obligations" we have to society. Some people thought it was disrespectful and obnoxious for a lady to have fuzzy limbs, even if it was for No Shave November. But if we were all brought up with the fact that hairy legs were the way to go, would it be discourteous if I shaved my legs?

Although my way of questioning society isn't exactly what Socrates would have done (I'll pass on the hemlock), it was my own way of saying that maybe it's important to question rules rather than accept everything in a stride. Even if it is something as small as having legs the founders of Gillette Razors would be proud of.

Maybe I'm making a river out of a raindrop, but it's just because I'm not afraid to swim. Unfortunately, my experiment can't go much longer because this prickliness is starting to get uncomfortable. Oh Venus Embrace, I've missed you. ♦

Lockheed Martin brings robots to Comp Sci class

BY Arnav Dugar

Instead of listening to a lecture or typing code into computers as they usually do in class, on Oct. 18 the AP Computer Science students gathered around the front of the room, interacting with five "LANdroids" milling about their feet.

These robots were a part of a presentation organized by Computer Science teacher Debra Troxell for the classes. Andrew Zimdars, a research scientist in the Modeling, Simulation and Information Services department at Lockheed Martin, spoke to the students about the work he does.

"It presented an example of what the Computer Science students would be able to do," said Troxell. She hoped that it would get the students excited about the possibilities with programming, contextualizing the rules and skills they learn in class to a real world example.

The \$100 robots, each running on about 20,000-30,000 lines of code, circled the computer lab, using the walls as

guides. The students were able to pick up the LANdroids and turn them over in their hands, and one group created an enclosed circle with their feet, trying to confuse the robot inside.

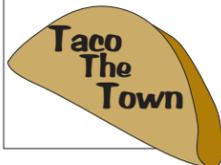
After the students played with the robots, Zimdars gave a short presentation in which he described how and why the robots are built.

"You take a smart-phone processor, camera and accelerometer, put tank treads on it and you've got a robot," Zimdars told students.

These robots are designed to automatically set up local wireless networks in situations when it is inconvenient to set up permanent wireless networks, Zimdars explained. They are used when soldiers need wireless communication in areas without networks or when scientists are exploring new caves.

The students enjoyed the presentation and were able to get a better perspective of the implementations of computer science in the real world.

"It was interesting to discover how programming can be applied to these robots," said sophomore Sujay Khandekar, "and can have practical applications." ♦



topten

WAYS TO STAY WARM IN WINTER

- 10 Kill some chinchillas. It's easy if you forget about how cute they are.
- 9 Move to France. People don't even wear shirts and they're warm.
- 8 Make a bubble bath.
- 7 Watch Top Chef. If it's too hot, stay out of the kitchen!!
- 6 Hibernate. Good luck finding a cave around here, though.
- 5 Wear a Snuggie to school.
- 4 Nestle with Mr. Cerbone's wolves. Beware of their teeth, though.
- 3 Dress like a ninja. Or a goth. Or just paint yourself black.
- 2 Date the hottest girl on campus.
- 1 Build a bonfire out of AP Bio notes. There's enough fuel to keep it going for a month.

>> Albert Gu