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LOS GATOS FOOTBALL GAME

Injured, but hoping for best



FALCON // JORDAN WAITE

During a home game last year on Oct. 22, the Falcons won 21-17 after 27 straight years of losing to the Los Gatos Wildcats.

>> **thebigidea**

BY Megan Benzing

LG-SHS game

When and Where

The game will be tonight at 7:30 p.m. on Los Gatos's Helm Field.

Who won't be playing

Due to various injuries, Robert Belpasso, Troy Doles, Mitchell Faylor, Jerrick Lee, Brandon Olivier-O'Connor, Sean Walsh, Henry Wei and others will not be playing.

With the annual Saratoga-Los Gatos football game away tonight at Los Gatos, students at both schools are getting ready for the rematch of the season.

Los Gatos is in fourth place in the De Anza League while Saratoga is in seventh place. The league is composed of eight teams.

It is no secret to either school that there is tension and rivalry between the two, especially when it comes to league games.

Senior defensive tackle-nose guard Nick Aske has played football at Saratoga since he was a freshman.

He noticed a lot of hatred toward Los Gatos as a freshman and after joining the

team, he began to get excited about the rivalry.

Aske feels as though about 80 percent of the school gets excited and competitive about playing against Los Gatos, not in football, but in other sports as well.

"The rivalry really unites the school," Aske said. "In some ways, it brings the Saratoga community together too. You can feel the energy and everyone comes together for a common goal."

The Falcons hope to defend their win from last year—a win that broke a nearly 30-year losing streak to their rival.

"Our chances of winning are just the same as last year's: not high," Aske said.

>> **LG GAME** on pg. 22

AP US grades weighted

BY Megan Benzing & Joanna Lee

Juniors are experiencing a different type of grading system in their AP US History classes this year than has been used in the past.

Starting this year, AP US History teachers Matt Torrens, Kim Anzalone and Margarita Morelle have made the decision to implement the weighted-grades that most college prep classes use.

In the past, the classes had been known to be manageable only because the completion of copious amounts of high-intensity homework usually ensured a good grade, no matter how poorly a student did on tests. Even with the change, the students still receive a letter grade boost because it is an AP course.

This year, however, a "test point" is not equivalent to a "homework point." For each APUSH class, homework, participation and assessments are worth 20, 30 and 50 percent, respectively.

"[The AP US teachers] heard different anecdotal stories implying that the class was too easy," Torrens said. "We surveyed the students and acted based on the feedback we received."

Torrens said the decision shows no sign of drastic changes in grades.

"The grades this year are a little lower, but not that much as compared to previous years," he said.

Morelle said the new grading system will serve as a more accurate representation "in terms of where each student stands in the class."

"This is definitely a worthwhile change, especially because kids [in the past] have found the class to be not as challenging," Morelle said. "It also prepares kids for the AP exams."

But some students, such as junior Derek Chao, do not enjoy the change.

"It really changes up my expectations and the amount of time I have to distribute for it," Chao said.

Chao agrees that since the class seemed easy, it was a good option to take AP US History.

"I don't believe it's fair to have a different grading system," Chao said. "Junior year is a crucial time, and the classes before shouldn't have an advantage by not having weighted grades." ♦

>> **thebigidea**

Weighted grades

What's new

Homework, participation and assessments now account for 20, 30 and 50 percent respectively.

Students this affects

Torrens, Anzalone and Morelle's APUSH classes no longer follow a flat point system.

Bikers dislike bike racks near Large Gym

BY Nick Chow & Rohan Rajeev

When students arrived on campus on the morning of Oct. 10, they were greeted with the sight of the familiar bike rack fixed in front of the Large Gym instead of under the overhang near the Small Gym.

The administration said the rack was moved for safety reasons, but many students are upset at this new location because their bikes will now be out in the rain and sun.

Over the previous weekend, the

bike rack, which is used by at least 25 students a day, was moved from its original spot to the front.

Assistant principal Kevin Mount said the rack was moved because students were riding up the hallway, causing dangerous situations. In addition, the bike rack itself took up too much space in the hallway, Mount said.

Another benefit, he said, is that when the bike rack was against the side of the Small Gym, only one

>> **BIKE RACKS** on pg. 5



FALCON // JUSTINE HUANG

Students now park bikes in front of the Large Gym.



Orchestra students take trip to SF

Senior violinist Vivian Tsai had been looking forward to this trip all week. On Oct. 5, band and orchestra students had the opportunity to watch the San Francisco Symphony rehearse at Davies Symphony Hall. The 50 students who went were amazed at the technique displayed, but they had expected a little more interaction with the professional musicians.

"We came late because of the traffic, so we missed the lecture that the conductor gave before the rehearsal," Tsai said, "but we still saw soloist Joshua Bell play."

Bell is idolized by many aspiring musicians for his skills and his instrument, a 300-year-old Stradivarius violin, worth \$4 million.

"We sat really far away from him, but we could still hear him play," Tsai said. "It was very impressive."

Music director Michael Boitz said that he had regularly organized this field trip years ago but had to stop because there were simply too many activities going on. Boitz recently began it again because he knew many students would benefit from the enrichment.

"Sometimes [students] think they'll never get the chance to be up there, so I started it again for them to know that they can," Boitz said.

After watching the rehearsal, the students spent two hours at Pier 39. Despite the crowding caused by the many other schools that attended, the field trip was a good experience and motivated many students to work harder.

"Their playing was inspirational, and they were all really good," junior clarinetist Michelle Tian said. "It made me want to go home and practice."

—Ashley Tang

TeenForce preps students for workplace

Attention to all teens: working does not have to include the monotonous task of tutoring or babysitting your neighbors' children. It can be an opportunity to work in a field you may pursue in the future.

TeenForce is a non-profit program in Los Gatos that offers such novel options. It not only offers job opportunities but also caters to 112 teens with skills training and developmental workshops to successfully attain work.

The company models a system in which hiring teens and generating revenue is convenient and cost-effective.

"With the given model we could potentially become sustainable, scalable and replicable—putting a TeenForce jobs program in other cities and communities and reaching a lot more youth," youth development coordinator Elly Detweiler said.

Currently TeenForce caters to a majority of students from Los Gatos High School and Bellerme College Preparatory; however, it is interested in extending its opportunities to all teens in the Bay Area.

Previous jobs have included elder companionship, marketing assistant, office assistant, event assistant and even auto mechanic apprentice.

Although the possibility for expansion and novel ideas of TeenForce are encouraging teens to apply, the number of teen applicants exceeds the number of job opportunities.

According to the TeenForce website, the keys to defeating this problem are simple: come prepared to give a good interview, and remember to constantly check back in on whether or not any openings are available.

"With TeenForce, teens develop skills and values essential to growing up as caring and responsible members of the community," Detweiler said.

—Akshara Sekar

>> upcoming events

7:30 p.m. Football Game at Los Gatos

Nov. 5 November SAT testing

Nov. 6 Daylight Savings ends

Nov. 11 Veteran's Day: School closed

Nov. 23-25 Thanksgiving Holiday

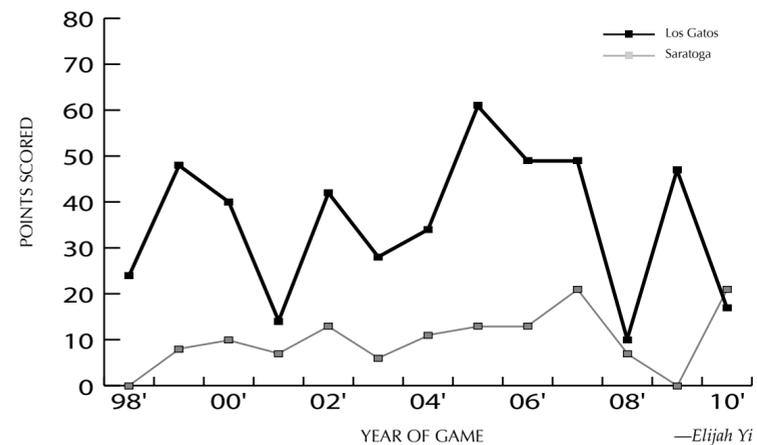
>> picturethis



Spirit commission seniors Zara Sheikh and Shayda Khorasani give sophomores Sana Ali and Ingrid Hong class points for donning their one-piece pajamas, "onesies," during the Pajama Spirit day on Oct 21.

>> falconfigures

LG-SHS FOOTBALL SCORES OVER THE YEARS



FALCON FOCUS: KEVIN MOUNT

Administrator's interests go beyond school discipline

By Aashna Mukerji

Given his job as the school's chief disciplinarian, meeting with assistant principal Kevin Mount isn't on many students' to-do lists. But what many students fail to see is that Mount has much more to offer than just a Saturday School.

Before his entry into education in 1996, Mount worked as a landscaper in Santa Cruz. He designed, installed and maintained yards.

"I did a lot of irrigation, digging, tree-work and climbing. When I was a younger

guy, it was fun being outside every day," Mount said. "It was good when my kids were little because I was my own boss."

Mount enjoyed the "people part" of the job the most.

"I made a lot of friends with my clients," he said. "They'd show up and talk to me, and that's what I really liked."

Since the physical labor of landscaping was so demanding, Mount eventually decided to follow in his wife's footsteps and become a teacher. He

taught English for four years at San Lorenzo Valley High in Felton, Calif., before assuming a position at Saratoga High in 2001, where he taught English 9 and AP Language until 2006.

Mount then moved to the district office, where he worked as the director of curriculum and alternative education and was the principal of the district's alternative education program called NOVA.

Mount's background is strongly artistic. He has played the guitar since high school and writes music and poetry.

"I spent a lot of time composing and recording," he said. "I'm kind of a music hermit. The goal is to play [music] every day, but I have a lot more time in summer."

Mount considered starting a band in high school but preferred writing to performing.

"Performing is nerve-racking," he said. "I did a lot of drama in high school, and I was pretty into it, but there was a point where it just created too much anxiety. The creative process of writing is much calmer."

Though Mount does not write as much as he used to, he has been working on a collection of poetry for the past 10 years and goes back to it from time to time.

"It's a huge effort to finish it and polish it and make it perfect, but maybe someday," he said.

As assistant principal, Mount is in charge of discipline, attendance, athletics and facilities and is the chair of the staff development team.

"I work with parents, students, parent organizations, maintenance workers and coaches, so communication is key to this job," he said.

In terms of discipline, Mount's goal is to be as fair and consistent as possible.

"I know the cuts and tardies [disciplines] are terrible, and kids hate them, but we're trying to hold them accountable for that," he said. "If you cut, you have to pay the price."

Mount believes that his consistency has had a positive effect. He strives to make SHS a place where students feel safe and comfortable.

"I feel like we can do that," he said. "If not here, where? We're so close already." ♦

FALCON FOCUS: JENNIFER MANTLE

Math teacher's past as band member

By Denise Lin

"We played [in not-so-great] hole-in-the-wall clubs. Bowling alleys, bars, living rooms, art galleries...[we] played to whomever would come."

It sounds like the typical lifestyle of a burgeoning artist. It's what very few would expect to be the past of a Saratoga math teacher.

Meet math teacher Jennifer Mantle, former member of a punk band.

At first, the band consisted of just Mantle, who covered bass and vocals and her then-boyfriend, who covered drums and vocals.

While touring with her band, she lived a lifestyle usually only seen in movies, constantly moving on the road and performing at obscure venues.

"[On the] first tour we went to Florida and back through New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, Louisiana, etc.," Mantle said. "[On the] second tour, Tahoe, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver."

The journeys began when Mantle's boyfriend drove their

friend to Florida and proposed that he and Mantle start a band and play on the way back home. And thus, the punk duo "The Unit Breed" was born.

Fitting its quirky name, the group created music characterized by Mantle as "artsy, screamy and punk." The Unit Breed drew inspiration from then-popular punk bands such as Nomeansno, Shellac and Jawbreaker.

Although Mantle left the band when she and her boyfriend broke up, many new band members joined, continuing the legacy. The band is still recording and touring and has created many CDs and records.

Mantle continued to pursue her musical desires after leaving The Unit Breed, joining another band that performed at bigger venues.

"I think that being in a band just adds to who I am as an individual," Mantle said. "You certainly learn a lot about who you are as an individual when you are trying to cooperate with others to make music."

Some may find it intriguing

that this daring musician and vocalist is the same person teaching them AP Statistics three times a week.

But when she joined the band, Mantle had already started her teaching career. She believes that there are, in fact, many similarities between the two seemingly opposite lives she has lived.

"Teaching is like being on stage, except it's not all about me," Mantle said. "It's about getting the 'audience' involved to be interested in your subject."

Mantle admits to still getting butterflies on the first day of school, as she used to while performing.

Although Mantle teaches AP Statistics and Algebra 2 Honors now, she has not forgotten her appreciation for music.

"Music has always been a huge part of my life," Mantle said. "I associate a lot of memories with bands and songs."

Her mom, who loves to sing, instilled in her a love of music from an early age, Mantle said. In high school, Mantle was very much involved in music, participating in marching, concert



Mantle rocks out on her bass guitar in 1997 in her punk band "The Unit Breed," complete with long hair, sunglasses and a metallic choker.

and jazz bands. Mantle hopes to resume playing music when she has more free time and her children are older.

But for now, despite no lon-

ger being in a punk band, there is no sign that the role of music will diminish for Mantle, whose 4-year-old daughter Chloe joins her singing both in the house and in the car. ♦

WORLD LANGUAGES

Japanese class creates video for earthquake victims

AP STUDENTS AIM TO ENCOURAGE SCHOOL IN JAPAN DESTROYED BY MARCH TSUNAMI

By Will Edman

On March 11, the world watched as a monstrous tsunami hit the east coast of Japan, killing thousands and sparking a nuclear emergency. Although more than six months have passed since the tsunami, the Tohoku region of Japan remains in disrepair.

The tsunami is no longer global news, but Japanese teacher Yuko Aoki yearned for a way to assist those still suffering, and found an unlikely medium in her friend, a businessman named Alan Mockridge, who lives in Santa Clara.

Mockridge, formerly an English teacher in the area of Japan hit by the tsunami, enlisted the help of the school's Japanese AP class which created a special video letter that Mockridge presented to students at Ohtsuchi High School

in Ohtsuchi, Japan, a town that was destroyed by the tsunami.

The project was spearheaded by Aoki, who had met Mockridge through a weekend Japanese school that both their children attend.

"[Mockridge] suggested that we could make some kind of encouraging video and give the students a taste of Saratoga," Aoki said. "We've done a similar video project before, so I knew the students would make a good video."

Aoki said her Japanese students compiled a video on different aspects of Saratoga life in order to encourage Ohtsuchi students.

According to Mockridge, the Japanese students were particularly intrigued by the fact that students could bring off-campus for lunch, as most bring their lunches from home. The video, spoken

entirely in Japanese, ended with an encouraging message to the Ohtsuchi students, imploring them to stay strong and wishing them good luck.

"I think the project was really meaningful in the way we interacted with the students," senior Phoebe Wong said. "I hope they found it heartwarming."

Mockridge departed for Japan on Sept. 17 and returned Sept. 29, after having seen the destruction the tsunami caused and the attempts to rebuild.

"As a designated evacuation site, Ohtsuchi High still had evacuees living in their sports hall until the week before I visited," Mockridge said. "The high school students had to share facilities with the elementary school students, whose school was destroyed."

Mockridge said the Ohtsuchi High School students, only 1 percent of whom proceed to college due to the region's isolation, enjoyed the Japanese class' video.

"They were especially motivated and

grateful to see the videos and hear about schools in America," Mockridge said. "They were very surprised to see that so many Asians attended SHS. They were very moved by the message at the end."

Mockridge returned to Saratoga on Oct. 17 to recount his experience with the Japanese class, sharing photographs of Ohtsuchi's downtown, which is completely destroyed. Mockridge also worked with Los Gatos High School Japanese students to create multiple projects that he brought with him to Ohtsuchi.

"The whole district did a great job," Aoki said. "The Japanese kids probably never thought that American high school students cared so much about them."

Mockridge said that he donated an iPad to Ohtsuchi High and that he hoped its students would use it to create a video reply to SHS' Japanese class.

"[Mockridge] did all of this voluntarily, and we could all learn from the way he gives back to the community," Wong said. ♦

SPEAKER SERIES

MAP invites media professionals to introduce students to careers

By Evaline Ju

A panel of professionals invited by the Media Arts Program introduced students and parents to careers in media in the McAfee Center on Oct. 27.

While speakers emphasized that the roads to their jobs were not easy, they felt the hard work worthwhile and encouraged students to follow their interests.

Parents of students in MAP invited Rob Koo, an animator and story artist at DreamWorks Animation; Jaymee Sire, a reporter for "SportsNet Central"; the mother-daughter team of Susan O'Connor-Fraser and Regan Eymann, producers at their family company Tam Communications; and Geoffrey Thomas, a current curator and designer at the San Jose Tech Museum.

Scott Budman, a reporter and anchor for NBC Bay Area, hosted the discussion.

Koo showed the audience a snippet of the story board for "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa," Thomas displayed exhibits from the Tech Museum, including a scale that tweets a person's weight to his friends and furry spiders.

According to the speakers, finding out what their audiences want is not always easy.

"You always have to have a crystal ball to say, 'This is going to work next season for you,'" Eymann said.

Budman also had the speakers describe the best parts of their jobs.

For Eymann, it was being able to see her commercials on TV at home with her children.

"It's just really exciting to see the fruits of your labor, and for your kids to be able to say, 'Oh, my grandparent or my mom did that,'" she said.

Parents were able to find the speakers through personal connections and references.

"The parents really want the program to be successful," Joanne Makeever, organizer and mother of senior Derek Makeever, said.

Seniors Jocelyn Takahashi, Megan Yen and Antara Rao, who make up the MAP student leadership for the speaker

series, helped coordinate the student volunteers.

"We're just here to really support the students and the teachers in their ability to do this program successfully," Makeever said. ♦

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Campus continues with makeover

by Jennifer Jin

Looking around the school, it may seem like the beautification process has stopped, but little changes are slowly being made.

One of the most noticeable changes is the removal of the falcon painting that was at the front of the school near the gym. The wall now reads "Saratoga High School, est. 1959."

"This lets people know where you are because when you pulled up to the school before, it was not quite clear," principal Jeff Anderson said.

The school is also trying to put in planter boxes in the areas that have previously been only dirt in order to brighten up the school.

"Our hope is that over the next year, we will be able to get the plants placed," assistant principal Kevin Mount said.

A small project that the school recently tackled is the area near the copy center. It has been repainted and new plants have been planted.

"There was an old tree that was dead," Mount said. "The cement was also messed up and it was pretty gross."

To fix this, the maintenance crew took out the dead tree and planted a new tree and shrubbery. New cement was put in so that no one would trip over the uneven surface.

The administration says it is working hard to fix as many areas they can as

quickly as possible and make the school as pleasant as possible.

"The money comes and goes, so we can't do everything at once," Anderson said. "The other problem is we don't have the manpower; we're doing stuff every day to keep [the school] in good condition. We can't just drop everything and tackle all the projects, so we have to do them over time."

It will cost \$60,000 to finish painting the school an earth tone beige color, which includes some of the hallways and the back of the school. Many of the doors will also be painted gray.

The administration will not be painting the library walls because it already fits in with the color scheme, but they will be painting the trim on the building.

The school has been talking to some parent groups in hopes of raising more money for the school beautification, but nothing has been finalized yet. Administrators also have been going to the district and the Saratoga High School Foundation, which paid for part of the first half of the beautification.

"The goal is to have the school painted by the end of the year," Anderson said. "But now, school is in session so I can't have painters running around."

The administration is planning to have the school painted over the long breaks, when there won't be many students to interfere with the painting.



The school has been gradually continuing its beautification process. The falcon painting on the main gym has been replaced by a "Saratoga High School, est. 1959" sign.

If the school is not able to get all of the money it needs, it is likely that administrators will have the maintenance crew paint the walls, while paying a paint crew to paint the harder sections such as the trim of buildings.

"This is not ideal, because it's nice to have a paint crew come in and do it right, clean it and make sure it's done well," said Anderson. "I'd rather have

professionals do it to ensure we have a good paint job."

Even though the school currently does not have enough money to complete the job, Anderson is staying positive.

"If we can have the school painted by the end of the year," said Anderson, "and hit as many of the dry, dead areas as we can and try to beautify them, our school will soon be looking pretty good." ♦

Fundraising for solar gains district approval

by Izzy Albert

Most students' class projects consist of compiling a PowerPoint presentation or making a colorful poster; seniors Claire Couch, Ali Kothari, Tyler Schuppert and Austin Kerby have a different type of project in mind. The four seniors proposed raising \$50,000 to construct solar panels during a district board meeting on Oct. 4.

The students are hoping the solar panels will be placed on the roofs of either the gym or the MAP building and help provide power to the majority of the school.

Couch, Kothari, Schuppert and Kerby are pursuing this ambitious project for their MAP senior project, which requires students to use their media arts skills to make a difference in their community.

They would be lucky just to get a plan passed by the end of the year, according to Kothari. The group has a long to-do list before convincing the school to install the panels.

Their adviser, physics teacher Kirk Davis, believes that it is an ambitious project, but thinks the students are off to a good start.

"The first step is to raise money by marketing through the mass media," Davis said. "They've gotten approval from the board to fundraise so they are on their way."

The group decided on the panels in

an effort to get some of the school to be running on "green energy."

"We were thinking of ways we could help change the school and then we came to solar panels," Kothari said. "Plus, [solar panels] are way overdue at our school, and it is time that they happen."

The reason they picked the MAP building and gym as sites for the solar panels is that they are the only buildings on campus with the structural integrity able to support them, according to Couch.

Before any panels can be installed on the buildings, the students first have to raise a total of \$50,000 to pay for their entire project.

They plan to start fundraising by creating Internet banners, passing out fliers, hosting events and making advertisements.

According to Couch, the group will also receive some monetary support from certain solar panel companies and other organizations through their donations.

The group is still trying to figure out the logistics of the project, such as how much energy the panels would ultimately save.

Couch and Kothari understand how much the group will have to work to reach their goal, but are confident that they will be able to achieve it now that they have received the support of the school board. ♦

[Solar panels] are way overdue at our school, and it is time that it happens.

>> Senior Ali Kothari

Proposed pool lights could create schedule flexibility

by Megan Benzing & Serena Chan

The school is in the process of getting bids for the installation of lights on the pool deck, an addition that may take place in next school year. But the purpose of these new pool lights goes far deeper than simply illuminating the deck.

Water polo players and swimmers have faced difficulties with scheduling since school practice begins during seventh period. Athletes must either sacrifice their high school sport or their seventh-period class.

The school's aquatic sports must begin practice early because De Anza Cupertino Aquatics (DACA) rents the pool in the evenings. The club team's swim practices run between 3:30-8 p.m.

"We really value our relationship with DACA because their rent essentially pays for all the maintenance and heating costs needed to keep the pool running," assistant principal Kevin Mount said.

Lighting the deck for the evenings will allow DACA practice to begin and end a little later into the evening, providing the high school team with a larger

er gap of time for practices. This way, athletes have the flexibility to take seventh-period classes and to participate in high school water sports.

Senior Kenneth Leung is one of many students who had to decide between swimming or a taking seventh-period class.

"Last year, my teacher recommended me to take Jazz 2, a seventh-period class, since they needed more trombones. It would also be an opportunity for me to grow as a player," Leung said. "But then I realized I had swimming during that time."

Leung decided to do both Jazz 2 and swimming. But he had to practice on his own with DACA in the evenings instead of with the school team.

"Even though I still got to compete with the school team, it took away from my high school swimming experience since I didn't get to practice with the rest of the team," Leung said. "I could not bond as much with the other school swimmers since I only swam with them at meets."

The project also opens up possible opportunities for water polo games during the night, depending on the company and project the school decides to use.

"We would like to be able to hold water polo games at night, but that is really not our priority," Mount said. "Our priority is to get more time for our students to use the pool."

Mount is also glad that Sports Boosters will help contribute to the costs of the lights. However, until the estimated cost comes in, he is uncertain of how the project will proceed. ♦

>> THE bigidea

Why the change
The new lights would result in more flexible practice hours for water sports.

No more sacrifices
Athletes would no longer have to choose between sports and a seventh-period class.



Track to be resurfaced over December break

by Sarah Finley & Sophie Mattson

More than 15 years have passed since the track has been replaced, and its worn-down conditions are becoming more and more apparent. However, much to the relief of frequent joggers and student athletes, the track will finally be resurfaced later this year.

The track will be resurfaced beginning the week before finals in December. It will be finished before students return from Winter Break.

"The track is badly in need of being resurfaced," athletic director Tim Lugo said. "As you look around, there are numerous holes and patches that have been added to prevent injury while running, but were band-aids until a full project could be done."

The scheduled time of the resurfacing is the best possible choice, due to the fact that it is during the off-season of track and cross country, and that the winter weather often discourages runners from training outdoors.

However, the boys' and girls' soccer seasons will be in full swing during the two weeks before finals when the track is set to be resurfaced, which will inconvenience the athletes, coaches and spectators.

Due to the resurfacing, the athletes won't be able to use the main field for practices or host games for a select few days.

"There will be a few days before the break where the turf field will be closed so the soccer teams will have to practice on the upper field," Lugo said. "During the break, there are no home games scheduled [on the turf field] because of the work on the field so there are no conflicts."

This may prove discouraging for soccer players, but fortunately, they will continue to have access to the upper field to practice.

According to Lugo, this \$25,000 project will be funded by Sports Boosters. The funds for this project are entirely composed of donations and fundraising; no district money will be used.

The red surface of the track will be taken off and substituted for a soft new covering. This new coating will provide an optimal surface for running, with more cushion and bounce.

The school is fortunate enough to have a synthetic track, due to the fact that many other nearby high schools, such as Lynbrook, only have tracks of dirt or gravel.

"Our [track] is definitely worn since most of our track meets are at home, but this is because most other schools have dirt tracks," senior cross-country runner Eren Veziroglu said. "It will be a nice upgrade, one that is definitely welcome."

With a new track, Saratoga will be able to continue hosting cross country and track meets, giving the runners a home track advantage. ♦

Our [track] is definitely worn since most of our meets are at home; most other schools have dirt tracks.

>> Senior Eren Veziroglu

Audit: District can see savings in energy usage

by Anshu Siripurapu

The Los Gatos-Saratoga High School district has much to be proud of: high standardized test scores, enviable graduation rates and state-of-the-art facilities. But a recent energy audit, conducted by Innovate Energy Services (IES), found that the district is lagging behind most schools in one area: energy efficiency.

IES compared LGSUHSD's energy usage with the energy usage of other neighboring districts.

The results showed that at 1,251 kw/H per student, the district's consumption was the highest of all schools in the comparison, 47 percent higher than the average. Los Gatos was 31.64 percent above average, and SHS was 25.2 percent above average.

The district had previously taken steps to reduce power consumption on campus.

In 2010, SmartMeters were installed to monitor power consumption in real time and provide information on unusual fluctuations in electricity usage.

The district also replaced the inefficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system in the district office, netting savings of \$7,000.

The report by IES identifies further savings, some immediate and some long term, to further reduce district power consumption.

The study's findings fell into two main categories: operational/behavioral modifications, which are immediate, and

no-cost changes and equipment modifications, which require some investment with different rates of payback, some in several months, others in several years.

The behavioral modifications included such changes as adopting a district-wide energy policy and removing some refrigerators and coolers.

The equipment modifications included retrofitting inefficient lighting systems, installing solar panels for pool heating at SHS and Los Gatos and replacing the stadium lights at Los Gatos.

The total cost for the projects was nearly \$2 million with a payback in close to 11 years.

Principal Jeff Anderson said the biggest change that arose from the report's recommendations was the decision to install solar panels to heat the pools at both Los Gatos and Saratoga High.

In addition, some minor modifications such as installing motion sensors to automatically turn lights on and off and the removal of

some of the energy inefficient mini-fridges on campus will also be implemented.

"Some of those fridges can cost as much as \$50 a month by themselves," said Anderson. "We're going to try and get units for each department to reduce the amount of consumption."

Some proposals for further reducing the school's consumption include installing solar panels in the parking lots and displaying the data from the SmartMeters on an LCD screen in the office, but what action will be taken on these remains to be seen. ♦

The results showed that at 1,251 kw/H per student, the district's consumption was the highest of all schools in comparison. 47 percent higher.

>> togatalks

What do you think about the new school changes?

"The beautification is cool, but the original paint colors didn't really bother me in the first place."

senior Kevin Tam

"The new plants make the school look much less dreary."

junior Jensen Welton

"I prefer the original gray because the brown is random. I also miss the mural in the front."

sophomore Lauren Lin

BIKE RACKS >> Location switch

continued from pg. 1

side was usable. The school also wanted to put the bike rack out front to landscape the area under the overhang.

"There will be even more places on the rack to lock bikes," Mount said. "This way, less students will lock their bikes in places other than the designated areas."

According to Mount, there was much deliberation over where the rack would go.

"We finally decided upon the front of the school, since the bike rack would fit in well in the parking lot," he said.

However, despite these supposed benefits, student bikers seem generally opposed to the move.

"I think it's inconvenient, because when it rains, our bikes will get really wet," sophomore Sanjay Kaliyur said.

The old bike rack location was especially convenient, according to student bikers, because the overhang would effectively shield the bikes from any rain.

During the rainy season, Mount said one of the bike racks could be moved back under the overhang to shelter the bikes.

However, students aren't completely on board with the idea.

"There's so many people who have to bike to school [on rainy days], so one bike rack's not going to cut it," Kaliyur said.

Junior Benedict Chiu thinks the rack should be moved back to its old spot permanently.

"The old location [worked]. A lot of people were satisfied with that," Chiu said. ♦



Chiu

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MSET

Robotics team aims to repeat success

BY Allison Chang

Hidden away in the far left corner of the music quad is a largely unknown room labeled "Robotics" in worn letters. Despite its abandoned-looking exterior, students may have heard loud music blasting from within, indicating that it is not as lifeless as it may seem. Lately, it has been filled with bustling students working with power tools and writing code.

These students make up the Mechanical Science and Engineering Team (MSET) and currently, they are frantically working on building a robot.

"We do a couple competitions now, the CalGames and FIRST Robotics Competitions," president and senior Michael Zuccarino said.

CalGames has already passed, while the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) season starts during March and ends on April 28. The team also participates in the Team America Rocketry Challenge (TARC), which involves rockets, not robots, during March and April.

Two years ago, the team won the FRC Silicon Valley Regional and were FRC Nationals Contestants in Atlanta. Last year, however, they were not able to place, but the team expects brighter prospects for this upcoming year.

The team is currently in its the building phase, the six-week period when designs and makes the robot.

The criteria for the robot changes each year. This year, the objective of the competition is to place various ring-shaped balloons onto pegs. The robot will first be given a time frame to perform this task alone, then human handlers will get the chance to control the robot.

Another change from last year is that the team plans to build not only one robot, but two, which is why the team has reached out to more sponsors.

Aside from their success in FIRST, the team also did well in the TARC competition last year. TARC is the world's largest rocketry contest.

Last year, the TARC team placed 44th out of 100 teams in the National competition and hopes to improve even more this year.

The criteria for the rocket used in TARC is that the rocket has to weigh less than 650 grams and carry two eggs. The eggs must reach 800 feet in the rocket and go back and forth in 43 to 47 seconds.

"Currently, we are finishing designing our rocket, using computer assisted drafting, and then we're going to order parts soon," junior Benji Yang said.



Parent mentor Bob France and junior Benji Yang measure a wire to be used in the robot.

Unlike the robotics counterpart, which is working on CalGames and FRC, the TARC competition is not under such a strict of deadline.

During CalGames this year, the team was chosen to be part of Bellarmine's alliance, a trio of schools collaborating. However, due to mechanical problems, MSET's robot broke, and the team de-

clined their offer. Bellarmine went on to win the competition.

"It's not very technical at all; a lot of people are intimidated from joining because they think they don't know what they are doing. It's actually really easy though," Zuccarino said. "After you show up for a few times you know what the deal is and you are ready to go." ♦

DRAMA

'Tartuffe' a success

FALL PLAY TAKES STUDENTS BACK TO 17TH CENTURY FRANCE



Freshman John McCarthy and sophomore Annelise Nussbacher perform in "Tartuffe" on opening night. The play held performances on Oct. 20 and 22 in the McAfee Center.

BY Allison Chang, Andy Fang & Jennifer Jin

As the curtains slowly opened on Oct. 20, audience members were faced with a sofa, dinner table and various chairs scattered around, which constituted the Orgon household. Then, senior Penny Burgess began the play, "Tartuffe," with a long-winded speech about the failings of humanity, drawing the audience into the play for the next two hours.

The cast of "Tartuffe" was able to showcase its hard work on its opening night and twice on Oct. 22. "Tartuffe" was the first play directed by the new drama teacher, Karen Babbitt.

The play is set in France during the reign of Louis XIV. Because of the use of complex language in the play, students found the play difficult to comprehend.

Senior Joshua Harris, who played the titular character Tartuffe, found the lines to be the most difficult out of all shows he has participated in.

"The [biggest] problem I faced was the language," Harris said. "It's probably the most lines-difficult show of any show I've been a part of. It was an exciting challenge."

In addition to learning the lines, the

cast members also had to express their character through their body language. Burgess had to channel the actions of her character Madame Pernelle.

"Character-wise, I worked a lot on developing facial expressions and body movements that would make sense with my character," Burgess said.

Yet, inevitably, the show experienced some difficulties on opening night.

"My skirt came unpinned during the first scene of the opening night show and I had to hold on for dear life throughout the entire scene," Burgess said.

In spite of the difficulties, the cast and crew managed to pull off a successful opening night.

"The audience turnout was way better than I personally expected, and they responded really well to the show," Burgess said. "It always boosts the energy of the cast when we have a responsive audience."

In the end, despite a number of often-unusual obstacles and challenges, the cast was able to pull the show off seamlessly.

"The show went very well. The costumes and set looked fantastic, and the actors really stepped up their game," Harris said. ♦

SCHOOL TRIPS

Classes preparing for upcoming trips

BY McKenna Galvin & Sophie Mattson

Most students look forward to school breaks as a time to relax and unwind from the trials of school. For a select few, however, these breaks provide a unique opportunity to learn. This year, some students will have the opportunity to travel with their peers to expand their knowledge.

The French and Spanish departments will be traveling to France and Mexico, respectively, while history teacher Matt Torrens will lead his "Wild West" trip to Utah. All three trips are already well into the planning process and will occur during the second semester.

Spring break in France

For the first time, the French department has scheduled a trip to France during spring break. The trip is being planned by French 2, 4 Honors and 5 AP teacher Laura Lizundia.

The trip will include stops in Paris, Loire Valley and St. Malo. The students will have a chance to practice their French while enriching themselves in the country's culture.

The group will begin their trip by spending two days in Paris, where they will tour the city's significant landmarks such as the Notre Dame Cathedral and the Arch de Triomphe. Two more days will be spent in Loire Valley, and the second to last day will be spent in St. Malo. The trip will be capped off with a dinner in Paris.

Returning to Cuernavaca

The Spanish department will return to Cuernavaca, Mexico, this February break for its annual trip. Since venturing to Merida, Mexico, for the first time last year, Spanish teacher and trip coordinator Arnaldo Rodriguez plans to alternate between the two destinations to give returning students an opportunity to learn

about both the Mayan history present in Merida and the Aztec history of Cuernavaca.

The trip is open to students in Spanish 2 or above and typically includes around 40-50 students. The students will be fully immersed in Spanish language and culture throughout the 10-day trip.

"The academic component is that the students take six hours of classes at a university, and then we have cultural tours," said Rodriguez, who has been organizing the trip at Saratoga since 1980. "[The students] stay with Mexican families to practice their Spanish, and then we do activities as a group every night."

Torrens preps for "Wild West"

Another upcoming trip is the "Wild West" trip during spring break, which typically takes around 25 juniors and seniors. The trip will be a historical trek around Moab, Utah, as the students will learn about the state's historical monuments and explore both Canyonlands National Park and Arches National Park. This will be the fifth trip conducted by World Geography and AP U.S. History teacher Matt Torrens.

"It's a pretty stressful trip for me, so I do it every other year," Torrens said.

According to Torrens, students on the Wild West trip will have the action-packed experience of Jeeping, rappelling and mountain biking. They will also visit a Japanese World War II internment camp, see dinosaur tracks and petroglyphs and hike out to the crash site of a B-52 that carried a nuclear missile during the Cold War.

These experiences do come at a price, however. The French trip will cost approximately \$3,500, while the Mexico trip costs \$1,800. Though Torrens does not know of the exact price of the "Wild West" trip, he estimates it will cost roughly \$1,200. ♦

CUPERTINO PROTEST

Community counters church

BY Allison Chang & Deborah Soung

Standing on the sidewalk in front of Cupertino High on the morning of Oct. 19 were five protesters from the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC), a group that has gained public scrutiny for its picketing at soldiers' funerals, an act deemed inappropriate by many Americans.

Opposite to them stood 50 counter-protesters. One called out through a megaphone, "If you hate America so much, then why don't you go to Iraq?" The crowd cheered in support of his statement.

The WBC, notorious for their extremist views regarding homosexuality and Jewish institutions, is located primarily in Topeka, Kans., but there are numerous followers of the church who have protested in all 50 states. They have made 46,718 pickets as of Oct. 19, according to their website.

A news release published on the WBC site on Oct. 14 announced that the church would picket the "fag-infested, pervert-run Cupertino High" because the school's "brutish teachers and hateful parents have broken the moral compass of this generation."

Though the release also declared the picketing would occur from 8 to 8:45 a.m., the WBC left the front of Cupertino High at around 8:20. On Wednesdays, Cupertino High students begin class at 8:55.

Shirley Phelps-Roper, spokesperson for WBC and the daughter of WBC minister Fred Phelps, attended the picketing with four other members, during which they held up signs condemning gays, soldiers and Americans in general to hell.

Some of their signs also contained messages such as "Thank God for breast cancer," and "You [Cupertino parents] hate your kids." Counter-protesters responded with homemade signs, some of which parodied and insulted WBC signs, while others displayed messages



Five members of the Westboro Baptist Church face off with Cupertino community members at Cupertino High on the morning of Oct. 19.

of love for all. During and after the protest, members of the WBC were unable to be reached for comment.

The administration at Cupertino High was notified that the protest would occur by the Santa Clara County Sheriff's office, according to Cupertino High assistant principal Andy Walczak. Staff members and sheriff's deputies kept order at the protest.

High staff made sure all of the counter-protesters stayed on the sidewalk because stepping onto the school campus would have violated the California Education Code, which states that it is illegal to protest at the campus during school hours.

"We were not too concerned about the Westboro protesters coming onto campus because they are very savvy about the law," Walczak said. "They push the limit with their signs and words but definitely know where they are able to

congregate." Befitting of the Silicon Valley's reputation as a diverse environment, the counter-protesters who showed up ranged from caring neighbors to Cupertino High alumni.

A woman, who identified herself as Bethany C. and lives across the street from Cupertino High, feels the WBC's behavior is uncalled for and unjustified. "I really don't understand—I've been through the church upbringing, and I really think they're just crazy overboard," Bethany C. said. "I understand that everybody has the right to have their own opinions, but the way that [WBC members] come at people is not okay."

Karin Novak, a senior attending Middle College at De Anza College, heard about the protest online and went to "go and take a look at [WBC]" because of its notoriety.

"It's interesting to me how people can be so hateful and actually do all this without running away or not being ashamed, not even a little bit," Novak said.

Aside from those who attended out of curiosity, some decided to represent

groups targeted by the WBC. "[I'm at this protest] because my parent and I, who have been together almost 25 years and have two children, want life to be a better place for them, without this kind of hatred," Cupertino resident Alberta Freeman said.

Many of the counter-protesters believe that WBC is simply protesting to gain media attention and to make money.

"The whole thing is stupid," Freeman said. "They are a small group of people that make a lot of noise, and their purpose seems to be to sue people. When you read about them, they send people to law school so they can sue for whatever reason during protests. It's crazy."

After the picketing at Cupertino High, the WBC went to the Apple, Inc. Cupertino campus at 9 a.m. to hold another protest because Steve Jobs failed to "serve God and help God's people serve God," according to the WBC website.

"[The Cupertino community] responded really well," Bethany said with regard to the counter-protest. "There are so many people out here." ♦

Halloween in Saratoga >>> Photos by David Sparkman and Noy Shaked



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The cheer team hits their end pyramid during their routine during the Halloween rally on Oct. 31. Science department teachers dress in their "Angry Bird" costumes.



Sophomore Julia Sakamoto attends the rally in her steaming "Cup Noodles" costume. Drama teacher Karin Babbitt, seniors Mihar Morishita and Valerie Peterson and sophomore Nicole Banta pose for a Disney princess-themed photo. Sophomore Abigail Small bobs for apples during the rally. Despite the others' better efforts, seniors won.



Fist tightens, cheating slips through

COLLEGE BOARD NEEDS SMARTER RULES TO ENSURE FAIRNESS IN TAKING THE SAT

BY ROHAN RAJEEV

"Put that phone away before your scores are canceled!" a campus supervisor yelled at me, rushing in my direction.

Having just finished a stressful Chemistry SAT II at Palo Alto High School on June 4 of this year, I had completely forgotten the many rules that my test administrator had explained before the exam began, including a rule banning the use of cell phones at all times, even after the test. I quickly hung up on my father, who was in the middle of telling me where he would pick me up.

After half an hour of receiving scathing looks from many supervisors who had been notified of my cell phone use, I finally spotted my dad's car in the parking lot by sheer luck.

I knew why supervisors were so concerned about sharing answers from a test over the phone during the test, but I could not understand why they enforced this "no phone" rule even after the test. They had been so lenient during the administration of the test itself, placing desks within a foot of each other, where wandering eyes could easily glance at other tests.

Yet after the tests were finished and turned in and we could scarcely remember the questions themselves, the supervisors became suspicious about using cell phones to spread information about

the test.

Even during the recent SAT on Oct. 1, I overheard ample discussion in the hallways about test questions during the breaks. The test proctor had not bothered to come into the hallway to prevent this blatant cheating and possibly cancel these students' scores. I had even heard about a student who had used his smart phone to look up the definition of a vocabulary word from a future section, violating a number of SAT rules.

Having had my own experiences with the lawlessness of SAT testing and the lack of attentiveness by testing proctors, I was little surprised at news of 19-year-old Samuel Eshaghoff's recent arrest. It was just further proof supervisors and test administrators have been not been enforcing the more important rules.

Eshaghoff, a sophomore at Emory University, was caught Sept. 27 for taking the SAT Reasoning Test in place of six New York students, in exchange for a price averaging \$2,500 per test. He had been able to trick his way past the proctors, who found nothing suspicious with his identification until he was exposed months after the tests had already been taken.

The SAT is arguably the most important test of a prospective student's high school career; it indirectly decides which college the student will attend. Test supervisors are aware of the immense pressure on students to do well and the fact that some students will be desperate

>> candid caricatures



enough to cheat in one way or another to get their desired score.

However, these supervisors should not be focusing on enforcing more trivial rules such as the "no cell-phone" rule—especially since the test questions change every month, and students scarcely remember the questions even soon after the test.

Instead, proctors should focus on verifying the identities of the test-takers themselves, preventing wandering eyes from seeing other people's tests and stopping discussions about the test during breaks. Proctors should all have standard training on how to properly administer an SAT, which would increase the security of the test tenfold.

Eshaghoff's scam is just the tip of the

iceberg in terms of cheating. Around 1,000 of the two million students who take the SAT have their scores revoked for cheating and 99 percent of these cheaters are caught for in-test cheating.

If the main way of cheating is in-room copying, that is all the more reason that test administrators should pay more attention to make sure the students are taking the test honestly, which includes preventing discussions about the test before it is completed and preventing cheating while the test is in session.

Rather than purely cause inconvenience in the same way that the post-test no cell phone rule causes, these stricter in-test regulations will be the key to keeping the SAT a purer representation of student capability. ♦

The test proctor had not bothered to come into the hallway to prevent this blatant cheating.



UC Berkeley bake sale displays the harms of affirmative action

BY SOPHIE MATTON & AKSHARA SEKAR

A cookie for a Caucasian male: \$2. A pastry for an Asian-American: \$1.50. A brownie for African-Americans: 75 cents. A cupcake for a Native American: 25 cents. The cost of getting rejected based on ethnicity or gender: astronomical.

On Sept. 22, a UC Berkeley group, Student Republicans, organized what they called the "Increased Diversity Bake Sale," using the pricing scale above. This was in protest of a bill, awaiting Gov. Jerry Brown's signature or veto, that would allow California's public universities to consider race and gender in their admission processes.

Although the bake sale sparked controversy and extensive uproar, the use of the bake sale as a form of protest was completely justified and within the students' rights. The bake sale was an effective analogy of how students would feel if others were given preferential treatment because of race and gender.

If race and gender were considered in the application process, universities might be more culturally diverse, but leaders would be revoking academic opportunities for those who deserve them for reasons that were not their choice and not capable of being altered. An applicant should be judged on what they accomplished with the resources available rather than immutable characteristics such as race and gender.

The true intentions of the "In-

creased Diversity Bake Sale" were commendable. It successfully demonstrated the negative reaction that students would have if they were treated differently by college admission boards in accordance to their gender and race.

In 1996, Proposition 209 was passed in California. This law prohibits the use of preferred or discriminating treatment of individuals in the public education system and other government-run facilities based on their gender or racial background. This includes the favoring of minorities, what some consider to be "reverse discrimination" against Caucasians.

After 15 years of banning this practice, it is the responsibility of those most affected by these possible changes to demonstrate the utter disparity present in the pending bill.

Without a law banning the use of affirmative action, students applying to California state-funded colleges would feel cheated out of years of hard work of studying punctiliously for the SAT, working meticulously through four years of high school and participating in various extracurricular activities.

If colleges took race and gender into account, they would be more partial toward potential students not because of their academic background, but whether or not the student's race was sufficiently represented among the university's demographics.

This would lead to higher rejection rates of students who meet or surpass the academic requirements

of their desired public college or university, simply because their racial background was too highly represented in comparison to individuals of other races.

Colleges may wish to create a diverse environment with a variety of cultures and ethnic backgrounds present in their school, but the first thing that colleges and universities should consider is merit.

A student's application that demonstrates to the institution that they will be able to live up to its expectations and would be able to perform to the college's standards should be the major determining factor in the admissions process over race and gender.

Some may claim that some races tend to score higher than others, largely due to cultural or class differences such as access to preparation materials, location or parental pressure. However, it is up to the student himself to decide whether or not he will excel and overcome the obstacles around him.

Although helping minorities attain higher education is an admirable goal, society should focus on helping minority children meet the standards of admission, not give them racial preference in lieu of academic merit.

This is not only unfair to qualified applicants, but also tarnishes the accomplishments of minority students who have succeeded through hard work yet are seen as beneficiaries of an unfair system. Unlike a bake sale, Affirmative Action is far from a sweet deal. ♦

THE saratogafalcon >>

FOURTH PERIOD

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

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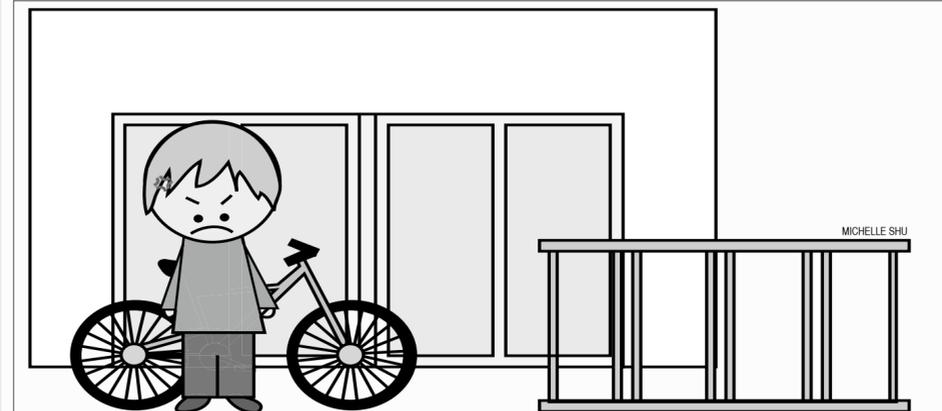
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The double-wheeled debate

>> candid caricatures



MOVE BIKE RACKS BACK TO THEIR ORIGINAL PLACE

A few students who bike to school may have noticed a rather large change lately, aside from the school's paint job. Without notice, over the weekend of Oct. 8-9, the bike racks were moved from the hallway next to the girls' locker room to the front of the school next to the entrance of large gym.

This unwelcome change is an inconvenience to the many students who bike to school every day, and the bike racks should be moved back to their original location.

In addition to an unwelcome disruption in their routines, the main problem students face is the lack of protection for their bikes. Previously, the bikes were under the hallway's overhang.

Now, however, when exposed to the elements, students' bikes, helmets and any other equipment will become soaking wet—a major hassle for bikers.

Additionally, it will make their journey home much more uncomfortable if their seat is wet the entire time.

Although the rainy season has not yet arrived, California is known to have unpredictable weather, especially considering the winter storms of the coming

months. According to school administrators, the bike racks were moved because students were harming the plants by putting their bikes on the side of the racks facing the Small Gym wall. Because only one side of the racks was able to be used, bikes were rolling over the plants, which are expensive to maintain. In an attempt to preserve those plants, the bike racks were moved to the front.

Administrators also were concerned about safety, since students would ride in the hallways while others were walking, which could cause potential collisions.

But what the administration must realize is not only does the hallway provide little or no aesthetic value, the safety risk that bikers constitute is insignificant.

With the amount of traffic congestion in the morning, and for the environmental benefits, the school should

be making every effort to encourage students to avoid driving and bike to school, instead of placing an additional burden on students by creating unnecessary inconveniences for bikers.

Furthermore, no student input was taken before the move was made. Granted, not all decisions the administration makes should be subject to student approval, but for decisions that affect a sizable portion of the student body and where surveying student opinion requires little or no effort, student voices should be heard.

Fortunately for students, the move may not be permanent. When winter comes, the school is thinking of moving the racks back under the overhang, when students will be most inconvenienced by the rain and weather.

Hopefully, in order not to get this privilege revoked, students will take care not to trample upon the plants.

While not all students who bike to school are affected by the change in placement now, most assuredly, once the weather starts becoming worse and worse, there will be many more complaints. With any luck, the school will move back the bike racks soon, a welcome change for our bikers. ♦

>> Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief Christine Bancroft	Opinion Editor Anshu Siripurapu	Reporter Allison Chang
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The Saratoga Falcon staff voted 34-3 against the bike rack relocation

>> letter to the editor

Dear Editors,

I am writing in response to Jonathan Young's article in the Oct. 14 edition of The Falcon: "Lack of respect between school squads: Poor judgment shown by members of the band toward football".

When I first read this story, I had noticed some very valid points: Mr. Boitz had in fact spoken with the band about etiquette following the football game, highlighting the struggles that the marching band endured when it was still an unknown and growing program; the marching band has been doing well in competitions recently, and will in fact be going to the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade next year. Many members of the band also had the opportunity to march in Barack Obama's Inauguration Parade.

What disturbed me, however, was the idea that there is some sort of rivalry between the football team and the marching band. There are 220 members of the marching band. One member chose to make a poor decision and make an inappropriate remark, and was reprimanded not only by Mr. Boitz, but also by marching

band leadership team members. This remark was not at all representative of the overall view of the marching band towards the football team.

The marching band works tirelessly towards completing their show for their own competition circuit, yet they still dedicate five hours every Friday evening to dress, warm up, and perform at every home football game.

The marching band plays with enthusiasm when the football team scores a touchdown, and the band cheers the team on as the team makes a play.

The marching band performs at halftime shows not to take away from the ambiance of the football game, but instead to add to the fun and excitement of the game.

As head manager of the marching band, I would be deeply disappointed to see that the hours that I spend preparing schedules, setting up equipment, and preparing uniforms were going to waste for a rival of the marching band. The reality is, however, that I am proud to do these things. I look forward to every football game, as each one is an opportunity for the

marching band to show their support for the football team, and convey a sense of school spirit. Saying that the band has a rivalry with the football team is like saying that because one high school student cheated on a test, all high school students are cheaters. Somebody made a mistake, and he or she has learned from that mistake.

Even more, the band was able to take the opportunity to remind itself of its roots and traditions, and even what we stand for.

We are not enemies. We are separate entities that work together at football games to increase pride and school spirit on campus.

Sincerely,
Akash Kar
Head Manager
SHS Marching Band



Extending Friday lunch a good idea

By Andy Fang & Jennifer Jin

The bell that signals the beginning of sixth period rings, but as students slide into their seats, they notice a couple of empty seats. Just as the students start to wonder if there was a mass flu breakout, they see their flustered peers rush in with Chipotle bags, unopened.

Among the many trials and tribulations of a typical Saratoga student is the unsatisfyingly short lunch break, which is especially annoying on Fridays. For students who after a long week just want to let loose, which translates to grabbing a burrito or other tasty grub, there proves to be yet another stress-inducing challenge. Often, upperclassmen who go off-campus during the 40-minute lunch period find themselves rushing back to their classes to avoid being late.

No time to eat, strict in-class rules

Sometimes, students are even unable to go to their favorite places to eat. For example, the closest In-N-Out, a favorite among students, is in Mountain View, about 16 minutes away, not counting the possibility of lunch-rush traffic. There is not enough time to safely return to campus on time.

This problem is further exacerbated by the no-food policy of some classes, which makes it impossible for students to enjoy or even eat their food until after class. Their only other option would be to scarf down their food as they rush back to campus, a potential driving hazard.

Not only is rushing back a stressful experience, it is also incredibly dangerous. Many students also feel pressured to speed and eat at the same time just to make it back on time. These driving violations are clearly conducive to an increased likelihood of car accidents.

Benefits of extended Friday lunch

An easy way to resolve these problems? Extending the amount of time allotted for lunch—just for Fridays.

This could be accomplished without extending the school day in any way by removing the 10-minute break that is after tutorial on Fridays and adding it to the lunch period.

There is no need for the break that comes after tutorial. For those that don't use tutorial to do school work or to ask questions, tutorial already serves as a break.

If it is not possible to take away break from the school day, adding 10 minutes to lunch would not have a great impact on the schedule either; school would end at 2:30 rather than 2:20. With school ending on Friday so early, students wouldn't mind if school was extended by a mere 10 minutes, if they were able to get more time to eat lunch.

Many workplaces allot an hour for their workers to eat lunch; shouldn't the same courtesy be extended to equally hardworking students?

Even for the students who do not go off, the extended lunch can be beneficial. If they buy lunch, they won't have to rush to the beginning of the line to make sure that they have enough time to eat.

Teachers can also benefit from this extended lunch period since they can use these extra minutes for some peace and quiet, especially after a long week of teaching and grading papers, or for some additional shots in the teacher basketball game often played on Fridays.

Extending the lunch period to either 50 minutes or an hour would give people ample time to go off campus and eat, as well as promote safe driving practices. And let's face it, nothing quite hits the spot like a juicy hamburger and crispy golden fries to end a stressful week of testing and projects. ♦

The elephant in the room

SENIOR REFLECTS ON HARSH STIGMA AGAINST CONSERVATIVES

By Anika Jhalani

What outfit would you expect to gather catcalls in the hallways of our beloved school? Maybe a skimpy ensemble is too suggestive for our halls. Or perhaps an orange and black outfit that doesn't quite say Halloween. Well, from my experience both are plausible but not nearly as effective at gaining attention as one of my most treasured shirts: my "Meg for California 2010" green tee.

Yes, that's right, I am conservative, a Republican, a lone elephant. My stance has certainly been recognized on campus. This "disease," one might say, was one I developed on my own, not something I was conditioned to believe.

In fact, I was almost indifferent to political party affiliation until the summer after my sophomore year, when I interned for then-Republican gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman.

It was then I saw the real practicality in the way of the "right" (I mean, there is a reason its not called the "wrong.") Of course, many Democrats despise the seemingly ice-cold hearts of we elephant riders, but they are misguided. Republicans are not devoid of emotion, we simply believe that the welfare state that liberals cherish is destroying the American ideals of hard work and personal responsibility.

I'm also not just fiscally conservative. I am one who believes that life starts at conception. The only position that separates me from many other conservatives is my stance on gay marriage: I do believe that marriage is a right deserved by everyone, regardless of sexual orientation.

And although conservatism might seem like a breed who must have surely



Courtesy of ANIKA JHALANI

Senior Anika Jhalani gets a thrill out of reading the Meg Whitman campaign catalogue. Jhalani interned with the Whitman gubernatorial campaign in summer 2010.

already migrated away from the mostly liberal winds of Saratoga High, some of us still exist here.

It is made quite clear that a conservative attitude is an unwelcome one. From Homecoming jokes about the Tea Party to ongoing Rick Perry or Michelle Bachmann jokes in the classroom, being not conservative (not even liberal, mind you) is the new fashion.

In my experience, students at Saratoga freely criticize Republican policy in a desperate effort to adopt hip liberal attitudes. It seems as if some students choose to be pro-choice and for employment benefits not because

they necessarily believe in them, but because it is as far from conservative as they can get.

So I ask the student body, are you liberal for the sake of being not conservative?

Is your position taken up for the fun it brings?

When asked why I choose to mingle with the "disgusting" beliefs of the right, I often just sigh and rebuff with a quote that effectively ends the conversation (if not from the snores it induces from the message it evokes.)

"A 20-year-old conservative is heartless, but a 40-year-old liberal is brainless."

Next time you decide your values, think about which you'd like to be, and whether or not you truly support the causes you appear to be in favor of. ♦

Of course, many Democrats despise the seemingly ice-cold hearts of we Republicans, but they are misguided.

School atmosphere needs to improve



>> Cristina Curcelli
Fincelli without the Fin

Two anti-bullying assemblies in a six-month period, people being singled out at rallies with offensive jokes and a disqualification from Homecoming because of inappropriate and offensive humor. Welcome to the new and not-so-improved SHS.

The start of the 2011-2012 school year hasn't been the best, at least in the eyes of the administration. With behavioral issues becoming more and more of a concern, I can't imagine that they're very pleased.

For one, this year's Homecoming week was rather memorable. But unfortunately people probably won't be talking about the seniors' great centerpiece or the football team's victory. They'll be poking fun at the sophomore class for worsening their already fragile reputation.

As part of the sophomore class, I will be the first to admit that we haven't made the best impression as a group. Now, not only are the administrators hearing about our class's poor conduct, but the teachers, parents, community and virtually anyone who is involved at school knows about all the issues we've caused.

The sophomores' Homecoming episode hasn't been the only problem with this year so far. The first rally of the year back in September didn't go over so well. Many of the jokes were targeted at certain people and these individuals found the comments to be offensive—no surprise there.

Basically, what started out as a few incidents involving a relatively small number of people has now escalated to a school-wide issue. The concept of bullying is becoming far too familiar around campus for my taste.

Our school is unusual in the fact that our student population isn't typical and we should be proud of that. The nerds don't get their clothes stolen from their P.E. lockers—then almost all of us would be walking around naked. The band kids don't find Play-Doh stuffed in their instruments—that would throw a third of the student body into chaos. And no one has to cry alone when they get a "B"; we have company to mourn with.

The idea of an intelligent, well-mannered and respectful student population is becoming more of a memory than reality. The obvious increase in bullying is beginning to tarnish our school's culture as a whole. But what exactly can be done about this? Is it the school's responsibility, or is it our own, as members of the student body, to do our part in rectifying the situation?

The administration has made an effort to improve the culture of our campus. There have been two assemblies, one near the end of last year and one at the start of this year, to raise awareness for bullying issues. The administration has brought in local psychotherapist John Peña and Assistant District Attorney Ray Mendoza to speak at these assemblies. Neither of these were taken very seriously though, at least judging from the sophomores' jokes during their quad day.

But no matter how hard the school tries to suppress bullying, it is difficult for them to change the campus culture. Because many of the bullying issues on campus are spurred by online or off-campus conflicts, the school cannot monitor these situations at all times.

Once we leave the classrooms, the tone and feel of our school is established solely by us, the students, and the amount of respect we pay to one another. We determine the school's culture.

So do I hope these problems disappear? Of course. Do I think it's an immediate fix? By no means.

But it can and must be done by each and every class at our school if we have any hope in maintaining our quirky, unusual and somewhat eccentric culture here.

If not, I have a feeling that rallies and Homecoming celebrations won't be the same anymore. ♦

>> The big idea

SHS Culture in Decline

The SHS campus environment is negatively affected by bullying. Each class needs to make a large effort to maintain SHS culture.

<< lifestyles

That awkward moment when...

—all briefs written by Allison Chang and Evaline Ju, all graphics by Michelle Shu



Junior Homecoming princess Michelle Chan began chatting on Facebook with Homecoming commissioner junior Triscilla Chu about how she was enjoying her chicken wings on Sept. 29. Chu then sent another message to the members of the Homecoming court and commission with information about attire, transportation and the school-provided dinner before the Homecoming game.



Chan

eatin a chicken wing" and sent the message to the Homecoming commissioners and all 12 members of the Homecoming court.

When she realized her mistake, she became startled and hastily informed everyone that she had typed in the wrong conversation.

Still, the damage was done. Senior Homecoming commissioner Allison Toh later posted, "Michelle, please do tell me more about your chicken wings." ♦

Absentmindedly, Chan accidentally typed, "im

In the silence of Natasha Ritchie's sixth-period English Honors class on Oct. 7, junior Johnny Chang rose for an appointment with his guidance counselor while the rest of his classmates concentrated on their books.



Chang

He turned the door knob to leave, but the door refused to budge. Though the door didn't move, Chang still did. "I walked into the door at a constant velocity, experiencing a large

deceleration, which then prompted a funny little 'wuh' from my mouth," Chang said.

At first the class seemed confused as to what had occurred but soon burst into laughter. Chang also laughed his experience off and finally made his way out the door. With smiles on their faces, the rest of the class went back to work. ♦



During the summer of 2010, senior Sue Liang was in front of a mall in the middle of a crowded square in Dong Guan, China, when her foot became stuck in the bars of a sewer drain in the ground.



Liang

"My foot somehow managed to fit perfectly [in the bars]," she said.

Many people passed by surprised and curious as to what happened, but ne-

glected to help the stranded senior in her struggle. "Everyone was watching. They didn't know whether to help or laugh," Liang said.

Her cousin tried to help her pull out her foot, but after 10 minutes of pulling, Liang managed to release herself with only a little scrape on her leg.

"[My cousin] just gave me an 'I will forget about this incident like it never happened if you do the same' look and I gave her an 'of course' look," Liang said. ♦

With so many people packed onto one campus, it is easy to lose track of new friends and faces. This can often lead to a case of mistaken identity. It's never clear who feels more awkward in such a situation, the person initiating the greeting, or the person receiving it.



Rao

For sophomore Ojus Rao, who found herself grouped with the former, this was a constant problem last year. As a freshman, there are plenty of new classmates coming into the high school who are not from Redwood, so confusion is natural.

"I just kept saying 'hi' to people I thought I knew, who I really didn't know," Rao said. "One really awkward one was when I called my new friend Erica, 'Lauren' instead and she just yelled, 'Why do you keep calling me Lauren?' It was rather awkward for me and everyone else who overheard her."

However, these experiences allowed Rao to make even more friends and become familiar with students that she did not have any contact with in classes, and may not have had any chance to meet previously. ♦



As a so-called chickadee, a newcomer, to the Falcon staff, I have had a myriad of new experiences this year. But by far, the most difficult and often awkward part of being on staff is interviewing. I cannot count how many times in just the first six weeks that I have walked into the wrong classroom or frozen in the middle of an interview.

The most awkward interviewing moment I have had was in the process of writing these little blurbs of awkward stories. In my search for senior Timothy Ling, I walked into world history and government teacher Kirk Abe's class after looking up Ling's schedule.

But to no avail, I forgot to notice that Ling had Abe for

second semester and economics teacher Todd Dwyer for first.

Therefore, I was left standing awkwardly around when Abe asked the entire class if they had a Timothy Ling in their class.

Then, even after the dreaded process of pulling someone out of class is finished, talking to a complete stranger and developing rapport is not easy.

However, despite this awkwardness, I am extremely glad that by being part of the Falcon staff, I am able to meet new people and hear their stories.

Who knows? I may grow out of this awkward stage, especially if I can remember to pull the right people out of the right classes for interviews. ♦



Chang

Going to a new school is always disconcerting. There are new people, new teachers and a new campus to become acclimated to. Brand new students are often stuck wandering around the school seeking the right rooms for their classes. Naturally, some of these "newbies" will walk into the wrong room or find themselves in some other bizarre, uncomfortable situation.



Chiang

In such a situation, embarrassed students will make a hasty retreat after realizing that this was not the class they intended on entering. Even if they don't catch their error speedily, after taking roll, it should not be difficult for them to realize that they are not in the right place.

For sophomore Emily Chiang, however, it wasn't her first year at her school, the Taiwan American School in Taipei, but her second. She had moved from America to

Taiwan in third grade, but was still adjusting to her new surroundings.

"When I was in fourth grade, I just sat down in the classroom and didn't notice that it was the wrong room until later," Chiang said. "I'm not exactly sure why the teacher didn't catch the fact that I wasn't in her roster, but it might have been because she forgot to take roll call."

Fortunately for Chiang, none of her friends were in the class so her delayed exit wasn't too comfortable.

"I just felt really awkward and embarrassed because it wasn't even as if it was my first year at this school," Chiang said.

Chiang found out her error during lunch break that day after checking her schedule once again. Fortunately, her actual teacher didn't chastise her much for her mistake. ♦



November 4, 2011

A WEEK WITHOUT WEAKNESSES

REPORTERS PUT THEIR DIGNITY AND SANITY ON THE LINE TO BE GUINEA PIGS FOR THESE SOCIAL EXPERIMENTS

Columnist rolls her way to social awkwardness



>> Akshara Sekar
They call me Awkshara

7:50 a.m.: A couple bewildered stares, some hushed tones and the blaring hum of the wheels.

8 a.m.: Caustic comments from some, a couple laughs and the blaring hum of the wheels.

12:20 p.m.: A few demeaning looks, a pity glance and the blaring hum of the wheels.

2:40 p.m.: "What is this, third grade? Who carries a roller backpack?", a uniform stink-eye and (I may be wrong) a couple students' spit. Oh, and the blaring hum of the wheels.

Let's just say life is not a joy ride for those making their way around school with roller backpacks. Not only do the unwieldy bags reduce you to an unfortunate soul stuck bruising people while you attempt to wheel your "luggage" around, but they are also loud

enough for everyone to hear as you make your way through the crowded hallways.

The majority of baffled looks solidified this assumption, as students peered at me pensively, wondering what sane person would deign to carry such a loud, obstructive, neon-shining beam of social suicide.

I never fully understood the declining phenomenon of roller backpacks. When did they lose their upper-crust popularity status?

Until middle school, they were a prized item, personalized by your favorite color or character. However, they turn you into an ostracized anomaly in high school.

As you can see, my experience with this elementary school trend landed me the social status of a high school pariah, leaving me quite a few options. I might as well have eaten lunch in the fume-infested bathroom stalls or enjoyed my tutorials hiding in the library with my latest self-help book.

Maybe that's an extreme, but there's more to roller backpacks than just their negative stigma. By the

time students reach high school, the weight of textbooks they lug around has tripled. The glory days of math workbooks and gold stars have been replaced by the 5-pound calculus book, the equally heavy APUSH book and the notoriously heavy (on the brain and back) AP Physics book.

If students didn't mind easing their thirst for social acceptance, maybe there would be less complaining of back pains and neck sprains.

Already suffering from h i g h

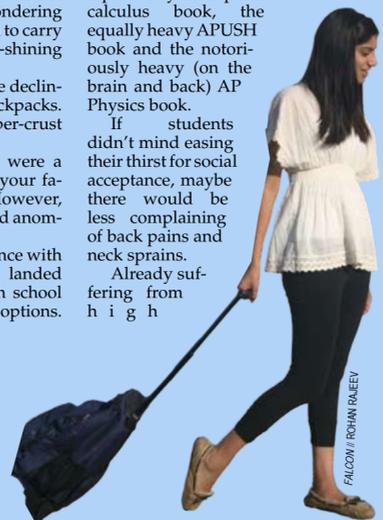
stress level of junior year, I prefer the increase in arm muscle the roller backpack induces rather than the clearly attractive hunchback given by my normal backpack.

Even though the roller backpack had many advantages, I missed the comforting task of pulling my backpack straps.

Throughout my high school career, my normal backpack, Borealis (name given by The Northface, the company that created my closest and most dependable companion) and I have become quite good friends; we each pull our own weight.

However, more than the backpack, I missed the lively chatter of the hallways. During my experiment, it was something I never heard because I was either avoiding that crowded area altogether (already a social outcast with no need to become the reason people begin finding mysterious roller scratches on their legs) or muting out everyone else with the loud, airport-esque sound of my newest accessory.

Through this experience, I solidified my generally awkward personality. The backpack was just a visible manifestation of my already peculiar character. ♦



FALCON // ROMAN RAJEV

Lack of television allows for productivity



>> Wren Sutterfield
Just say Wren

For my social experiment, because apparently I am a masochist, I chose to watch no television for an entire week. I know not why I subjected myself to this, but at least it was entertaining for my friends as I slowly but surely went insane.

No TV meant no movies, YouTube or TV shows. I could not click on a

video shared by a friend on Facebook, or watch the viral video everyone would be talking about.

In the beginning, the lack of TV wasn't so bad as the apprehension: What would I do to occupy my time? How would I deal with scheming friends determined to ruin my week with spoilers?

And following days of monotony, I began to despair. The boredom! The math! The lack of anything interesting! Every day, I had hours of homework to complete, uninterrupted by guilty-pleasure TV shows like "The Lying Game."

The experience was made even worse because of my friends, who I knew were determined to ruin my days with spoilers. The lack of TV not only affected my days, but it affected my nights as well. One night, I had a dream I was watching a TV show. When the show ended, I got

mad at myself because I'd ruined the social experiment. I woke up disappointed. But I had been screen-free after all.

It's strange how a simple thing like watching no TV affected me. Time seemed to go a bit

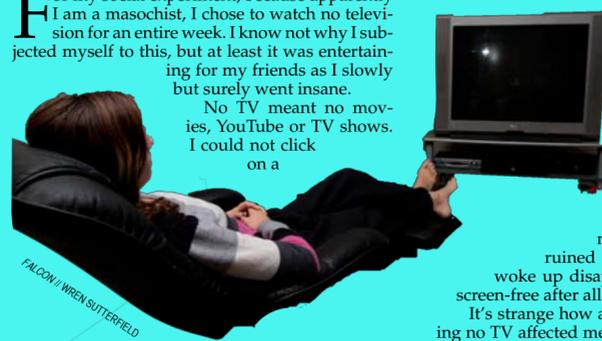
slower, and I got home every day feeling sad because I knew I couldn't watch TV to relax in the evening.

I missed TV the most when I wanted to watch amazing videos on YouTube with my friends. I was so sad that I couldn't join in their joy during Media Arts class as they watched trailers for upcoming horror movies, or sang along to the "Narwhal Song."

My ban was especially irritating when I was attempting to create a playlist with a friend and couldn't watch the music videos for any of the songs. On the plus side, my friends and I were actually able to complete the project we were working on after school on Friday. This was mostly because we weren't watching "Glee" videos instead of working. This no-TV thing actually had some benefits.

At the completion of my week without TV, I was feeling surprisingly good. I had expected to spend all my time feeling sad and incredibly bored, but I was actually able to use my extra time to do homework and other useful things.

Television is just entertainment, like anything else. I think this week, I learned I don't need silly vices like that to control my time. And since I had a lot more time to get my schoolwork done, I've decided to institute a no-TV rule before finals and other important commitments that are extremely time-consuming. ♦



FALCON // WREN SUTTERFIELD

>> wren'smissedshows

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
None	House The Lying Game The Colbert Report	NCIS Glee New Girl	Suburgatory Modern Family Psych	The Office	None	Saturday Night Live

Deprivation of social media: feeling cut off from society



>> Olivia Chock
Chock bored

After telling my dad about my newspaper assignment to go a week without Facebook and Tumblr and write a story about my reaction and coping mechanisms, he double high-fived me and said, "Why only a week? Why not a month?"

The first thing I did when I was assigned this torturous task was take away those two websites from my bookmarks menu so it wouldn't tempt me while I was on other sites doing homework.

By the first hour, my mouse already began hovering over the spot where my bookmarks were hidden. I was already fidgeting for some stalking and it had only been an hour. I

knew this would be a tough week.

Throughout the week, I kept typing "face" into my url bar thinking no one would ever find out if I secretly went on Facebook just for a second. As I was about to break the rules, the voice in my head told me this has to be an honest social experiment.

Without Facebook and Tumblr, I resorted to other time wasting-sites, such as Skype and iChat (what's the point of these when you can use Facebook?), and online shopping. Even so, time goes by a lot slower without Facebook and Tumblr.

I kept thinking of Mr. Dwyer saying, "Our most valuable resource is time" and how much is wasted on Facebook. However, this week, I found myself with a lot more time this week to study for a midterm I had for chemistry.

Although I'm pretty proud of myself for going a week without the websites I'm most addicted to, I have to be honest.

I broke the rules once and went on Facebook for maybe under a minute to write on my a capella group's wall

that we had rehearsal. It just goes to show how much we utilize Facebook these days.

My week-long Facebook and Tumblr hiatus made me think about something my physics teacher at San Jose City College said. He said there will not be a next Einstein in our generation because we are so distracted by technological advances.

He ranted about how we think we're multitasking by being on the computer and doing homework at the same time, but that multitasking actually isn't completely possible; therefore, we no longer use our full capacity of knowledge 95 percent of the time since we are always on the



FALCON // IZZY ALBERT

computer.

For the first time in a long time, I'm able to fully concentrate on my homework instead of refreshing the homepage of Facebook to see the same statuses and pictures over and over again.

I'm starting to think my physics teacher isn't all that nuts in his theory, seeing as I only went a week without Facebook and Tumblr and felt so incomplete. ♦

No friends, no problem: daring junior gets new ones



>> Elijah Yi
Yiiii buddy

High school is filled with cliques and social groups. Glancing around the campus during lunch, these divisions are incredibly apparent and visible. So, what would happen if someone interrupted the social norm and tried to join a completely different group for lunch? For a few days, I had the pleasure of doing just that.

At first, excited and compelled by the thought of meeting new people, I embarked on this quest to break the social rules. I quickly learned that it was not an easy goal to achieve.

When the bell rang to signal the end of lunch on the first day of my experiment, I realized what I was getting myself into and was horrified by the thought of doing something different. But my curiosity about the experience compelled me to muster up some courage and continue with my

plans.

On the first day, after overcoming the initial fear, I had no difficulty with meeting new people. I stumbled over a group of sports-loving sophomore boys sitting under the trees in the quad and decided I would join them for lunch. At first there was a slight awkwardness in my conversations and my presence, but there was also a certain ease to it all.

After talking and eating, I spent the rest of my time playing basketball with one of my new acquaintances in the Small Gym.

On another day of my adventures during lunch, I once again searched for a group to hang out with. This time I was drawn to a table of friendly looking faces of Asian sophomore boys and girls sitting under the overhang of the cafeteria. I spent my time talking and listening to them raving about their recent attendance to a conference held by Wong Fu Productions, a video-making group on the Internet.

The amazing thing about this lunch was that I was reunited with a friend who I had not seen since elementary school when he moved away. I was dumbfounded. I had no idea that he attended this school at the time.

Feeling especially courageous on

the final day of my experiment, I joined a clique of a few quiet freshman boys eating in the English room halls. It was a risky move and could have caused embarrassment, but I decided to take a chance with them.

During that experience, I felt that I had made the group very uncomfortable. Though they allowed me to join them for lunch, they seemed shocked and suspicious and asked at my motives in eating with them.

After they had finished eating and we had talked about weather and life as a freshman, they left me to go to the library; I assumed it was a their way to escape the unusual situation that I had created. I ended up spending the majority of that lunch eating with my own friends.

Besides that last day, I found the social experiment to be an enjoyable break from the usual. I found myself casually talking with the people with



FALCON // NIKHIL GOEL

whom I ate, and I soon forgot that I was on an experiment to break barriers. I even got a few friend requests on Facebook from some of the students that I hung out with.

Generally, it may seem hard to penetrate social barriers, but, at our school at least, it was relatively easy and enjoyable after getting over the initial awkward greeting.

Through these experiences I was able to meet some interesting people I would not have otherwise gotten to know.

So if you ever see me coming toward your group with a big smile, be ready to make a new friend. ♦

togotalks

What would you not be able to go a week without?

“My poetry journal. It's basically my collection of thoughts; it gets my mind off things when I'm stressed.”



senior Darisha Jhutti

“My computer; it has everything ... the internet, Skype, music and more. My computer's my life; without it I wouldn't be able to do anything!”



junior Sharon Mansha

THE BEST THING TO DO

Junior brings model vehicles to life

BY RohanRajeev

To control a miniature airplane from afar or to sit behind the wheel of a classic car certainly provides a fair share of thrills. To junior Matthew Allen, flying model planes and building cars were the highlights of his middle school days.

"My friends used to fly model planes," Allen said. "It looked cool, so I thought I would take a swing at it."

After flying his store-bought models with his father over the weekends for the first few months, Allen decided to take his hobby a step further by creating his own airplanes.

"I began to put together my own airplanes with separate parts," he said. "My dad and I bonded a lot while we created and fine-tuned our model aircraft."

However, flying and building aren't always flawless for Allen.

"There have been some awkward moments where I've lost control of my craft, landing on private property," he said, laughing. "I've had to knock on people's doors to politely ask them for permission to look for my plane."

However, most of these people Allen

have encountered have given him positive reactions and even take interest in his fascinating hobby.

These property owners are not the only ones who take interest in his unique hobby.

Ambitious young children are enthralled by the model airplanes as well.

"I actually teach some interested kids about planes," Allen said. "I give them pointers about where to start and give them remote control tips. They're simple tricks of the trade."

When he isn't assembling homemade model aircraft, flying his creations or teaching interested children about his hobby, Allen works on an even bigger project in his garage.

As a child, his father built a working Ford Model T car completely from scratch. His son hopes that he can follow in his footsteps.

"My dad and I have worked on the car, hoping to be able to drive it around once again," Allen said.

However, as he has progressed through high school, he has realized that not as many other kids take interest in model planes or antique cars.



Junior Matthew Allen displays his most recent model airplane at his house on Oct. 21.

Even though the workload of junior year has encroached upon his time to work on his antique car and remote-controlled airplanes, Allen does not want to give up the hobbies, though it becomes

difficult at times. "My hobbies also give me a chance to bond with my dad more than before," Allen said. "I don't plan to give them up anytime soon." ♦

Board games keep students un-bored

BY SierraSmith

Laughter and smiles fill the room as dice roll across the board. Four players, assuming the roles of settlers, battle it out to build and develop settlements, as they attempt to settle the fictional island of Catan.

Junior Heather Sabel had been playing "Settlers of Catan" for nearly two hours with her sister, grandma and uncle before she came to an exciting victory by earning the most settlement points.

"Settlers of Catan is one of my favorite board games," Sabel said. "We played it once with some family friends, and we liked it so much that we got it."



Sabel

Sabel has been playing board games with her family and friends for many years, a practice that has allowed for bonding and great fun. Playing games is a simple way to spend relaxing, entertaining time together.

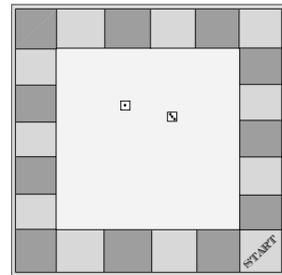
She got a chance to renew the excitement of board games this past summer on a family trip to a ranch in Wyoming.

"Since we were in Wyoming, we didn't have a lot of access to Internet or TV, so when we had down time we did things like play puzzles or games," Sabel said.

Sabel enjoyed games such as Monopoly, Settlers of Catan and Scrabble in her free time at the ranch.

Sabel's playing habits have faded today because of the availability of other forms of entertainment and a busier schedule, but she always enjoys taking a night off to relieve stress with a board game.

"Board games are a really fun way to hang out, because instead of just sitting together like you would at a movie or when you play video games, you actually interact with the people you're playing with," Sabel said. "They're a great way to catch up with family and friends that you haven't seen in a while because everyone ends up laughing and talking and having a great time together." ♦



Building blocks of childhood survive

STUDENT REFLECTS ON ENDLESS HOURS SPENT BUILDING WITH LEGOS

BY NelsonWang

Many students remember building with the simple LEGO blocks when they were younger. Whether they made a plane or a dragon or some unrecognizable contraption, these LEGOs provided endless amusement. Unfortunately, old habits fade, and many have lost the amusement of playing with LEGOs. Even so, few students' childhoods were affected as much by LEGOs as was that of sophomore Charles Li.

Li had played with LEGOs when he was younger and still has the blocks now.

"[LEGOs] are awesome. You can build whatever you want," Li said. "You don't need even the instruction pack because it just restrains you."

Li recalls building LEGOs for a "good chunk" of his childhood and remembers how much he enjoyed it. He said it helped him relieve his stress sometimes as a child because LEGOs were simple yet highly amusing. At one point he even wanted to build LEGOs for a job.

"In first grade, I wanted to be a professional LEGO builder. That is a job,

,you know," Li said. Li's fascination even prompted him to go to Legoland, and he recalls his amazement at the various huge LEGO structures.

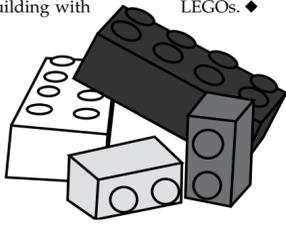
Li had only one complaint for LEGOs that most people who played with LEGOs probably experienced and are all too familiar with.

"Stepping on a LEGO was pretty painful, especially on a non-carpeted floor," Li said. Aside from the one complaint, Li could not think of any flaws to LEGOs.

Like many of us, Li designed fictional worlds with those little blocks of joy and he will never forget his years of building with LEGOs. ♦

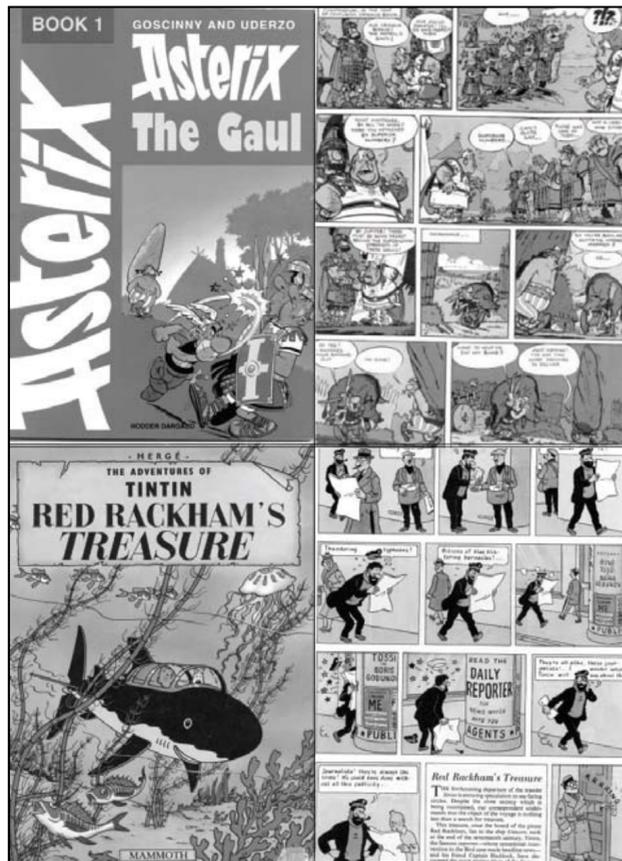


Li



BACK WHEN I WAS...

ALL GRAPHICS BY MICHELLE SHU



Comic heroes changed my childhood forever



>> Rohan Rajeev RoHAHAN

I have never really enjoyed newspaper comic strips, as they either are too wordy or require too much background information to understand. I never understood my dislike for traditional comic strips until I realized my love for classic comic books.

One day, as a curious 6-year-old, I explored a mysterious cabinet in the back of my parents' bedroom and was surprised to open a drawer inside of it filled with many comic books belonging to two separate series.

When I asked my dad why they were there, he told me that he used to enjoy them as a kid and had kept all of his books with him just in case I ever wanted to read them.

I'm glad he decided to keep the books. I was immediately engrossed in the works of "The Adventures of Tintin" and "Asterix the Gaul," two European comics that ran from the 1930s to 1970s. These entire comics presented longer, more detailed stories than the small newspaper comic strips ever did. I read these comic books time and time again, never becoming the slightest bit bored with the stories.

I found the main characters of the

two comics series, Tintin and Asterix, most interesting.

Tintin's intelligence and Asterix's scheming mind always captivated me, keeping me guessing at every plot twist. Captain Haddock, Tintin's best friend, keeps me entertained with his hilarious catch phrases, and Obelix, the omnipresent companion of Asterix, keeps me smiling at his loyalty.

After enjoying these interesting, yet easy-to-understand books for many years, I later realized that I preferred them over the contemporary comic strips for many reasons.

Contemporary comic strips and political cartoons force the reader to think about the hidden satirical message or metaphor within.

After a long, stressful day, the last thing I want to do is discuss possible interpretations of a certain cartoon or strip. That's where Tintin and Asterix both saved me.

These comic books aided me in my worst times of boredom and loneliness. They presented the stories in such crystal clear detail that I would not have to analyze the story at all to understand it perfectly.

Reading about the adventures of Asterix and Tintin not only served as pure, mindless entertainment, but also as a way to relieve stress.

It is pretty disappointing that not as many people my age appreciate these classics, and some people do scoff at my taste in comic books. As Captain Haddock always says in frustration, "billions of bilious blue blistering barnacles!" I like my comic books! ♦

Modern entertainment replaces card games

BY SierraSmith

"Go fish!" junior Miguel Bismonte shouted.

On a typical Friday night five years ago, Bismonte and his friends played a social game of "Go Fish," as per their now long-forgotten tradition.

"I liked the idea that we could just break out a deck, and everyone could get together and have fun," Bismonte said. "It's just normal for this to be the absolute icebreaker of any get-together."

Junior Rohan Cotah also reminisces about card games of his childhood such as "Blackjack" and "Texas Hold'em" with nostalgia and admiration.

"It was nice to bond with my friends during that time," Cotah said. "I loved just sitting around in a circle for hours after midnight and talking about the most random things while playing a game of cards."

Yet despite the great fun that the boys had with cards, neither one still plays today.

Whether it be lack of time or the availability of other entertainment, Bismonte and Cotah have lost interest.

"[My friends and I] stopped playing

after a while just because we didn't see each other as much as we would have liked to," Cotah said.

Bismonte misses the value that card games had to him many years ago, before he became busy with school and other activities.

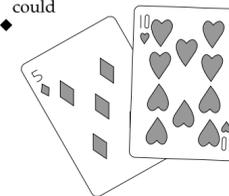
"I hardly play now," Bismonte admits. "All I do is work or study. Sometimes I play video games, but I haven't touched a deck of cards in over five years."

Today video games have taken the place of card games in Bismonte's interests, a change that he both welcomes and regrets.

"Personally, I kind of miss the old days, but I can't complain to the new," Bismonte said. "Technology has taken a bigger part of our lives, from work to our free time. It's a shame, but there is not much else we could do." ♦



Bismonte



Book-lovers still make time to enjoy reading

BY NelsonWang

For some students, their childhoods seem to consist largely of reading books. Whether these memories involve running into the library looking for books, reading by themselves, listening to parents or teachers reading, or throwing themselves into fantasy worlds, many students cherish their memories of reading books.

One example of such a book-lover is sophomore Steven Tran. When he was bored, he could simply read a book to enter a new world and use his imagination and creativity to escape reality for a little while.

"I read because I used to be bored a lot, and books provided me with a source of entertainment and escape," said Tran.

Tran remembers how he loved picture books when he was really young, as he could see the images the book was trying to depict and they helped him understand the plot at hand.

"I really liked picture books because of all the entertaining illustrations," Tran said. "And then I progressed so that when I finished reading a chapter book, I felt accomplished."

Tran also reminisced on the days when students would listen to teachers tell stories. He remembers how relaxed it was to listen to a teacher compared to having to do everything independently nowadays.

"I remember sitting criss-cross with the other kids around the teacher during story time," Tran said. "I was always excited whenever that happened."

Even today, Tran still enjoys reading books. However, his preferred genre has changed.

For one thing, he obviously doesn't like picture books anymore.

"I still read books for the entertainment value," Tran said. "Now, I like sci-fi and mystery books, but before I usually liked fantasy books more."

Another student who was greatly impacted by books during her childhood is senior Jocelyn Takahashi.

"Reading was one of my favorite hobbies...When I was younger, my mom had to yell at me to put away my books," Takahashi said. "She'd take them away and tell me to do my homework."

She mainly enjoyed reading series when she was younger.

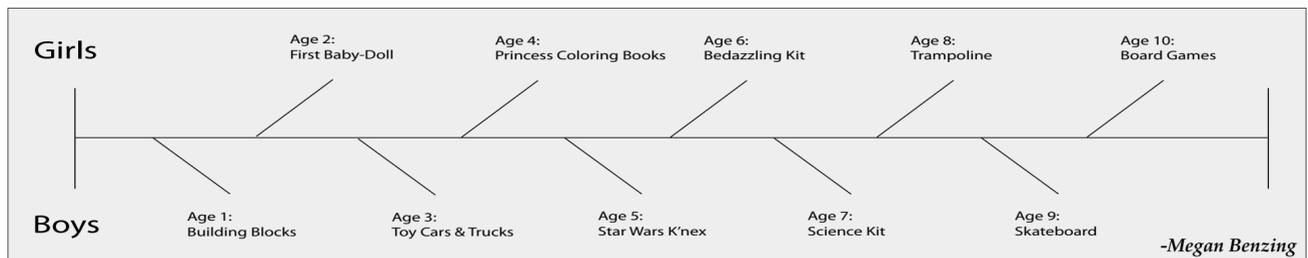
"I would read series because I didn't like when books ended. So with a continuation, I got really excited!" Takahashi said.

Takahashi still enjoys reading books but is reading less frequently due to time constraints. Luckily for her, summer vacation offers enough spare time for her to read.

"Books were important to me when I was younger, and they still are. I'll probably still be reading books a lot when I get older," said Tran. ♦



senior Jocelyn Takahashi



Marching with the band

Color Guard puts a new spin on tradition

by Sarah Finley

"Love it, live it, spin it." To senior Color Guard captain Katie Cummins, that saying reflects the impact Guard has on the lives of its members and sums up what the culture in Color Guard is all about. "Our lives are filled with Guard," Cummins explained. "We only work so hard and do Guard because we love it, we love the people and love spinning our flags and rifles."

Cummins feels that Guard has a unique culture that is different from that of other groups in band. "We all can laugh at each other and have a good time," Cummins said. "I think we're crazier and louder than any other section of the band."

Junior Katlyn Hirokawa agrees, pointing to the group's traditions. "We have an infamous game that we play called 'munga munga' which involves a lot of hugging, screaming, and craziness," Hirokawa said. In addition, the group sometimes has dinners at the local restaurant BJ's and sleepover parties at members' houses at the beginning or end of the season, Hirokawa said.

Hirokawa said the team also completes a good luck ritual before they

perform, in which their guard instructor gives them a lemon drop.

"It symbolizes that the lemon drop will be the only 'drop' we are allowed," Hirokawa said.

Hirokawa feels that as a result of these bonds, the group gives off a welcoming atmosphere. As a freshman, Hirokawa remembers falling during one of the competitions and how the group consoled her.

"I started to cry after the show was over and all the members came over and comforted me, calling the fall, not an accident, but a 'mini solo,' and it made me feel so much better about the situation," Hirokawa said.

Junior Elizabeth McAfee said that even little things bond the group together and shape its culture, like the time members spend hanging out together at competitions.

"We usually discuss our show, gossip about other shows and attempt to get warm," McAfee said.

McAfee added that even seemingly ordinary practices have their own highlights.

"I guess you could say every day is team bonding, because I can honestly say there isn't a single practice I've walked away from without having a brand new memory," McAfee said.



Color Guard members practice tossing and twirling their new flags on the football field on Oct. 20, in preparation for a band competition in Pleasanton, CA, on Oct. 23.

Senior Michael Woodruff said that because Color Guard begins practicing very early in the summer, the extra time helps to bring the group together.

"Starting earlier in the summer also helps the new members feel more connected with the older members and allows for a unified feeling of the Guard as a whole," Woodruff said.

Woodruff, the only male member of

Guard this year, said that he does not let this fact bother him.

"At first my peers made fun of me for [being the only male member], but I did not let it affect me, and they learned to respect my love for the activity," Woodruff said. "I love Color Guard and I don't care what others think because I know that I am who I am and will continue doing what I love." ♦

Percussion held together by strong ties

by Sophie Mattson

From the back of the band bus come the sounds of drumming and tapping. Irked band members beg the source of these sounds to cease their music, but this is an average occurrence in the life of a percussionist; others finally ignore the persistent noise.

Percussionists are much more than the instruments they play: They form two sub-groups in their section, each of which has its own distinct and unique culture.

There are 11 students in the drumline, which marches on the field, and 12 in pit percussion, which is stationary and plays instruments like the xylophone at the front of the field.

With two factions of the percussion section, which practice and perform in

different areas, each subgroup becomes intensely loyal to its own.

According to sophomore Raiza de Vera, a member of drumline since freshman year, the group is different than the other sections of the band because there aren't as many people, and usually don't practice on the field with the rest of the band.

Although they are faced with a demanding practice and competition schedule, drumline still finds time to unwind and have fun.

"At our most recent competition, the bass drummers linked our harnesses together so that we were joined to each other, forming a circle," de Vera said. "People leaned back to make everyone else lean their way, and we all started laughing."

The members of pit also have memo-

orable experiences during the season and enjoy each other's company.

"Our bond is kind of like a family. We are all very relaxed with each other," said junior Feargus MacFinnionlaoich, a marimba player in pit. "There are no awkward situations because there are only 12 people in pit, so we know each other pretty well."

"We get everything done, but we have fun while we are doing it," sophomore Michael Eschen said.

The members of pit have an array of inside jokes and traditions.

"We have something called 'Dress like Aben Day' where we dress like our past instructor by wearing skinny jeans and flannel shirts," MacFinnionlaoich said.

People who aren't well informed about percussion instruments tend to wonder how musicians in pit are able to

keep their sanity after tapping mallets against such large instruments.

"The [marimba] is the hardest to learn but easiest to get better at. Once you have the technique down, which comes from monotonous exercises, you can then learn a much wider variety of music," MacFinnionlaoich said.

Although the members of percussion tend to keep to their separate sections, the friendships they develop within their sections are strong.

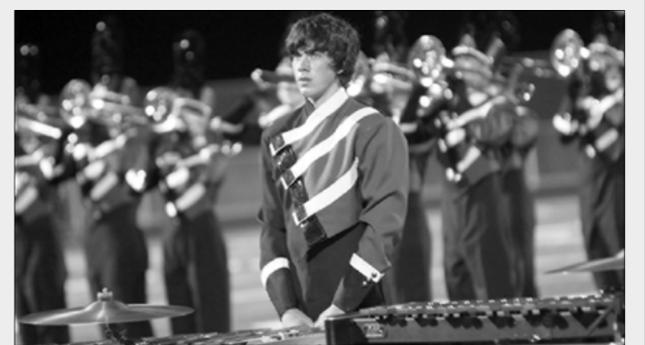
They enjoy every minute of their unique bonds fostered by their love of percussion.

"Even though front ensemble [pit] and drumline have extremely different jobs and spend most of the time separated," de Vera said. "We come together to create musical passages that neither section would be able to create alone." ♦



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Drumline practices near the football field on Oct. 20. Pit members rehearse on Oct. 17. The trumpet section prepares to review its movements on Oct. 25. The clarinet section hones its march on the softball field on Oct. 26. The trombone section stands ready to go over its movements on Oct. 23. Junior Jamie Zhou and sophomore Thomas Ringsrud stand in formation on Oct. 26.

At the competition >>> Photos by Kylie Tseng



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The clarinet section stand in its positions during the Tournament of Bands held at Cupertino High School on Oct. 8. Junior Feargus MacFinnionlaoich waits for the right moment to begin playing the marimba. Junior Desmond Chan concentrates on playing the marimba. Senior Stephanie Poo and junior Sarah Menard prepare to twirl their rifles.

Brass: a mix of cultures

by David Sparkman

The marching band is one of the most well-know groups of students on campus because of its size, reputation and presence at many school events. The brass section is easily identified by its shiny and loud instruments, including trumpets, tubas, french horns, baritone, mellophones and the trombone.

Within the brass section, instrument players seem to form a unique bond that goes beyond their musical performance experience.

Even outside of class, they have their lunch spots in the band quad and around campus, where they can be found joking and talking.

They seem to share a certain type of energy and spirit.

The 13 baritone players started the year by following a specific tradition: with a bowl of pho at a Vietnamese restaurant on DeAnza and an ice cream at McDonald's afterward.

"Nobody knows why, but we do [the traditional lunch]," senior Jeremy Veis said. "We have a ton of fun every time."

The baritones start each competition with a special chant to get excited about performing.

"I would say we work hard and play hard," Veis said. "We really find a great balance of working hard and also having a fun time and enjoying what we're doing."

The trombones seem to blend these

two cultures. They are diligent and always give their best, but seem to have enough time to joke around.

"We're like a big family," sophomore Margaret Maccoun said. "Some of us are quiet, but most of us are loud and energetic."

On some Saturdays, the trombones enjoy "section lunches" at local hang-outs like Chipotle, Pizza-My-Heart and Jamba Juice.

One fact that is not well known about the trombones is that they start each competition or performance with a secret handshake.

"[Our handshake] is kind of a good luck thing," Maccoun said.

Another section with an interesting culture are the tubas.

"I'll give you three words [to describe the tuba section]," senior section leader

Jimmy Zheng said, "resilient, funny and crazy."

According to Zheng, band members can go into the tuba area of the band room almost every day and find something to eat.

Like many other sections, the tubas are also a lively and fun section. They always enjoy eating and playing pranks on people, both inside and outside their section.

"[The band culture] is really fun," freshman Bridgette Olsen, who plays the tuba, said. "It's a big family. We love each other, and then sometimes we can't stand each other, but that's how a family is." ♦

Woodwinds march to tune of their own instruments

by Aashna Mukerji

After a hard day of memorizing positions for their upcoming show, junior Todd Nguyen and the other 20 saxophone players run back onto the field, fingers pointed to the sky, yelling "Unicorn Charge!"

The woodwind section of the marching band is comprised of the flute, clarinet and saxophone players.

From charging across the field as mythical creatures to an almost unhealthy admiration of their instructor, Seth Jones, the woodwinds express their individuality through various quirks.

"Our section has a bunch of traditions that are pretty embarrassing," Nguyen said. "We're a rebellious, free-spirited bunch."

The flute players, who, despite being notorious for gossip, have a strong "work hard, play hard" ethic.

"90 percent of the flute section is female, inevitably bringing drama and 'girl issues' to band," junior Cathy Han said, "but we're definitely one of the more hardworking sections."

The woodwinds have a strong admiration for Jones, who is "arguably the most important man in the world," according to junior Kevin Chen. "As clarinets, we try to model our behavior after our beloved instructor," he added.

In addition, junior Maya Nag feels that the clarinet section is known for

being the largest, and possibly most friendly, section of the band.

"We're also referred to by Mr. Jones as 'my people,' because he majored in clarinet performance at Carnegie Mellon University," Nag said.

The weekend before band camp starts, players in the section host a "clarinet party" so members can get to know each other before the true season begins.

During the year, they bond through their secret-buddy system, where members draw names out of a bag to give another member a \$5-\$10 gift on the day of competition.

Similarly, the flute players have "flute bags" for each competition, where one grade level is responsible for providing candy and drinks for the section on the ride to their competition venue.

"Despite being a 30-person [clarinet] section, we're pretty close," Nag said.

The "saxbros," as Nguyen refers to his fellow players, are "known for being trouble-makers" because of the frequency with which they are yelled at by Jones.

Because sections are in the same place for the majority of practice, most band members agree that they are closer to their section-mates than to others in band.

"We're all one big family," Han said. "The flutes are just my brothers and sisters." ♦

Connecting to culture

ALL GRAPHICS BY MICHELLE SHU

Students at Saratoga High enjoy not only celebrating their own unique ethnic backgrounds but also experiencing a taste of their peers' diverse cultures

What about Europeans? >> togetalks



>> McKenna Galvin
Marvelous McKenna

Every time Club Day rolls around, it's hard not to be impressed by the variety of clubs we have on campus that work to preserve various cultures. From Indian Club to Asian Club, the quad is filled with tables celebrating the unique heritages present in Saratoga. It seems that everyone has a place where he or she can share unique traditions and customs of his or her culture.

Which raises the question: What about me?

I've lived pretty much my entire life as what one might consider the typical "white" stereotype. I burn easily in the sun and probably am more concerned with my grades than my parents are.

As a third-generation American, I wouldn't say that I'm connected to my Irish, Polish and Norwegian heritage. To me, I'm just American, and

that's pretty much it.

In Saratoga, it's hard to go anywhere without seeing people talking to their parents in Mandarin, celebrating holidays unique to their culture or listening to Korean pop music.

It seems that almost everyone is connected to some sort of culture through his or her parents—except me. Sometimes I wish that I could be more connected to my ancestry by speaking a different language.

Of course, it's not like I don't have a heritage at all. I remember making rosettes, a type of Scandinavian cookie, for my class's heritage day in fourth grade. But besides filling my stomach, I didn't really gain much from the whole experience.

Unlike people of Asian or Indian descent, I feel as if I'm a mixture of so many ethnicities that I really don't have any sort of cultural identity that I associate with. While this mix of cultures is a good thing, it's often difficult to connect to a particular culture and traditions.

We have an Indian Club and an Asian Cultural Awareness Club at our school; why not "European Club"? Students of European descent should get a chance to share and be proud of their cultures as well.

On standardized tests, instead of

indicating what individual countries I'm from, there's only one box to fill out: "white." It's sad that European culture isn't considered important enough to be differentiated between the different countries.

To be honest, I get a little jealous whenever I see someone talking to his or her parents on the phone in a different language. While I've tried to become familiar with some aspects of my peers' cultures (I can say "where is my meat?" in Mandarin, by the way), it's just not the same as learning about my own heritage.

Everything is so mixed in the U.S. today; it seems that people of European descent have forgotten where they come from. We're losing sight of the individual cultures and traditions that came together to form this country. While having a mix of cultures is good, it's just as important to recognize the past and celebrate our heritage. ♦



Do you consider yourself involved in your culture?

"I guess, since I celebrate Chinese New Year and work at a Chinese school."



senior Kevin Pan

"Not too involved. We don't do much. We celebrate Christmas, but that's more religion than culture."



junior Lisa Porter

"I do participate in Chinese New Year and Moon Festival, but I don't really think I'm very involved."



junior Selena Xu

Immigrant parenting style aims for balance

By Joanna Lee

Katie Lo, parent of first-generation junior Cynthia Chen, moved from Taiwan to the United States in 1990. A parent of four, Lo described her first experience in America as "difficult yet worthwhile."

Immigrant parents often find themselves in a tough situation: whether to raise their kids in the strict ways they were subject to growing up or to adapt to more flexible American methods.

Lo's childhood was radically different from that of Chen's. When she was a teenage girl, Lo was strictly taught to only put priority on schoolwork and to rarely leave time to "hang out with friends or to relax."

Although Chen has similar restrictions because of the difficulty of the school, she manages to find time to have fun, whereas her mother had been raised to put academics over any leisure time.

Even though Lo's childhood was set in a completely different cultural background, the connection between child and parent is strong.

"My mother's culture was really strict back in Taiwan, but she's gradual-

ly picked up some parenting techniques that [parents] use here in America," Chen explained.

In addition, Lo had been taught to adhere to the traditional customs of Taiwan, such as respectfully bowing to elderly—yet she does not consider them integral in the process of raising her children.

"She's not the stereotypical 'tiger mom' that every child fears," Chen said. "She is reasonable because her parenting is a mixture of both Taiwanese and American techniques."

Yet Lo has not completely shifted her parenting techniques to the familiar "lax American" ones. She still maintains some of her culture, such as bowing in front of the elderly, but not enough to be an obstruction in the understanding of her children.

"Personally, this is a nice balance for me," Lo said. "I don't emphasize my culture too much, but it's important to not completely forget about it."

Yet other first-generation students' parents seem to have slightly different parenting techniques than that of second-generation parents.

Alissa Park, mother of junior Wesley



Junior Cynthia Chen and her Taiwanese-immigrant mother Katie Lo bond in their home.

Park, is not so concerned about retaining and practicing her Korean culture around the house. As a child, her mother had faithfully retained the Korean culture of cooking a traditional soup during the Korean New Year's Day, called "duhk-gook," but Alissa does not see too much importance in maintaining those customs. Instead, she says her primary focus is on maintaining a good parent-to-child relationship.

"As an education major, I learned that children need verbal affirmation and open communication so that parents can be aware of all aspects of their child's life and remain influential in their child growth," Alissa said.

Surprisingly, parents of second-generation children experience similar par-

"[My mom is] not the stereotypical 'tiger mom' that every child fears."



junior Cynthia Chen



junior Haley Wong

"My father understands the American customs [immigrant parents] might not understand."

Exploring diversity through clubs:

>> TzuChi



Courtesy of TC CLUB

Junior Kelly Liu, a Tzu Chi member, helps young children with learning disabilities use computers at one of the club's many volunteering events in San Jose.

President: Senior Connie Chien

When/where: Every other Tuesday lunch in Tseng's room (409)

What: According to junior Maggy Liu, Tzu Chi is an international charity organization based in Taiwan, founded by Master Cheng Yen in 1966 to ease suffering in eastern Taiwan. Though Tzu Chi is religiously affiliated with Buddhism, it often helps groups of other faiths, including helping Muslims in Thailand or building churches for Christians in Taiwan.

"Tzu Chi does community service at least once a month," Liu said. "We also have an on-campus thing called Bamboo Bank, which is where we give each member a plastic cylindrical pig-

gy-bank-esque container. The idea is to give a little each day, like five cents, to cultivate this spirit of giving. At the end of the year, we collect the money and send it to Tzu Chi."

Why: Liu believes that even though Tzu Chi isn't based on a specific culture, it still represents the Buddhist philosophical culture well. Their meetings are centered around how members can find personal peace and happiness through helping others.

"We try to cultivate a spirit of genuine compassion through our events," Liu said. "The topics we talk about aren't religious, though; we try to keep it broad—compassion, kindness, respecting elders and all faiths are welcome." ♦

>> FrenchClub

Presidents: Seniors Antara Rao and Meghana Rao

When/where: Every other Thursday lunch in Lizundia's room (408)

What: According to Antara, the French club is looking forward to doing a fundraiser, a chocolate or sorbet tasting event, a buche de noël decorating event and participating in a field trip to a French school in May. In

hosting these events, the French club attempts to bring students together in discovering the different aspects of French culture.

Why: "My sister and I joined French club because we love French culture," Antara said. "French club helps us to practice French, but many of the members do not speak French. However, we do learn interesting new French words every meeting." ♦

>> IndianCulturalAwareness



Courtesy of ARUN ARUNKUMAR

Senior Eric Wang, alumni Brandon Pierce, Kaitna Shankar and Esha Roy sing at last year's Bombay in the Bay, hosted in the McAfee Center to celebrate Indian culture.

Presidents: Seniors Priyanka Arunkumar and Sneha Shivkumar

When/where: Every Tuesday lunch in Ms. Troxell's room (103)

What: Indian club is one of the biggest cultural clubs on campus.

"[We hold] a bunch of events to expose our school to Indian culture," said Shivkumar. "Our biggest event in Bombay in the Bay, but this year we are trying to hold more events, such as frooti and samosa (Indian snacks) fundraisers."

According to Shivkumar, several non-Indians participate in the club,

typically one or two non-Indians per grade.

Why: "I love Indian culture because it is colorful and full of life," Shivkumar said. "All Indian events I have ever been to are always loud and fun; Indian club events are like this as well."

Arunkumar loves the bonding that comes along with the club's events. "The thing I enjoy most about the club is the unity," Arunkumar said. "At the end of Bombay in the Bay, [we're all] friends. The whole experience makes us one big family." ♦

-All briefs by Megan Benzing

>> SpanishClub

Presidents: Senior Alex Amato and junior Edward Dong

When/where: Thursday lunches in Roderiguez's room (601)

What: Spanish club members can attend "noche de cines," or movie nights. Last year, several members attended a performance by Latino dancers in the McAfee last year. Students who attend Spanish club meetings receive cultural credits and always speak in Spanish during meetings, according to senior Alex Amato.

Why: "We connect with the culture through making salsa or the Day of the Dead," said Amato, who has been in the club for two years. ♦

Multiracial students embrace their ethnicities

By Andy Fang

Saratoga has long been a microcosm of the "melting pot" that is America, evidenced by the diverse mingling of cultures. Students who are multiracial are easy to see at school and are symbols of the racial tolerance that has become integral to the school's open-minded culture. But what does it really mean to be multiracial?

Junior Nadya Shahin, whose mother is Ethiopian and father is Jordanian, says her lifestyle is predominantly American with the occasional intermingling of the cultures through language and ethnic cuisine, such as enjera, a spongy brown bread that is not only eaten but also used to pick up other food, and watt, which is a red spicy stew with pieces of meat.

"At home I guess you would say it is a typical American household, but we'll have traditional Ethiopian dishes," Shahin said. "During the Ethiopian holidays, my mom will also have a bunch of her Ethiopian friends over, and they all

speaking their [native] language."

Junior Tyler Bakke, who is of half Caucasian and half Iranian descent, says that his lifestyle is mainly American. For example, he plays soccer and video games with his family and friends in his downtime. However, holidays such as Novrooz, the Persian New Year, allow him to immerse himself in his Persian culture through eating food like chelo kabab, skewered and roasted meat with rice, and bamieh, honey-covered Persian donuts.

"I identify most with my dad's American culture because my mom's Iranian culture only influences me when we celebrate holidays with her side of the family, which is infrequent," Bakke said.

Junior Cori Posadas, whose father is Caucasian and mother is Chinese, experiences a hybrid approach from her parents with regard to work ethic.

"My work ethic is a mix between Chinese and American because I don't have that constant pressure from my mom

to get A+'s all the time like some Asian parents, but my parents, of course, want me to try my best and get good grades," Posadas said.

Though different cultures may often carry contrasting beliefs, Shahin claims that the different cultural beliefs of her parents have not led to conflict.

"My parents do have different religions, my mom being Christian and my dad being Muslim, but that doesn't really affect anyone in the family," Shahin said. "My parents are fine with me being whatever I want to be."

Students of mixed ethnicity get to experience the best of both cultures.

"There are lots of holidays to celebrate, delicious Chinese food whenever I visit my grandparents and Texas-style football games when my dad's father comes over," said Posadas. "Basically, there's lots of yelling and food."

However, Shahin admits

that a downside to being multiracial is that she is not as knowledgeable about her culture as a single-ethnicity student would be.

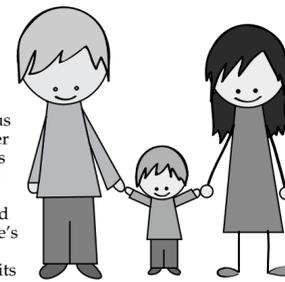
For example, Shahin wishes she spoke more Arabic, her father's native language.

"I wish I spoke more Arabic because it's a really pretty language and if I spoke it, it'd be easier to communicate with my dad's side of the family," Shahin said.

Ultimately, Shahin, Bakke and Posadas identify most with the American culture and way of life,

but also embrace and take pride in their ethnic backgrounds.

"I like that being multiracial is different and unique," Shahin said. "It's a cool conversation starter to tell people about my different races." ♦



RED PRIDE

Code Red leads sports fans

By Andy Fang

The football team's historic win against Los Gatos last year is hard to forget. The vivid memories include the sea of red on the bleachers, the shirtless students with the word Falcon emblazoned on their chests, and finally, the victorious school-wide huddle on the field.

At the forefront, Code Red, a student-run group whose goal is to raise school spirit, was instrumental in pumping up both the crowd and the football players for the win.

Kevin Darchuk, a Saratoga High '11 alumnus and avid sports fan, was one of the three founding members of Code Red.

"[Code Red] began when Greg Johnson, Alex Wokas and I dressed in red and went to a field hockey game my sophomore year [2008]," Darchuk said. "We brought drums to one of the games and were yelling, just getting really into the game."

Soon, Code Red grew in popularity and sports events started to receive a considerable amount of publicity. Johnson, a 2011 graduate, often publicized games on the morning announcements, which ended up drawing many spectators.

"Everyone caught on really quickly and before you know it we had cheers and chants," Johnson said.

Code Red participants found that they were not only supporting their peers but that they themselves also had lots of fun cheering their peers on.

"The football game [against Los Gatos last year] was probably my best moment in high school," Darchuk said. "The whole school was really into the game and going crazy. We painted our chests and stormed the field after. It was



Code Red members at the Los Gatos game on Oct. 22, 2010, spell out "Letz Go Toga."

all really cool."

Johnson also found cheering his peers on an enjoyable yet intense experience at times. Sometimes, Code Red's enthusiastic cheering disconcerted the opposing sides.

"A 'highlight' was getting in trouble by Cupertino's vice principal for trash talking too much during a game," Johnson said.

However, Johnson hopes that Code Red will persevere even despite his departure to college.

"I think some juniors this year are going to have to step up and get people going," Johnson said. "We started it when we were sophomores so as long as people care, it doesn't matter what grade they are in."

Aditya Dev, another graduate from

last year, was a prominent member of the group.

"There should always be people in red out at field hockey, basketball, football, and as many other sports as possible," Dev said.

Darchuk, Johnson and Dev all believe that Code Red can make a big difference during games.

"Code Red helps win big games. With the football game against Los Gatos last year, without the crowd, I don't know if we would have won that game," Johnson said.

This year, the torch has been passed on to the remaining students, including this year's freshmen. This new group hopes to help cheer on many more wins against the Cats in the future. ♦

November 4, 2011

Support all Toga teams



>> Debbie Soung

Dangerously Debbie

My acrimonious distaste for all things physically challenging arose during the period in which my father forced me, barely in elementary school at the time, into playing basketball. Unfortunately, this experience not only made me view basketball unfavorably, but it also rendered me allergic to all sports.

Now, I usually avoid attending all sport-related school events, but lately I have wondered to what extent behavior like mine dampens school spirit.

Of course, in my initial stages of pondering, I wondered why school spirit is necessary at all. After all, many students already study day and night, so there seems to be little reason to also ask us to dress up in ridiculous outfits on spirit days and flock to every home game.

Red pride with regard to sports

However, school spirit is an important element of high school life—it unites students and gives them greater pride and confidence about being part of the Saratoga community.

The evidence of this lies with the Saratoga-Los Gatos football game of last year. Though I regrettably did not attend this game, virtually the entire school, including both students and teachers, babbled on about it for weeks afterward.

Saratoga's "red pride" was palpable during the days following. This was one of the brief periods in which I wasn't cynical about our school's sports programs. I felt the tinge of pride in one of our school's non-academic achievements.

"Teams" we should celebrate more

Yet, it seems hypocritical for people to advocate for attending sports games while ignoring our school's talented academic clubs, such as the math club, robotics and speech and debate.

These clubs participate, and for the most part, excel in statewide and national competitions. And sure, showing school support at these competitions might serve to further Saratoga High's reputation as a "nerdy" school, but this is an image we should be proud of.

In fact, having a great math team, marching band and journalism program is what gives our school its unique culture: one that is not only centered on "jocks," but also on the more bookish students, an unusual deviation of the societal norm. In addition to promoting variety in the school, our school appreciates students for all of their individual and differing strengths.

After all, sitting out on icy bleachers to watch a game one may lack any understanding of (the only thing I know about football is that the referees tend to blow their exceedingly shrill whistles a lot) doesn't appeal to everybody. That said, watching the MSET team's robot climb up a pole or put a ring on a pin might not seem like the ideal activity to everyone as well. But maybe after football season ends, students should try taking a couple of hours off to cheer on MSET during the FIRST competition or attend an orchestra or choir concert. ♦

November 4, 2011

GIRLS' TENNIS



FALCON // SARAH FINLEY

Varsity player senior Lisa Asai returns the ball in a match for a point against Monta Vista during a home game on Oct. 25. Varsity lost 4-3 for the second time this season.

Close match ends in loss against rival Monta Vista

By Evaline Ju

The girls' tennis team suffered another 4-3 loss to rival Monta Vista on Oct. 25 on the team's senior day, the last home game of the league season.

"I was a little disappointed because we had a pretty good chance, but it was a close match," said No. 1 singles player senior and co-captain Crystal Yen.

Coach Tom Uyehara echoed Yen's sentiments and was disappointed regarding the loss, but was pleased with the girls' overall performance.

"We played our best, but obviously there are various improvements [to be made]," he said. "Hopefully we'll get a chance to play [Monta Vista] one more time down the road at CCS."

Yen won 6-1, 6-1 over opponent junior Wendi Kong. No. 2 singles player sophomore Kalyani Narayan won a close match 7-6, 7-5 over opponent junior Jody Law. The No. 3 doubles team of senior Tiffany Tu and junior Evaline Ju won 6-3, 6-3.

No. 3 singles player junior Niharika Bedekar and No. 4 singles player freshman Smita Sabada both dropped their first sets but gained a lead in their second sets before their opponents freshman Aiswarya Sankar and sophomore Shwetha Bharadwaj came back to win 6-4, 7-5 and 7-6, 7-6 respectively.

The No. 2 doubles team of junior Corianna Posadas and freshman Arathi Sa-

bada played a tough first set but eventually lost 7-5, 6-1.

"I felt like Arathi and I tried our best, but our opponents played to our weaknesses," Posadas said.

The girls had won 5-2 over Gunn on Oct. 18, 7-0 over Leland in a non-league match on Oct. 19 and 6-1 over Lynbrook on Oct. 20.

The team now has a 16-3 overall record (10-2 in league) in preparation for SCVAL (Santa Clara Valley Athletic League) individual matches on Nov. 1 and 2. Yen and Bedekar will be playing in the singles tournament.

The team itself will have to make some adjustments for CCS, in which players only play one set.

"Normally we like to take our time, and now we're going to have to get out of games fast," Uyehara said.

The first round of CCS matches begins Nov. 8, but the team will start in the second round on Nov. 9. Saratoga will receive either the second or third seed for CCS depending on where Archbishop Mitty is seeded. Monta Vista will become the first seed.

Uyehara still has high expectations for the team, which are two-time defending CCS champions and defending CIF Nor-Cal champions.

"I think this team can definitely do [well]," he said. "It should be fine, and we should have a really good chance of pulling out." ♦

GIRLS' TENNIS ANALYSIS

CCS changes unjust

By Evaline Ju

As a sports team nears the end of the regular season and prepares for CCS, it seeks to perfect its starting lineup and the strategies it has practiced. Yet everything will change for the girls' tennis team at the CCS playoffs beginning on Nov. 9.

On Oct. 19, the CCS league representatives at the Board of Managers meeting voted to implement a new format for high school tennis with in CCS and immediately make the change for this year's competition.

Instead of having four singles players and three doubles teams playing their respective opponents from other teams, competition will now feature three singles players and three doubles teams in a round-robin style. Thus, each singles player from one team will have to play one set against every singles player from the other team. The same applies to the doubles teams.

One high school match will conclude with 18 total sets played, and the team that wins the majority of the sets wins the match.

This format discards the lineup for the team. No longer are there true "No. 1 singles" or "No. 2 doubles" players, but only singles and doubles players. A team then has an advantage even if it has only a few strong singles or doubles players rather than a depth and balance to the team lineup.

If two or three strong players win each of their three sets against weaker players from the other team, they potentially sway the whole tide of the match. Then the match does not depend on the team as a whole but on a few players, undermining the purpose of "team tennis."

Regular tournaments in the USTA (United States Tennis Association) include single elimination draws, with the winner decided in a best out of three-set match. Only some novice tournaments for juniors use the round-robin style to allow players to

gain more experience through more matches. In this manner, high school tennis has totally defected from the customary format.

The use of one set in the new system in replacement of a match gives a skewed impression of the ability of players. In a set, which requires six games to win, a player who falls behind quickly in the beginning of the match has little chance of coming back to win.

This hurts players who usually exemplify both mental and physical toughness in long matches and come back to win the second set after losing the first set. The competition becomes a race to gain six games first instead of a true game of skill and patience.

It was argued that the format would combat stacking of the lineup. Stacking is the process of putting stronger players lower in the lineup in hopes of gaining extra wins. However, teams can still possibly stack the odds by playing strong singles players in doubles teams to win while giving up a few sets in singles.

Implementing the change near the end of the season hurts teams since they have to juggle around players.

The sudden change was hardly necessary with the season already drawing to a close by the middle of November. The representatives seemed to put little consideration into both players' feelings on the change and the short amount of time that all teams have to adjust to these changes. The old format, used for many years, had few problems and did not call for immediate change.

League representatives may have voted in their own interests for their teams instead of their true desires to improve the section, as certain teams will benefit more from the change while weakening others that succeeded with the previous format. If winning is an issue, they should not have to change a sport's format to defeat their opponents. ♦

Sports teams make new connections

By Sierra Smith

Anyone attending a field hockey home game this season may be in for an eye-opening sight: boys running across the field in Speedos.

The boys' water polo team has started performing Speedo runs and cheers at field hockey games to promote school pride and encourage the team to do well. In return, the field hockey team attends water polo home games whenever they can, and lead much of the cheering in the stands.

"Normally, not many people besides parents come to the games," senior field hockey captain Anna Ashe said. "It's really great to have the boys out there now. I think we play better when we have fans backing us up."

Senior water polo player Nicolas Doyen arranged the pact with Ashe at the beginning of the fall sport season, after the boys did their first Speedo run during one of the field hockey games.

"The boys came to one of our games in their Speedos, and that weekend I ran into Nic Doyen," Ashe said. "I told him that we re-

ally appreciated the support. We then went on to make the deal that we'd try to get our teams to go to each other's games as often as possible."

Empty bleachers at field hockey and water polo games have recently started to fill up thanks to the arrangement, a change that is much appreciated by the players.

"It's very discouraging for us to see half our stands empty, or filled with other team's parents," said Doyen. "I thought this was a good way to spread school spirit and have people attend."

Both teams enjoy the new crowds and would love to see an even higher attendance at their games.

"It's always nice to have a loud crowd, no matter the sport," said Doyen.

The seniors hope to see this arrangement carry on in the future to extend the positive results.

"I hope that the teams will continue to do this after we graduate, and make it a tradition," said Ashe. "I think it would boost school spirit a lot and increase attendance at both teams' games." ♦



FALCON // JUSTINE HUANG

Junior James Speedy dances as part of the water polo team's routine at the field hockey senior game on Oct. 26. Additionally, the field hockey team performed a synchronized swimming routine at the water polo senior game on Oct. 27.

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Fantastic week leads to hope for CCS, second place league finish for team

BY Stanley Yip

The boys' water polo team managed to topple then-undefeated and top-seeded Lynbrook 16-13 on Oct. 20, as well as longtime rival Wilcox 8-6 on Oct. 18, producing a glimmering hope to snatch the league's CCS spot.

"If we lost [the game against Lynbrook], [Lynbrook] would have essentially clinched the CCS spot unless something went fatally wrong," junior driver Parth Shah said. "We stopped them from doing that and kept our hopes alive [to claim the CCS spot]."

After this upset, the team feels confident that they have a good chance at making CCS this year.

"I feel that we are the team to beat now and that it's going to be tough for Wilcox or Lynbrook to top us," Shah said.

However, the team must now beat both Wilcox and Lynbrook again at the league tournament on Nov. 5-6 for a chance to land a spot in CCS.

"We are really going to have to play our best at the league tournament because [Wilcox and Lynbrook] are going to be fired up to beat us," junior driver Jimmy Speedy said.

Lynbrook played a tough game with a strong start, but the Falcons managed to pull away in the second half with junior hole set Neal Sigantoria leading the charge with three goals in the first four minutes of the second half.

scoreboard

Aug. 20
Saratoga 16, Lynbrook 13
Junior Neal Sigantoria scored 4 goals in an important win versus the league leaders.

Oct. 25
Saratoga 13, Cupertino 5
Coach Courtney Crase pulled many of the team's starters by the third quarter in an easy win.

Oct. 27
Saratoga 13, Harker 8
Senior Tyler Borch scored two goals in the final 35 seconds to cement a senior day game win.

Senior driver Eric Wang, sophomore hole set Stephen Cho and senior driver Tyler Borch all scored three points each, while junior utility Tyler Tanaka scored two. Senior two-meter defense Nicolas Doyen scored one.

"It was easily the best game of the year," Speedy said.

The first victory in two years against Wilcox raised the team's spirits, which helped in their game against Lynbrook, Shah said.

"[The game against Wilcox] was pivotal to get our momentum rolling [for the game against Lynbrook]," he said.

Speedy said it was exciting to see the team play at its full potential on both days.

As for CCS, both Shah and Speedy agreed that the team has to really step up their game if they do make it.

BOYS' WATER POLO



Senior utility Tyler Borch shoots over multiple Lynbrook defenders in a crucial 16-13 victory at the Saratoga pool. The game on Oct. 20 avenged an early season loss to Lynbrook.

"If we get into CCS, we will really have to play our best water polo to compete against other elite teams," Shah said.

The team later scored a 13-5 victory against Cupertino on Oct. 25, and a 13-8

victory against Harker on Oct. 27, bringing the team to second place with an 9-2 El Camino League record at the end of the season. The team played a tournament on Oct. 28 and 30, but results could not meet printing deadlines. ♦

ATHLETE OF THE ISSUE: SAMUEL JUNQUA

Freshman in Earthquakes academy

BY Shivani Chadha

When freshman Samuel Junqua first began playing soccer at age 6, he didn't think much of the sport. He only began playing in AYSO's youth recreational league because his older brother was doing it, and it looked fun. Now, Junqua has taken his passion for the sport to the next level and is playing competitively on the San Jose Earthquakes Juniors team and is also a developmental player for the under 16 (U16) academy team.

A developmental player is someone who is not exactly on the team, but is wanted by the coaches and cannot join for a variety of reasons. Junqua cannot play on the academy team until the team gets permanent fields in San Jose, because they currently practice in Danville, which is too far of a commute for multiple practices a week.

He is sometimes asked to watch games and attend as many practices as possible for the academy team, in addition to playing on the San Jose Earthquakes Juniors team.

Since Junqua's love for soccer developed from that of his brother, he and older brother senior Jonathan Junqua still frequently practice together. Jonathan said they sometimes play at Congress Springs Park since it's near their house.

"I love soccer because there's so much freedom," Samuel Junqua said. "No plays or anything of the sort; just you, your skills, and your imagination."

Samuel Junqua keeps busy with at least a couple two hour practices a week, and his weekend commitments vary.

"On the weekends I usually have at least one game and as many as five if I have a tournament," Junqua said. "And to keep improving, we all have to work on things on our own so I do that also."

To stay in shape outside of soccer practices, Junqua goes on runs with his friends on the cross-country team and practices with Jonathan.

"He's got plenty of skill," Jonathan Junqua said. "And he's only going to progress even more as a player from here on out."

Right now, Samuel Junqua's team consists of about 20 boys between the ages of 13 and 15, while the academy team consists of boys who are slightly older, around 15-16 years of age and has a larger roster.

"My favorite thing about my current team is that we play really great soccer



S. Junqua



Samuel Junqua winds up to pass the ball during a game on the Earthquakes Juniors team.

and it helps me prepare for the U16's a lot," Junqua said.

Junqua hopes to play professional soccer in the future and believes he has progressed a lot by being on this team.

"This team is different because it's a much higher level and has helped me develop more than any other team has," Junqua said.

Because Samuel Junqua's team does not allow its team members to play high school sports, he will not be playing school soccer.

"Honestly it'll be better for me, because staying with the Earthquakes will help me improve and get where I want to be," Junqua said. "High school soccer is for the experience and for fun." ♦

GIRLS' GOLF

Improvement drives end of league season

BY Aashna Mukerji

Sophomore Sachi Verma approached her ball at the edge of the water hazard and took a shot. The ball sailed cleanly through the air, but was knocked off course by a tree. Verma, literally knocked off her feet by surprise, fell backward into the creek with a splash.

"It was such a nice shot, too!" Verma said. "I couldn't believe I fell in in front of Coach [Dave Gragnola], my teammates, and the other team. It was so embarrassing."

Coach Gragnola, on the other hand, definitely enjoyed the spectacle.

According to several eyewitness accounts, he turned away laughing before joining junior Samika Kumar in helping Verma out of the water.

"I'm proud of her for getting back on her feet and continuing to play a good round," Gragnola said.

Despite Verma's mishap in the creek, the team managed to beat Leland by seven strokes on Sept. 22 and advance to the next round in the Blossom Valley Athletic League. Saratoga's top six players were sent to La Rinconada Golf Course on Oct. 17, where they secured third place in the BVALS

this season after their 10-stroke victory over Los Gatos.

"Not everyone was having a good day," junior Sanjna Verma said. "We were down by 14 after the top four had played, so it was up to our five and six."

The players in question, freshman Vivian Roan and junior Sara Petterson, were incredibly nervous. Fortunately, they managed to keep clear heads and shot well enough to win the match.

"We made a furious comeback to beat them by five [strokes]," Gragnola said. "I'm extremely proud of the team."



sophomore Sachi Verma

Saratoga High at the BVAL final at the Santa Teresa Golf Course on October 26. Verma, junior Sara Petterson, and sophomore Halle Champion advanced to CCS by shooting scores of 94.

Players said the 2011 golf season has been a success, with each player improving her game by five to 10 strokes. The team's win-loss record was 7-5, a marked improvement from last year.

"We have the most depth in the league, and almost all of our players are returning next year," Gragnola said. "As one of the other coaches remarked, 'Saratoga is the favorite in 2012.'" ♦

FOOTBALL

LG GAME >> A year after the win, rivalry continues

continued from pg. 1

"I'm not saying that we are not going to win; I'm saying the odds are against us. We will always be the underdogs, but we will always be the team that wants it more."

Senior class president Nicole Shadman feels as though only 50 percent of students are really competitive about the rivalry. Shadman thinks that the Code Red spirit team, a group of students who attempt to bring red pride to school games, will encourage more students to attend.

"Students should go to the game to at least support the people who get out on the field and have the courage to play despite the current circumstances," Shadman said. "Even though we might lose, I think it's important that we are still proud of what we have."

When Shadman came to Saratoga High, she had a dislike toward Los Gatos's teams because of the rivalry.

"I know preconceived notions are bad, but it's always been that way," Shadman said. "Los Gatos will always be our rival since we are in the same district and have polarizing stereotypes."

Los Gatos senior Jayten Weiss attended Saratoga during her freshman and sophomore years. According to

Weiss, she didn't notice any competitive spirit toward Saratoga when she arrived. However, Weiss agrees with Shadman that there are stereotypes between the two schools and it can sometimes get out of hand.

There was a Facebook group created last year before the Saratoga-Los Gatos game. Students from both schools put each other down, made inappropriate comments and altogether got too riled up about the game, leading to administrative disciplinary action.

"The only negative thing about the rivalry is the wall it puts up between the two schools and the bad sportsmanship that comes with it," Weiss said, in reference to last year's Facebook group. "I think both sides need to learn how to let go of the stereotypes of one another and take pride in their school rather than putting each other down."

Weiss believes that the majority of students who are strongly competitive with Saratoga are football players. To Weiss's knowledge, students at her school don't even talk about the rivalry, but it still exists. Weiss says there are more important things going on at Los Gatos and that is what Saratoga students don't see.

Weiss recalls her sophomore year, when she was attending Saratoga. She got yelled at and flipped off at the away game at Los Gatos. Her junior year, when she was attending Los Gatos, things were just as bad at the away game at Saratoga.

"Being a student at both schools has showed me a lot about both sides of the rivalry," Weiss said. "Neither school is worse than the other, and that's what I think people really need to understand."

Los Gatos sophomore Sean Wieser noticed the competition against Saratoga as a freshman. From his viewpoint, approximately 55 percent of Los Gatos students are very competitive with Saratoga.

Wieser believes the rivalry is healthy and a good thing because it motivates people to better and support their own school.

"The rivalry can also make the games pretty intense for the ones that Saratoga actually scores against Los Gatos," Wieser said. "Our football team is and always will be stronger, so the normal preparation with suffice for the game. Are we looking for redemption? Of course, because we were humiliated last year. That will not happen again for another couple decades." ♦

FIELD HOCKEY



Junior defender Evelyn Lee runs with the ball during a game against Mitty on Oct. 26. The Falcons narrowly lost 2-1.

Girls score huge victories

BY Cristina Curcelli & Sarah Finley

The field hockey team is on a winning streak, having defeated three of the four teams they have faced in the last two weeks, as of Oct. 22.

One such win was against Saint Francis on Oct. 14. The Falcons lost to the Lancers 0-4 the first time the teams played, but came back to beat them the second time 1-0. Senior co-captain Anna Ashe scored the Falcon's only goal.

Senior co-captain Abby Williams said that the win against was a big accomplishment for the team.

"The Saint Francis game is my favorite win so far. We scored in the first half and we managed to play strong defense and keep the lead for the game," Williams said.

Junior co-captain Hannah Johnson agreed with Williams.

"The game almost slipped away from us but we pushed through and finally got it to-

gether in the end to win," Johnson said.

After tying for the second time to Gilroy on Oct. 17, the Falcons faced Los Altos on Oct. 19 and beat them in overtime 1-0, after tying the team 0-0.

Coach Lifon Huynh said that the team deserved these recent wins and are in a good place for the rest of the season. She said that the team has greatly improved throughout the season so far.

"[The players are] growing confident in their play and being disciplined to make smart decisions and clean tackles with the ball," Huynh said. "They are building on, trusting, listening and following through with tactics and strategy which immensely impacts the outcome of the games."

The Falcons placed fourth in the league at the halfway point of the season, Oct. 14, but recent games may have improved their record.

"I do not want to emphasize our ranking too much as the team can get wrapped up in that

and not play as composed as usual," Huynh said. "But it is well-deserved and earned, and I'm excited for the team."

Huynh said that the team has a good chance of making it to CCS, but believes the team needs to maintain consistency.

"Ultimately, it will be up to the team when they step on the pitch to take what we've done in practices, apply it to the game and be coach-able when there is strategy I see fit on my end," Huynh said.

Williams has never been to CCS before, but like Huynh, said this could be the year for field hockey.

"[The season] exceeded my expectations," Williams said. "I think we have a solid chance at making it to CCS this year. We have beaten some really strong teams and our record is pretty good."

The Falcons had a game against Leigh on Nov. 2 that could not be covered by the Falcon due to print deadlines.

They will be playing Presentation on Nov. 4. ♦

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Team shows promise despite tough losses

BY Sierra Smith

Despite a few tough losses as of Oct. 24, the girls' volleyball team demonstrates great potential and determination. What viewers can't see from the scoreboard is the effort the players put into every game.

"I think the team as a whole is doing a lot better than expected," junior middle Corinne Moran said.

"We all possess certain individual skills that led to a stronger team."

The four losses in the team's 5-4 record were the result of games versus Cupertino and Lynbrook, the top two teams in the EL Camino league. However, those who watched these games were in for an exciting night of long rallies and thrilling play.

"My most memorable moment was playing against Cupertino the second time," junior middle Ramya Swami said. "Even though we lost, we have never played better."

The second match vs. Cupertino match went to five games, with Saratoga winning the first and fourth, resulting in a disappointing loss. The team as a whole scored 47 kills, a close second to Cupertino's 59 kills. Despite the team's defeat, some of the players left in tears of

joy over the excitement and great skill they played with throughout the match.

Playing with full effort to the end has helped the team push through tough games and pull out more wins during the season.

Outside hitter Talia Sisco summed up their improvement when she said, "We're learning how to finish."

Each win boosts the morale and confidence and the individual players have grown

together throughout the season.

"My favorite thing about being on the team is all the people,"

Moran said. "We all have a bunch of great attributes and positive spirits."

The sense of team camaraderie is shared by all the players as they have connected over the season.

"I love the [team's] sense of friendship and the bonds that we get to build with our teammates and being able to share that with everyone else when we play," Swami said.

The team's chance of making it to CCS depends on their performance for the remainder of the season, including the Spikefest II Tournament on Oct. 29 (which the Falcon could not cover due to print deadlines). If the team continues to play well and win matches, they should earn enough points to join the other top teams at CCS. ♦

polaroids



FALCON // LILLIAN CHEN
Physics teacher Kirk Davis sets up a pendulum during class on Oct. 27 to demonstrate momentum.

FALCON // DAVID SPARKMAN
Juniors crowd around Spanish teacher Sarah Voorhees' mini Charlie-brown like piano to better learn Spanish verb forms.

FALCON // WYSENE HANG
Thirteen varsity swimmers from boys' water polo perform a dance routine to support the senior game for girls' field hockey on Oct. 26.

FALCON // DAVID SPARKMAN
Sophomores Phillip Young and Henry Ling work on a hydrate lab in Chemistry Honors.

The banned class: Why we were disqualified



>> Nikhil Goel
But I'm not a rapper

When I was notified that the sophomore class had been disqualified from Homecoming due to rude behavior, I felt ashamed.

I'm not just disappointed that we were disqualified; I'm also disappointed that the effort put into our quad day by so many was undermined by a minuscule fraction of our class. What happened to good old Homecoming? I remember watching the senior class of 2010's Up-themed quad day videos and thinking to myself, it would be tight if our quad day was like that.

Many of us made decorations, set up and worked hard to put together dances

that the school would enjoy watching. I know for a fact that people loved our monkey dance.

The script obviously didn't turn out the way the script writers wanted it to. Even they were confused on what was going on, seeing as many jokes were added last minute during the night rehearsal on the eve of sophomore quad day. I doubt they set out with the purpose to be mean to people though. But, I don't think our class' reputation should be determined by a few people.

Homecoming is supposed to bring everyone together, not cause drama and hate. One would think the class of 2014 failed to realize this based on the script that was written. Not only did some writers hate on other grades, but also on our own. How can we have a successful quad day when there isn't even harmony in our own class?

The apologies have been made and

the hurt feelings have been somewhat mended, but the nasty jokes showed our class' dilemma. We have a deep schism between the groups of our class. One group made a script; one group made another. A debate of which should be chosen emerged and the script writers worked together to form one.

Sure, the script writers worked together, but not in the best way. It was more of a forced collaboration in which each group pushed for their jokes to be put

in. I know that our class has a division between groups and that is the problem that needs to be addressed.

Should we look to the past and say we should have done this or we should not have done that? No, what we need to do now is step out of the ditch and work as a class, not as individual groups. We need cooperation and unity within our class to thrive. That will help us succeed in the

future.

There is no denying that the disqualification was more than fair for the "jokes" that were made. Now that the class of 2014 is at an all time low, we can only go up. Next year, I hope this problem won't happen again. No one will jeopardize our class' reputation just to improve their own popularity any longer.

Everyone, by now, should know about what happened, so there is no reason for the same mistakes to be made next year. From now on, we should make no more blunders. We need to set an example for lower grades in the upcoming years, and focus on working together as one class of 2014. ♦

(Homecoming is supposed to bring everyone together, not cause drama and hate.)

buzzworthy >> No Shave Novembrians discuss competition

by Nikhil Goel

November is not just a time for turkeys and giving thanks. It is a time for guys to show off their manliness and go a whole month without the cleanliness of a shaved face. It is a time that separates the boys from the men. It is called No Shave November.

No Shave November is a community event where men (and women if they feel up to the challenge) go for a whole month without shaving their beards. There are two explanations for this origin of this tradition. Some say it started when participants, called Noshemberers, Noshemberians or No-shave-Novemberers, asked the question: why waste time shaving in November, one of the hardest months of the school year, especially for seniors? A more practical explanation is the use of a full beard to warm one's face in the frostiness of the late fall and winter season.

Today, however, No Shave November has become more of a tradition at Saratoga

High than the practical use of warming one's face. Many students, especially upperclassmen with greater amounts of facial

hair, are participating in this event. "I participated sophomore year, and I may do it again for the pride," senior Salmaan Javed said.

Like Javed, fellow senior Noshemberer Kushal Raj participates for tradition's sake, and also for aesthetic reasons.

"It's manly, it looks good, the ladies

"I wish I had the ability to grow facial hair."
>> Senior Eric Wang

love it even though they won't admit it, and shaving is a pain in the neck," Raj said.

On the flip side, the ladies of the school aren't too thrilled about the luxurious beards that grow in November.

"It's not like I see the guys in a completely different light, they're just hairier, and they look really scraggly and unclear," senior Allison Toh said.

According to senior Shivani Chadha, guys who do No Shave November "get a sense of pride by competing against each other" to see who can grow the longest beard.

"Some guys think girls like the griz-

zly look, but in reality very few do," Chadha said.

Because the rules are not defined, Noshemberers debate whether trimming with scissors is allowed.

"I think trimming is stupid. If you are not going to shave, then don't do anything to your beard," junior Keller Lofgren said.

Others, such as senior Rajiv Ramakabir, think differently.

"I think you can trim a little so that you don't look too homeless," Ramakabir said.

Even though some don't have an enormous amount of facial hair, they still participate in the tradition.

"I wish I had the ability to grow facial hair. This is the perfect time to push myself to the limits," senior Eric Wang said.

Others have an upper hand in the competition.

"I realized I have the facial hair-growing abilities of a mammoth," Javed said.

No Shave November is a time to become lazy, coarse and vulgar without breaking a sweat. It is a competition and a tradition, and will hopefully be a fun way to not spend time shaving. Good luck to the participants and competitors and remember, please shave (or don't) responsibly. ♦

>>> crosswordanswers

Congratulations Eric Ringsrud (10), winner of last issue's crossword. Answers will be posted online at saratogafalcon.org.

topten

REASONS TO LOOK FORWARD TO NOVEMBER

- 10 The crisp multi-colored leaves that find their way to the newly paved streets on a cool, brisk November morning.
- 9 Turkey and stuffing—except for vegetarians.
- 8 For the vegetarians: There is always tofurkey.
- 7 The weather finally behaving like it's not still summer.
- 6 Time for Uggs with short shorts for the weather confused.
- 5 No-Shave November: Popularity points for the manliest beards.
- 4 Facial hair is a good place to store snacks for later. Just saying.
- 3 Winter sports—good thing everybody shows up at our games.
- 2 Thanksgiving Break! (all three days of it)
- 1 Justin Bieber's Christmas Album... someone buy him a calendar.

>> Nikhil Goel
Rohan Rajeev



