



FEATURING

OPINION: Guns in school

SCHOOL SCOPE: Toga IQ

ENTERTAINMENT:

Back in the day

LIFE: Sibling stereotypes

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DECISION '08

I think both candidates are the best that we can have. It's more of distinguishing who is less good."

—senior Hana Pruzansky



Some seniors vote for first time

by Robin Liu
and Tiffany Tseng

As Election Day approaches, people are finalizing their decisions on which presidential candidate they will be supporting on Nov. 4. Over the past months, people have been following Barack Obama and John McCain closer than ever, tuning in to all debates and interviews.

Several students who have already turned 18 will be able to vote. Senior Lauren Christensen is one example.

"I think this is an important election," said Christensen. "It's cool because I'm the only one of my friends

who has this chance to vote."

Although Christensen has not had the time to fully research each candidate's stances and make a decision, she has viewed the propositions and feels fairly strongly against Proposition 8, which if passed will ban gay marriages.

"I think all people should have the same rights," said Christensen. "I don't feel their access in hospitals should be restricted when their [partners] are sick."

Senior Hana Pruzansky, also registered to vote, is looking at the candidates' different solutions to the economic crisis.

"I think both candidates are the best that we can have, and they have equally effective ways of dealing with the econo-

my," said Pruzansky. "It's more about distinguishing who is less good.

Because Pruzansky does not feel that picking Alaskan Gov. Sarah Palin as a running mate was a good choice, she will be voting for Obama.

Both Pruzansky and Christensen agree that they are excited to participate in such an important and controversial election, while those who do not have the opportunity to vote are finding other ways to take part in the process.

U.S. Government teacher Kirk Abe is offering his class extra credit for

see ELECTION, p. 2

Falcons face Cats tonight

by Karthik Annaamalai
and Rebecca Nguyen

The rivalry between the Falcons and the Los Gatos Wildcats continues tonight, as the Falcons take on league opponents under the home field lights.

Despite a 28-year losing streak, the Falcons are optimistic about their chances of beating Los Gatos. They hope that the implementation of the Wing-T offense, which has thrived in previous games, will help them pull off an upset.

The Falcons, who have rushed for 1,489 yards in six games, will depend on their ground attack, but getting past the LG defense will be a challenge.

A key matchup will be between senior running back Mat Spencer, fourth in the league in rushing yards, and senior Wildcat linebacker Kyle Baumann, who has recorded the third most tackles in the league.

The Falcons have struggled against the pass this year. In order to win, the team must pressure senior Los Gatos quarterback Nick Hirschman, who leads the league in passing yards. Los Gatos will hold a size advantage, making it even more important that the Falcons execute properly.

In order to minimize pressure on the team, coach Tim Lugo is trying to downplay the traditional rivalry. The rally commission had scheduled a rally during tutorial today, but Lugo asked that the event be canceled. He feels the Los Gatos game should not be different than any other game.

Sophomore rally commissioner Aditya Dev said that in place of the annual Los Gatos rally, this year there will instead be a Halloween rally on Oct. 31. ♦

Video class debuts television show on local channel

by Mika Padmanabhan
and Jordan Waite

The digital video class recently started a first at Saratoga High, a regular half-hour show about the school on KSAR, the local cable channel. The program debuted Oct. 6.

"It advertises the school to the community," said digital video teacher Tony Palma. "A lot of times our news stays in our walls."

In order to make the school events more known, KSAR suggested that the digital video class make a show to publicize the school's events.

"We really didn't know how to make it, so we sat down in class and discussed what the show was going to be about," said Palma. "We decided to make it part 'Regis and Kelly,' part 'Sesame Street' and part clips of things going on around campus."

The first show features music teacher Michael Boitz teaching students how to use slang, an interview with the Benefit commission about its annual fashion show and a music video produced by the students in the video class.

"It's a huge mass effort," said senior Michael Stek. "We all work on individual clips and then transition it together."

The students put a combined 200 hours into the project, including time after school.

"We can do most of it during class, but we only had three weeks to do a full half hour video so it was a lot of work," said Stek. "People also spent hours here at school after school working on it."

For future shows, Palma would like to have input from clubs and other organizations around campus that wish to have their efforts publicized.

"We want to be a service to the students," said Palma. "If the students want

to be a part of the show, or have an idea, we encourage them to come talk to us."

Palma and the rest of the video class plan to broadcast two videos per semester for this year and plan to up the production to once a month for the following year when a new Media Arts building is complete. With the better equipment that will come with the new building, Palma hopes to broadcast the shows more often.

The process of the show started with a storyboard in which students brainstormed and got the basic idea for the telecast. Then, they assigned groups of students to film their segments. Each group ended up with a final clip of two or three minutes that they all gave to one person who added transitions and final edits. Each group's final project went to Palma, who put the whole thing together into one cohesive whole.

"You have about an hour of film, but you have to cut 90 percent out and you get

the really good parts," said Stek.

Along with this huge amount of work, Palma organized the show, guiding the students to a successful product.

"He didn't teach us anything about how to use any of the equipment; he just told us to do it," said Stek. "He taught along the way so it was a quick learning experience."

In addition to weekly television broadcasts, Palma has plans to someday create live broadcast video announcements prepared on a daily basis, but, for now, Palma is happy that he and the video class can make the community more aware of the individuals of the school through KSAR.

"It's not like we are those bookworms that people think we are," said Palma. "We have these fun creative minds coming out of here that people need to know about." ♦

To see the show, go to www.ksar15.org.

NEWS BRIEFS



Three vie for two spots on School Board

In the upcoming elections for the Los Gatos Saratoga Union High School District (LGSUHSD) School Board on Nov. 4, three candidates will be vying for two available positions. Saratogans can vote for school board elections at the same time they are voting for the presidential election.

The job of the school board is to oversee educational policies for the district.

Lorrie Wernick and Rosemary Rossi are the two incumbents in the race. Saratoga parent Robert Zager is the newcomer.

Wernick, currently the principal of William Regnart Elementary School in Los Gatos, was elected as board president in 1996 and 2004. Wernick has accumulated over 20 years of experience in education and served on several boards and committees.

"I know how to work with all parties involved to create policies and make decisions that are practical, positive and effective," said Wernick in an interview with the *Saratoga News*.

Rossi, an active participant in public education, was elected vice president in 2004. Her goals for the school board are to "provide a rigorous curriculum for all students, continue fiscal policies to ensure financial stability, and improve the use of technology."

Zager said he feels that since the primary responsibility of the board is financial oversight, he thinks his 25 years of business experience would be an asset.

Tutorial Center reschedules to lunch

The Tutorial Center, held last year after school in room 804, has been moved this year to the one half of the Social Studies office during lunch. The primary reason for this rearrangement was the lack of participation last year.

"It was a decision made by guidance and PTSO," said coordinator Sharon Barrett. "They wanted to increase the participation so they were hoping that changing the schedule would improve things."

She said lunch is a time when students can seek tutoring without cutting into after-school activities.

"We've been looking for the right arrangement and the best time to reach students," said assistant principal Brian Safine. "The hope was to find a student audience that was already present rather than having them find a separate time to come back."

The new location for the center has sufficient supplies and is student friendly.

"We were very happy with how the space looks and feels," said Safine. "There are couches, tables, supplies available for all students. It is a very good environment for learning, and it has everything a student would need to get academic help."

The Center, however, has seen little increase in participation since it opened on Oct. 7, partly due to the timing of its sessions.

"We have a lot of smart kids and smart adults in here available to tutor, and they're just not being used so I'm a little disappointed," said Barrett. "I'd love to see more people come in to help."

The administration feels that the Tutorial Center should be utilized at its fullest. There shouldn't be any reason to pay for an outside tutor when students can receive free help from the Tutorial Center, according to Barrett.

School learns from medical emergency

English 10 teacher Bill Peck's calm handling of an emergency situation in his class on Sept. 30 has prompted other teachers to wonder what they would have done if put in Peck's position and has helped them prepare for future emergencies.

"You really can't predict what is going to happen in those types of situations. The adrenaline starts running and it's panic," said chemistry teacher Jenny Garcia. "In past experiences, it has been extremely hard to remain calm and for things to run smoothly."

When a student fell on the floor in a seizure, the surrounding students were in shock. They were afraid and unaware of the seriousness of the situation.

"Mr. Peck handled everything very well. He knew what he was doing and made us feel more relaxed and less scared," said sophomore Vania Chang.

Peck calmly ordered students to go out and get help. Three students from the class sought help from health teacher Amy Obenour and assistant principal Karen Hyde, both trained in emergency situations and medicine. Paramedics also came to assist the boy, who eventually revived from the seizure.

"I was calm since I have taken classes from Ms. Obenour and the training paid off. The students reacted well and knew exactly what to do since we talked about it before," said Peck.

The incident caused other teachers and students to look at in-class medical emergencies. Multiple teachers talked to their students about what to do in case of a medical emergency.

—by Brian Kim, Lauren Kuan, Annie Lee, Pia Mishra, Saniha Shankar, Anna Shen and Andy Tsao



Tiffany Tung

Sophomore Erin Wong and other students dressed according to their class themes groove at the Homecoming dance, which took place Oct. 4. Although DJ Prestige was late, hundreds of students still showed up.

'Dance around the world' overcomes DJ problems

by Brian Kim
and Annie Lee

The second dance of the year gathered over 700 students to celebrate the end of Homecoming week.

Students lined up from the gym entrance along the front sidewalk, but even as the clock struck 8, the doors did not open as promised. What many didn't realize was that coordinators were already facing conflicts that threatened to ruin the dance.

The Homecoming commission had already prepared for WiLD 94.9's DJ Prestige to arrive on campus by 6 p.m., but he did not arrive until 10 minutes prior to the event, and coordinators rushed to unload his equipment

and open doors for students.

Coordinators finally kicked the night off at 8:15, as anxious gladiators, goddesses, harajuku girls and Egyptians piled in. Following tradition, students dressed in garb appropriate to their Homecoming class theme.

"I like that at Homecoming, you don't have to dress up but you can be creative with your theme," said senior Stephanie Douglass. "I like the freedom of choosing what you wear."

Although students had the choice of what they wore, parent chaperones complained about how students were dancing.

"I had concerns from parents who watched the dancing that went on," said assistant principal Karen Hyde. "This is something we have to address. I

understand we're going through a culture clash with kids, and we can't bring back the waltz, but we have to keep this kind of thing from going on."

DJ Prestige not only started late, but also received criticism for his work.

"I didn't think it was as good as past [Homecoming dances]," said senior Matt Leung. "The DJ kept replaying songs."

As the dance neared its conclusion at 11 p.m., the party came to an abrupt end that angered students. What was intended as a 10-minute warning resulted in an early end due to miscommunication between the administration and the DJ.

"The dances always seem to go by fast," said sophomore Arianna Paranzino, "and it's

ELECTION | Class simulates voting

continued from pg. 1

working at the polls on Election Day. Senior Melissa Ozaslan is taking this opportunity to get more involved.

"I want to work there since I can't vote this year," said Ozaslan, "and I thought that I could get active this way."

Ozaslan hopes that by volunteering, she will be able to gain a deeper insight of the process.

"I hope to learn more about voting so that when I can vote, I'll know the issues people are concerned with," said Ozaslan.

Abe has held an election simu-

lation in his classes over the past couple weeks.

There are three presidential candidates per class, each with a campaign group to represent the Democrats, Republicans and a third party. The rest of the students represent the "battle-ground states" that have the potential to be swayed either way.

"Students make campaign ads, travel to states and decide how to spend their money," said Abe. "This way they can learn about the elections process through an actual campaign simulation that they run."

Citizen Representatives (CRs)

from each of the represented states follow strict guidelines on whom they support and how their state can be influenced through ads or speeches. After seven campaign days, the CRs will cast their votes on Nov. 3.

Similarly, students in U.S. Government teacher Margarita Lozano's classes will be learning about the 12 different propositions by performing skits.

"People don't realize that propositions are an important part of the election," said senior Paulina Tsai. "Acting them out makes them seem more realistic than reading about them." ♦



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Talented instrumentalist debuts in McAfee

by Albert Gu
and Jenny Zhang

When senior Aaron Garg walked into the spotlight of the McAfee Center on Sept. 28, he instantly felt all eyes turn on him. He was calm and focused as he prepared to begin his solo concert. As the orchestra behind him started to play, and Garg lifted his Chinese flute and began the first song. Finally, after hours of dedicated practice, his moment was here.

In the show, Garg performed his solo debut "A Musical Jour-



Garg

ney Through East and West." The California Youth Chinese Symphony (CYCS), a Chinese orchestra with about 50 members that uses traditional Chinese music and instruments, accompanied Garg.

To showcase his talent and musical diversity, Garg performed a combination of Eastern and Western instruments and music. He played the flute, piccolo and seven traditional Chinese woodwind instruments for 12 solo songs.

"The concert was a huge event for me," said Garg, "but I felt pretty comfortable because I'm

used to performing a lot."

Garg started in music in sixth grade, when he joined the Redwood Middle School band. Ever since, band became his favorite class.

"Music is a passion for me," said Garg. "It's a good way to express myself and get my feelings out. Nowadays it's a really important part of my life."

Garg gained experience by participating in the Saratoga High band and CYCS, which is conducted by Jian Ding, also Garg's private Chinese flute teacher. Garg is able to play flute and piccolo in band the several Chinese woodwind instruments in CYCS.

Garg was also part of the Chinese American Cooperation Council (CACC), a one-time group that traveled to Beijing during the summer of 2007, where it performed in an Olympic kickoff event. Garg was a lead musician and was also played solo.

"There were a lot of complications, but I think for the most part it was a fun experience," said Garg. "We had a great time and got to see places like the Great Wall of China. Part of it was even aired on national television."

Garg, who is half Indian and half Chinese, first began learning Chinese instruments four years ago, when he started playing the

Chinese flute, in part because he already played the western flute. He also picked up six other Chinese woodwind instruments last spring, in preparation for his solo debut.

"It takes a lot of time and devotion to play this many instruments," said Garg. "My teacher wanted me to practice three hours a day, but usually I don't have enough time so I would shoot for 1 1/2 hours."

Despite lacking much time to practice music, Garg has become amazingly skilled.

"The Chinese instruments are really fun to play," said Garg. "I'm definitely going to continue playing them in the future." ♦



Melody Zhang

Junior Flora Chang and senior Cynthia Zhao practice marching for their Oct. 18 competition in Gilroy.

Marching band places second in Cupertino High competition

by Elizabeth Cheng
and Kirstie Lee

"Once you get on that bus, that's it. We're in competition season. This is what we live for," director Michael Boitz told the 220 members of the marching band surrounding him early Saturday afternoon, Oct. 11. Later that evening, the band took the Cupertino High School field in the first competition of the year.

After grueling months of rehearsals, the band performed their 2008 show, titled "Mirror Images," for a panel of judges.

"I was extremely nervous," said Boitz. "I've been doing this for 13 years, but no matter how old I get, I get the same butterflies because I want the kids to do really well in the performance."

The band won first place in the captions of Color Guard,

brass and woodwinds and took home music sweepstakes. Percussion came in second place. Overall, the band placed second, .05 points behind Homestead High School.

"For the first show of the season it was a really good start. We know that we're taking the right steps to get where we want to be," said drum major senior Paul Stavropoulos. "I think it was a good experience for the new comers." He and fellow drum majors, seniors Mara Couch and Julia Glausi, led the band into competition.

Though elated by the first performance, the band leadership is looking ahead.

"[The] first step is to continue learning the show because we marched about 75 to 80 percent of the actual content on Saturday night," said Boitz. "Step two is to make sure we go back regularly

because the show is so complex. It's like covering a major concept in a math or science class; we have to go back and review it."

On Oct. 18, the band went to Gilroy to compete. This was the band's first Western Band Association competition, the circuit that they typically compete in. There, they competed against Logan High School, the top performer of the circuit, and Amador Valley High School. Though they were second in the captions of General Effect, Visual and Auxiliary, the band placed third overall, .15 behind Amador Valley.

This Saturday, the band will be competing in Pleasanton. They were originally headed for the Live Oak Invitational at Diablo Valley College but decided to change to create diversity in competition. ♦

New communication system established

by Karthik Annaamalai
and Vijay Menon

In an effort to make communication easier, the school has implemented a new contact system for this school year called "School Messenger."

This brand new system takes the place of the older list in e-mail services. The old system was capable only of sending out messages by e-mail, while the upcoming new system will be more convenient for everyone in the Saratoga environment.

"It's a lot more user-friendly," said assistant principal Joe Bosco. "Not only can it be used to send out emails, but text and voice messages as well."

According to Bosco, the new system can be used by a variety of groups around campus to contact members and send out important messages.

"PTSO and the Boosters use it to get the information out, as well as the guidance office and principal's letters," said Bosco.

The system can be used to notify parents of absences and to remind students when they have Saturday Schools. It also registers whether the message was received or not. This feature will lower the chances of

miscommunication between the school and parents, said to Bosco.

"It is very efficient because it can send large messages out to people very quickly," said Bosco. "It sends the information back about who the message reached and who it didn't in less than 10 seconds."

The system also allows for e-mails to be sent to targeted groups of people, making it useful for after-school clubs as well as sports teams, said Bosco.

"You can provide limited access and create groups of people that can be contacted based on the clubs that they're in," said Bosco.

Bosco also mentioned that the new system can be utilized to contact and alert students and parents promptly and swiftly in the case of an emergency.

"If there's any sort of safety issue or if we need to alert people about not coming to school on a certain day, we'll be able to get that information out quickly," said Bosco.

Bosco said that the school has just scratched the surface of the system's potential.

"There's a ton of stuff we can do with it and we're still trying to navigate through all of that," said Bosco, "but it's really convenient and easy to use." ♦

Cast for 'Romeo and Juliet' picked; play set to open on Nov. 20

by Pia Mishra

The cast for the fall play, "Romeo and Juliet," has been selected. Seniors Holden Sparacino and Juliana Lustenader will play the parts of Romeo and Juliet respectively.

Other parts include Friar Lawrence being played by senior James Arroyo, and Tybalt played by junior Patrick Hawks.

Sophomore Jay Lee, who has been cast as Mercutio, said that he looks forward to portraying the character and is ready to ac-

cept the challenge.

"I'm excited to play Mercutio because he's such a unique character," said Lee. "I mean, he can do pretty much whatever he wants and still get away with it."

"I'm excited to play Mercutio because he's such a unique character."

—sophomore Jay Lee

fight scenes, and it is necessary for the scenes to be executed professionally but also safely," said director Chris Mahle.

Stage artist Monica Pease has been asked to help the actors with their combat scenes. Pease, currently working with

City Lights Theater (CLT), has taken time out of her work to help out.

Besides the help of Pease, English teacher Bill Peck, a former actor, will assist the cast members.

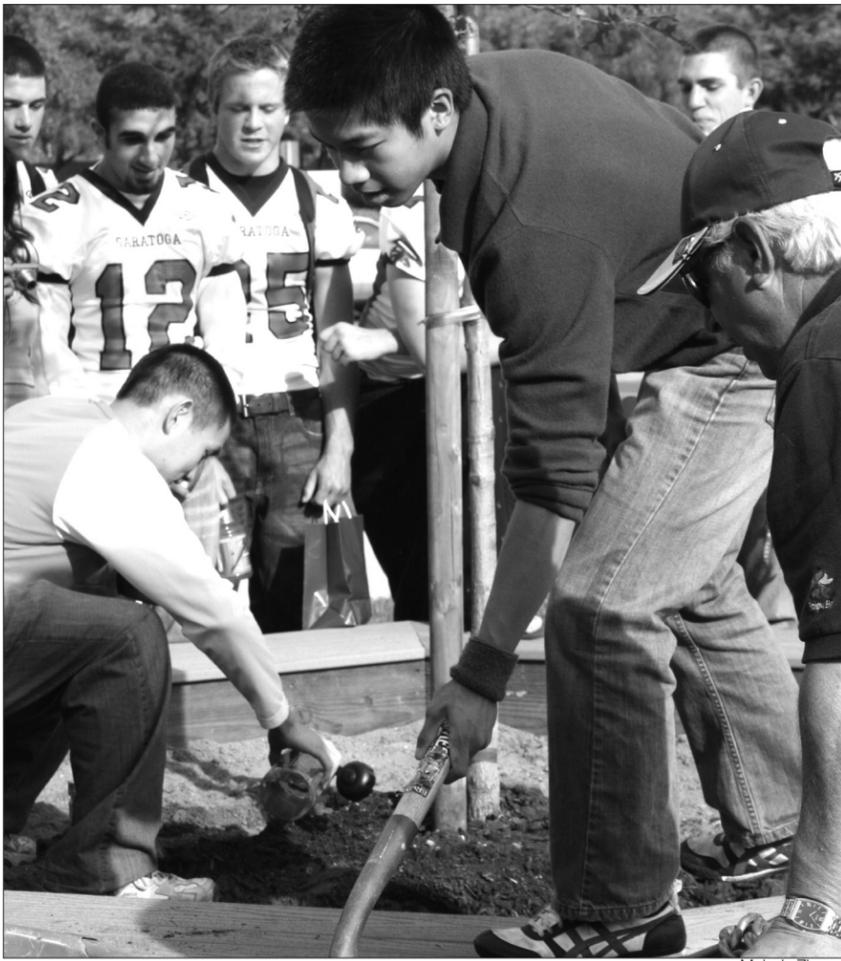
Peck will help students with their scene development and blocking. Peck said he anticipates helping the students out with understanding the complex Shakespearean verses.

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



Melody Zhang

Freshmen Michael Coe and Valerie Peterson rehearse a dance scene in the fall play "Romeo and Juliet."



Melody Zhang

Senior Nathan Nguyen participates in a tree-planting ceremony on Oct. 17 as part of Mission Green Earth, an international movement to help the UN meet its Millennium Development Goals. Students also pledged to help end extreme poverty worldwide.

Naviance now required for private school applicants

by Elizabeth Lee

Many students, excluding freshmen, know about Naviance, the online tool that allows students to search for colleges and explore different career options. However, a large percentage of these students, even seniors, have not been taking advantage of it.

Now it has become inevitable for many students to use Naviance. During this month, seniors are required to meet with their counselors about Naviance if they are applying to private colleges. In these sessions, seniors and their counselors work together to enter data before and after applications are over.

On the day the applications are due, for both early and regular decision, counselors check off boxes on the secondary school report envelope indicating that the student has completed all requirements, including Naviance. Unless the student does everything, the counselors will not send off the application to private schools.

One student applying early decision, ran into such a problem recently.

"I didn't do [Naviance], I didn't know," said senior Jennifer Li. "I had to go to the library [the day early applications were due], quickly [complete my tasks] and go back to [turn in my application]."

Basically students have to enter the list of colleges that they are applying to into Naviance. After that is done, they have to make an appointment with their counselor in which they go over the list of colleges and everything else pertaining to applications. This process may take a long time, but the actual checking off of applications only takes about a minute or two.

According to guidance counselor Christy Cali, the program itself is a college search that has some career element to it, but "the real purpose is to improve communication between the student and the counselor or the career center." Counselors can see what students enter into the system and use this information to determine how to help the student. Naviance is convenient in that it not only

allows students to search for colleges, but it also allows counselors to immediately e-mail the students, and vice versa.

Students begin using Naviance during their sophomore year, during which they are asked to enter five or six colleges they are considering on their account. Once this is done, the counselors will step in and ask them about their choices. With each reason, the counselor learns more about the students, thus increasing communication and understanding.

On the site, there is a personality inventory called "Do What You Are." From here, students can get an idea of what kind of career they could like to pursue.

"I would like to take it a step further, someday, and have kids investigating their careers in their sophomore and junior year," said Cali. "[Just talking to students] won't let them feel the understanding of possible careers."

Naviance also provides tools for researching colleges, including "scattergrams," which show the acceptance history of specific colleges of past students. It also lets students organize their personal information, such as grades and test scores.

In addition to searching for colleges, students use Naviance to update their resume as well. Once they have everything updated, the students e-mail the counselors, who can then look over and approve the material.

While Naviance use currently remains low, each year more and more students are trickling into the system as the website gradually improves. The counselors feel that it has not been used to its "utmost capabilities," so they are trying to add new features to promote more student activity. While Naviance allows counselors to do research for students instead of having them wait for a meeting, they will still try to meet with every student.

"[Naviance is] not to replace personal contact, it's to enhance that contact," said Cali. "And that's what we're hoping for." ♦

City Council reinstates school resource officer

by Sophia Cooper

The memory of singing "D: I won't do drugs" is still fresh in many students' mind from the fifth grade DARE classes, taught by Santa Clara County Police Deputy Dan Cutforth.

After missing his tall, bald head around school all these years, students will be seeing Cutforth a lot more after his recent appointment as Saratoga's School Resource Officer (SRO).

"[My job] is to assist the administration, students and PTA in regards to students and activities that might involve law enforcement and be the go-between with the deputies and students," said Cutforth.

The SRO position has been vacant for the past few years, but [was] re-instated this summer by the City Council. According to Cutforth, there has been a "high demand from the high school districts and elementary schools" to maintain the job.

"I'm responsible for 11 schools in the vicinity of Saratoga, but I definitely spend more time at the junior high and high school levels," said Cutforth. "They seem to demand more of my attention."

Because of the large number of schools Cutforth oversees, he does not plan on visiting Saratoga High every day.



Cutforth

"I definitely try to get out here once a week, and I talk with the administration more than that," said Cutforth. "I might attend some [school events], but it mostly depends if it's necessary. My position is not an enforcement position, the crushing skulls and that sort of stuff. I'm more of an adviser. I'm probably not going to do a lot of squishing."

The position has been defunct for four to five years, according to Cutforth. But a changing society brought the need for its revival during the city council meetings this year. The topic was proposed multiple times, broached by Saratoga parents and community members.

"As a patrol officer in Saratoga a few years ago, I saw the need for someone to be doing this [job]," said Cutforth. "It took a lot of my time to be in the schools, and it took me off the streets dealing with a lot of the other crimes I should have been dealing with."

Cutforth is excited for his new position and wants to make a positive influence on students' lives.

"I'm happy to have this position, and I'm glad it's back," said Cutforth. "I'm someone [students] can go to in addition to the administration or their parents for some guidance. I see this as a very positive and proactive position that I think is very beneficial." ♦

Junior interns in science at Stanford University

by Umadevi Sambasivam

Some students have a passion for a certain subject, but not many take the interest into going deeper in the subject. Junior Malika Kumar is a student with a big passion for science. Over the summer, she went to Stanford to study oncology. Oncology is the study that deals with tumors.

"I want to be a doctor when I grow up, because everything that I have learned I can use better help the patients, and I like the environment where I can interact with different people every day," said Kumar.

Kumar has been working at Stanford lab for two years as an intern.

She looked on Stanford websites and found links to the lab under the genetics page. Kumar wrote a personal letter attached with a resume to each professor.

"I really like doing science because it keeps my brain going and it keeps me challenged," said Kumar.

Kumar worked at a cancer lab un-

der M.D. and Ph.D. Dean Felsher. The experiment that Kumar is currently working on is related to determining the effect of a microenvironment inside a body and how it affects a cancer tumor.

"You can't observe that fact when you are growing in the flask, you have to observe it in an organism," said Kumar.

Aside from gaining hands-on experience, Kumar has enjoyed working at the Stanford lab with all the Ph.D students and grad students.

"I like the high intellectual level of people most," she said.

"I learned a lot about living system, systems works, cells and molecular biology from the people that I worked with."

Working with these students has given Malika a taste of what the future could hold.

"Now that I have had some exposure to what research would be like, I know how life would be if I were to go to research field, if I were to be a lab scientist," she said. ♦



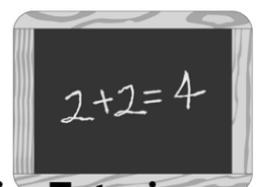
Kumar



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Math instructor at De Anza College in Cupertino and am available to tutor Saratoga High students in Stats AP and other courses.

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FALCONFOCUS

Junior studies in Italy

by Mira Chaykin

After she won *Saratoga Idol* last year with her rendition of Norah Jones' "Don't Know Why," everyone knew junior Maddy Renalds could sing. But who knew her singing talents included Italian opera?

Renalds was one of 42 teens hand selected from applicants that spanned the entire world to be part of a Spoleto Study Abroad Fine Arts & Humanities program for three weeks this past summer in Spoleto, Italy.

Said Renalds, "I wanted [to do] something with singing, and I was interested in learning Italian and art history."

It was, however, a rigorous examination process. Renalds had to fill out the applications and two essays typical to study abroad programs. One of her essays was about her personal accomplishments and why she was interested in the program. For the second, Renalds wrote about a challenge she faced, which was being sick for the majority of her freshman year. In addition, she had to submit a studio-recorded CD of herself singing an Italian Aria, or Italian operatic music.

The program certainly lived up to its expectations. Renalds lived in an entirely different world in the hill country town of Spoleto for three weeks, a world in which she had yoga classes in the morning, followed by singing and performing classes, Italian lessons and the occasional Italian festival. Renalds raved about the beauty and culture of Italy, and also spoke about how strange it was to return to Saratoga after being in an entirely different country. Renalds joked about the excitement of Saratoga residing mainly in downtown nail salons and restaurants.

"I love Saratoga, but being in the study abroad program made me more adventurous and independent," said Renalds. "I've become a risk taker, and that's pretty difficult when you live in Saratoga."

Renalds loved the amazing Italian food, particularly the gelato and the little foam hearts on her cappuccinos in the mornings. However, she said the best part didn't lie in the food or the beauty of Italy.

"The friends that I made there, I have to say, was the best part," said Renalds. "I still keep in touch with them, and we all talk about having a reunion."

There were a few downsides to Renalds' dream trip, one of which was getting lost the very first day. Renalds mistakenly thought the bus had left without her and went on a frantic search in a city that spoke hardly any English, only to find her group enjoying a leisurely breakfast at the lodging upon her return.

Another downside was the curfew. Renalds said, "I don't want to sound like a bad girl but I really wanted to go out because there's an entirely different social thing going on at night."

Despite her misfortunes, like getting lost and being forced to squander her inner party girl, Renalds believes everyone should take part in a study abroad program.

"I definitely suggest—no encourage—that people should do an exchange program because first of all you get to meet new people," said Renalds, "and then if you're looking on improving in a language, what better place to do it then a place rich in culture?"

And in Spoleto, Italy, you get all that and foam hearts on your cappuccinos. ♦



Renalds

Students, faculty to attend presidential inauguration

by Gautham Ganesan

No matter who wins the presidential election on Nov. 4, January's inauguration of either the first African-American president or the first female vice president to the White House promises to be a landmark moment in American history. Thirty-seven juniors and seniors and staff members, including Principal Jeff Anderson; history teachers Kim Anzalone, Mike Davey and Matt Torrens; English teacher Erick Rector; Video Production teacher Tony Palma; and Health teacher Amy Obenour, will be present in Washington, D.C., for five days to witness this historic event.

"I think this trip is an amazing opportunity to witness a huge part of history and be in D.C. when the next president of the United States is being sworn in," said junior Natalie Tkalcevic, one of the students going.

Besides the inauguration on Jan. 20, a highlight of the trip will be the opportunity for four students to formally place a garland on a memorial for deceased U.S. soldiers.

"We've got four of our very own Saratoga Falcons delivering a wreath to the soldiers," said Torrens. "I booked a year in advance to get that done."

Aside from the wreath ceremony and the inauguration itself, students, who paid the \$1,600 fee to go on the trip, will visit a variety of museums, including the International Spy Museum and the Smithsonian National Air & Space Museum. Also, they will be able to view performances of the musical *West Side Story* at the National Theatre and the country's longest-running

comedic play *Shear Madness* at the Kennedy Center during the trip. Students who have learned about the nation's capital in their history classes are also eager to visit historical landmarks during the several tours of the city Torrens has arranged.

"I'm just really looking forward to learning the history of the city," said Tkalcevic.

Students' political views will also shape their experience on a personal level.

"I'm crossing my fingers that it's Barack Obama [being inaugurated]," said junior Maddy Renalds. "If not, my friend and I will be among the crowd of protesters of John McCain."

With the financial crisis a hot-button issue for the presidential candidates, it is somewhat ironic that budget-motivated airline cutbacks resulted in the cancellations of three separate flights booked by Torrens for the inauguration trip. Flight problems were one of many logistical issues that presented themselves during the planning process. Torrens also had to deal with the Marriott Hotel not wanting to house students and rejecting the school's reservation, although he was later able to arrange for accommodations elsewhere. These difficulties largely stemmed from the fact that SHS has never organized an inauguration trip before.

"We're pioneers," said Torrens of the trip. "Trailblazers."

Despite the minor setbacks, Torrens thinks the trip will be a rousing success that will provide invaluable memories.

"The trip is going to be so much fun and there are great people going on it," said Renalds, "so it will definitely be a week of fun and politics." ♦



courtesy of Nikil Balakrishnan

People of all ages, including SHS students, attended LoveFest in San Francisco on Oct. 4.

LoveFest attracts huge crowd

by Tim Tsai

The dull thud of techno bass echoed through San Francisco on Oct. 4. People of all ages dressed in outlandish hats and outfits roamed the streets, on their way to LoveFest.

San Francisco's LoveFest is the largest single day electronic dance music event in the U.S. People from all over the country came to celebrate peace and love on the streets of San Francisco. Parade floats moved along Market Street before ending in McAllister Park. Twenty-eight DJ's dotted McAllister Park on floats playing techno music from noon until late into the night.

Senior Nikil Balakrishnan was one of the many students who attended LoveFest.

"I was a little unsure about LoveFest because I had never been there before," said Balakrishnan. "I just expected a lot of different electronic music and interesting characters. I was also hoping to meet up with some friends from different parts of the Bay Area that I haven't seen for a while."

LoveFest originated in Berlin, Germany, in 1989, and grew out of a celebration for the fall of the Berlin Wall. Originally a political movement, it has now spread to cities all around the world.

The theme of the event is to bring people together through love and electronic music, and Balakrishnan said he definitely felt a welcoming and open atmosphere.

"The people there ranged from high schoolers to people in their 50s and 60s," said Balakrishnan. "Most people were in their mid-20s, and they were all open and friendly."

This year, LoveFest was set on the same day as the Homecoming Dance. In order to be at Saratoga for the dance, many students left San Francisco early. However, Balakrishnan stayed back with his friends late into the night.

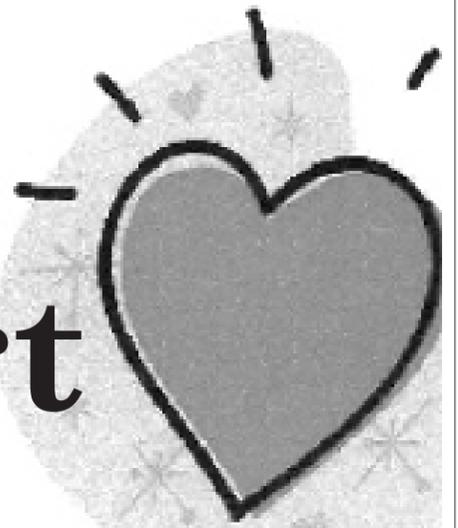
"Even though it's my senior year, I felt that I would have more fun at LoveFest than if I came back for the Homecoming Dance," said Balakrishnan. "The experience was amazing the parade, the music and all the people I met made the trip totally worth it." ♦

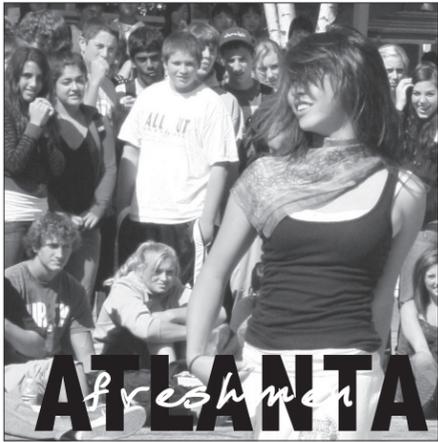
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Music by Mr. Paul Page; Choreography: SHS Skating Club

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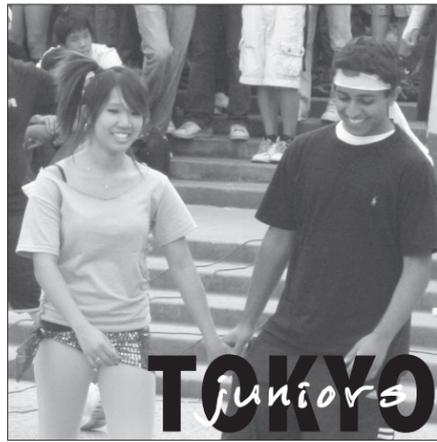




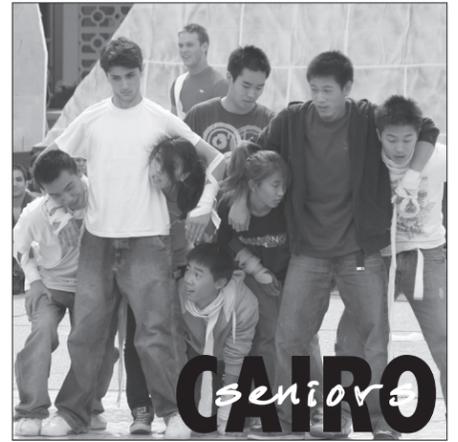
ATLANTA
Freshmen



ROME
sophomores



TOKYO
juniors



CAIRO
seniors

A BIG CITY SHOWDOWN

by Tiffany Tung

This year's Homecoming allowed students to leave their desks and travel around the world. From the freshmen tooting on their French horns in Atlanta to celebrating with friends at the dance, the week passed by with most complaints revolving around conflicts with tests and SATs.

Homecoming was the crucial week before SATs, which resulted in some classes not gathering enough students to help out with decorations. Even so, all the grades were able to gather enough people to participate in their homecoming dances.

After much debate, class scores were released, with seniors in first place, juniors in second place, sophomores in third, and freshmen ranking last.

The junior class jeopardized its chances of winning by the addition of many racial comments in its quad day; however, after a long ASB discussion, the officers decided to let it go.

"I was really disappointed in the junior class," said Homecoming commissioner Jennifer Li. "I did not expect that they would say so many racial comments, so I wasn't surprised that we got third place for [quad day]."

This year, unlike last year, there was no teacher quad day dance.

"I was actually really looking forward to teacher quad day," said freshman Danielle Hata. "My [sister] told me about how the teachers performed 'Crank That' by Soulja Boy, and I was

disappointed that they didn't have anything like that this year."

The freshman class performed their quad day dance on Tuesday, featuring instrument playing, dancing and trivia about Atlanta. The sophomores followed the day after with cross-dressing and classical Roman love problems. On Thursday, the juniors performed their Tokyo-inspired quad day dance and on Friday, the seniors performed their quad day dance on Cairo.

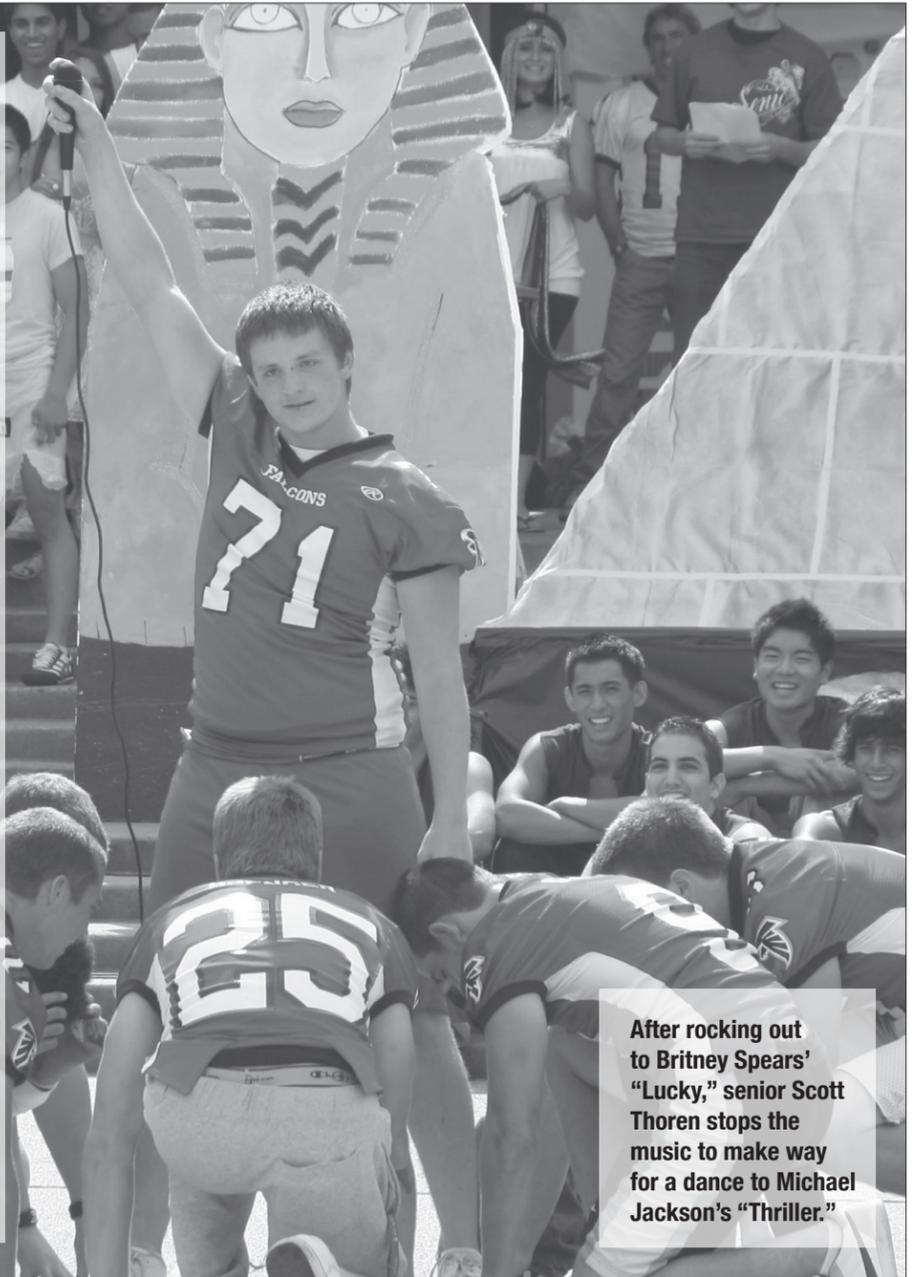
"Homecoming went better than expected," said junior Jessica Tam. "The quad day dances were way better than last year's."

On Wednesday night during the night rally, the Homecoming princes and princesses and the potential kings and queens were revealed. The court consisted of freshman Chad Keating and Megan Kao, sophomores Vanessa Block and James Reed and juniors Chiyo Hartley and Trevor Teerlink.

At the Homecoming game versus Los Altos on Oct. 3, seniors Chris Rea and Christina Robert were crowned king and queen.

The dance was held on Oct. 4 from 8-11 p.m. in the gym. Decorations included a hot air balloon and other symbols that depicted the theme "around the world."

"Even though the dance ended early because of some miscommunication, I still had a great time," said Tam. "Winning the game against Los Altos on Friday and having the dance on Saturday was a great end to homecoming." ♦



After rocking out to Britney Spears' "Lucky," senior Scott Thoren stops the music to make way for a dance to Michael Jackson's "Thriller."

photos by Aaditya Dev, Uma Sambasivam, Jordan Waite, Amanda Yi and Melody Zhang

AROUND THE WORLD IN 25 DAYS



Clockwise from top-left: Freshmen take the floor with a dance medley. Sophomores Arianna Paranzino, Grace Kim and Erin Wong makeover Julius Caesar's daughter Jay Lee. Junior boys bring on the fire with a hip-thrusting dance to remember. Senior Scott Thoren hoses down nomads Chris Rea, Rishi Taggarsi and Nick Mortazavi. Senior Shawna Lempert rallies the crowd with her Egyptian dance solo. Senior Laura Ruddy pies assistant principal Joe Bosco at the night rally. Seniors Chris Rea and Christina Roberts stand before hundreds as Homecoming King and Queen at the Homecoming football game.



Nathan Kim

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS

110-STUDENT SCHOOL'S DECISION ALLOWING TEACHERS TO CARRY
CONCEALED GUNS ON CAMPUS NOT SO CRAZY AFTER ALL

by Shannon Galvin,
Saniha Shankar and Alex Song

The days of teachers holding rulers and sending students to a corner with a dunce cap have long passed. Some teachers at a 110-student school in Harrold, Texas, have upgraded to an unusual technique: carrying guns. The idea sounds crazy at first but has some merit at a school like this.

Located in North Texas, Harrold is an impoverished hamlet with a population of 320. Residents can barely remember the last time any violent act occurred. Many never lock their doors. The nearest sheriff's office is 17 miles away.

Beginning this school year, the local school board passed a resolution that allowed several teachers with a concealed weapons permit to carry a gun during school hours, citing events such as the Columbine High School shooting in 1999 and the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007.

Despite measures such as cameras and upgraded emergency systems, the Harrold school board fears school officials would still be handi-

capped in the event of an armed assault. The new policy enacted by the board has sparked serious debate, but Texas Gov. Rick Perry has backed the decision.

Although, putting handguns on campus may seem like a recipe for disaster, Harrold has few alternatives, especially since security

Some say, though, the plan simply opens up more problems to deal with and that keeping guns at a school to prevent shootings would just be fighting fire with fire.

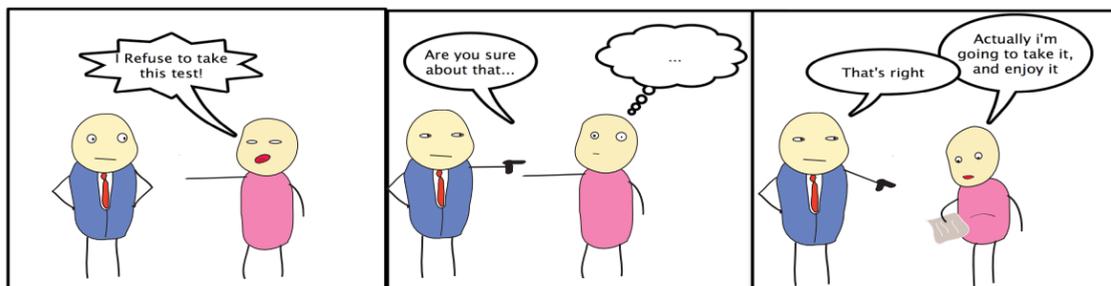
Anti-gun organizations have not taken any action, however, despite supposed anxiety over this new resolution. Other than whining blogs giving few alternative options, the organizations have not done anything to push their causes in Harrold.

Rather than posting useless options like hiring expensive armed officers or sneering at Texas laws al-

lowing for such an act to be passed, any organization truly devoted to their cause would have immediately started protesting and lobbying against them. Lack of action is tantamount to agreement to the Harrold solution.

In the end, no such action has been taken, and the school year has started in Harrold smoothly and safely, with parents noting to reporters of the Fort Worth Star Telegram that they trust their children's lives with their teachers. ♦

New Teaching Methods | by Alex Song



guards are too expensive and local law enforcement is too far away.

Faculty members chosen to carry firearms go under extensive psychological scrutiny as well as crisis management courses to prepare them for the use of a firearm in emergency situations. The teachers still need all the required permits and background checks expected of regular citizens as well as a Concealed Carry license, which in itself mandates weapon safety and liability education.

Link Crew rejection process based on inconsistent standards

Most people love getting as much help as they can. But right when help is ready to be given, it's thrown away. Such is the tale of Link Crew this year.

In the past, Link Crew has always gathered enough interested people to sign up. Those who have showed a desire to help freshmen got the opportunity to guide ninth-graders through orientation and the rest of their year. Due to the overwhelming number of applications to be on the 2008-2009 Link Crew—more than 200—guidance counselors Frances Saiki and Alinna Satake had to reject nearly half of the applicants.

The troubling thing was not how many were cut, but who was cut. Many of the veteran seniors and seemingly perfect candidates were passed over in favor of

inexperienced juniors with no idea what being a Link leader entailed.

The arbitrary selection process seemed inconsistent and flawed to some. If the Link Crew coordinators truly wanted to maximize the benefits of the program for incoming freshmen, it would have been more prudent to allow experienced seniors to be the leaders. Furthermore, as a senior, one would have more knowledge and familiarity with the goings-on of the school, again proving more beneficial to the freshmen.

So what exactly were the criterias that applicants were judged on? The coordina-

tors based their selections on the completion of applications, time commitment, past experience and leadership skills. If the students who applied were part of the crew last year, their attendance and commitment to all the events in the program was evaluated.

Though it is understandable that the coordinators want to take into account preexisting time commitments, the average junior and senior have roughly the same workload.

While juniors have tough classes and standardized testing, seniors have tough classes as well as college applications to deal with.

These students, however, are good at managing their time, and the minimal Link Crew time commitment is not difficult to fit into a senior's schedule.

The fact that the selection of accepted applicants included many upperclassmen taking a large number of AP classes rather than more well-rounded individuals only adds more fire to the flames. Well-rounded students possess greater potential to bond with freshmen and help them transition into the high school environment.

The Link Crew program was founded on the belief that the transition from middle school to high school is a difficult and confusing time for freshmen. If Link Crew truly wants to aid in smoothing this transition, the selection process should follow a consistent standard that chooses the most adequate candidates. ♦



STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE: TOP TEN THINGS TEACHERS SHOULDN'T DO

Every student fears seeing their schedule for the first time, reluctant to read the name of a "bad" teacher—they are a major reason the guidance counselors' boxes are filled with schedule change slips at the beginning of each year. The following is a list of the top 10 ways that teachers fall short and our recommendations for improvement.

- 10 Don't limit restroom passes—really, what are we suppose to do, pee in class? We get that some students leave for the "restroom" and never come back, but why penalize the rest of us? Use good judgment when letting students go relieve themselves and there'll be no problems.
- 9 Don't be nitpicky—don't take off points for minor things. Everyone makes mistakes, but deducting points for not writing your name in a specific order or forgetting to bring your book to class is ludicrous. It's not like it has anything to do with understanding the material that matters, unless the class is based on style and format.
- 8 Don't be unorganized—it's a trait that many students have themselves. Also but please stop taking $t \rightarrow \infty$ days to return tests.
- 7 Don't give "lecture lullabies"—when teachers lecture in a monotone voice, turn off the lights, and don't even look like they're just as bored as everyone else in the room, should students really be punished for falling asleep?
- 6 Don't stack projects and test on spirit weeks like Homecoming—tone down the "no pain, no gain" attitude. SHS is competitive, and we're well aware of that, but then again, we do have spirit weeks like any other high school. Homecoming is no fun when we have tests and projects bogging us down.
- 5 Don't teach only from textbooks—if we are only going to learn from a book, we might as well do it at home.
- 4 Don't show any kind of obvious prejudice—yes, the athletic and smart students are charming, but the rest of us need attention too.
- 3 Don't be oblivious to students busy with SATs/ACTs, extracurricular activities and other classes—we are teenagers who like to sleep and eat like the average human being. We don't look forward to coming home from seven-hour school days to work 10 more hours to get ready for the next day.
- 2 Don't be defensive when you don't know the answer to a question—students don't expect teachers to know everything. Teachers should admit it when they don't have an answer and get back to the students as soon as they can. This allows teachers to do a better job at teaching their students, and both parties learn their students, and both parties learn.
- 1 Don't talk condescendingly when a student asks a question—that makes us feel inferior, stop asking questions and, as a result, struggle in the class.

The main goal of most teachers is to help students learn the required material set by the state standards. Unfortunately, some teachers have turned their classrooms into environments where students feel miserable and reluctant to do more than just get a good grade in the class.

Teachers should understand that it's very difficult for a student to do well in a class in which they don't feel comfortable. Students deserve committed teachers who work in a student's best interest. The classroom is supposed to be a learning environment, as students do look up to teacher as mentors, giving them all the more reason to step up their game to keep their students from regretting that they didn't win the teacher lottery this year. ♦

—opinion of The Falcon editorial board

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

In response to the article "Lunchtime change cause negative effects" in the Sept. 26 issue:

I am sorry the writers of this article are unhappy with our food in the SHS cafeteria. I would like to ask if they have actually had lunch in our facility?

We have had students return from college and remark how much they miss our food as they do not have the quality or choices in college.

We do not fry our food. It is baked. We have a variety of items to choose from on our menu. We attempt to please all tastes. We do have vegetarian choices, both breakfast and lunch servings.

The State requires certain standards

and we must follow those guidelines.

We are restricted by our budget from hiring any more workers.

We would welcome parents and students to volunteer so we could become more efficient.

That would include managing the lines outside the cafeteria as well as helping out serving the food. It would also help to have a student [or two] come and work in our shoes for an entire day shift (Perhaps on Career day).

Thank you.

Mel Holliday
Cafeteria Assistant

You make the choices, I'll fill out the apps



Melody Zhang

What am I doing?

Yes, I'm a senior now. Yes, I've finally joined the ranks of the college application victims—those whom I have mocked from afar for three years. Yes, I too suffer from extreme procrastination.

But my one biggest problem is an unusually bad case of indecisiveness. I suppose that's why my parents have initiated an intervention to prevent a looming teen-life crisis and have taken it upon themselves to determine my future.

Just like any other concerned parents worrying over this crucial point in their child's life, my parents have been bombarding me with "gentle reminders" about starting my applications since the end of junior year. Being the oldest child leaves me no prior examples to follow, so my parents have turned to whatever resources they can get from school. Mainly, my mom has been a recruit of the College and Career Center since last year, acting as my secret spy within the center of college advice.

When all this started, I wasn't a bit worried by the constant nagging. Applications were still months away. Lately, however, I can tell that it's time to start the process, mainly from my mom's sudden torrent of advice, ranging from the useful to the absurd. To my exasperation, she went through a strange month-long phase when she would come home with a different major and career choice in mind for me every day. These ranged from factory inspection to paralegal to hotel management to nursing. My dad, of course, his input on my future: doctor, lawyer, CEO or engineer.

These "options," however, have no longer become options. Just recently, my parents sat down with me many times to discuss my future. They told me what they wanted. I told them what I didn't want—after all, I still don't know what I do want. But it's finally been decided. I'm going to double major in applied mathematics and econom-

ics and learn international business on the side.

I'm still a little unclear how we exactly came to this conclusion, but all I know is that I'm just glad staying put with their original decision: information sciences. that is.

I mean, I can see how the study are easily applicable of high-paying jobs (my parent goal), but I can't imagine living a happy life calculating numbers or taking on the professional businesswoman doesn't fit. But any dissent is quashed by the "well, ones paying" argument.

Unfortunately, my parents are completely satisfied with just sure we reached a consensus major. After learning about the oh-so-great online college organizer, my mom made her what all the commotion about. When she came upon listing all the colleges I was apply to, she called my dad they immediately began exchanging scattergram features.

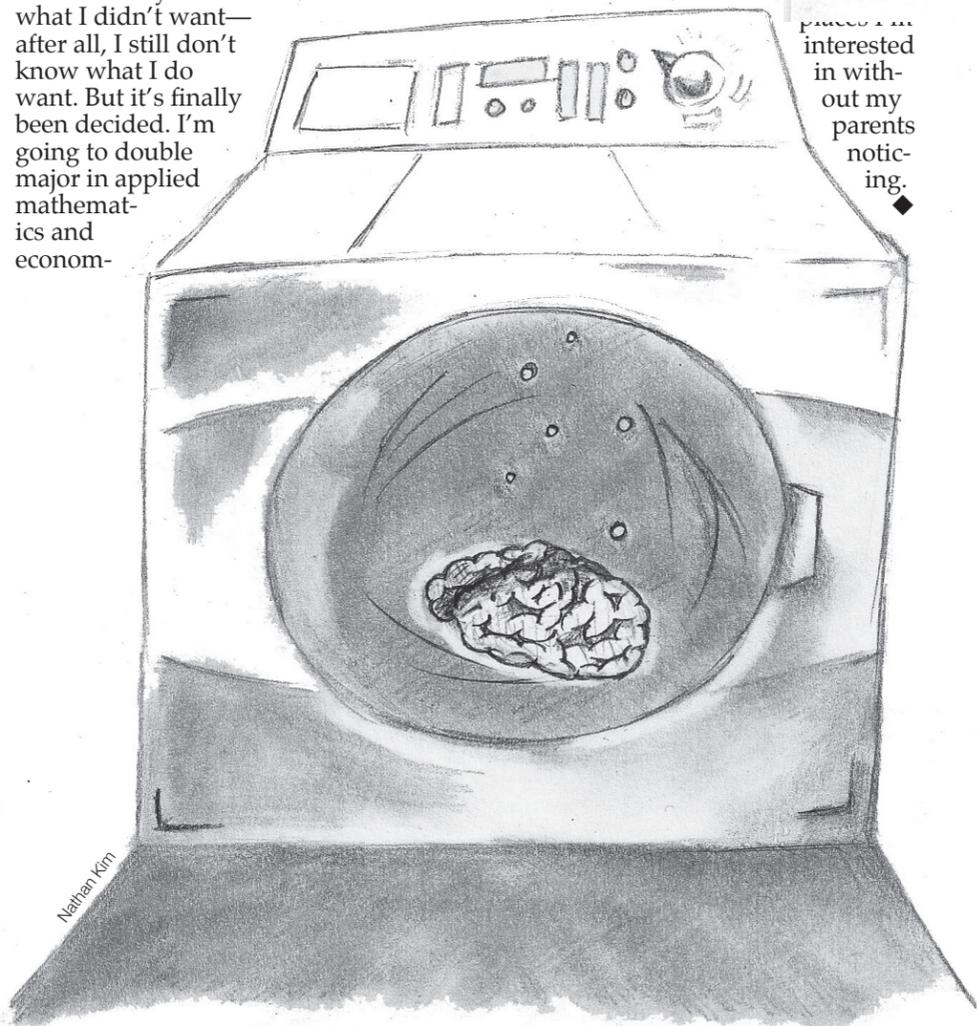
This consists of a GPA by score graph with individual all past SHS applicants to a college. I guess they never that the data was purely of students, not of all applicants than using the graph as a used it as a restriction, based my college choices from the

So, once again, it's been I'm going to apply to only Ivies and nothing in between thanks for supporting my non-Ivy schools on the East

I know I'm not alone in massive price-tags of privacies, my friend will only be to the UC system because I are not willing to foot such bill. I have another friend trying to take back some credit his parents over his future-to go into international relations medicine or engineering. It sounds rather bleak for him

In the meantime, I'll see sneak in a few applications

parents are interested in without my parents noticing. ♦



Tropic disrespects mentally disabled

by Emily Chen

It's a sad sign of our times when the third-highest grossing rated R movie of 2008 is a film that got its many "laughs" at the expense of an already mistreated population. *Tropic Thunder*, the summer's blockbuster comedy, opened number one in US box offices, despite well-deserved outcry about the film's portrayal of mentally disabled people.

Stiller's mockery

The film opened in a parody called "Simple Jack," with Ben Stiller playing the part of a bad actor named Tugg Speedman, who in turn was overzealously playing the part of a mentally handicapped farmhand. He crassly imitated common stereotypes and used obscene humor to poke fun at such individuals. In doing so, Stiller only served to perpetuate the cruel and untrue ideas about the behavior of handicapped people.

Although the film's creators defended their choice by saying they were trying to poke fun at the actors who played such characters rather than the

individuals themselves, there lies a great and insulting disparity between Stiller's offensive portrayal and the films of such respected actors like Tom Hanks and Dustin Hoffman in *Forrest Gump* and *Rainman*, respectively. While Stiller played the role as a joke, with an appalling lack of sensitivity, Hanks and Hoffman played their role with a respect for the characters that they portrayed.

Furthermore, even if one buys the argument that they were making fun of the actors and not the people, it becomes harder to explain why the movie would choose to use the term "retard" as an insult for the entire duration of the film. Throughout the movie, Stiller's character is called a "retard" for his portrayal of Simple Jack, and when Speedman references the process of becoming the farmhand Jack he says, "In a weird way I had to sort of just free myself up to believe that it was ok to be stupid or dumb." Having a mental disability is not in any way a joke and should not be treated as such, regardless of whether or not it is for the purpose of cheap humor.

The word "retard" is not a substitute for "stupid" or any similarly offensive term. Though it's understandable that filmmakers want to "toe the line," so to speak, when it comes to decency and shock factor to make for good comedy, the line must be drawn when the result causes undue and unjust hurt for an entire demographic that has done nothing to deserve such treatment.

As a result of the movie's excessively discriminatory and insulting language, special interest groups such as the Special Olympics and Friends of Children with Special Needs, a local Bay Area foundation for families of disabled individuals, called for a boycott of *Tropic Thunder*. The chairman of the Special Olympics, Timothy Shriver, said in a statement, "This population struggles too much with the basics to have to struggle against Hollywood. We're sending a message that this hate speech is no longer acceptable."

Stand up against offensive language

Filmmakers are free to create movies they want, but because they are technically allowed to do so doesn't mean it's right. By refusing to support such movies, students too can make a difference by standing up for those who can't stand for themselves. Teens can also cease using hurtful language in their everyday speech. People have become increasingly aware against using the word "gay" as an insult; however, there has been a lack of outrage over the use of the word "retard."

The homosexual community has protested the usage of the word "gay" as a synonym for derogatory words, but who is going to stand up for the mentally handicapped? The increasing sensitivity toward the homosexual community is undoubtedly a result of society's growing awareness of the need to be accepting, and it is time for such tolerance to be extended toward the mentally handicapped community as well. Ultimately, the most important message is that it's simply not acceptable to use such tactless language.

Instead of using their movie as a platform for positive entertainment, filmmakers of movies like *Tropic Thunder* instead chose to propagate a message of hate and discrimination by spreading the message that the word "retard" is an acceptable epithet. By doing so, they showed a shocking lack of judgment and sensitivity and proved that they cannot rise above the unsophisticated humor of exploiting a community of people who have already been denied a voice for too long. ♦

The Saratoga Falcon

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

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

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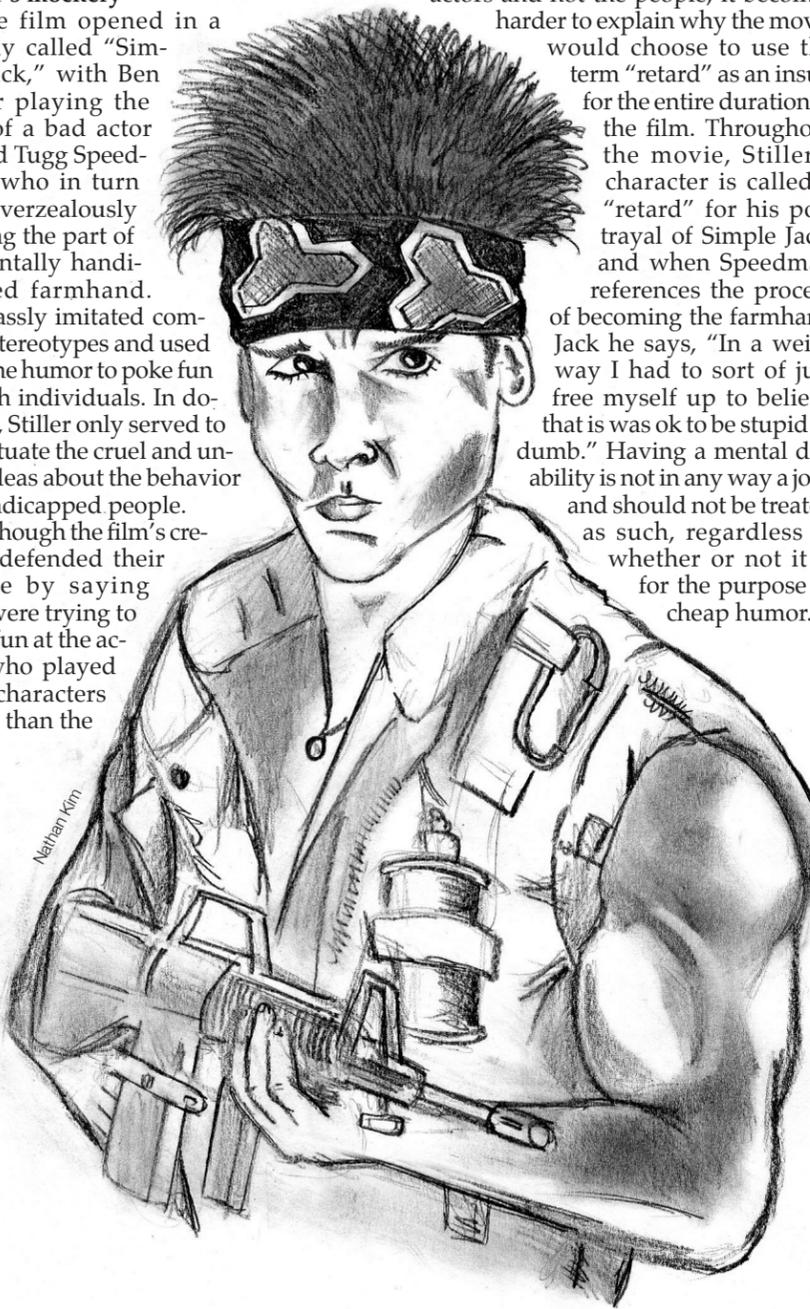
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*Various contributions were also made by the fourth period staff



Gay marriage: A matter of human rights

by Mira Chaykin

Have you ever seen a gay person rallying against straight marriage? Didn't think so. What is it, then, that makes straight people think they have the right to control the lives of others because of their sexual orientation? It is morally repugnant that America claims to be a society where all people are created equal, then has the audacity to consider banning homosexual marriage.

Despite legalizing gay marriage in California on May 15th earlier this year, gay marriage is once again up for contention in the Nov. 4 election in several states, including California under Proposition 8.

One of the biggest arguments for denying the rights is tradition. America has always defined marriage as between a man and a woman. This sentiment echoes the fight for slavery not long ago. People asserted slavery was a tradition, thus not to be abolished. Yet America soon realized the practice took away the rights of human beings, and their color was irrelevant.

Opponents of gay marriage argue marriage is mostly for the procreation of the species. In that case, when do we start denying the right of marriage to infertile men and women?

It has also been said that establishing

gay marriage would be immoral as many religions are against it. In truth, churches can retain the right to deny marriage on an individual basis wherever they see fit, but they have absolutely no grounds on which to restrict an entire population.

Another ridiculous argument against gay marriage is that it's a "slippery slope to polygamy." The point of marriage being monogamous is that it makes laws in

Despite being seemingly mundane and insignificant for those who possess it, the title of marriage is a status symbol.

respect to inheritance and life rights, like making decisions in euthanasia cases, less ambiguous. Essentially, people are being denied their basic rights in fear of a hypothetical future.

Others claim, in a similarly preposterous fashion, that life is about love, not marriage, so gays should be happy they're still allowed to love. This is invalid as no one seems to be calling for a total abolition of marriage. What we have here is flat out discrimination and a desperate attempt at a solid argument where none exists.

Sometimes gay people are allowed "civil unions," in which they are given some of the same rights as heterosexual couples. People argue that it's merely a battle over semantics, and the title of "marriage" is unnecessary. In a civil union, however, homosexuals are still denied Social Security, insurance and employee benefits, in addition to the title of marriage.

On a federal level, however, in states where a civil union does not exist, homosexuals are also denied tax benefits, estate and inheritance benefits, Medicare and disability benefits and immigration rights. One of the rights denied because homosexuals are unable to marry is hospital visitation rights.

Despite being seemingly mundane and insignificant for those who easily possess it, the title of marriage is a status symbol. For the gay community, being in a civil union doesn't warrant the same respect.

It's easy for people to fight homosexual marriage when they aren't gay. They are not affected, so they simply disregard it. One student said, "I do not support gay marriage because I don't want people to think I'm gay." Being gay is not a sin. Ignorance and denying rights to fellow human beings is a sin. It isn't necessary to be gay to be an advocate of human rights. ♦

THE ARTIST OF THE ISSUE: Yvette Young

—by Melody Zhang



courtesy of Yvette Young



Melody Zhang

Senior Yvette Young is a singer, a musician, a painter, a designer—and she is going against all odds to explore her interests. Mainly self-taught, Young has aspired to be an artist since she was young.

Q: Other than painting, sketching, singing, music and clothing design, what other arts do you do?

A: I [also] do fashion sketches and band advertising.

Q: How does advertising work?

A: [Bands] contact me for graphics. I send them via the internet and they use them. I get free music and sometimes I'll meet up at shows.

Q: Do you get paid for those?

A: It's [just] fun for me.

Q: Do you just do them for local bands or bands elsewhere too?

A: I've done everywhere. Illinois, Texas, San Jose, etc.

Q: Are you planning to go into art in college?

A: YES.

Q: Any colleges in mind?

A: I'm trying out for Rhode Island School of Design, Cleveland Institute, Pratt and then UC's.

Q: Is your main motif in drawing/painting/etc. surfers as we've seen in your past works?

A: I do [love drawing surfers] because lets face it: they've got the bods. Plus I love the water and surfing. But no, I've branched out.

Q: What's your inspiration?

A: The only things I hate drawing are

buildings and flowers. [A lot is just] from my mind. My current inspiration is an amazing boy I talked to over summer.

Q: And singing lessons? Art lessons? Did you take those?

A: Nope. Only art. I stopped when I hit 8th grade though.

Q: When you say you do clothing design, do you also make clothes in addition to making the designs on the clothes?

A: [Laughing] Well, I made a tie-dye v-neck shirt.

Q: You write your own music?

A: Yeah, lame stupid sappy stuff.

Q: Where have you performed your songs other than online?

A: Camp, café...I also played at [Elizabeth Shin and Nicole Ng's Paper Star Productions show on Sept 26].

Q: When did you start learning guitar?

A: I taught it to myself a year ago. Internet and ears.

Q: Are you planning to make a CD sometime?

A: No. My dad is forcing me to publish a song. [But] I don't want to. I hate it when parents get involved in my art. It makes me totally lose interest.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

A: I love colors. Have great auditory memory. And I have a crazy eye for weird details.

Details of Young's work are located www.myspace.com/yvettelyoung. ♦

THECRITIC

Nick and Norah an infinite hit

by Emily Chen and Elizabeth Cheng

At first glance, "Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist" is like any other generic teen romantic comedy. Boy mopes about ex, girl needs a boyfriend, boy meets girl, they have adventures and an inevitable happily-ever-after ending. But with endearingly awkward moments, crazy drunken antics and a flawless supporting cast, this movie is a must see.

Drawn by their love of Where's Fluffy?, a popular underground band that plays secret shows, the two protagonists and their best friends set out on a chase around New York City to find the venue where Fluffy is playing. They meet early in the night in a local club where Nick's band, of which he is the only heterosexual member, is playing a show. In a spontaneous attempt to prove herself to prep-school enemy Tris, Norah kisses Nick, claiming him as her boyfriend without realizing that Nick is actually Tris' moping ex. And so, the night begins.

Nick and Norah, played by Michael Cera and Kat Dennings respectively, are both adorably awkward characters. Instead of forced lines that try too hard to be clever, the retorts they deliver are realistic and authentic. With witty remarks and sweet smiles, the two charm audi-

ences into falling in love with them. Their back-and-forth banter is fun to watch and has viewers genuinely rooting for them to get together.

Nick's homosexual band mates make it their duty to find Nick a perfect match to help him get over his evil ex, Tris. Norah's best friend, Caroline, is drunk for the better half of the movie yet still manages to be charming and not irritating. Even the antagonist, Tris, is funny in her over-the-top malicious ways.

There is one particular scene that falls more on the disgusting rather than humorous side. It involves vomit, a toilet, a cellphone and gum. And a hand coming into contact with all the aforementioned items at least once. Audience members with a tender gag reflex will want to take a bathroom break.

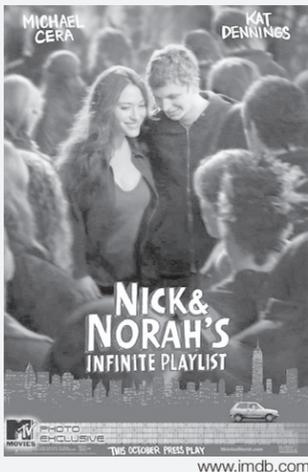
With the exception of that scene, however, the rest of the movie goes by too quickly, as viewers follow these offbeat characters through the night of their lives. An infectious and quirky playlist along with stunning New York City night visuals are an added bonus that only enhance an already enjoyable movie. As the characters proceed with their late-night adventures, viewers are left longing to be their friends and wondering when they are going to have a night like the one Nick and Norah share. The instant likeability and easy humor of the movie make this a playlist that I would gladly listen to over and over again. ♦



Nick and Norah's Infinite Playlist

Rating: PG-13

Length: 90 Minutes



www.imdb.com

AUDIO FILES



Subject: Whitney Hansen
Weapon of Choice: iPod Classic
Genres: Classic Rock, Indie

- 1. Carry Me Home - The Hellcopters (3:43)**
Memorable Lyric: "Oh these nights out alone come carry me home"
- 2. Pennyroyal Tea - Nirvana (3:35)**
Memorable Lyric: "Sit and drink Pennyroyal Tea, I'm anemic royalty"
- 3. Ashes - Pepper (3:01)**
Memorable Lyric: "It's been so hard to breathe when the trust is gone"
- 4. Phenomena - The Yeah Yeah Yeah's (4:10)**
Memorable Lyric: "Hot time kid, hot time kid, it's cold under the blanket"
- 5. Golly Sandra - Easley (3:29)**
Memorable Lyric: "G-g-g-golly Sandra! You've grown up really crazy"

—by Tim Rollinson

Keeping touch with the past



Kavya Nagarajan

Saturday morning fever

Remember those days when you could turn on the radio and you would be sure to hear some song by *N Sync playing? Or when you would turn on the TV and MTV or VH1 would actually be playing music videos instead of pointless dating shows that are obviously scripted? Ever miss those days? I know I do.

Even the classic Disney movies aren't being made anymore. Don't you ever wish they still produced the original films where it was all cartoon drawn out with pencil, instead of being computer animated? Now, don't get me wrong, I absolutely love movies like "Cars", "Monsters Inc.", and "Finding Nemo", but sometimes I wish they still made those old-style cartoons.

I know they are all cheesy, and unrealistic, but "Aladdin" and "The Lion King" always made me happy. I think what is so magical about these movies is the fact that they let you escape from reality at times. Somehow, I manage to ignore everything around me when I'm watching a Disney movie. Perhaps it's the thought of flying around the world on a magic carpet. Or maybe it's the fact that when something went wrong, you could sing a song and everything would be fine within 3 minutes.

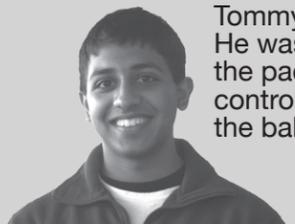
Speaking of old times, don't you just feel like listening to old school Britney? Even in recent years, when she has shaved her head, gone to rehab and attacked paparazzi, she still manages to make good music. And I truly believe that while she is a target for the media, her fans will always be loyal to her.

I, being a die hard Backstreet Boys fan, am not embarrassed to admit that I still pop in their old CD's every once in a while. Sometimes I'll even find myself scrolling through my recently played list on my iPod, and noticing that practically every song is one of theirs. I suppose it's just a way to stay in touch with my childhood. They were some of the best years of my life. Why would I want to forget them? ♦



Nathan Kim

VINTAGE CARTOONS, TV AND MUSIC. QUEUE THE NOSTALGIA



junior Varun Parmar

Tommy from *Rugrats*. He was the head of the pack, and he had control of the rest of the babies.

Batman from *Batman*. He didn't use weapons, but he still fought crime and kicked butt.



senior Amrit Rathi

Courage from *Courage the Cowardly Dog*. He was so cute, and he lived to protect his family.



freshman Essie Quevedo

Tom and Jerry from *The Tom and Jerry Show*. They never talked, but they were still amusing.



senior Michael Vu

TOGATALKS

Who was your favorite TV character as a kid?

—by Brian Kim

Entertainment of the good old days out of reach

by Lauren Kuan and Synthia Ling

When teens listen to the newest single on the radio or watch the season premiere of the hottest television show, they think back to the music and shows of the good old days when they were just young kids. The new generation of kids, however, are so obsessed with the current shows and music that the entertainment of the past cannot return.

Blue's Clues, *Pokémon*, *Rugrats*, *Sailor Moon* and *Mister Rogers's Friendly Neighborhood* are just some of the many shows that students watched during their childhood. When they look back, waking up Saturday morning or rushing home after school to watch these shows was awesome. They want to help Steve find clues with Blue, watch Pikachu battle it out with Raichu, watch Tommy and Chuckie's adventures in their backyard, listen to the *Sailor Moon* theme song and hear Mister Rogers sing-

ing while putting on his converse sneakers. It was what they did when they were young. They grew up with all these shows so they feel attached to them.

These old shows will always remain in their hearts as fond memories of their childhood, but there are new shows now. On television, *Hannah Montana*, *Drake and Josh* and even movies such as *High School Musical* and *Camp Rock* dominate the programming. Around campus new television characters cover students' shirts, backpacks or folders. All the merchandise for the old shows have disappeared from store shelves and turned into collector items on eBay.

People never see or hear of the old shows and characters they once watched. They miss them so much because they grew up watching them; no matter how much people miss those shows, they have been replaced and will never come back.

Music has also changed drastically. Current teenagers used to have CDs of *NSYNC, A*Teens and other bubblegum

pop music when they were kids.

Now boy bands have mostly disappeared, except for one group, the Jonas Brothers.

"People aren't as into guy bands as before, but the Jonas Brothers are such a hot thing now. But you can't really compare them with *NSYNC or Backstreet Boys," said sophomore Erin Wong.

Wong, however, still enjoys the music of the boy bands of the past.

"If the old boy bands had concerts, I would totally go because they're still awesome," said Wong.

Even though the artists that students used to listen to such as Britney Spears and Backstreet Boys are still performing, their music has changed. They don't dominate the Billboard charts as they used to.

Wong, like many teen girls across the nation, now loves the Jonas Brothers. For many girls, however, loving the Jonas Brothers is an understatement. The Jonas Brothers have girls screaming and crying

for them.

Like fellow Disney star Miley Cyrus, they have sold millions of CDs, clothing, posters and other merchandise with their name on it. The Jonas Brothers are so popular and making so much money for Disney that they had their own hit movie, *Camp Rock*, a reality show and will have their own television show.

The Jonas Brothers obsession is reminiscent of the stardom of the old singers. *NSYNC, Backstreet Boys and Britney Spears once too had sold-out concert tours, platinum albums and the adoration of people across the nation. Their fans, however, are mostly gone and they now listen to new singers.

Even though people now like and enjoy the current shows and music, they still crave the nostalgic shows and singers from their younger days. They cannot have both though, because now the past is gone and the television is playing different shows with new stars and music has changed. ♦

What's your Saratoga IQ?

Sure, Saratoga High School has one of the highest API scores in the Bay Area. But how much do SHS students really know? Take the quiz to find out!

Thomson monkeys around with variety of collections

by Annie Lee
and Andy Tsao

As students step into biology teacher Kristen Thomson's classroom, they enter a thick jungle.

With monkeys hanging from the ceiling, pictures of monkeys placed on the wall and an oversized blow up monkey attached to the back wall, Thomson's classroom is the perfect environment for studying the anatomy of primates and many other organisms.

Thomson began collecting monkey paraphernalia after her first trip to the Amazon rain forest in 1999. The lodge where Thomson and her husband were staying had a pet monkey that guests could pet and take care of. Since Thomson was one of the only guests who stayed for an extended period of time, she became a primary caretaker of the primate during her stay.

"I absolutely fell in love with all the primates [in the Amazon]," said Thomson. "[The monkey at the lodge] was like my first little baby."

Since her adventure in the Amazon, Thomson has continued collecting over 30 monkey-related items, ranging from T-shirts to woodcarvings.

"The most fun things that I have are probably the wood carvings and my individual students," said Thomson, with a smile across her face.

Not only does Thomson have fun searching for more monkey business to decorate her home and classroom, but she believes that collections contribute to a person's personality.

"Obviously they're not necessary, but I think it gives character to a person," said Thomson. "They say an awful lot about someone, and apparently I'm a crazy kind of monkey person." ♦



courtesy of Kristen Thomson

Kristen Thomson hangs out with orangutans in Singapore. She has collected over 30 monkey items.

Sutton 'makes a difference' by creating young writers

by Brian Kim
and Annie Lee

Since history teacher Chuck Newport retired after his 40th year of teaching last spring, English teacher Judith Sutton has taught the longest. Despite teaching her 38th here and 39th in the district, Sutton still finds each school year as exciting as the previous 38.

"I never get bored!" said Sutton. "How could you get bored with teenagers?"

Since she teaches students in English 9, Creative Writing/Poetry 1, 2 and 3, Sutton often has students in her classes for three or four years in a row. Although she returns to the same curriculum, she still finds ways to make each

year a new experience.

"You just keep growing year after year, learning new things, working with new kids and encountering new challenges," said Sutton.

Sutton has built many relationships with students from her first few years of teaching. She has kept in touch with numerous past students by mail and is now colleagues with former students and current English teachers Bill Peck and Erick Rector.

Sutton's desire to keep students improving their work and growing as individuals motivates her to continue teaching at Saratoga High.

"I work here because I feel like I'm making a difference," said Sutton. "If I stop feeling like I'm doing so, then I'll stop and begin a different career." ♦



Sutton

Saratoga Quiz

1. What are the official school colors?

- Maroon and white
- Scarlet, navy blue and grey
- Red, white and blue
- Red and gold

2. Who was crowned as the 2008 Saratoga Idol?

- Taara Rangan
- Sam Pack
- Maddy Renalds
- Katie Stevens

3. What is the total number of whiteboards in the school?

- 60
- 154
- 183
- 73

4. Who has been teaching the longest at Saratoga?

- Ms. Sutton
- Mr. Page
- Mrs. Head
- Mr. Drennan

5. How many books are there in the library?

- 22,579
- 15,287
- 9,091
- 12,871

6. How many people are in the school's publications?

- 64
- 76
- 57
- 110

7. What sport has won the most league championships?

- Boys' Swimming
- Football
- Boys' Soccer
- Girls' Tennis

8. How many Olympians have attended Saratoga High?

- 7: the 2008 Men's Basketball Team
- 0
- 2: Patricia Miranda, Carrie Steinseifer
- 3: Randy Arrillaga, Miranda, Steinseifer

9. What is the maximum capacity of the gym?

- 1,487
- 2,000
- 891
- 2,399

10. What percentage of the class of 2008 are National Merit semifinalists?

- 59%
- 23%
- 12%
- 44%

11. When was the McAfee Culture Center built?

- 2003
- 1999
- 2005
- 2001

12. How many new classes were added in the 2009 school year?

- 2
- 3
- 0
- 5

13. About how many students are there?

- 1,000
- 1,350
- 1,200
- 2,000

14. What is the most common car?

- BMW
- Mercedes
- Honda
- Volvo

15. What is the most sold item?

- Cookies
- Pizza
- Dr. Pepper
- Hot Chocolate

16. What is the population of Saratoga?

- 30,000
- 10,000
- 25,000
- 50,000

17. Who is the youngest teacher?

- Mr. Rector
- Ms. Lozano
- Mr. Bosco
- Ms. Ridge

18. How long has assistance been at Saratoga High?

- none
- 21-30 years
- 11-20 years
- 0-10 years

19. When was Saratoga High founded?

- 1920
- 1987
- 1959
- 1963

20. Who is the current mascot?

- Ann Waltonsmith
- Chuck Page
- Kathleen King
- Aileen Kao

If you got...

0-10 correct: you're a freshman

Pay attention during the next three years, and you'll get better. But un-

games such as Trivial Pursuit and Jeopardy.

11-24 correct: you should broaden your horizons

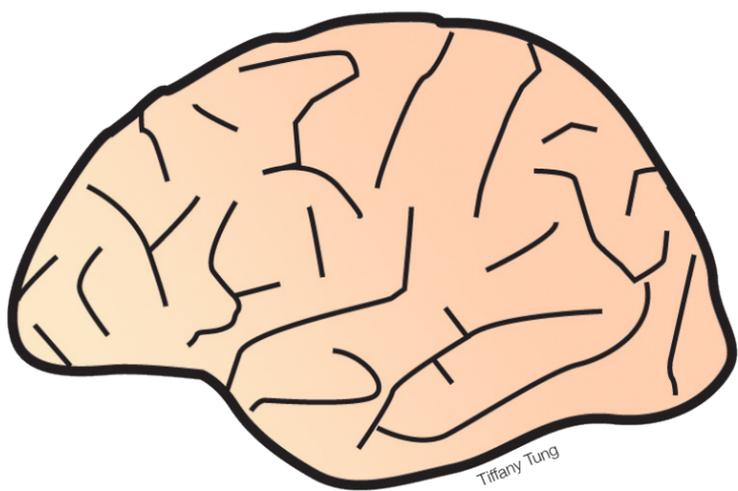
You might be booksmart, but your local knowledge needs work. Put

prep book and go on a scavenger hunt through Saratoga.

25-30 correct: you're the next Willys Peck

You know everything there is about Saratoga. Stick around long enough

might get a plaque in your honor!



Chapter Test

- Performing Arts and Lec-
21. How many K-12 schools are in the city of Saratoga?
a. 8
b. 5
c. 3
d. 12
- s were added in the 2008-
22. What is SHS's 2008 API score?
a. 100
b. 847
c. 907
d. 928
- ents attend SHS?
23. How many kinds of instruments are in the SHS string orchestra?
a. 15
b. 6
c. 4
d. 10
- mon car in the parking
24. How many computers are in the MAP Room?
a. 18
b. 34
c. 63
d. 42
- item from the cafeteria?
25. What mineral was found in Saratoga in 1854?
a. Nitrogen
b. Oxygen
c. Copper
d. Silicon
- a of the city of Saratoga?
26. How many students are currently in the marching band?
a. 218
b. 350
c. 128
d. 623
- teacher on campus?
27. How many monkeys has Ms. Thomson collected?
a. 12
b. 30+
c. 24
d. 67
- nt principal Karen Hyde
28. How many rooms are on the campus?
a. 102
b. 155
c. 57
d. 213
- igh established?
29. When was the drama mural painted?
a. 1998
b. 1987
c. 2005
d. 1996
- mayor of the city of Sara-
30. Where did the McAfee Center get its name?
a. Eric and Marguerite McAfee
b. The McAfee AntiVirus System
c. Bill and Jill McAfee
d. Annie and Brian McAfee

til then, avoid

down the SAT-

ugh, and you

15. a

14. a

13. b

12. a

11. d

10. c

9. a

8. b

7. d

6. d

5. a

4. a

3. b

2. c

1. b

ANSWERS:



The mural at the front of the school portrays the class of 1996 alumni who participated in drama.

Mural honors student

by Shannon Galvin

Doug Leverich always wore bowling shoes and was a huge fan of Star Trek. At Saratoga High, he participated in a core group of the drama department until his graduation in 1996. In November 1997, he lost his battle with Lymphoma cancer.

In his honor, the mural near the front entrance on the back of the Little Theater was then commissioned in 1998 to memorialize him and his high school friends.

While in high school, Leverich and his friend Jim Van Over ('96) had planned on painting a mural about the students who had revitalized the theater during their time, but when they left for college, the idea was lost.

After Leverich died, his family and friends were determined to keep his memory alive and helped produce the play "Blacklight," which he had written while attending Saratoga High.

His mother, Janet Leverich, also commissioned professional muralist Bill Vuljevich to paint the mural in 1998.

The mural illustrates what the Little Theater might look like through the wall. On stage, actors are performing a scene from the play *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder. The students pictured are all SHS alumni.

Doug appears twice in the mural, once looking on from the side and once on stage as Howie Newsome, the milkman he played in the fall of 1994. The mural also contains symbols related to Doug as a person and his time in high school.

What appear to be dust balls and hairballs in the mural are actually "tribbles," fictional creatures from the original Star Trek series in

1968. The treasure chest and pirate flag also represent the "Road Pirates," the name Doug and his friends gave themselves.

At the far upper right corner, Randy Anetsky ('96) is shown mixing up cables, a prank he and Doug played during their senior year of high school. On Anetsky's back is part of a yellow "Men at Work" symbol, a homage to the shirts Anetsky, Van Over and Doug created for a show once to tease the female tech crew members.

Years later, Doug is still fondly remembered by his friends.

"I am now about six years older than Doug was when he died and I still strive to be something resembling who he was," said Van Over in an interview with *The Falcon* in 2003. "How many people can hold a mirror up to you, show you your ugly parts, yet make them not look ugly?"

The students portrayed in the mural are as follows: (bottom) Anne Gilbert ('97), Sheryl Linsky ('98), Jennifer Nissly ('98), Sarah Hollenhorst on the ladder ('98), Jim Van Over ('96), Kelli Tager ('95), William Lawrenson ('95), Leverich ('96), Alicia Teeter ('97), Jim Elliot ('97), Amanda "Wommie" Posner lying down ('98), Doug again on the outside; (top) David Armstrong ('98), Jason Van Over ('97), Randy Anetsky ('96).

Though the former students are long gone, Doug's memory continues to live on through the mural.

"I don't know that it's entirely possible to describe Doug to someone who didn't know him without doing him a disservice," said Hollenhorst in 2003. "He was one of the most 'something' people I ever met... figuring out that 'something' was the hard part." ♦

New teacher replaces Rector as youngest member on SHS staff

by Brian Kim
and Annie Lee

History teacher Margarita Lozano received her graduate degree in 2004 and was just added to the SHS staff for her second year of full-time teaching.

"I don't see myself as the youngest teacher here. I thought there were teachers younger than me here," said 26-year-old Lozano. "I don't see it. I don't think [other people] do either."

Although the age difference between Lozano and her students is smaller than those of other teachers, she still feels a substantial generation gap with her students.

"I thought I would be able to relate more to the students, but a lot of the stuff I [did] when I was in high school isn't the same

that [current students] do," said Lozano. "Even though I'm closer to [students by] age, we still have different [tastes in] music and TV shows."

In spite of the significant age discrepancy between Lozano and some of the other teachers, she feels comfortable working with them as colleagues.

"I turn to [the teachers of my department] for a lot of information that I need about this school," said Lozano. "Whoever I need assistance from, I'll go seek out."

Lozano does not have a laid-back attitude as many students would expect from a young teacher. Instead, she expects students to take her class seri-

"I thought I would be able to relate more to the students, but a lot of the stuff I [did] when I was in high school isn't the same that [current student] do."

—History teacher Margarita Lozano

ously. "Class is class, and [students] have work like just every other class," said Lozano. ♦



SLEEPLESS

IN SARATOGA

Snooze-less students suffer from the effects of abnormal and unhealthy sleeping habits

Doctor cautions students to get proper sleep

by Saniha Shankar
and Tim Tsai

If there's one thing teenagers hate more than homework, it is the sound of the alarm clock at 6:30 in the morning. With extracurriculars, standardized tests and homework, it seems the only way to get everything done is to cut down on sleep. Everyone hears their parents and teachers shout that they need to get more sleep. But these nagging requests are not just empty warnings.

Minh Tam Nelson, mother of junior Jenny Nelson and a family doctor who works at a private practice in San Jose, stresses that there are more health risks beyond what may seem apparent to most teens. According to Nelson, teenagers should get at least eight-and-a-half to nine hours of sleep every night.

"Sleep helps keep us physically healthy, too, by slowing our body's systems enough to re-energize

us after everyday activities," said Nelson, "This is the essential time of rest and rejuvenation and benefits our mind and bodies."

According to Nelson, scientists believe the process of releasing growth hormones happens during sleep. The luteinizing hormone and the follicle-stimulating hormone, both of which are involved in reproductive and maturational processes, are just some of the hormones released during sleep, she said.

Outside bodily functions, there are also many other prolonged effects of sleep deprivation. Nelson stated that sleep deprivation can lead to "decreased attentiveness and short-term memory loss, inconsistent performance and delayed response time."

Research states that more than 20 percent of high school students fall asleep in class, and many experts have tied poor grades to lack of sleep. Lack of sleep also lessens teenagers' ability to reach their potential in athletics.

"The fact that sleep deprivation slows reaction times can be life threatening for people who drive," said Nelson. "Not enough sleep will bring daytime drowsiness, trouble concentrating, accidents in driving and lower productivity."

Social studies teacher Matt Torrens agrees that students all around the school simply do not get enough sleep.

"We watched a video which showed us that the brain is actually growing during the adolescent age, although the actual physical brain may not grow in size, it undergoes many changes, and when children don't sleep enough it's messing with this process as well," said Torrens.

Nelson urges teens to take sleep seriously. "My opinion as a mother and a doctor is teens should find a reasonable time to sleep every night, and wake up at the same time every morning," said Dr. Nelson. ♦

Senior shows how to get sufficient sleep

by Melody Zhang

Senior Sophia Cresci has managed to be an exception at this school: she sleeps a lot. No matter how much work her teachers give her, no matter how much socializing time she misses and no matter how many college applications she needs to finish, Cresci always manages to put in an average of nine hours of sleep a night—even on weeknights.



Cresci

"On average, I go to sleep around 9:30," said Cresci. "On weekends, I sleep at 10 and wake up at 10, unless I have to do something."

So how does she do it?

Cresci's parents, who have always slept relatively early, helped mold her

sleeping habits. A love for sleep also helps.

"I just have a habit to fall asleep if I'm not doing anything or if I'm bored," said Cresci. "If I'm done with my homework and I'm just watching TV then I'll probably decide to sleep instead."

The sleep-deprived are often cranky and grumpy, but when she doesn't get her nine hours, Cresci feels "really tired."

"I'm either really lethargic or the complete opposite: ridiculously hyper and full of energy," said Cresci.

Studies have shown that adolescents' peak performance times occur at night, their internal clocks having shifted later from where they were set at when younger. This is why many teens feel difficulty falling asleep before midnight. But as the clock nears 9:30 and her agenda for the day has been completed, Cresci feels genuinely sleepy.

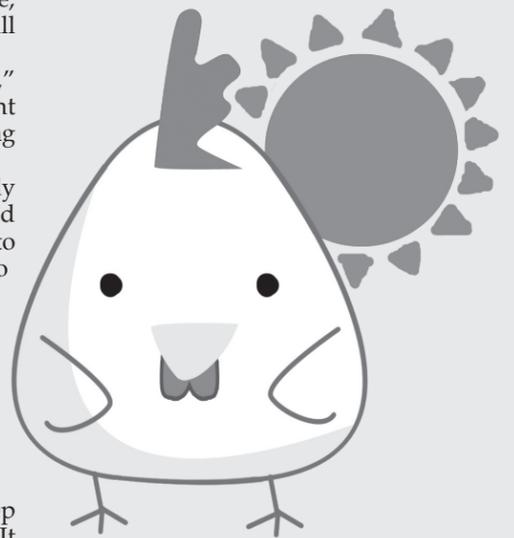
Though Cresci has been keeping this sleeping pattern for a long time, she says that if required, she can pull an all-nighter.

"I can stay up as late as I want," said Cresci. "I can go through the night without sleeping. But if I'm not doing anything, I will just fall asleep."

Her advice to those who regularly find themselves up at 3 a.m.: Avoid procrastination. Not only is she able to finish all her homework, but she also pays attention better during class. In turn, homework is easier and faster to complete, leaving more time for other leisure activities.

However, when college rolls along and the workload increases, Cresci isn't sure if she can keep her sleeping schedule.

"I don't know [if I'm going to keep doing this in college]," said Cresci. "It really depends on how much work I have." ♦



If only there were more time during the day...

Teens, burdened by abundance of work from school and activities, cut down sleep time to compensate

by Tim Tsai

For years, senior Vicky Chang has gotten fewer than the recommended eight hours of sleep a night.

In fact, Chang usually sleeps about four hours each night. However, because of how long she has been staying up late, she is used to the side effects.

Starting at age 7, Chang has been staying up late, going to bed past 10 p.m. However, she began to stay up even later during her freshman year, even staying awake for three days straight during that year's finals week.

"I don't really see a problem with my not getting enough sleep, at least health wise, because I guess I am used to it now," said Chang. "I take naps sometimes, and I used to drink a lot of coffee, but it doesn't work on me anymore."

Chang attributes her lack of sleep to simple procrastination and band.

Senior Rishi Taggarsi also struggles to get enough sleep, averaging under six hours a night. He sees his volume of extra-curricular activities as his main reason.

"I can't stand leaving things unfinished and I feel resentful if I go to bed without completing an assignment," said Taggarsi. "A benefit to staying up late is that it ensures that one will have their

assignments done before class and leaves the student less stressed than trying to finish it the day its due."

Chang also sees benefits to staying up later rather than going to bed.

"By staying up late, I get to talk to my friends in Taiwan and I can still continue our friendships and update on our lives," said Chang.

Both Taggarsi and Chang say that they feel physical effects from not sleeping enough. Many students can empathize with feeling sluggish and tired because of a late night studying or watching TV. Even though Chang has become accustomed to little sleep, she no longer has qualms about her health, even though she consistently has to deal with the side effects.

"Because I have stayed up late for so many years, my body has gotten really messed up," said Chang. "My muscles get tired, but my mind is awake, and my whole body just feels lazy."

Taggarsi's friends see the effects of his lack of sleep, as he is often listless and slow during the day.

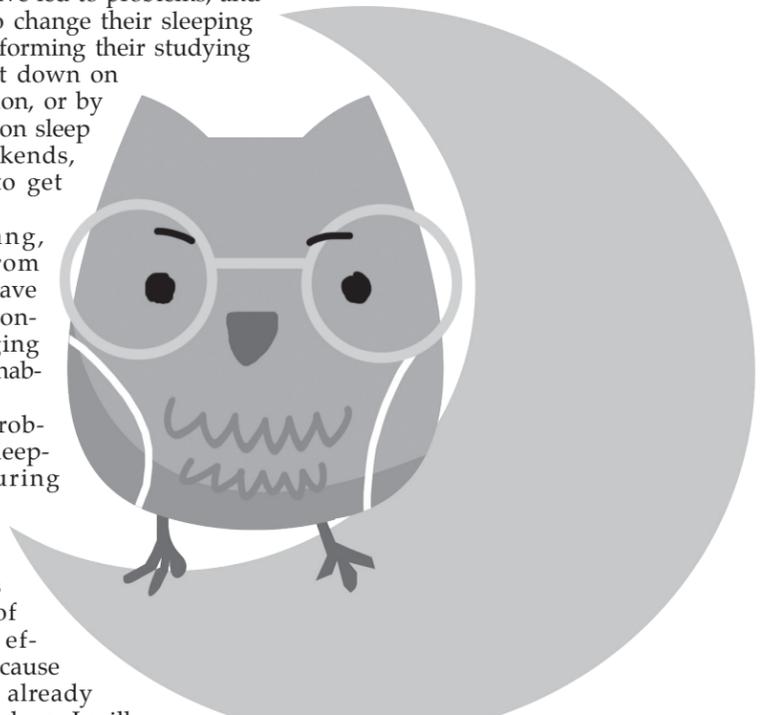
"My friends know me to be 'out of it' all the time and I can honestly say that it's because of poor sleeping habits," said Taggarsi. "It is much more difficult to focus in class and I find myself in a never-ending cycle of trying to relearn

the material at home, thus keeping me up late once again."

Both students realize that their sleeping habits have led to problems, and are trying to change their sleeping hours. By reforming their studying habits to cut down on procrastination, or by catching up on sleep during weekends, they hope to get more rest.

For Chang, pressure from her friends have led her to consider changing her sleeping habits.

"I will probably keep sleeping late during this semester, but because many of my friends are afraid of permanent effects and because my body is already pretty messed up, I will try to sleep more and become more healthy," said Chang. ♦



A high school experience with A's and B's but not zzz's



Brian Tsai

Feel My Wrath

Out of all the sleepless students at SHS, I can confidently say that I have had some of the worst experiences with sleep. Whenever I hear someone complain about getting only two hours of sleep, I always have to struggle to refrain from calling him "nublet." If you think getting two hours of sleep is bad, try getting that amount for three days in a row. How I even got to that

degree of sleep deprivation sometimes disturbs me. Here's a somewhat reliable account of my sleeping patterns throughout my high school career.

As a freshman, I was an average procrastinator. I would goof off, at most, two hours before starting my homework, and I would rarely go to bed past midnight. But, things drastically changed for me during sophomore year, when I found YouTube.

Ah, YouTube. From "Seinfeld" to "Survivor" to the Grammys to tennis matches to David Letterman, I simply had to watch them all. I didn't know when to stop. My bedtime slid from 12 to 4 a.m., and I started getting about three hours of sleep every night.

This new sleep schedule heavily affected my schoolwork and extracurricular activities. I often fell asleep

in class and my grades plummeted. I made serious blunders in my chess games and even let my racket slip out of my hand during a tennis match. The worst thing that came along with my sleep deprivation was my new moodiness. I became more unpredictable than the Chicago Cubs' season runs. I snapped unreasonably at my friends and spazzed over the most meaningless things. One moment, I was the hyperactive Energizer bunny, the next, I was struggling to stay awake in class.

The turning point came when I had two major tests and projects, a tennis meet and SAT IIs over the span of three days. I ended up staying awake for 45 straight hours. Those were two hellish days I will never forget. Of course, I could have avoided the

ordeal altogether if it had not been for the temptations of 11 episodes from the Japanese thriller drama Liar Game.

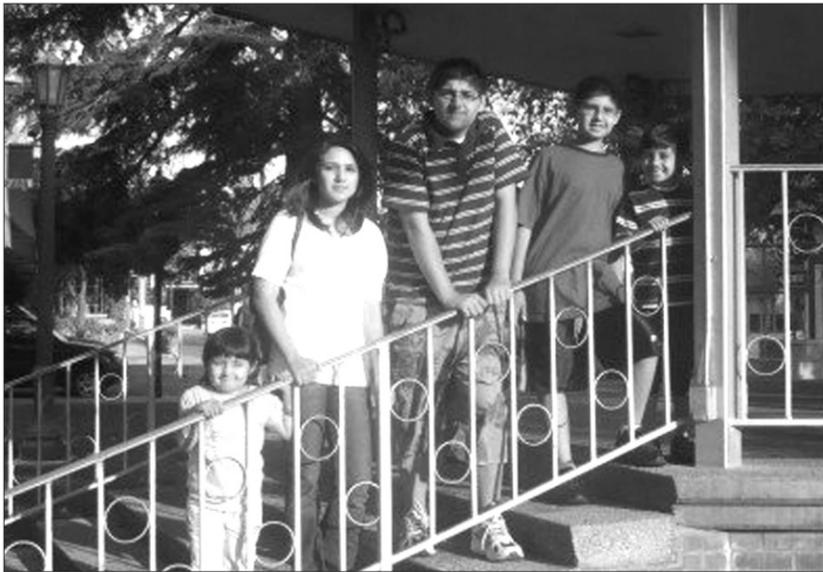
Ever since then, I've been desperately trying to solve my sleeping troubles. I've tried several solutions without much success, but I am at least glad to say that my problems have lessened to a certain extent. Recently, I've been experimenting with this new sleeping pattern in which I sleep from 4 to 11 p.m. and stay awake the rest of the night. It's been going well: There's time pressure to finish my homework, and I still get seven hours of sleep!

To all those reading out there, I am the reason you should always get a full night's sleep. You don't want to end up like me. ♦

brothers & sisters

ARE ONLY CHILDREN
REALLY SPOILED?
IS THE MIDDLE CHILD
ALWAYS NEGLECTED?

Hyder takes pleasure in role as oldest sister of six



Senior Heraa Hyder, junior Hashim and sophomore Ibrahim stand alongside two of the other three siblings. Hyder is often cares for her younger siblings.

by Mika Padmanabhan
and Jordan Waite

Senior Heraa Hyder struggles to concentrate amid distractions. Hyder would love some quiet time by closing the door.

"I can never really get a piece of quiet time for myself, like that space [that you need] when you're a junior [or] senior," said Hyder.

Hyder unfortunately cannot have quiet time because her five younger siblings require constant attention. She is constantly needed around the house, whether it's to solve a third grade math problem or to do the laundry.

"My mom and I sort of split up the work," said Hyder. "I help out at home until my mom gets back from work."

She has four younger brothers, ages 16, 14, 7 and 2, and a two-year-old sister.

Furthermore, her siblings are more comfortable getting help from Hyder than

from their mom because she is closer to them in age.

"I'm basically my little brothers' second mom," said Hyder, "[They] go to me more than they go to my mom."

Hyder acts as a mother by helping her siblings get ready for school every morning.

"I get [the younger kids] ready for school every morning by making their breakfast for them," said Hyder. "I'm going to get my license soon, and I'm going to drive them to school as well."

Despite all the children who need attention, Hyder feels that her parents are fair with their distribution of love.

"My parents treat us all the same," said Hyder, "But I'm more of a role model to [the younger siblings] than anything else."

Despite the difficulties involved, Hyder really likes having five siblings around the house.

"It can be pretty tough sometimes," said Hyder, "but I'd rather have this than be an only child." ♦

Student holds place in family as youngest of three children

Despite generalization, sophomore does not get special treatment and cherishes close bonds between siblings.

by Apeksha Sharma

According to the stereotype, youngest siblings are supposed to be spoiled and bratty. They always have their parents' support even though they are at fault. The youngest has the reputation of always getting whatever they want from their parents, but sophomore Alex Chan believes that not all youngest siblings fit this stereotype.



Chan

"I don't think I always get out of things," said Chan, the youngest of two siblings

As for being spoiled, Chan believes that his mother may be guilty of this, but definitely not his dad. He is aware of the stereotype, and tries to not perpetuate the myth.

"I definitely try not to take advantage of the fact that I'm the youngest," said Chan, "Sometimes my mom does take my side, but I usually have a good argument to back that up."

Even at times when they don't get along, Chan is always grateful to have older siblings, viewing them as good models to take life lessons and experiences from.

"They're successful and I learn from them," said Chan.

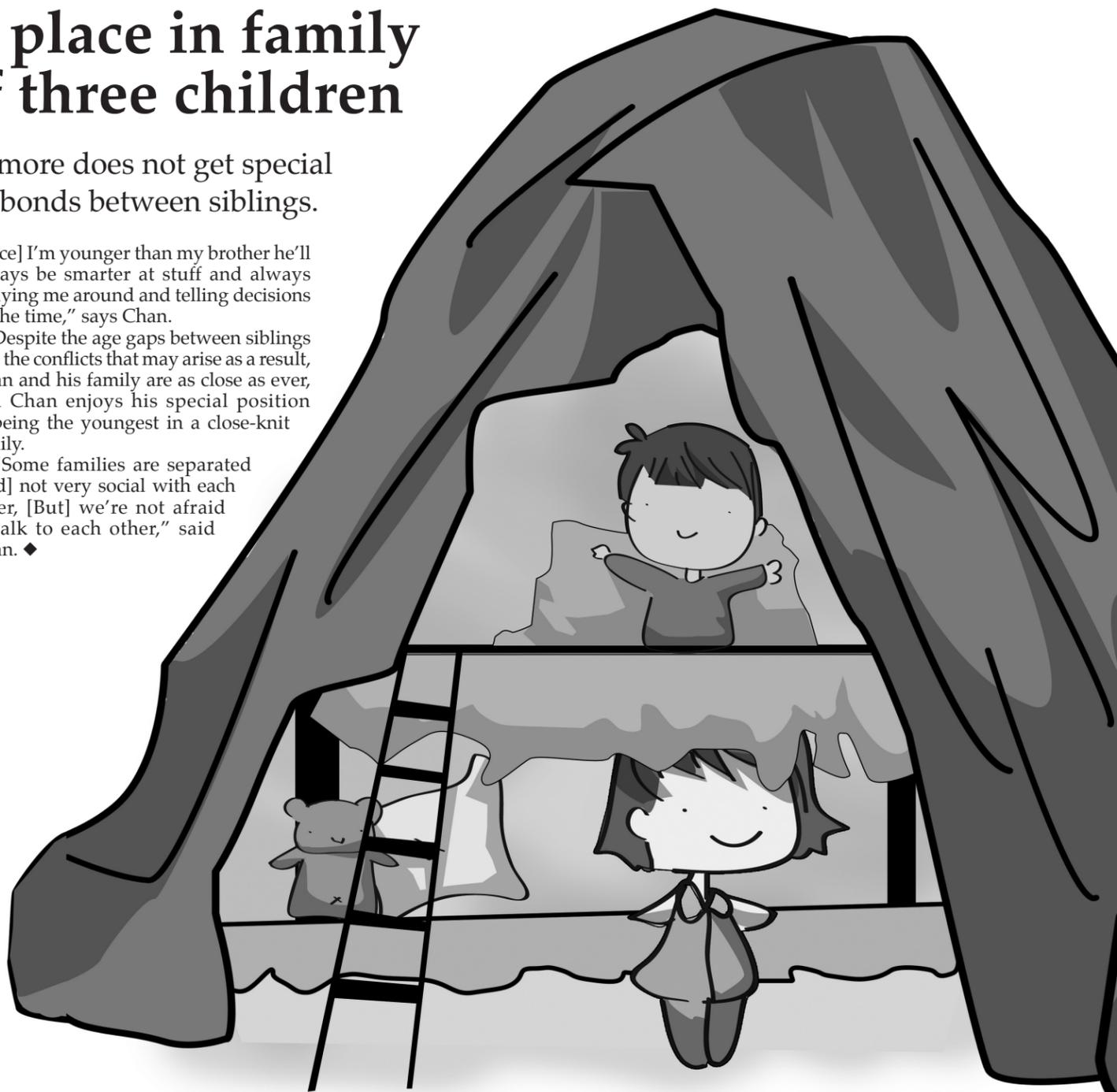
Although Chan has a five-year difference from his brother and a seven-year difference from his sister, he still remains in close contact with them.

"We're pretty close as a family but

[since] I'm younger than my brother he'll always be smarter at stuff and always bullying me around and telling decisions all the time," says Chan.

Despite the age gaps between siblings and the conflicts that may arise as a result, Chan and his family are as close as ever, and Chan enjoys his special position of being the youngest in a close-knit family.

"Some families are separated [and] not very social with each other, [But] we're not afraid to talk to each other," said Chan. ♦



Lonely only child yearns for company of siblings



Jordan Waite

Waite for me

Most of you have already gagged and choked after reading only the headline for this story. Yes I know, it might sound weird to say that siblings are good, but life as an only child isn't ideal either. My whole life consists of being bored, having two-on-one fights, having no sibling to pick on or learn from and not having a companion on vacations or those grown up dinners that your parents drag you to. It's true that some of this happens with siblings too, but as an only child, I have it 10 times worse.

Siblings might be really annoying, but nothing can be as annoying as being alone all the time. As an only child, I haven't been able to experience any of those fun or hard times that I would have if I had a sibling. There are also countless times when it would have been great to have a brother or sister to talk to. With the obvious age gap between my parents and me, I think it would be easier to learn life lessons from a sibling than from parents.

Another reason siblings aren't all bad is that two siblings stand a much better chance in an argument against parents than just one. If I want something but both parents don't, it's just a

plain no, but if I had a sibling on my side, it would at least be a fair discussion. This happened to me when I first wanted a game system. With only one begging voice, it took me longer to get a Game Cube than it took my friends with siblings.

Also, if I had an older brother, he would do bad things before me and I'd be able to say that whatever bad things I did weren't nearly as bad as what he did. Without that, the only thing I can be compared to is my dog. My parents often complain that even the dog is more obedient than I am.

I will admit that my parents spoil me a little, but the stereotype of being a snobby only child is almost never true. Being spoiled is dependent on the parents, not how many kids there are in the family. In a way, there are more chores because when parents don't want to do a chore, they only have one person to take over for them. With at least one sibling, the chores are divided between the two of them. Only children are responsible for the same number of chores, all by themselves.

You know those adult dinners or parties that your parents drag you to? Well, when I'm dragged to those, I'm the only kid there. It would be a lot more fun if I had a brother or sister to go with me and keep me company. It might be annoying company, but it would be better than nothing. A couple years ago at my grandpa's 80th birthday party, I was the only kid at a fancy Saratoga restaurant with my

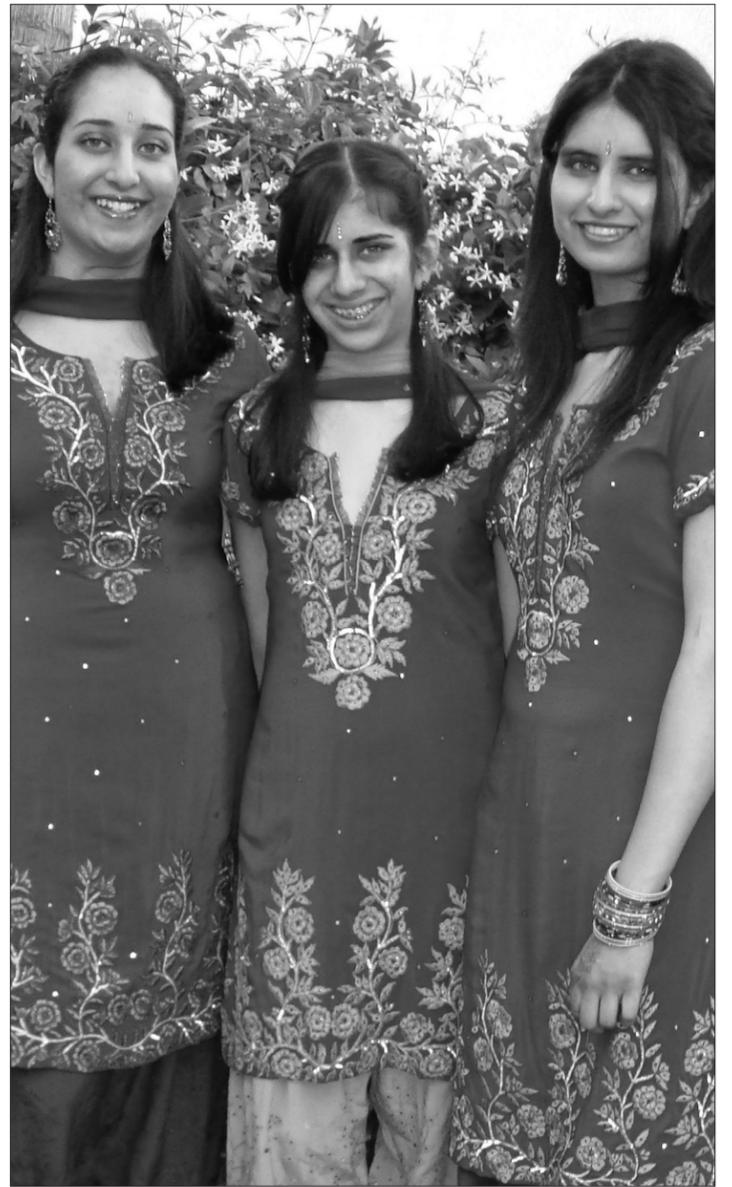
aunts, uncles, parents, and 35-year-old cousins. It was extremely boring. The small talk and presidential politics were too much to handle with the person closest to my age old enough to be my mother.

The same is true with vacations. All of our family vacations are just my parents and me. I can't explain how much fun it would be to have a brother or sister as someone else to enjoy the vacation with. On one of our family vacations to Hawaii, I was delighted to find that my second cousins, who are my age, were going to the same island for the same week. It was a refreshing change to get to hang out with them. If I had a brother or sister, maybe every vacation would be as fun as that one was.

On a positive note, I feel like I have a strong bond with my parents and I get their attention whenever I need it. It must be harder to form those valuable parent-child bonds with a family of many kids than with only one.

I used to think I was mostly alone with my struggles of being the only child, but in fact I am among 25 percent. The percentage of American women having only one child has more than doubled in 20 years, to almost one quarter.

Though I feel good about being one of many only children, I would still rather have a brother or sister. I really would want someone who could provide me with company and make my life more exciting. ♦



Apeksha Sharma

Senior Aneesha Sharma, sophomore Apeksha and 2006 alumna Aashima Sharma poses in their traditional Indian garb. Despite the stereotype, Aneesha enjoys being the middle child.

Despite stereotype, middle child fits in among family

by Rebecca Nguyen

Here is the stereotype: A middle child is someone who is neglected or ignored by both parents; someone who has to compete with a younger sibling and an older sibling for attention or has to live up to the accomplishments of the older one and act as a role model for the younger one. In short, the middle child is an after-thought, lost in the family.

Senior Aneesha Sharma is stuck between a younger sister, sophomore Apeksha Sharma, and a 20-year-old sister, Aashima Sharma, who attends University of the Pacific. Although she has grown up with two sisters, she said she doesn't fit into the middle child stereotype.

"I don't think I'm neglected. I have two sisters so obviously I don't get paid attention to all the time, but that's actually good," she said. "I appreciate that I don't have to focus on me all the time."

Having sisters is something she treasures, and she likes the fact that it takes the attention away from her at times.

"I think it's nice to have sisters who are always there.

You can talk to them and they're like automatic friends," said Aneesha. "It's good to have someone to take

the spotlight off of you sometimes."

Even though the sisters have their rough patches every now and then, they still find solutions and remain close.

"My family is pretty close, I mean we do have conflicts sometimes but we always get them resolved," said Sharma. "We don't let anything hang over."

With three sisters in the family, they always try to help each other and rarely focus only on themselves.

"I really admire that we do have problems and we're not perfect, [but] we don't try to be perfect. If we see something that's wrong or something that's bothering someone, we always try to fix it," said Aneesha. "We don't try to put our own needs above anybody else in our family. So I think that's really cool."

If she was given the chance to choose between being the oldest, middle, or youngest child, Aneesha would choose to be in the middle again.

"If I had to pick or could pick, I would definitely pick being a middle child because I have an older sister I can talk to if I need advice, and a younger sister who I can boss around if I want to," said Aneesha. "Or if I want to spend time with her, she looks up to me so I get to choose the stuff that we do together. So I think it's really cool how I have that on both sides. I get to experience all of it." ♦



Tiffany Tung

Flavorful and authentic curry well worth the price

by Mabel Hsu
and Pia Mishra

All summer long we had been hearing good reviews about Curry House, a restaurant that serves Japanese-style curries and spaghetti. Japanese curry is usually thicker, sweeter and milder than Indian curry. Curry House has been known for getting as close as authentic curry can get. We were able to find parking quickly in the garage adjacent to the building and made our way in.

Pia's Take:

Walking into Curry House, I immediately noticed the clean and spacious atmosphere. With neutral palettes and an inviting ambiance, the place seemed well worth the 30 minutes of driving back and forth in

search of a place to dine. We were shown to our seats quickly, and I began scanning the menu.

The menu consisted of original, yet simple Japanese dishes. Expecting such simple dishes to be cheap, I was taken aback at the high costs. After having a discussion with Mabel about our tight budget, I settled for the Chicken Curry priced at \$9.99 (which was really high considering my \$10 budget).

This dish came with white rice and a choice of soup. After shooting Mabel a puzzled look and receiving a firm nod for the corn soup, I gave the waiter my order.

The soup was the first to come, and it looked delicious.

My main meal followed quickly after. I was astounded at the huge plate filled with steamed rice. The curry came in a separate plain bowl that was set beside the plate of rice. The food was relatively mild but still tasted good. The plainness of the steamed rice complemented the seasoned taste of the curry. The meal was simple but enjoyable and the restaurant definitely calls for a trip back, but this time with a few more bucks.

Mabel's Take:

Curry House is clean and open with Asian designs much simpler than the heavy décor found in many other Asian restaurants. We were seated immediately by gracious waiters. After reviewing the menu, I decided on the Chicken Katsu for \$10.99. I was a little surprised at how high the price was for curry but found out that it was well worth the price.

I was given the choice between a salad and miso or corn soup as a starter to my meal. I chose the corn soup. There was no long wait, as the soup was brought out within five minutes. It was so beautiful, like a sea of yellow perfection, that I almost didn't want to eat it. The soup was wonderful; it was the perfect temperature between warm and hot, and was smooth and creamy.

Once the chicken and curry was placed before me, I knew that the \$10.99 plus tax that I paid for the meal was a deal. Though it appeared as a simple meal, the tastes were a medley of different



Mabel Hsu

A tidy Curry House serves different kinds of curries that come in different spice levels

spices that were in no way plain. The curry had a strong flavor, but was not overwhelming. My one concern was that I had ordered the curry to be "hot", but I felt that it wasn't spicy enough. The Chicken Katsu had arrived

neatly presented in strips over rice and curry. It was crispy on the outside and tender on the inside—all around delicious.

The meal was a filling one, and I would definitely go back again with friends or family.

Though the prices are a bit high, any customer would get food well worth their money. They take both cash and credit. Curry House has a hygienic and sunny atmosphere, and most importantly delicious food. ♦

Excuse me, but would you mind if I broke into song?



Emily Chen

Because you really care

Every time I watch a musical, be it the Broadway classic "Phantom of the Opera" or the cheesy Disney Channel mega-franchise "High School Musical", it completely consumes my life for a period of time.

Yes, I realize that despite the fact that "High School" is in the title of the movie, I am probably too old to be as enamored with the series as I am. In my defense, however, I don't watch for Zac Efron's disturbingly androgynous face, or Vanessa Hudgens's atrocious acting. I watch for the infectious songs and the ultimate escapism that the film provides.

I realize that the movies are poorly directed, and poorly acted, but who cares? Just sit back and enjoy the sparkly, glossy

spectacle. It doesn't aspire to be the next "Chicago" and it's well aware of the alternate universe in which it exists. It simply asks for viewers to embrace and appreciate the inherent cheesiness.

Musicals allow viewers to connect with a movie in a way that is simply not possible for normal movies. When viewers buy the soundtrack, every song transports them to that moment in the movie. Unlike most movie soundtracks, which may contain one hit song, every song on a musical's soundtrack has an impact on listeners and allows them to make a direct parallel from song to movie.

Singing allows actors to convey what might otherwise be too corny a message, in a more palatable form. Take the song "La Vie Boheme" from the musical "Rent" for example. If the characters were to say "to yoga, to yogurt, to rice and beans and cheese," you would likely be very confused. But because those words are sung, you accept it because, well, they're dancing on tables and strange lyrics are the least of what you're noticing.

I think the real reason I enjoy (or obsess over, really) musicals so much is that I'm jealous that my life isn't a musical. Don't deny, you've had the same thoughts. I simply refuse to believe I'm the only person out there who wishes her life were set to a soundtrack and that people would spontaneously break into song and dance.

I guess one could say that I live vicariously through my musicals, and by watching them countless times and memorizing all the songs, it indulges my innermost fantasy that my life could be a musical.

So I propose that we all learn a choreographed song and dance routine, and one day, let's all break out in song in the lunch line. You know you've longed for it, so now let's make our dreams a reality.

Or not. It won't change my eternal love for musicals. And until everybody sees the light, I'll still be here, looking up lyrics to the songs from "High School Musical 3" (which I'm so watching this weekend) and singing along at the top of my lungs. ♦

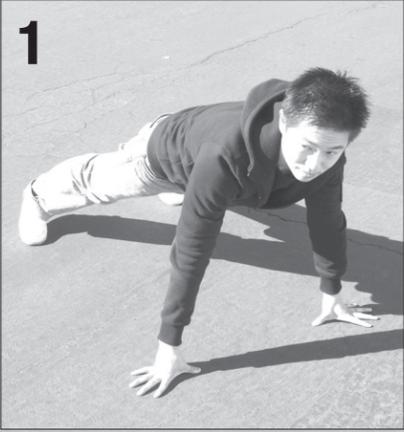
TOPTEN

MOST ORIGINAL HALLOWEEN COSTUMES

- 10 Chick Magnet: Buy some small chicks (the baby chickens!) and stick them onto yourself. You'll be pretty studly, and who knows, you might attract some real chicks.
- 9 Facebook: Well we're all obsessed with Facebook so why not just dress up as it? Print out your profile on a larger scale and paste it onto a poster board. Cut out a square where your profile picture would be and walk around with your face in it instead.
- 8 Grim Rapper: Take a normal grim reaper costume, put some grills on and load on some big gold chains as bling.
- 7 iPod: Get a big piece of green cardboard and draw the iPod controls onto it. Attach green balloons to make it look like a pea.
- 6 Nudist on Strike: Just paint a sign that states your cause and wear some clothes!
- 5 Miss Matched: Dress up as a beauty pageant contestant with a sash that says "Miss Matched" and accessories that are well, mismatched.
- 4 Holy Cow: Dress up as a cow but add some wings and a halo.
- 3 Jonas Brothers: all the ladies will be "Burnin' Up" when they see you as Nick Jonas
- 2 Make a Transformers costume: that'll be SICK!
- 1 Mr. Newport: Bring back memories of world map tests.

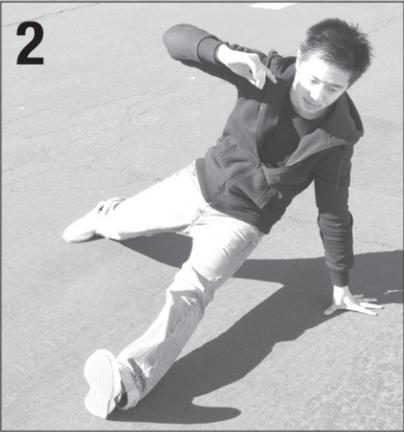
—by Pia Mishra & Mika Padmanabhan

1



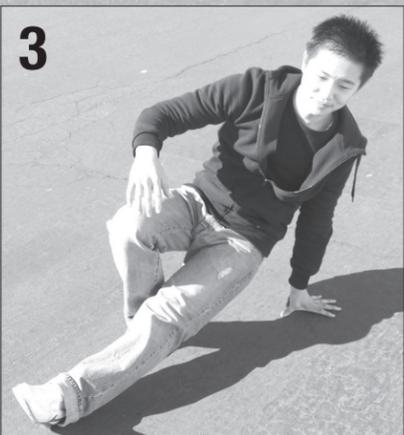
Start in pushup position, spread legs.

2



Raise right hand, straighten left leg with foot where right hand just was.

3



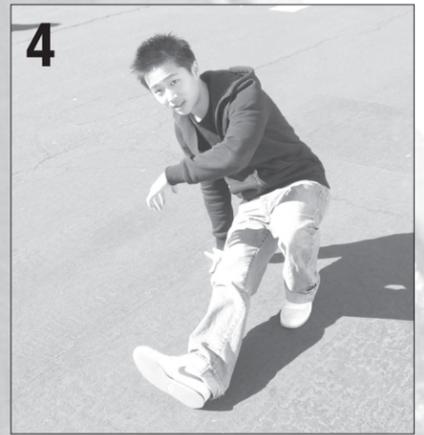
Tuck right foot into back of left knee joint.

SIX-STEPPIN'

with Sukai Chen



4



Place right hand on ground, swing left leg in into crab position.

5



Swing right leg in circular motion, wrap it around so it touches left knee.

6



Move left foot backwards, step right leg back to get into pushup position.

photos by Jordan Waite

BREAKIN' IT DOWN

Saratoga students test their athletic ability with the dance craze that's sweeping the globe



It looks so hard, but it's really entertaining. You're like, 'Oh, my god, I wish I could do that.'



senior Gretha Loubser



It's pretty cool, I guess, but there are too many wannabes in my class.

sophomore Cid Diaz



Hundreds of students crowded around the quad and cheered as seniors Matt Leung and Nikki Chang opened their class's quad day show by wowing Saratoga with their unbelievable breakdancing talents. Sweat gleamed on their arms as they performed solo routines featuring their own superhuman moves.

Ever since breakdancing started in the 1970s as an alternative to gang violence, the high-energy style of dancing has been sweeping the world. Many professionals—referred to as b-boys and b-girls—dedicate their lives to perfecting their windmills, flares and freezes, but Chang managed to grasp a couple of eye-popping moves within four weeks.

"I started learning two weeks before Homecoming, and [Leung] and I practiced every day during tutorial, lunch and after school," said Chang.

Chang, a member of the school's Color Guard team, feels that breakdancing came easier to her due to her prior experience with other forms of dance. She credits Leung as well as several dancers on TV for inspiring her to pursue breakdancing.

For Chang, breakdancing has been mostly a recreational activity, and although she hopes to continue dancing, she does not have any plans for the future.

Sophomore Ricky Chiu, on the other hand, harbors quite different ideas.

"If I get a good job in the future, I want to continue to breakdance and go pro," he said.

Chiu, unlike Chang, has been dancing for a couple of years, but he admits that he wasn't as passionate then as he is now.

"I started back in eighth grade, but I didn't have much interest then because I wasn't really physically built for breakdancing," said Chiu. "I really started practicing during freshman year when I saw my friends breakdancing. When you look at people who can actually breakdance, you get motivated and inspired to try it yourself."

For Chiu, there were several limitations he had to overcome to be a successful breakdancer, including the strain on his body and the complaints of his parents. But, he said, the effort was worth it.

"Breakdancing can be a lot of hard work because you need a certain body build," said Chiu. "Plus, my parents didn't want me breakdancing so I had to practice during school and in my room when they weren't watching. But, it's fun once you know how to do it. Compared to many other activities, it is very invigorating." ♦

—by Andy Tsao

"Breakdancing can be a lot of hard work, but it's fun once you know how to do it. It is very invigorating."

—sophomore Ricky Chiu



It's a way of expressing yourself and it looks sick!

junior Guillaume Bellagarda

It looks like they're in really uncomfortable positions but they are able to sustain it.



freshman Olivia Chock



Undefeated girls tie rival LG, remain atop league

by Shannon Galvin
and Ren Norris

When Falcon field hockey challenged longtime rival Los Gatos at home turf under the lights, there was more than just dignity on the line, there was the first place ranking.

Both teams held identical undefeated records of 3-0-1 leading into the game—both tied for first in the Mt. Hamilton Division, the toughest section of the Blossom Valley Athletic League.

The stands were filled as both teams played a hard-hitting game, but in the end, the teams remained in a tie with a final score of 1-1.

“We played intense and we played our game,” said senior co-captain Kelly Darchuk. “There’s really nothing else we could have done, but we should have won.”

In the first half of the game, Saratoga’s defense was tested as the girls struggled to move the ball up the field. Seniors Laura Ruddy and Megan Mandell and junior Anna Schroeder led the defensive effort throughout the game.

Darchuk and seniors Katie and Claire Marsh helped wake up the Los Gatos defense with several breakaways in the first half.

The Lady Falcons then won a stroke, similar to a penalty kick in soccer, shortly afterwards when the Wildcat goalie trapped the ball in her gear. Darchuk took the stroke, but it was stopped by the diving Los Gatos goalie.

With six minutes left in the first half, Wildcat senior co-captain Rachelle Comeau scored, making it 1-0 at half time.

In the second half, the Marsh twins tied up the score. Katie dribbled the ball up in a breakaway, dodged the diving goalie and passed it Claire, who finished with a shot at the upper corner.

Los Gatos had another opportunity to score with a short corner with one minute



Melody Zhang

Sophomore Ren Norris takes a lunge at the ball during a game against Los Gatos on Oct. 8. The Falcons tied the Wildcats 1-1.

left in the game, where the offense lines up its players on the outside of the penalty to circle for an opportunity to score against four defensive players, but senior goalie Stephanie Douglass saved it with a spectacular dive.

With the score tied at the conclusion of the game, both teams went into a sudden-death overtime, where seven players play for seven minutes.

Los Gatos received three offensive short corners during the overtime, but Falcon defense was able to stop all of them. Saratoga had several breakaways during the seven minutes, but was unable to score any goals.

The game concluded with a draw, and both teams remained tied for first place in their division.

“We played well and worked hard,” said coach Amber Wilson. “It was tough against such a physical team, and it took us a while to figure them out. But overall, we gave them a tough match.”

Saratoga field hockey is in the middle of a successful season, despite injuries that continue to hurt the team. On Oct. 3, they beat last year’s CCS champions St. Francis with a final score of 2-1, with both goals scored by Ruddy. Sophomore Shea Sullivan moved up from JV to help many players out. Sullivan had been a leading scorer for JV.

Wilson believes that if players are practicing hard, they should be rewarded with getting to play varsity.

“Shea’s been playing really well and working really hard,” said Wilson. “We

have four senior forwards so we need to start thinking about next year. Plus we’ve had so many injuries that we need more subs.”

The team hopes to continue its success and hold on to first place as they begin the second half of the season and play all of the teams in its division a second time.

The next home game is on Oct. 29 at 7:30 p.m. under the lights against St. Francis. That same week, the team also faces off again against the Wildcats on Oct. 31 at Los Gatos.

At the end of the season, Wilson plans to step down, and the girls are determined to make this last season the best.

“I’m not worried about winning league. We’re still undefeated and tied for first,” said Wilson. ♦

BOYS' WATER POLO



Felix Tuan

Senior goalie Justin Winningham looks to pass during the Oct. 7 game against Wilcox.

Goalie’s wide wingspan stops opponents’ scores

by Kevin Mu
and Guy Quanrud

Of all the players on the boys’ varsity water polo team, senior Justin Winningham is the tallest. His height of 6’5” dwarfs his fellow teammates and provides him with an advantage as goalie: his massive wingspan. His long arms cover up most of the goal and frustrate opposing players, boosting the team’s defensive presence.

Thanks largely to Winningham, the Falcons have roared to a 6-1 record, a great improvement from last season. Although Winningham is only one player, his skills equip the team with insurance against fast-break counters and make the Falcons dynamic at both ends of the pool.

“Justin has gotten a lot better. He’s amazing,” said junior Kevin Rollinson. “He’s definitely helped [us win].”

In a recent game against Wilcox, Winningham really came through in a clutch, blocking three penalty shots, which in water polo are just five meters from the goal. As a result, Saratoga was able to slip by the Chargers 8-7. Even in the Falcons’ only loss of the year, Winningham kept the defense intact against Lynbrook’s upbeat offensive strategy, but in the end, the Vikings won 8-7.

“We lost because we weren’t all at our best, but we still played a really good game,” said Winningham. “Lynbrook just played a different type of offense than

we’ve ever seen before.”

Because the team moved down to a lower division this year, it has done well; however, Winningham admits that he underestimated the caliber of the schools in their new league.

“The teams are a lot harder than I thought they would be,” said Winningham. “We thought it would be much easier since we moved down a [division], but they’re actually pretty good.”

With Winningham as goalie, the Falcons can expect to have an edge in their games for the rest of the season. His goalkeeping, combined with the team’s strong offense, is sure to lead the Falcons to success this season.

During the team’s Oct. 16 victory over Fremont, Winningham dominated, allowing only four goals to Saratoga’s nine.

“Fremont played dirty,” said Rollinson, “but in the end we were able to prevail.”

Saratoga crushed Santa Clara 13-5 in their game Oct. 14, playing with strong defense and aggressive offense. It was a close game at halftime with the Falcons leading 4-3, but the Falcons pulled away in the third quarter with a flurry of goals and ended the game with a blowout.

“[In the third quarter] we countered a lot and we shot more,” senior captain Nick Mortazavi said. “It was a great game.”

Mortazavi and fellow captain senior Arian Mahini were the key players in the game, scoring three and four goals, respectively. ♦

FOOTBALL

Falcons struggle with injuries, still win two in row

by Karthik Annaamalai
and Abhi Venkataramana

The Falcons looked strong as they dominated their past two games against Westmont and Los Altos.

The offense moved the ball well and the defense played its part by forcing many turnovers, but several injuries have forced the team to shuffle the lineup.

Senior linebacker Alex Youngs suffered a mild concussion during the game against Alisal and is hoping to get back into the action as soon as possible.

"When I was carrying the ball in the game," said Youngs, "I put my head down instead of lowering my shoulder. The next thing I know, I'm on the ground feeling dizzy."

Youngs, the starting fullback and linebacker before the concussion, feels that injuries have affected the team greatly.

"Some practices, we don't have enough players to practice, so the coaches pretend they are players," said Youngs. "Imagine how good our team would be if we didn't have any injuries."

Another starter, junior safety

Trevor Teerlink, broke his arm while roller blading.

"Roller blading was a stupid way to get hurt and I regret it," said Teerlink. "Because of my injury, many players had to switch positions. Quarterback Michael Guercio had to play safety for me. No coach ever wants their quarterback to play defense in case the quarterback gets hurt."

Though the Falcons have many injuries, head coach Tim Lugo feels that the team has stepped up in the last couple of weeks.

"The injuries really hurt our depth chart. Luckily, we will be getting back most of our players in time for the toughest part of our schedule."

—head coach Tim Lugo

"The injuries hurt our depth chart greatly," said Lugo. "We only have 30 players,

so it is hard to give the players who aren't injured a rest and get them off of the field. Luckily, we will be getting back most of our injured players soon, just in time for the toughest part of our schedule."

Lugo promoted sophomore fullback and linebacker Greg Johnson from JV to varsity to help combat the injuries.

"Johnson has played very well for us," said Lugo. "He filled in a huge hole in our team made because of injuries. He fit in just as if he had been there the whole



Theresa Yeh

Senior Mat Spencer carries the ball for a touchdown during the Falcons' 48-13 win over Los Altos on Oct. 3.

year."

Still plagued with injuries, the Falcons played Mountain View on Oct. 10, dominating the Spartans 56-14. The week before, the team opened division play with a 48-13 blowout over the Los Altos Eagles. The Falcons' Wing T offense set them up for big running plays that led to their Homecoming victory.

"We executed our plays very well on offense," said senior running back Mat Spencer, who scored

two touchdowns in the game. "All the players were comfortable with the new offensive scheme, so we turned the ball over less than we did in our previous games, which was vital to our success."

Due to printing deadlines, *The Falcon* was unable to cover Saratoga's Oct. 17 game against Palo Alto.

The Falcons will be playing the Los Gatos Wildcats in their third division game at 7:30 p.m. tonight. ♦

GIRLS' WATER POLO

Speedy junior leads team

by Amalie MacGowan
and Pia Mishra

After two disappointing losses against Palo Alto on Oct. 7 and Los Gatos on Oct. 14, the members of the girls' varsity water polo team were delighted with their 11-8 win against Mountain View on Oct. 16. They have taken their victory in stride and continue to improve.

A big part of their success has been junior Lauren Opatrny who has put her best effort forth in order to strengthen the team.

As sprinter on the team, she puts it on herself to make sure the ball gets to her team and that the game stays active.

From the time she began at age six, Opatrny has never stopped swimming. Her passion for swimming has fed into her love for water polo. Opatrny has taken this passion and turned it into drive to constantly improve herself as a member of the team.

After only a few summers of being part of a swim team, it became apparent to Opatrny that she really had a knack for swimming.

Whether it was freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke or butterfly, she always seemed to have it in her to beat the competition. It wasn't until her sophomore year that she decided she wanted a break.

"I got really sick of swimming all of the time, and lots of my friends were already on the water polo team," said Opatrny. "Because I was pretty fast, I made it on the varsity team, but I had never played water polo before."

Opatrny had a hard time becoming accustomed to the rules and regula-

tions of water polo. Since every concept was new to her, she struggled but her strength in swimming helped to keep her ahead in the game.

Even with these difficulties, Opatrny enjoys the sport, seeing it as a respite from her hectic swimming schedule during the year and a fun way to spend time with her friends.

"Many of my friends are on the team, and water polo is a great sport to socialize, yet still work and exercise at the same time," said Opatrny. She also joked that team dinners may be one of her favorite parts of being on the team.

As a result of her physically demanding workouts, Opatrny is suffering a mild case of bicep tendonitis in her right shoulder. It doesn't seem to bother her during the games, but it is still a nuisance to her during everyday practice.

"It isn't a very serious injury, but hopefully it'll get better by the end of the season," said Opatrny.

As a team member, Opatrny tries her best every game to help her team work together. Opatrny feels that one of the best and strongest aspects of the team is the amiable relationship between the girls.

"Lauren's spontaneity and enthusiasm always pump up the team," said coach Courtney Crase. "She has really been improving this year by scoring a lot more goals and is one of the fastest swimmers I've seen."

With just a few weeks left in the season, Opatrny hopes to lead the Falcons to wins against Los Gatos, Mountain View, Gunn and Los Altos, teams the girls will be playing for a second time. ♦



Opatrny

GIRLS' TENNIS

Toga caught in three-way tie for first place in division

by Kelly Lamble
and Annie Lee

The sunlight began to wane and the temperature began to drop as the girls' tennis team lined the fence, watching anxiously as two lone figures continued to battle. Back and forth the ball soared as the Oct. 7 match between long-time rivals Saratoga and Monta Vista hovered at a 3-3 standstill. No. 4 singles player freshmen Crystal Yen finally lost 6-4 in the third set after several hours of nail-biting play, bringing the final score to a disappointing 4-3 loss.

No. 2 singles player sophomore Catherine Nguyen brought home the only singles win of the match, 7-6 (11-9), 6-2. The Falcons' other wins came at No. 1 and No. 2 doubles. No. 1 doubles team junior Annie Lee and freshman Sarah Lum won a tough first set 7-6 (7-3), then dominated the second set 6-0. No. 2 doubles team freshman Lisa Asai and sophomore Mary Edman came back after losing the first set 3-6 to win 6-4, 6-2.

No. 1 singles player senior co-captain Lindsey Marsh lost a tough match in two tiebreakers. No. 3 doubles team, junior co-captain Samantha Tseng and sophomore Carolyn Chen, also fell to the Matadors.

"Our singles match up very well, but if we're going to beat Monta Vista and the tougher teams in our league, we need to work on doubles," said coach Tom Uyehara.

The girls have until Oct. 21, the date of their next match against Monta Vista, to beef up their doubles.

"That match is going to be won in

the doubles department," said Uyehara. "They have a very tough singles group so we're going to have to sweep the doubles. I think the chemistry is very good between the teams, but we just have to be a little more consistent day in and day out."

Despite this loss, the Falcons still have a 6-1 record and are in a three-way tie with Monta Vista and Palo Alto for first place in the El Camino Division.

Although it has not had a strong tennis tradition, Palo Alto proved to be surprisingly tough this year. The Falcons barely scraped by with a win on Oct. 2, taking the match 4-3.

Part of the reason this match so difficult was that Palo Alto strategically stacked its players. According to the Saratoga team, the Viking girls who usually play No. 2 and No. 3 singles dropped down to challenge the Falcons' No. 1 doubles team. As a result, the Falcons dropped the No. 1 doubles match, while Nguyen and No. 3 singles player senior co-captain Kara Wang breezed to easy victories. The Falcons also lost No. 1 singles and No. 2 doubles.

"They came out with a different lineup than I anticipated, but I still think we played very well despite that," said Uyehara.

As the girls prepare for the second half of their season, they are hoping to break the current three-way tie for first and come out on top.

"I'm very happy with the results for the first half of the season. I think we are considered one of the teams to beat," said Uyehara. "With the amount of depth that we have in our lineup, we will hopefully be one of the top three teams in CCS this year." ♦

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY



Junior Christine La races around the course at the Lynbrook Center Meet on Sept. 4.

courtesy of Pro Image Studios

Junior's perseverance yields impressive times

by Ashley Chou

Six years ago she was a timid little fifth grader silently cheering on her twin brothers during their cross country and track and field races. Six years ago swimming was her passion. Six years ago, she had no idea she'd become one of the top girls' cross country runners at Saratoga High.

Meet Christine La, a junior who's been running since sixth grade, with a mile personal record of 5:43.

Since freshman year, La has been working her way up through the competition, attempting to shave her times second by second. Cross country, though, has never been an overly consuming obsession for her.

"I never ran on the weekends or anything of that sort," said La. "I never did anything extra."

Her speed developed naturally; long years of practice and consistent participation in cross country and track and field

for the past six years eventually earned her a spot on the varsity team.

"In the beginning it was a little weird being on varsity; it kind of just happened really fast," said La. "I actually liked JV more because you could place in the top 10."

Coming back from a foot injury last track season, La said her main focus now is the Central Coast Sectionals, coming up on Nov. 15.

CCS alternates between Toro Park in Salinas and Crystal Springs in Belmont; La prefers to run the latter.

"I like Crystal better because it feels shorter—the first mile goes by really quickly—and it's calmer, there's not as many people rushing in the beginning," said La.

The team will be competing at Toro this time around.

Despite that, La hopes to do well and simply have fun.

"I'm trying to improve my times," said La. "I want to get faster every year." ♦

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

5K course gives runners preview of state meet

by Sophia Cooper and Kelly Lamble

They are one step closer to success. Three of the top seven runners on the boys' cross country team raced at the 5K Clovis Invitational in Fresno on Oct. 11. This was their only chance to become familiar with the state meet course before the actual race on Nov. 29.

Senior co-captain Alan Menezes led the group, placing 139th of over 1,300 racers. Among the 11 CCS teams that attended, Menezes placed 12th with a time of 16:24, boding well for CCS finals when the top 10 runners go to the state championships. Senior co-captain Kian Banks also ran well, finishing in 16:44, and junior Kyle Borch crossed the finish line at 17:53.

The other four members of the varsity team were not able to compete due to various injuries and previous commitments. Freshman Harry Curtis recently injured his Achilles tendon and junior Nick Olsen is recovering from a torn IT band and should be able to run in the coming weeks.

"Everyone is starting to get healthy

again so our chances of making state are good," said Banks.

Sophomore Kyle Fukui also missed the race because he was participating in the marching band competition at Cupertino High.

Menezes and Banks finished first and second on Oct. 2, with times of 16:17 and 16:40, respectively, in the senior race at the SCVAL Crystal Springs meet, a hilly, dusty, 2.95-mile course.

Neither Borch nor Olsen raced due to injuries, but sophomore Kyle Fukui finished fifth in his grade level race, receiving a time of 17:35. Curtis ran to 12th place in the freshman race, putting out a strong performance with his time of 18:37.

Six runners also attended the Stanford Invitational on Sept. 27. Menezes placed 15th in the Division III Varsity Boys' race, followed by Banks in 25th. Other racers included Fukui, Curtis and sophomores Garrick Chan and Wesley Tai.

The boys also raced at a SCVAL meet at Crystal Springs yesterday, but due to publication deadlines *The Falcon* could not print the results. Upcoming meets include league finals on Nov. 4. ♦

GIRLS' GOLF



Kevin Rollinson

Sophomore Annaliese Parker practices her putting at the Saratoga Country Club.

Underclassmen lead team in first official season

by Tim Rollinson and Uttara Sivaram

The No. 1 and 2 players are sophomores. The No. 3 player is a freshman. Typical JV team, right?

No, this is the first year girls' varsity golf team led by sophomores Uttara Sivaram and Annaliese Parker and freshman Jayten Weiss. The single freshman on the team, Weiss, who took the No. 3 spot despite having only one year of previous experience, has proven to be a key player.

"This season has been really fun and I plan on playing for the next four years," said Weiss.

The roster also shows another positive stat—no seniors.

"There are a lot of young players and they all work together really well," said coach Casey Hall.

The players say that although their record may not indicate it, they have had a successful first season and were able to stay competitive with much more experienced teams. A win over Woodside and a close loss to rival Los Gatos proved the potential of these

girls.

"Many of the girls have only been playing golf for a short amount of time," said Hall, "so the opportunity to play so often and be surrounded by other girls who enjoy the game is phenomenal."

Sivaram missed a chance to play on the co-ed team last year, but she has been enjoying her No. 1 spot. Parker complements her well as the No. 2 player, posting similar scores during the majority of the team's matches.

"It is a little weird being the only freshman on the team, but overall it's been a really good experience," said Weiss.

This young group has shown an impressive amount of leadership and has paved the way for a bright future for the team.

"We are going to go out and give it our all in every match," said Hall. "Winning is just an added bonus."

The team wrapped up its debut season on Oct. 15 with a match against Burlingame and Capuchino at Poplar Creek. After the season is over, CCS participants will be decided based on each girl's individual scores. ♦

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GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Losing streak forces team to take new approach

COACH SWITCHES AROUND POSITIONS AND TECHNIQUES IN ORDER TO IMPROVE PLAY, BRING WINS

by Nathan Kim

With a 0-7 league record, chances of making CCS are looking very slim for the Lady Falcons. Head coach Brad Frederickson has found some sunlight in the gloomy situation by using the losing streak as an opportunity to bring the players closer together.

Frederickson decided to experiment by switching the positions of his players on the court. He suggested a potential change, switching junior setter Alysia Patel to libero, while moving junior defensive specialist Emily Baba up to the net as an alternate setter.

"[Frederickson] moved us around on the court to give us a better understanding of where our [teammates] are at," said junior outside hitter Nicole Gragnola.

The team agreed that this "eye-opener" could potentially help them cover the holes on the court better.

On Oct. 16, Saratoga played a close first two games against Homestead, but lost their steam and fell in four games. The Lady Falcons won the first game, but lost: 27-25, 23-25, 14-25 and 15-25. Weak backrow play proved to be a recurring problem leading to their loss.

Saratoga battled Mountain View on Oct. 14, but lost after pushing their opponent to four games. Senior middle Kiersten Dolbec played a strong defensive game at the net, while leading her team

in blocks. The Lady Falcons prevailed in the third game, but lost their momentum in the fourth, to lose: 20-25, 17-25, 25-22 and 16-25.

On Oct. 9, Saratoga played undefeated Palo Alto, a game that was previously scheduled for Oct. 8. The schedule was changed due to the Palo Alto coach's recognition of Yom Kippur. The first game was noteworthy, but Saratoga still fell in three games, losing: 20-25, 9-25 and 16-25.

Saratoga faced off against its rival, Los Gatos, on Oct. 6; however, due to a combination of bad passes and missed serves, Saratoga lost in three games: 20-25, 17-25 and 19-25. Gragnola led the Lady Falcons with seven kills. This offensive front

was not enough to penetrate the Wildcats' defensive game in the end.

"They had more experience than us in years, not necessarily in skill," said Baba. "I think most of

their players probably played [club volleyball]."

Having played all the teams in their division once again, the Lady Falcons started from the top of the list with a loss against Homestead on Oct. 16. The following week, they had match-ups against Gunn on Tuesday and Los Altos on Thursday, both of which were home games. Scores could not be printed due to publication deadlines. ♦

"[Frederickson] moved us around on the court to give us a better understanding of where our [teammates] are at."

— junior Nicole Gragnola



Melody Zhang

SENIORS KATE STEWART AND SAMI LOVELADY GO FOR THE BLOCK AGAINST MOUNTAIN VIEW ON OCT. 14. SARATOGA LOST AFTER PUSHING THE SPARTANS TO FOUR GAMES.



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The 'shot' heard around town

No one knew what happened at Lexington and Concord. Until now. It was an epic dance battle. Juniors Edwin Chen, Eric Sun, and Jason Yoon were filming a video at Foothill Elementary for their AP United States History class on Sept. 28. The boys, equipped with airsoft guns for special effect, attempted to dance to the music blasting from Chen's car.

Sun said they were in the process of filming the epic dance battle at Foothill Elementary when they "had a little scene," said Sun. A police car passed by and the boys tried to hide their props. "We put away all of our guns and tried to act natural," said Chen. After the police officer left and Sun continued to break dance, the officer came back.

When Sun realized the cop was watching, the cop took out his megaphone and yelled into it, "The neighbors are complaining about your dancing."

Then he yelled, "Just kidding!" and drove away. Yoon, Sun and Chen stood there looking at each other, astonished.

Safine becomes a father

Assistant principal Brian Safine and his wife brought their first son, Eli Xavier, into the world Oct. 7. The baby weighed 7 pounds and 15 ounces at birth.

"It's very powerful now that someone else is relying on me throughout the day and the course of his young life," said Safine.

Safine's wife and he did not feel nervous or apprehensive during the process, but Safine did feel some distress.

"Of course, as any father and husband would be, I would be concerned with the trauma a father and mother, for that matter, experience through the delivery," said Safine. "This is our first, so we are obviously unsure about what things might look like in the delivery room. I just want my wife to be well."

Safine took a break from working at the office for a week to be with his wife. It was a tough time for Safine, as he had to balance his family situation, teacher evaluations and the busy college application season.

Change in jersey tradition increases spirit

Most students are accustomed to cheerleaders walking around in the football players' jerseys, so many students were shocked to see assistant principal Joe Bosco and teachers Bill Peck and Julie Scola, among others, repping the SHS garb on Homecoming Friday (Oct. 3).

Football coach Tim Lugo brought the idea to SHS from Pioneer High, where it had been an eight-year tradition.

"It gives the students a chance to honor their teachers, and it increases attendance at the football games," said Lugo.

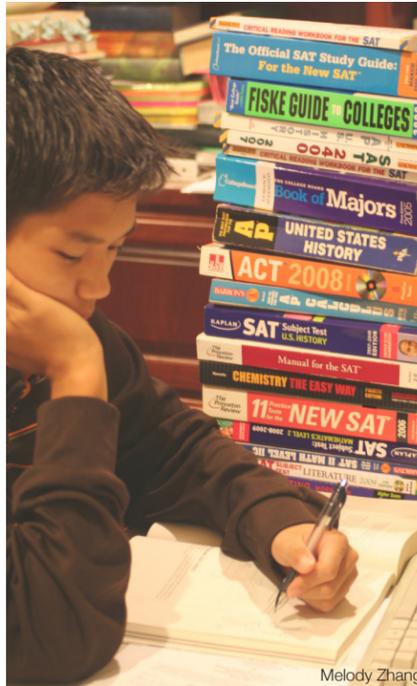
This change did not only help football players get involved in the community and bridge the student-teacher gap, but it was also a great morale booster for the staff.

"It made my week," said Peck. "It made me feel special because out of all the teachers I had been chosen."

Bosco was wearing the jersey of number 21 junior cornerback Yash Chaudry. "It was strange to see someone else wearing my jersey, but it was cool to see all the recognition he was getting and the fun he was having," he said.

—by Mira Chaykin and Girish Swaminath

FALCON FREEZE FRAME



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang



Jordan Waite



Melody Zhang



Melody Zhang

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: **CRAMMING** SOPHOMORE VICTOR ZHANG DOES SOME LAST MINUTE SAT PREP ON OCT. 3. **BING** SENIORS TINA CLARK, ABBY CONROY, CHRISTINA ROBERT AND JUNIOR ROBIN LIU SET UP FOR HAND BELL CHOIR ON OCT. 6. **YUM** SENIOR DEBORAH LIN AND SOPHOMORE RICKY CHU SIGN IN AT CULINARY CLUB ON OCT. 8. **MOVIE NIGHT** FRESHMEN ANSHA HUSSAIN, EVA JOHNSON, SALLY QUEVEDO AND EMMA VALIANT ENJOY THE LINK CREW MOVIE NIGHT ON OCT. 15. **LALA** MEN'S CHOIR SING DURING THEIR WEDNESDAY LUNCH PRACTICE ON OCT. 14.

TOPTEN

WAYS TO GET INTO THE WHITE HOUSE

- 10 Declare yourself as a hockey mom/pitbull with lipstick; that Palin is one sly dog.
- 9 Run for president over and over: Eventually someone who actually has a chance is sure to pick you as a running mate.
- 8 Break in; you'll be in there for a minute before you're shot down by the secret service.
- 7 Dress up as the president's wife and see how far that takes you.
- 6 Appeal to indie movie fans by making sure your daughter's life matches the plot of "Juno."
- 5 Try to date the president's daughter.
- 4 Avoid all "hard" questions and talk about how you can see Russia from your backyard.
- 3 If you can't say "nuclear" right, you already have an advantage.
- 2 Sign up for one of those guided tours of the White House. Then you can conveniently "get lost" and find yourself in the Oval Office.
- 1 Climb in through a window; that's how we get into our houses all the time.

—by Kavya Nagarajan and Tim Rollinson

Columnist detests friendly side-pokes



Sophia Cooper

Story of my Life

It's become an easy source of entertainment. You can access it any place where there are people. It's guaranteed to bring laughter, shrieks and possibly make you cry.

What is it? The side-poke. Being rather spastic, I often fall victim to this personal attack.

People have found it entertaining to poke my side and see the resulting tsunami of flailing arms and legs.

Even as I'm writing this story, I'm squished between two reporters who are constantly poking me. Thanks, Jordan and Nathan!

The typical reactions can also

cause physical injuries. When in the process of squirming away from my attacker, I have hit my head, knuckles, knees, feet and elbows on objects (or people) nearby. It's dangerous to be within a 7-foot radius of me.

For some reason, it's usually guys who initiate this modern-day torture.

Maybe it's an attempt to compensate for their lack of flirting abilities, or maybe they still think girls have cooties and they're afraid to have an actual conversation. FYI: We're more likely to talk to you if you don't make us spazz out.

When I used to complain to my mom about the preschool bully chasing me around the playground, she told me, "Well, dear, they can't chase you if you don't run." My proposed solution to this epidemic of spasms: Stop reacting.

It is our natural human instinct to coil away from the

side-pokes; therefore, we need persistence and determination to take down this poke-fest. Where would we be if we simply let our challenges beat us?

If the colonists had simply let Great Britain tax them without representation, the United States of America might not exist. Martin Luther King fought the system and helped gain full rights for African Americans.

Elle Woods stood up for blondes everywhere when she turned down Professor Callahan and won Brooke Windham's murder trial. Side-pokes are our generation's challenge.

So fight against it! Resist the urge not only to spazz out, but also to poke others.

Follow the golden rule: Do unto others as you would do unto you.

But if you still get side-poked, try a convenient spazz-punch to your attacker's nose. That ought to teach 'em. ♦