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LEADERSHIP CHANGES

New head of district appointed

BY Edward Dong & SanjNalwa

At around 6 ft tall, with graying hair and sea blue eyes, Bob Mistele brings to mind the image of a leader. Well, a leader he is.

On Oct. 4, the Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District (LGSUHSD) appointed Mistele the district's new superintendent. Mistele, who had been the district's assistant superintendent of human resources for four years, replaced Cary Matsuoka after the latter resigned in June to become superintendent of the Milpitas Union School District.

Mistele applied for the superintendent position in August and was interviewed on Sep. 19.

"It was a long day of interviewing," Mistele said. "I think I was relieved, ecstatic and then tired. All those in one."

Mistele, now 57, grew up in Philadelphia with four sisters and a brother. His father worked as a plant foreman, his mother a homemaker. Two of his older siblings also pursued careers in teaching.

"I always wanted to be a teacher, from the beginning," Mistele said. "It was always something that I had a passion for. I like people and I like being around students."

Mistele attended a Catholic high school in Philadelphia and then a Catholic college in Pennsylvania, but received his bachelor's degree from Arizona State University. He received his teaching credential from Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo.

Mistele started out as a special education teacher in San Luis Obispo. He then proceeded to teach elementary school at Arroyo Grande for six years, eventually becoming the school's principal.

>> SUPERINTENDENT on pg. 7

COLLEGE TRENDS

UCs no longer an automatic decision



\$15,000

The difference in cost between private universities and in-state universities

"Though I got into Berkeley and LA, I chose Duke for the wealth of opportunities it afforded me over the UC system."

-Vijay Menon (class of '11)

7%

Difference in the number of students who chose private universities over UCs

BY SabrinaCismas

For the first time in school history, more students from the graduating class of 2011 enrolled in private colleges than in the University of California system.

According to assistant principal Brian Safine, 33 percent of last year's seniors are currently attending private colleges while 26 percent are at the UCs. The graduating class of 2010 chose UC schools over privates by a margin of 33 to 30 percent.

"Our students are still able to gain

admission to the UCs," Safine said. "Admissions-wise it's fine, they're just making different choices."

Even though UCs are becoming increasingly selective, more students are choosing not to enroll at UCs mostly because they are finding that private schools are more tailored to their needs, Safine said.

Alumnus Nandini Ruparel, currently a freshman at the University of Southern California, said she chose USC because she wouldn't find the same level of attention at a public school.

"I dislike large classes, and I'm not the kind of person who fights for classes, so [a UC] wouldn't have worked for me," Ruparel said.

Another reason for the private school trend is cost. In the past, UCs were a bargain compared to the cost of private schools. But today, tuition runs at \$31,200 for California residents living on campus, according to the UC application.

"Students are viewing their acceptances [private and UCs] as a whole,

>> COLLEGE on pg. 7

HOMEcoming FALLOUT

Sophomores' problems routed in cliques, separation

BY AnushreeDugar & KarenSung

Just over three weeks ago, a buzz of conversation concerning the sophomore class's inappropriate quad day skit and subsequent Homecoming disqualification circulated the school. Almost immediately, students pointed fingers and spread rumors about who was responsible for the embarrassment.

This kind of behavior is nothing new to some segments within the sophomore class. For several years running, the class

of 2014 has become increasingly segregated into distinct cliques, according to sophomore Manini Desai.

"I think our class is really hierarchical," Desai said. "For that reason, the fact that there is such a big gap between 'popular people' and 'unpopular people,' there is just no respect among us."

Assistant principal Kevin Mount also believes that unlike other grades, the sophomores have had trouble overcoming their differences.

"It's typical for there to be groups in high school, but it is a problem when it

becomes exclusive," he said. "There are students who have a mindset of being cooler than their peers, but they don't realize that the definition of 'cool' changes as you grow older."

Desai believes that this idea of being "cool" has blinded some sophomores into thinking that it is all right to exclude others. Such beliefs have continued to divide the class.

The issues involving quad day have only further exemplified this lack of unity within the class. Sophomore Ainsleigh Mitchell believes that the sopho-

more class is noticeably less spirited than other grades.

According to Desai, it was the clear division of social groups that led to the lack of cooperation during the planning of the sophomore quad day. This also made it difficult for them to work together effectively, which resulted in a faulty overall performance.

"People are a lot meaner to each other in our grade," Mitchell said. "People should get along more, and act more

>> SOPHOMORE on pg. 6

>> upcomingevents

- 7:30 p.m. Football Game vs. Palo Alto
- Oct. 22-23 Fall Play "Tartuffe"
- Oct. 28 Football Game vs. Milpitas
- Oct. 29 Orchestra Exchange Concert
- Nov. 11 Veteran's Day: No School



Link Crew lunch floats to success

Root beer floats, a picnic-style lunch and the opportunity to spend time with their Link Leaders attracted more than 300 freshmen to the upper field for the first annual Link Crew lunch on Oct. 12.

This event was a departure from the usual after school Link activities, which are often difficult for students to attend due to conflicts with other activities such as sports and clubs.

"We thought a lunch event would be easier to attend. We are hoping for more involvement and attendance from Link groups as everyone is here on campus," Link adviser and guidance counselor Lisa Kellert said.

The lunch social was designed to fall during the ninth week of school in order to check up on how well freshmen are adjusting to high school midway through the first semester.

"We wanted this casual event to be fun for Link groups to reconnect, catch up and have a relaxing lunch together," Kellert said. "We hope that by now the freshmen feel connected to the school and part of the school community."

The immensely popular root beer floats required seven tubs of ice cream and about 20 two-liter bottles of root beer by the end of the event.

"I thought it was fun, and I liked being able to see my Link Leaders again," freshman Neha Anand said. "During the lunch social we were actually able to talk and interact with them."

Kellert attributes the success of the event to the decision to hold it during lunch, the free food and the good weather.

"The event was hugely successful and our expectations were not only met, but exceeded as turn out and participation were so high," Kellert said. "We would love to have this event again next year."

—Sarah Hull and Parul Singh

U.S. News: SHS among top science, math schools in country

On Sept. 29, Saratoga High was ranked as the 37th best high school for math and science in the country using a new ranking methodology by U.S. News.

The new system utilizes information from the rigorous and enriching college-level courses of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

To qualify as one of the best high schools for math and science, the school had to first qualify for either the Gold, Silver or Honorable Mention lists of the U.S. News Best High Schools in December 2009.

With the list narrowed down to 598 schools, U.S. News then evaluated math and science AP exams based on student participation and performance.

This data was used to form a Math and Science Achievement Index based on the number of students who took and passed the AP math and science tests. Schools with an Achievement Index of 20 or lower did not qualify to be ranked. The Achievement Index of Saratoga High was 43.5.

Principal Jeff Anderson was very impressed with the ratings because many of the schools that ranked lower than Saratoga were private schools.

"For us to be scoring so well as a public high school is very impressive," Anderson said.

Being the 37th best high school for math and science does not mean that Saratoga High is only focused on math and science, however. Anderson believes that Saratoga is a very well-rounded school.

"I think we are one of the most balanced schools in our area, in terms of offering a broad experience for our students and not just emphasizing strict academic performance," Anderson said.

—Anushree Dugar

>> picturethis



Link Crew leaders, juniors Henry Shen and Sasan Sadaat, eat lunch on the upper field with freshmen Link kids on Oct. 12 during the root beer lunch event.

>> falconfigures

Class of 2011 College Admissions

University	Apply	Admit	Enroll
UCLA	150	43	13
UC Berkeley	129	51	29
Stanford	65	8	5
UC San Diego	140	56	11
MIT	23	5	2
Harvard	37	2	1
UC Irvine	111	56	1
UC Davis	158	102	12
Caltech	8	4	0
USC	91	43	9

—Nick Chow and Arnav Dugar
Source: Naviance

>> quoteoftheissue

We sometimes act like we're in a movie, and we feel the need to follow those high school stereotypes.

>> Sophomore class representative Kristie Lin, referring to the class of 2014

Mysterious theft dampens guard competition's spirit

By McKenna Galvin

After returning to their bus after the Tournament of Bands competition at Cupertino High School on Oct. 8, several members of the Color Guard were shocked to discover that almost every bag had been searched through and items had been taken.

The stolen items, together worth several thousand dollars, included tech supervisor Ken Ochi's professional grade camera and a cell phone, wallets and cash from numerous other victims. They were taken when the bus was left unattended for approximately three hours during the competition.

"[The theft] made me feel kind of vulnerable because someone was able to take all of the things in the bus without anyone actually seeing them," said freshman Vicky Fontanilla, whose Droid X cell phone was stolen from her bag during the competition. "At least I had insurance on my phone, so I'm able to get a new one now."

While not everyone was victimized, many students

came back to find their bags opened and searched through. Only a few items were actually taken, and many items with more value such as cell phones and credit cards were left behind because they were easily traceable.

the buses were an incredibly easy target, such thievery never took place during my previous six seasons [in Color Guard,] Ju said.

As the rest of the marching band members had already changed into uniform at the school, they did not take any items with them to the competition. However, Color Guard, which changes on the buses, and the assisting tech crew took their belongings to the competition and left them in the bus.

Junior Kelly Liu had \$30 stolen from her wallet, but other items, which included a debit card and camera, were left untouched.

"I still can't believe that somebody out there targeted a high school band bus during a competition. And now he or she has our valuables," Liu said. "It just goes to show that the real world isn't as safe as Saratoga, and we all should keep caution of our belongings."

Upon arriving back at school, the marching band reported the missing items to the police. There are no suspects in the case as of now. ♦

>> thebigidea

Color Guard Theft

When and Where
Cupertino High School on Oct. 8 at the Tournament of Bands competition

What was stolen
Cell phones, a camera and cash were stolen from opened backpacks.

The marching band typically takes coach buses that are more secure to its competitions, but since this was a local competition held at Cupertino High School, the group traveled in school buses, which are easier to break into.

Senior Alex Ju was shocked when she discovered that \$40 had been taken from her wallet.

"Though upon reflection,

FALCON FOCUS: MIHARU MORISHITA

FIVE STEPS TO A SIX-STEP



Senior breakdancer dazzles at quad day

By Aanchal Mohan & Allison Toh

As senior Miharu Morishita stepped out into the quad during the seniors' quad day on Sept. 30, the audience fell silent. All eyes were on her as she executed a perfected "1,990," which involves standing on her head and contorting her body into a twist. From her first trick to her final pose, the hundreds of onlookers responded with applause and cheers.

Morishita is a Japanese foreign exchange student whose dancing talents were unknown to most of the school until her spotlight routine in senior quad day.

"Some of the juniors found out that she breakdanced and they had a [breakdance] session about two weeks before

quad day," said senior Peter Hsieh, who choreographed the dance preceding Morishita's performance. "We finally met her the Wednesday of Homecoming week, and she put together her routine in a couple of days."

Morishita was shocked and flattered when the seniors approached her with the possibility of doing a solo in their dance for quad day.

"I was surprised, happy and looked forward to connecting with my new friends," Morishita said.

Morishita's performance amazed much of the senior class as well as the rest of the school.

According to Hsieh, Morishita is possibly the only female breakdancer at Saratoga since the class of '09.

"We were definitely lucky to have

her perform, seeing as our class doesn't have any breakdancers," Hsieh said. "She also brought incredible enthusiasm and positivity, and I don't think anyone could help smiling when watching her perform because she always looked so happy doing it."

Morishita started dancing, specifically hip-hop dancing, when she was 4. At age 9, a mentor introduced her to breakdancing, and from there on Morishita has been dedicated to that form of dancing ever since. She finds dancing to be a great way to express herself as well as to connect with other people.

Morishita was also part of a breakdance team back in Japan.

"[The team is] called 'Keep It Real.' The team has been together for seven years," Morishita said. "I'm the young-

est. Some members are around 30. I call them brothers and sisters."

Morishita currently stays with senior Valerie Peterson's family. She partook in a foreign exchange program to learn about American culture.

"I want to be able to speak English and experience American culture! It's one of the ways to realize my dream. And I like to challenge something, so I decided to come here," Morishita said.

Morishita will stay in America for a year before heading back to Japan.

"I miss my mom, dad, my younger brother, breakdancing, friends and my puppy, Chako," Morishita said. "[But in Saratoga] I look forward to breakdancing with my friends, working on the drama show and prom, practicing English and making many new friends." ♦

OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Mr. Scott's summer excursion to bustling Bangkok, Thailand

By Sanj Nalwa

It's a dog day Thursday afternoon. The phone rings. It's your aunt and uncle. They're going to Thailand tomorrow. Would you like to join them?

History teacher Jeff Scott definitely would.

This past August, Scott spent nine days in Thailand with his aunt and uncle, learning about the southeast Asian country's culture, landmarks and people.

Scott decided to visit Thailand "on a whim," a country he had never even given a thought to visit before then.

"I quickly got my passport, I went home and I went to the local Campbell library and checked out three books on Thailand," Scott said. "Before I knew it, I was at the airport, boarding a flight to Tokyo and then to Bangkok."

Because Scott's uncle is a long-term employee of United Airlines, Scott got to fly first class for next to nothing. From Bangkok, Scott traveled to Ko Chang, an island near Cambodia, where he spent two nights.

Ko Chang is the third largest island of Thailand and is renowned for beautiful waterfalls and rainforests.

"We ate a lot of good food," Scott said. "We were on mopeds for three days. We saw some really cool waterfalls. With our mopeds we were able to go over the entirety of the island."

While he was there, Scott truly immersed himself in the culture of the island. He traveled all over Thailand, seeing new and exciting things.

"One of the coolest things I did when I was there [was when] I got to feed a baby elephant soy milk," Scott said. "I got a real kick out of that."

Scott then went back to Bangkok, where he enjoyed exploring the city after hours.

"It was really fun going to the night markets in Bangkok," Scott said. "Mostly because they were selling everything from fake watches to bootleg DVDs, to fake sunglasses, to basically whatever you wanted to buy, and you could bargain with them. It was really fun, buying headphones that looked just like Apple headphones, except they were like \$3."

Scott also recalled the foot massages that were given in the street.

"You sit next to about 20 people and they give you foot massages," Scott said. "I think it was only a couple of dollars for half an hour."

All said and done, Scott said that his favorite memory from the trip was learning about the history of the monarchy in Thailand.

"I never really learned the history of Thailand in college or high school," Scott said. "It's amazing how much they love their monarch. In Thailand, the king and queen's picture is everywhere. It's in every single business. You see it on the sides of buildings, on overpasses. You see it all over the place."

Scott additionally visited the Grand Palace while in Bangkok, furthering his study of the monarchy.

"I got [to go] the audio walking tour," Scott said. "So basically, I was able to walk around and I would punch in a



Jeff Scott went from history teacher to history student as he vacationed in Thailand.

number, and I would learn all about the historic landmarks that were inside the temple."

Scott said that although the history of Thailand is not a part of the California high school history curriculum, his trip enriched his perspective on the world

and would positively impact his teaching by adding more geographical knowledge to himself.

"And again, this was stuff I had never really learned about, so it was fascinating," Scott said. "I felt like a student of history again." ♦

CLUB LEGITIMACY

ASB officers to audit all clubs

By DylanJew

At the Key Club meeting on Oct. 13, activities director senior Jonathon Koo noticed a new face in the otherwise familiar crowd: ASB president, senior Anshu Siripurapu. However, Siripurapu was not there to contribute to the club; rather, he was verifying whether Key Club was observing ASB's recently mandated guidelines.

Indeed, the ASB has begun the long and arduous process of auditing the school's 60 plus official clubs, clubs commissioner junior Sasan Saadat said.

Saadat said that the reason for the audits is to determine which clubs are still active. Because the school includes a list of clubs in the profile it sends to colleges every year, ASB annually vets the clubs

to ensure the accuracy of the list.

In the auditing process, ASB officers sit in on random meetings to determine

whether the clubs are meeting the criteria set by ASB. Some of the areas that will be judged include: whether clubs actually meet at the frequency they report, have a substantial number of active members, and hold discussions pertinent to the original mission statement.

"The distinction between this and previous years is that [in the past] we had only ramped up the requirements to start new clubs on campus," Siripurapu

said. "Now ASB is scrutinizing existing clubs as well those that are currently in the creation process."

If a club does not meet the ASB's standards, club officers will be issued a warning and told to address problems with their club.

Clubs are given a few weeks to rectify the shortcomings before another random sit in takes place to verify that the club made the changes. If a club still fails to meet ASB guidelines, it will be forced to disband, Saadat

said. "[The audit] is completely necessary," Saadat said. "I really don't like having to do it, but the number of current clubs

is way large relative to the size of our school."

Siripurapu emphasized that the audits are not intended to censor clubs, but rather to ensure that ASB is not wasting resources on clubs that do not actually exist.

"The main reason [ASB] wants to ascertain which clubs on campus are active is to make sure [ASB] is only promoting active clubs on the ASB website, school profile, and other official documents," Siripurapu said.

After the examination of Key Club, Siripurapu concluded that it had met the standards set by ASB.

"Key Club demonstrated that it had consistent meeting attendance, and abided by the guiding principles from its mission statement," he said. ♦



DRAMA



FALCON // LILLIAN CHEN

Junior Mia Hammond, seniors Ariella Yendler and Penny Burgess demonstrate to the "Tartuffe" cast how to apply basic stage make up for this particular French comedy.

'Tartuffe' debuts

By LillianChen

Having continuously worked hard on the fall play "Tartuffe," drama students were very excited for the debut of their work on Oct. 20, 22 and 23.

The fall play's cast features Josh Harris, Mitchell McGuire, Ariella Yendler, Annelise Nussbacher, Penny Burgess, Valerie Peterson, Marshall Westall, Blake Propach and Jonathan Oh.

The play "Tartuffe" is a comedy that was written by a French playwright named Moliere in 1664. The play is centered around the character Tartuffe, who is a hypocritical man attempting to extinguish the happiness of Orgon, who took Tartuffe in as a house guest.

"The biggest difficulty is learning all of the lines in verse, but we're all having a good time," Drama president Penny Burgess said.

A new twist with the fall play is that there will be boxes of seats on the actual stage that will be auctioned off.

"Some lucky audience members will be able to sit on the seats on the stage, watch from these seats, and actually be interacting with by the cast of the play throughout the show," said Burgess.

Rehearsing every day after school, the cast had been practicing in the Thero-mond Drama Center but moved rehearsals to the McAfee Center. Eventually, rehearsals began lasting until 9 p.m. around the week before opening night,

affectionately referred to by the drama department as "hell week."

"We're supposed to have large wigs which are hard to find, but our costumes are going to be really outrageous and big," said Burgess.

Students have been learning a lot from Karin Babbitt, who is the new drama teacher and also the director for the fall play, and her guidance.

"I've found her a great and talented director who really knows what she's doing," Burgess said. "She gives us a lot of useful direction, makes sure we know each moment, and really helps guide the show on its way."

In addition to working on the fall play, the drama department has also found a fun and unique way to raise money. There will be a murder mystery dinner fundraiser on Oct. 28 inside the Thero-mond Drama Center.

People will be sitting around a table with their ticket having dinner and around them there will be a murder mystery, and at the end of the night, the audience can solve the mystery. Some drama club members will be playing the roles of waiters and bartenders for the night.

"This year started out a bit shaky," Burgess said. "It took us all a bit to adjust to the new regulations with a new teacher, but I think we're all getting into the new situation and finding out there's a whole lot more good points this year than we thought." ♦

ROBOTICS

MSET prepares for difficult Cal Games

TEAM CHANGES STRATEGIES FOR UPCOMING COMPETITION AT MITTY

By MinuPalaniappan

Last year, MSET endured a rough season at the Seattle and Silicon Valley Regional, as failures in the electronics of their robot came at a bad time.

This year, the team hopes to kick off a successful year by attending the Oct. 21-22 Cal Games Event. The competition will be held at Archbishop Mitty and has more than 30 teams participating.

With just weeks before Cal Games, MSET has a totally re-engineered robot, fixing mistakes that they encountered last year.

President Michael Zuccarino said the newly designed robot will incorporate more effective concepts that had seemingly worked for the other teams last year. Increases in stability, speed and precision are just some of the aspects being re-designed for this upcoming event.

MSET this year has attracted many freshmen. Active parents supervise the ongoing activity in the robotics room, ensuring that members are using the different machines correctly.

The robotics room is located in the music quad, housing two robots and over 10 power tools. The team members build their robot from the ground up in the room every year.

"We have mentors teaching the new

members how to use each tool," Zuccarino said. "We've gotten a lot more organized and now have a public calendar in which we assign deadlines for when things have to be done. It's helped us save a lot of time."

Another change is to create a new fundraising team that aids in finding sponsors and grants. The team has approximately eight people who give presentations to nearby companies in order to acquire sponsorships.

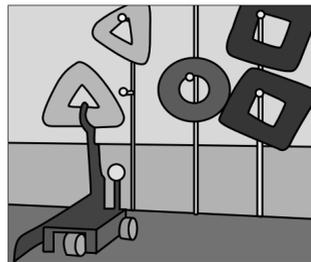
Fundraising head David Sparkman said the fundraising team has been discussing possible grants and sponsors, but in the meantime the team has planned to hold movie nights and schoolwide events to make some money going into the season.

MSET already has acquired sponsors FESTO Automation Controls and Valin, which contributes the majority of the team's funding. In addition, MSET will also be applying for a NASA Grant, which rewards each accepted team \$15,000.

A big challenge this year is having to make up for the leadership of 2011 graduate Cordell Hollingsworth, who led the team for two years.

"The team has potential and even after losing Cordell we'll just have to tough it out and hope for a spectacular season," Zuccarino said. ♦

Increases in stability, speed and precision are just some of the aspects being re-designed for this upcoming event.



>> bigtask

Robot to build

The First Robotics Competition game racks up tubes onto pegs. The more tubes racked, the more points earned. A mini bot is deployed onto 1 of the 4 poles on the field. The first mini bot to the top earns 30 points. Two opposing alliances, each consisting of 3 teams, work together to win.

MARCHING BAND

Boitz featured in book

Marching band places 2nd against three other schools in Cupertino Tournament of Bands

By CeciliaHollenhorst & JayMulye

While motivational speaker and writer Scott Lang has been invited to Saratoga High annually for six years to speak to the music students, this year he brought along a surprise: his new book, with an entire chapter centered around music department chair Michael Boitz.

Lang's book, "Leader of the Band," discusses the experiences of nine music teachers and their approaches to shaping a music program.

In the portion about Boitz, entitled "A Pe-King Duck out of Water," Lang outlines Boitz's initial decision to move from "Minnesota's frigid winters and conservative mind-set" to Saratoga, "home of sunny skies and Asian culture."

The chapter continues to discuss various difficulties and surprises Boitz encountered while working in Saratoga, along with the lessons that he has learned.

The music department has progressed significantly through the years under the guidance of Boitz since he started in 1998, and his principles are stated in Lang's book.

"We must reach out to our parents. We must reach out to our students.

We must reach out to our community. We must reach out to our colleagues.

We must connect with people," Boitz said, in Lang's book.

While Boitz and Lang have become friends over the years, Boitz was surprised two years ago when Lang mentioned his intentions to include Boitz in a book.

"I just laughed and said sure," Boitz said. "I didn't really believe that it would come to fruition at the time."

Until Lang revealed the fact that Boitz played a large part in his latest book, most of Boitz's students were unaware of the honor.

"I was surprised and also proud of our teacher for having an influence on such an important person," drum major junior Bennett Lopez said.

On Sept. 19, orchestra and marching band students attended mandatory assemblies featuring Lang.



FALCONMAN/KYLE TSENG

Junior Ye Seon Lee plays flute in the marching band for the Cupertino Competition of Bands on Oct. 8. They placed second overall against three other schools.

Although Lang, a former band director from Arizona, has spoken to Saratoga music department students several years in a row, Boitz believes that hearing him speak more than once is a valuable experience.

"The students seem to be very energized and excited in the message rather profoundly when he comes," Boitz said. "They do not get Scott Lang fatigue."

Lopez has seen Lang speak numerous times, but feels that he has had a positive impact on the group every year.

"[Lang's] speeches are engaging while also pointing out our problems that we can improve on," Lopez said.

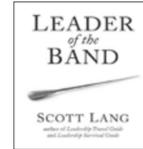
Both Boitz and Lopez have observed changes in students' attitudes after Lang's speeches and believe that taking time to listen to his advice is worthwhile, as it stays with students for a long time.

Lang's speeches discuss leadership and work ethic, and Boitz continues to find the variability of Lang's speeches helpful in inviting him back annually.

Even though Lang speaks primarily to music students, Boitz feels that Lang's message can even touch those outside of musical activities.

"Band is used as a metaphor to convey life messages," Boitz said. "They're about our ability and making sure we're taking advantage of our given talents."

Lang's books, including "Leader of the Band" may be purchased in hardcover on Giamusic.com or eBook format on Amazon.com. ♦



CUPERTINO BAND COMPETITION RESULTS

Field Show: In the Beginning...

Competition: Cupertino Tournament of Bands

Division: AAAAAA

Other Bands Competing: Homestead High School and Mountain View High School

Overall Place: 2nd

Awards: Woodwinds - 1st, Brass - 2nd, Percussion - 2nd, Auxiliary - 2nd

On the first performance of the competition season: "The band has worked really hard since the beginning of the season. It feels great to have that work rewarded with a first place in woodwinds."

- Band director Seth Jones

On the Horizon: "I'm really looking forward to completing our show and seeing what it looks like at the end because the best part of the season is seeing how all our hard work comes together." - senior Color guard captain Katie Cummins

Next Performances: Home football game vs. Palo Alto (Oct. 21), Foothill Band Review (Oct. 22)

—Cecilia Hollenhorst

SHS ALUMNUS

'Champ Gu' codes for U.S.

GRAD WINS A GOLD MEDAL FOR THE USA AT THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIAD IN INFORMATICS (IOI)

By BrandonJudoprasertijo & DylanJew

Class of 2011 alumnus Albert Gu lives in Saratoga High history as one of the greatest mathletes the school has ever had.

Although most people knew "Champ Gu," (a name his friends adorned him with), as a whiz in mathematics, many did not realize that he was one of the top high school programmers in the nation as well.

Last summer, Gu was chosen to be one of the select four people that represented the U.S. in the International Olympiad in Informatics (IOI) competition where high school students competed in algo-

rithmic tasks involving computer science.

Gu was awarded a gold medal after placing in the top 25.

He scored 497 out of 600 total points in the two days of competition, placing 19th out of around 300 contestants from 80 different countries all over the world.

"I have a lot of contest experience, and generally am good about keeping cool under pressure," Gu said. "But this time I was really nervous. For the first time, I wasn't just competing for myself and my own personal goals, but I was a part of something much bigger."

To qualify for the IOI team, contenders must compete in the USA Computing Olympiad (USACO) and take a series of

contests throughout the year.

The top 15 overall are invited to a training camp in late May, where more tests distinguish the top four who make the IOI team.

"Being able to represent the U.S. in a prestigious competition has sort of been a far off dream of mine since the beginning of high school," he said. "It's something that I've hoped for and worked towards, but seems almost impossible to actually achieve."

The IOI competition was held in Thailand from July 21 to July 29.

On the first day of the competition, Gu ran into a seemingly incorrigible bug in his program.

Faced with only half an hour left and only 100 out of 300 possible points, Gu managed to miraculously find the bug, solve half of another problem and end up with 250 points at the end of the five hours.



Gu

"I thought I had choked and let everyone down, so I was really relieved to find the bug," Gu said. "If I hadn't gotten lucky, I would have placed in the bottom half of all contestants."

According to Gu, the differences in the education systems around the world proved to be a disadvantage for him.

"Most of the top scorers were from East Asia and Eastern Europe, and I hear they practice coding for four hours a day." Gu said, "I didn't have as much time, especially attending SHS."

Although Gu no longer has any competitions to work for after high school, he is pursuing a career in computer science and mathematics as a double major at Carnegie Mellon University.

"Although my competition days are over, they will always be important to me both as momentous personal achievements and hopefully as stepping stones for future success," Gu said. ♦

SPEECH & DEBATE

Lincoln-Douglas returns

EVENT ADDED FOR COMPETITIVE EDGE

By ParulSingh

In recent years, the school's debate team has only offered Public Forum, Congress and Parliamentary debate for its students to exercise their argumentative skills. This year, coach Erick Rector has decided to reinstate the much requested Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debate to the team's events.

LD, named after the 1858 Lincoln-Douglas debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas, challenges its participants to consider logic, ethics and philosophy. Unlike Public Forum or Parliamentary debate, students do not require a partner to participate.

"With a partner they may get mad at you or you may be inclined to blame them for losing, so I think being an individual is better," freshman Anshul Aggarwal said.

There has not been a LD team at Saratoga in several years, according to LD coach, Steve Clemmons, but it was re-established this year to give the speech and debate team a more competitive edge. Clemmons looks forward to coaching the renewed LD team.

The LD team currently consists of 10 regular members who meet on Wednesdays from 6:15 to 8:15 p.m. with Clemmons.

"Coaching LD is challenging. It's a terrific program, but it is a lot like farming; you see it in the beginning but then you watch it grow into a large tree or plant," Clemmons said.

Senior Danielle Savage made the switch from Public Forum to LD after she was unable to find a partner.

"I'm the only senior and there's really no one else at my level on the team, so I've almost become the unofficial student coach in a way," Savage said.

LD debaters must research a topic and formulate a case which presents their arguments. The topic usually concerns a moral dilemma and students must research both the positive and negatives of the topic, Savage said.

At tournaments students give speeches up to seven minutes long to convince the judge of their viewpoint.

Some reporting for this story was done by Nelson Wang and Allison Chang. ♦

Juniors set example for future classes

By Kelly Liu

Despite placing second in Homecoming week, competition was not in the mind of most juniors, but rather setting a proper example of what quad day should be like for underclassmen.

"I wanted to leave the underclassmen in awe the same way I was," said junior Angela Kempf-Luu, one of the choreographers. "The one thing I remember someone telling me in my freshman year was, 'Just wait for the junior and senior quad days, they'll show you how it's done.'"

Most underclassmen spectators were indeed "left in awe," as Kempf-Luu had hoped, and learned how to improve their quad days for next year.

"I did feel that this year's juniors did their job to set a good example for our class as to how to make our dances and decorations better next year," sophomore Vivian Wang said. "I was pretty impressed with the juniors. They were amazing; it's like you can't believe these were the same people from last year."

Junior class treasurer Amin Mirzadegan also noted the dramatic change within the junior class.

Junior class adviser Matt Torrens attributes both the junior and senior classes' success to "a really strong group of peer leaders that were very active," claiming he played an insignificant role to the juniors' production.

"I think our class's Homecoming success just shows that even if you're faced with adversity and you start off small, you can put in the time and effort to have one of the most [amazing] quad days and decorations of all time," Mirzadegan said. ♦

Freshmen impress SHS

By Brandon Judoprasertijo

The expectations for Homecoming for the freshman class have always been notoriously low. While most classes fall under the stereotype of doing poorly their freshman year, the class of 2015 demonstrated many feats for the theme of Rumpelstiltskin.

Typically, the freshman class decorations compose of shabby cardboard cutouts, but this year the front of the cafeteria was adorned with various ornaments such as hay and characters.

"I think we did really well," freshman class president Dani Bruno said. "I think we were really creative."

In addition, the class of 2015 managed a quad day that consisted of a storyline related to the theme and five dances.

"Freshman quad day in my 19 years here was the best one I have ever seen," quad day judge Lisa Cochrum said. "I am really excited to see what the freshmen do next year, and I just think they're going to be an awesome group of kids."

The performance of the freshman class during Homecoming caught the attention of many students.

"It was really impressive," sophomore class secretary Jane Chang said. "They had a lot of participation, and the quad day was really good."

Bruno hopes that the freshman class's success in quad day will act as a catalyst for class spirit in future events.

"I think our class is more excited to participate now that they have seen how fun it is," Bruno said. "I want to encourage people to participate in future events so we can all come together." ♦

>> Homecoming results

Note: Class points shown are only from quad days.

387.5	301.8	142.3	0
Seniors	Juniors	Freshmen	Sophomores

Seniors bring wonderland to SHS

By Sanj Nalwa

"My world would be a wonderland!" senior Penny Burgess said to the audience as a group of colorfully clad dancers streamed out into the quad on Sept. 30.

This year's theme for the seniors was "Alice in Wonderland." Over 150 seniors participated.

"The class officers cast me as Alice," Burgess said. "I was incredibly surprised and thankful. Personally, being up there and acting like Alice with my ridiculous high-pitched British accent was the most fun I've had all year."

According to Burgess, rehearsing and learning her lines were the hardest parts because of the ever changing script.

"I would learn the lines and jokes one night, and then the next day half of them would be different," Burgess said.

Despite this, Burgess regrets nothing. "It was such an amazing experience," Burgess said. "I wouldn't go back and change anything if I could."

Senior class president Nicole Shadman said her favorite part about senior quad day was the teamwork.

"My favorite part was that our class



Seniors Varsha Ramesh, Eric Wang, Rachel Le and Brandon Pak participate in quad day on Sept. 30 as part of the senior class's "Alice in Wonderland" themed Homecoming skit.

came together, and it felt so good!" Shadman said.

The dances in senior quad day were each rehearsed two to three hours a week, starting in August.

"All the choreographers and cast members did an amazing job," Shadman said. "Without them, we would be nothing."

Burgess said that the response to se-

nior quad day was "greater than I could have expected."

"Our class has had its difficulties through the years with quad days, but we truly worked as a class this year and put together something amazing," Burgess said. "I'm incredibly proud to be part of this class, and I can tell already that the class of 2012 is going to make this the best senior year possible!" ♦

Storybook drive helps children's charities

By GraceMa

Students brought in more than 700 children's storybooks for the book drive during Homecoming week, according to assistant principal Karen Hyde.

The Homecoming commission hosted the drive to give back to the community. The drive was specifically selected because it fit with this year's Homecoming theme—children's storybooks.

The books were donated to Ronald McDonald House Charity and Sacred Heart Community Center. The drive was supposed to promote class spirit

and friendly competition through charity.

"[The purpose] was to take class spirit one more step, and in the process, do something special for somebody else," Hyde said.

From Sept. 26 to Sept. 30, students brought books and put them in the boxes in the office that corresponded with their grade level.

The senior class donated the most books, with the junior, freshman and sophomore classes placing second, third, and fourth, respectively.

The books were taken to the charities on Oct. 3 and were donated to Ronald

McDonald House, an organization affiliated with Lucile Packard Children's Hospital; they work to create a "home away from home" environment to help families with serious or terminally ill children stay close to their kids.

The other storybooks were donated to Sacred Heart Community Center, which gives back to the poorer families in Santa Clara County.

The book drive lasted only one week, but organizers considered it a success.

"I was thrilled. Anytime that we can do something nice for somebody else, [my mindset is] 'Let's do it,'" Hyde said. ♦

SOPHOMORES >> Cliques causing problems

continued from pg. 1

mature. In other grades, it's not a problem, but our grade has a lot of tension."

The comments that circulate from student to student have now come to the point where the sophomore class has a distinct negative reputation with other classes, along with the administration.

"I think other people view our class badly because of the way we present ourselves," sophomore class representative Kristie Lin said. "We sometimes act like we're in a movie, and we feel the need to follow those high school stereotypes."

The sophomore class has faced ongoing issues with cyberbullying, which range from subtle to outright disrespect. The administration has already conducted assemblies for the sophomore class in an effort to curb the amount of bullying that takes place on popular social communication websites, such as Facebook, Formspring and Tumblr.

"The school has already held bullying assemblies, and everyone has reiterated stuff we need to learn," sophomore class president Abigail Small said. "I think we

are just being really stubborn."

According to Lin, many students do not think that these talks have been productive in helping solve the overarching problem. Nonetheless, the administration's attempts are appreciated by at least some sophomores, and student awareness about the harmful effects of bullying has increased.

"We have to give the administration a lot of respect for all the work they have put into fixing the problems of our class," Small said.

The attempts made by the administration to fix the problems within the class of 2014 have not been taken seriously by all students, however, as the class still faces issues with bullying and cliques.

"The sophomores in particular need to learn about inclusion, but the question is if they're emotionally ready," Mount said. "We hope to see improvements with the sophomore class as they mature."

Compared to previous years, the leadership and spirit of the sophomore grade, although still lower than ideal, have seen an upturn, according to assistant principal Karen Hyde. Howev-

er, she said that some sophomores still have yet to realize that "nobody is better than anyone else."

"Bullying will not take students very far in the future," Mount said, "and the faster students realize this, the more successful they will become as a class." ♦

SOPHOMORE HOMECOMING

1. Assistant principal Karen Hyde reviewed and edited the sophomore quad day script.

2. A group of sophomores decided to ignore the changes made by Hyde and re-added inappropriate jokes. These jokes were performed during the skit.

3. The administrative judges as well as the students who were made fun of were not pleased.

4. The sophomore class was disqualified from quad day.

FUNDRAISING

Teachers walk 60 miles for cancer research

By GraceMa

Science teachers Jenny Garcia and Kelly Nicholson were among the thousands of people who donned pink tutus and face paint to participate in the 60-mile Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer 3-Day for the Cure walk from Sept. 9 to Sept. 11. The walk started off in San Francisco, went to Berkeley and on the last day, concluded through the Golden Gate Bridge.

The two collectively raised about \$6,000 for the foundation. Both teachers have family members who were diagnosed with breast cancer, which was one of the factors that drove them to participate in this walk. Garcia's sister was diagnosed with breast cancer a couple years ago, and Nicholson's mother passed away due to the cancer.

"Breast cancer impacts a lot of people, and I hadn't really thought about it until my sister got [breast cancer]; then it was a case of doing something to help find a cure for this, so she doesn't have to go through this again," Garcia said.

The long hours of walking were passed by chatting with other participants, since iPods and phone conversations were prohibited. Saratoga High teachers Seema Patel and Laressa Ridge

also were there to cheer them on.

Although it was a diverse group of walkers, Nicholson said that they were all unified under one cause—to raise money to find a cure for breast cancer.

"There is a kind of feeling of community that you get with you're with people who are all focused on a cause," she said.

This is Garcia's second time doing the walk. Two years ago, she did the same walk with a group of teachers from Saratoga High. Although Nicholson was not part of this group then, she did show up and walked a few miles with them to cheer them on.

"My sister did it last year, and I walked a bit with her, and that was really fun, so I decided to go ahead and do it myself," Nicholson said.

In addition to having to raise at least \$2,300, they endured rigorous training schedule to prepare for the walk. Starting in May, the participants trained by walking small three- to five-mile walks, and on the weekends, would walk up to 18 miles in a day.

Nicholson, with previous experience from running five marathons, admits that there is a big difference between the two.

"It's very different. In marathons, in



Science teachers Jenny Garcia and Kelly Nicholson pose during the closing ceremony at the Marina Green, San Francisco after their 3-day race on Sept. 11.

four hours you're done, but walking 20 miles is eight hours. And when you get up [the next morning], you have to do it again."

Though the experience thoroughly tired them out, both teachers were inspired during the walk.

"It was a really humbling experience. There were women there who just got off chemo. There was a [seven months] pregnant woman there. So, whenever I felt like I couldn't go on, I'd go OK, if she could do this I could do this," Garcia said. ♦

COLLEGES >> Private colleges now more popular among students

continued from pg. 1

and they base their decisions on what private colleges are willing to give in terms of financial aid or scholarship money," Safine said.

This was the case for Ruparel, who was offered a half-scholarship at USC, slashing her four-year tuition in half.

"I thought that was a really good deal for me, as I am getting public school prices for a private school education," she said, regarding the annual tuition of \$57,876.

With all of the budget problems at public schools in California, more students are applying to public schools out of state.

In this category, the three most popular schools among Saratoga students have been the University of Washington, University of Arizona and the University of Wisconsin.

Eleven percent of last year's seniors chose such institutions to benefit from the lower costs, Safine said. Out of the three, the University of Washington's tuition for non-residents is the highest at \$28,058, still more than \$3,000 less than any of the UC's tuition, according the website.

Another result of more student interest in private schools is that more students are applying early.

Ninety-three students chose this option last year, whereas this year, 140 early application packets were turned in, Safine said.

USC, the most popular private school choice among students, is in part the reason for this surge, as it requires students who seek financial aid to apply early no matter their intent. Senior Kristine John-

ston applied early to USC to increase her chances of receiving one of the many scholarships that the school offers and to take advantage the smaller application pool.

"I would apply early just to have a better chance of getting in," Johnston said. "It wouldn't guarantee that if I were accepted by the early deadline that I would be obligated to go, especially if I

In the end, Safine said students will have to ask themselves what it is they value most in a college and especially take into consideration cost and class size.

Current patterns show that more students favor private schools since UCs are no longer considered "safety schools,"

but at the same time, admission to regular private schools should not be taken lightly.

Safine said that all schools from the CSUs to Stanford have seen a doubling of applicants in a generation due in part to the ease of online applications. Less prominent private schools once used as back-ups for students may not be as safe as before.

It is an outdated model to think otherwise, Safine warned.

Even though private colleges are generally more expensive options, Johnston continues to set her sights on private schools because of the larger availability of scholarships.

"Though USC is more expensive, its scholarship opportunities are a lot more generous than those of the public system because public schools don't have as much money to spend on scholarships," Johnston said. ♦

All schools from the CSUs to Stanford have seen a doubling of applicants in a generation.

SUPERINTENDENT >> Mistele fills vacancy left by Matsuoka

continued from pg. 1

Mistele was then asked to start a new middle school near Arroyo Grande. After he planned and staffed this school, he was given an even bigger challenge: to start a new high school, Nipomo High, also near Arroyo Grande.

"I was responsible for all the decisions you think about when you come into a high school," Mistele said. "School colors. I had to plan everything about the buildings as well, because all the construction was new. It was probably one of the most rewarding and challenging things I've done in my career."

For seven years, Mistele was the principal of Nipomo. He said his greatest benefit from the experience was recognizing the need for an outstanding staff and "just how important people are in this business."

"I had a unique opportunity in both situations [the middle school and the high school] to be able to select my own staff," Mistele said.

Four years ago, Mistele was offered the position of assistant superintendent of human resources of the LGSUHS. "My friend Cary Matsuoka gave me a call, and he said, 'Hey, I got this open-

ing, would you be interested?'" Mistele said. "And at that time, all three of my daughters had moved to San Francisco. So it was an opportunity to be with my family."

As assistant superintendent of human resources, Mistele dealt with everything from teachers to support staff, parent complaints to dress-code violations. He also verified the background of every coach in the district.

This July, after Matsuoka's departure, the board asked Mistele to serve as interim superintendent until it found a permanent replacement. Mistele agreed to the 4-month contract.

Mistele admitted that he began to think about the next step in his career when he became interim superintendent.

"To be honest, I think that it crossed my mind when the board asked me to step in and be the interim," Mistele said. "I love this district; I love the kids and the adults. It's just a really easy, good place to work. I think once I got into the position [of interim superintendent], I felt like it [superintendency] would be the next step for me."

Mistele said that after a month and a half of working as the district's temporary leader, he found his work enjoyable.

"So I really had the opportunity to test-drive the position," Mistele said. "And at that point I decided, you know, I'd like to do this. I think I could bring some value to the district."

In August, Mistele applied for the open position. Although he thought his experience "spoke for itself," Mistele said he did not at all think he was a shoe-in for the position.

As superintendent, Mistele will earn \$185,000, the same salary that Matsuoka made.

Mistele said his new position has not at all changed the way he looks at his colleagues; he still views everyone in the district as an equal.

"We're all equal partners," Mistele said. "[Being superintendent is] an awesome responsibility, and I realize that. I come into it humbly, and I know that I need the expertise of everyone around me in this business to be successful."

Mistele said he would like to see the Los Gatos High and Saratoga High collaborate more closely in the future.



Mistele

"They're two distinctly different high schools," Mistele said. "That's OK. There's no reason to force the high schools to be the same. What we're talking about as an administrative group is to get our teachers to start talking to each other a little more, so they can collaborate on common curricular concerns."

"We have to get out of our bubble a little bit and learn a little bit more about each other," Mistele said.

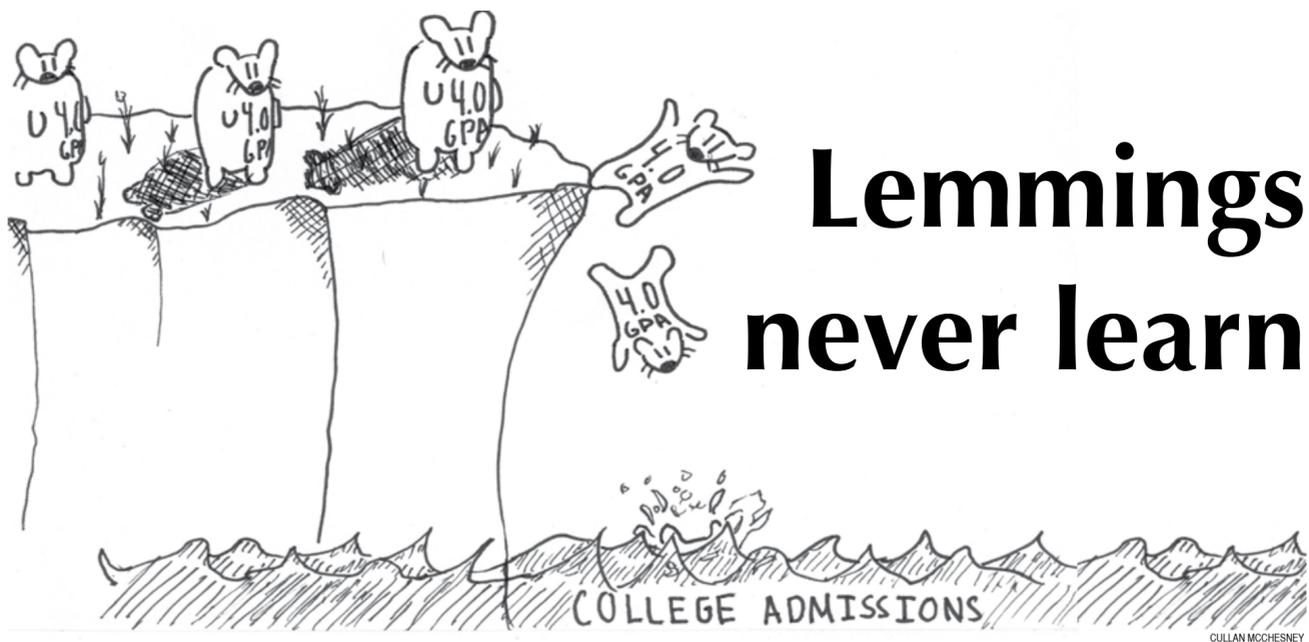
The application of technology to the classroom also interests Mistele.

"[We should] try to make sure we take another good look at 21st century learning skills," Mistele said. "Social media, [especially] the use of social media with our students, is another area I'm intensely interested in."

Finally, Mistele looks forward to meeting more students and plans to start student advisory groups at both schools.

In his years as principal at Nipomo High, Mistele held monthly meetings with students.

"Whenever I'm on this campus, if [anyone wants] to talk to me about anything, feel free," Mistele said. "I'm accessible." ♦



Lemmings never learn

Students should pursue passions in school

by Sabrina Cismas

With the college application frenzy well on its way, seniors are finally at the point in their lives when they take a step back from “doing” and focus on “showing.” The process of laying out one’s entire high school career is ironic, in that it not just reveals the inner workings of the student to the admissions officers, but to the student himself.

Through compiling and reviewing accomplishments, activities and workloads, students come to realize how the choices they’ve made affected the person they’ve become; however, are they happy with who they’ve become? Many students tailor themselves to appear college worthy, but in reality there is no one-size-fits-all expectation. Students should take care not to lose who they are in the effort of getting into their dream schools.

The race begins when students first enter Saratoga High, as they suddenly have a clean plate, devoid of everything from grades to school activities. Students looking ahead to college immediately hunger for things to fill it with, in-

cluding an impressive line-up of classes and reputable clubs. In scarfing down this impressive resume, many realize that some of their choices had not been to their tastes, and that they bit off more than they can chew.

Students need to understand that guidelines for getting into college are virtually nonexistent. Not all the students at Stanford were yearbook editors or drum majors in high school. When colleges look at the application pool, they want to see students who stand out, not necessarily for the connotations of their activities, but for what they were able to make of their respective arenas and what it meant to them.

As for grades, a good record can do nothing but help, but at the same time, students should not just focus on the numbers while putting the rest of their lives on hold.

“It almost seems as if the student population perpetuates this misconception,” AP Calculus AB and geometry teacher Michele Drouin said, regarding students who are pressured to overload on five to six AP and honors classes per year. “Colleges look at the whole picture, not just

one aspect.”

Students often get rejected from colleges with cumulative GPAs of 4.0+ if they lacked in the social and extra-curricular parts of their application. Similarly, enrolling in too many advanced classes and failing to keep up does not impress anyone.

“It doesn’t matter that you are taking many AP classes if you are not doing well in them,” Drouin said. “Focus on where you can do well, and that’s going to benefit you more than doing more and not doing well.”

Students who trudge through high school juggling more than they can handle do not have the time and energy to step back and re-examine what’s important to them. By deciding their fates for four years on the basis of what some stranger might approve of in an admissions office, they forget to ask what they might want to do, or what stimulates them.

Who cares if you are volunteering excessively at an elderly home if you would much rather spend the time to play an instrument? More importantly, how do you know what that stranger likes, or

what the hundreds of other strangers at many other schools will like?

“If you are challenging yourself just for the college admissions, you are doing it for the wrong reasons,” Drouin said.

Every application reviewer has different opinions and subjectivity is a reality of the process. Students who build an image solely to please admissions officers lose not only when all their efforts go down the drain when they get rejected, but also the prime years in their lives that they could have been using to follow their own paths. Even if they get accepted, they still have forgone four important years of their lives.

The best route one can take in high school is one that benefits them. When one enjoys doing something and has a passion or a talent for it, success is almost always guaranteed. Students should not fear pursuing certain activities or lifestyles due to what they think others may think. You can’t pinpoint the inner workings of the college admission process, but you can find your calling. Students should take full advantage of their high school years discovering who they are and who they want to be. ♦

Reinstated early action option a blessing to the affluent

by Edward Dong

Harvard and Princeton will reinstate their single choice early action program starting with the graduating high school class of 2012. Four years ago, the two universities dispensed with early action on the premise that their policies put low-income families at a disadvantage.

SHS students should benefit from this reversal because of their relative affluence. Early action reduces the stress of college applications and has nearly no drawbacks. However, for American education at large, the reintroduction of early action at Harvard and Princeton is not such a one-sided victory.

When Harvard ended early action in 2006, the then-university president, Derek Bok, said that “minority students and students from rural areas, other countries, and high school with fewer resources” often did not apply to early

action and were set at a disadvantage, according to The Harvard Crimson.

Students from less-privileged backgrounds were sometimes unaware of the early action policy and its implications. By eliminating early admissions, Harvard hoped to level the playing field for these students.

Although this goal was both admirable and rational, Harvard and Princeton could not maintain the new policy without cooperation from other prestigious universities. Some students who would likely have applied early to Harvard and Princeton found themselves without the option; they decided to take advantage of early action programs at universities like Yale and Stanford instead.

If other top-tier universities had dispensed with the option of applying early, Harvard would not have suffered a disadvantage in recruitment and would have had little reason to revert to the

system it abandoned four years ago.

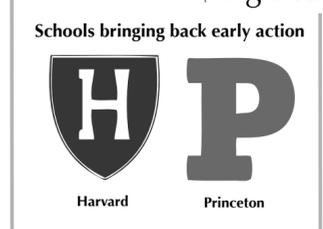
Harvard had no choice, nor did Princeton. They were losing too many high-achieving students.

Should other top-tier universities have followed suit when Harvard and Princeton abandoned early action? Universities tend to like early admissions; in fact, both Yale and Stanford regularly admit over 30 percent of their incoming freshman classes through early action.

Moreover, a consistent policy among universities would have prevented the drastic increases in applications at universities who kept their early admissions programs and bore the brunt of would-be Harvard and Princeton applicants.

To a certain extent, students should be grateful that Harvard and Princeton brought early admissions back. Early action is a blessing for those who are aware of its existence and its benefits: It offers an opportunity for applicants to reduce

stress through early acceptance. The new policy for these two universities widens the scope of possibilities.



Nonetheless, for less-privileged students across the nation, something was lost: The already unfair college admissions system lost a chance to increase its commitment to admitting a broader socioeconomic range of students. ♦

THIRDPERIOD

STAFFPOLICY

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

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

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

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ASB club audits necessary to combat ‘rogue’ clubs

Clubs on campus are meant to be reflective of the ideas and causes that students believe in and support. However, the ASB recently decided to cut down on the number of clubs, citing an increase in illegitimate and inactive clubs.

The ASB’s decision is necessary and acceptable. Several of the clubs on campus are inactive or formed to boost the club leaders’ college applications.

With the presence of these types of clubs on campus, there is less space for newer, legitimate clubs, which actually work hard for the success of their causes.

The ASB’s institution of an audit form that club presidents must fill out during ASB meetings is a great idea. The form, which allows the ASB to evaluate each club, is a useful tool for removing any clubs that are not legitimate or not serving any purpose. Clubs that do meet the standards and

serve a purpose will remain, and these clubs can be found more easily and attract more potential members.

If clubs are not meeting on a fairly regular basis, or if they are not accomplishing anything, they should not take up space on campus.

These clubs, dubbed “rogue” by clubs commissioner junior Sasan Saadat, end up drawing students into a time suck that does not benefit them or anyone else.

Clubs such as “Lumberjack club” have been popular in the past, but the ASB is justified in removing such clubs that serve no purpose. (The catch to lumberjack club was supposed pancake breakfasts, but these did not occur in recent years.)

Many clubs meet weekly and work hard to reach their goals, but they are often overshadowed by “joke” clubs with amusing premises that attract more members.

philanthropic causes, but they don’t actually schedule frequent meetings or provide their members with opportunities to support these causes or participate in anything related to the group’s topic.

This supposedly offers students the ability to place “founded X Disease Relief Club” as their most fulfilling extracurricular activity.

Faking philanthropy for a college application is low enough, but such clubs really

do suck students into a hole that does nothing more than wasting the time of everyone involved.

When a school has 60 clubs, being in a club or being the founder of a club starts to lose its credibility. If this happens, even the legitimate clubs on campus will not be able to benefit from their college applications.

Clubs such as “Starcraft Club,” which was recently individually presented to ASB treasurer David Zarrin, do not even need a school club. Those clubs that do not need a school environment to operate especially need to be removed.

Cutting down on the number of clubs may upset some, but it is a necessary step. ♦

>> Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board

Editor-in-chief David Eng
Opinion Editor Jason Wu
Web Editor Aasim Naqvi

The Saratoga Falcon staff voted 37-2 in favor of ASB club auditing.

School groups need mutual respect

POOR JUDGMENT SHOWN BY MEMBERS OF BAND TO FOOTBALL TEAM

by Jonathan Young

>> candidcaricatures

On Sept. 16, the bleachers were full and the football team was trailing 28-0 in a tough game against San Benito. The players were tired and frustrated. During the game, some players heard a couple of band members cracking jokes about their ill-fated athletic performance.

The band members’ jokes irritated the players, forcing the coaches to intervene and talk to music department chair Michael Boitz.

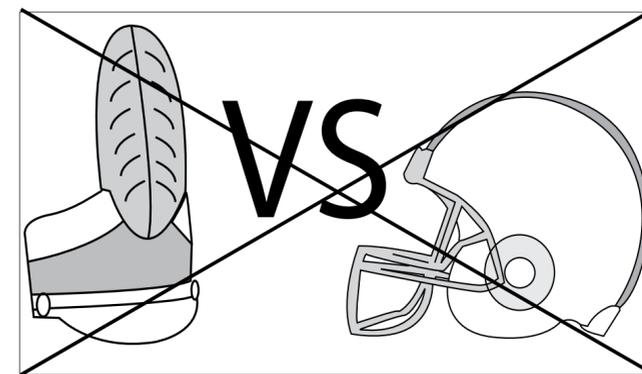
Boitz told band members about their legacy and reminded them to not forget about the many struggles the band has faced in the past and how other schools had made fun of them before. He explained how because of this, they should not do the same to others—something he should not have had to say in the first place.

The football team has struggled in recent years. Although they have not had a winning season since 2007 they have consistently posted a record at or around 500.

Conversely, the band has been doing well in competitions, even earning the honor of marching with 10 other bands in the 2012 Macy’s Day Parade next Thanksgiving.

Despite the success of the band and the struggles of the football team, there should be mutual respect between these two school groups and both band and should be squads of which the school can be proud.

Football is one of the most visibly revered sports to students. Whether it is girls wearing players’ jerseys on



football Fridays or students stepping around on the falcon in the quad on game days, the school has carved deep traditions around the football team.

The band has been impressive in recent years and now more and more people are joining.

Because of this, both groups should be respected by all students—and perhaps more importantly, by each other.

Students should have more respect for others than what was shown in this situation. By showing poor judgment, the students have tarnished the name of the band and have disgruntled the football team. Everyone makes mistakes, but it is essential to learn from these lapses.

Other rivalries

Some other rivalries between groups are Key Club vs. Interact Club, newspaper vs. yearbook, and now even the sophomore class vs. the rest of the school.

These groups are enemies because they compete for similar recognition. Key and Interact are similar clubs that compete for students to sign up during club days.

Newspaper and yearbook are school publications that sometimes compete for the rights to a story or a photo.

With their disqualification, the reputation of the sophomore class has deteriorated making the class a figure of many quad day jokes.

Regardless of the group or the origin of the rivalry, all groups are part of the school. Even with the competitiveness of students, they should not disrespect or belittle their rival. All competitions should ultimately be friendly. ♦

>> thebigidea

On campus rivalries

1. Football vs Band
2. Key Club vs Interact
3. Newspaper vs Yearbook
4. Band vs Orchestra
5. French Club vs Spanish Club

iGeneration, the vision of one genius



>> Mac Hyde The Superior Macintosh

Our generation is unlike any previous. We have grown up in a time of relative world stability in a country that is alone in the world as power.

As a comparatively proactive and docile generation, we are one of the first generations since the Baby Boomers to be brand-loyal and responsive to the behavior of companies.

We have put collective faith in those who lead our favorite marque, and by extension, we put our collective wants, superficial though they may be, in our brands as well.

As a brand-loyal generation, we are disposed to having our sources of inspiration spring from the companies and products with which we chose to surround ourselves.

Take a look at all of the modern conveniences that surround us. Bets are that at least some of them were influenced directly by the design guru of Cupertino.

See, the one thing Steve Jobs was good at was putting the human element back into technology. No longer was technology relegated to closets and the space under desks.

We decided that no longer should the majority of products be monochrome. Nay, they should be sleek and congenial. Steve Jobs dared to propose the idea that companies should not only be responsible for their products, but they should also be responsible for how their consumers use them.

Apple spent years figuring out how an object the size of an iPod sits in someone's hand, and then changed its basic design to make it comfortable to hold for hours on end, regardless of what one is doing.

Jobs influenced the way our generation viewed the world around it. Because of him, we believe that everything can be pleasing to the eye, that the average company is responsible for its products behavior in the hands of the average consumer.

In the midst of one of the worst political, economical, and quite possibly fundamental crises that this country has ever experienced by far, we have found inspiration in our daily objects, those little metallic boxes that accompany us everywhere.

National SAT average dips, but scores don't always equal smarts

by Michael Lee

>> candidcaricatures



CULLIAN MCHESNEY

Many places, however, are not as fortunate. Education expert Glenn Elert explains how test scores closely correlate with a student's wealth and the education levels of his or her parents.

"The SAT is not a measure of how successful one will be in college, but how well one conforms to the demographics of the group that did well on the first exam," Elert wrote in an essay entitled "The SAT: Aptitude or Demographics?"

The SAT is not the impartial measure of education that the College Board claims it is. The decline in SAT scores therefore does not necessarily signify a degradation of America's educational standards.

Additionally, national participation

in the SAT increased by more than 3 percent in the last year, the College Board said in its 2011 score report. Increases in the number of students aiming for colleges—particularly those who have little to no experience with the test—tend to draw down average scores.

College acceptance should not rely so heavily on a test that determines neither knowledge nor aptitude, but one's ability to fill in bubbles based on superficially acquired information.

>> falconfigures

31 Point increase on SAT scores at SHS from the past 5 years

9 Point decrease to the national average of 1500 from 2010

3 Percent increase in total SAT test takers from the past year

U.S. right in repealing 'Don't ask, don't tell' CLOSER TO ENDING DISCRIMINATION

by Grace Ma & Karen Sung

Americans would like to think of themselves as a people who value equality. As of Sept. 20, the country is one leap closer toward that goal.

The repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) policy shows that America is learning to accept differences in others and is working to eliminate discrimination in our country.

The Don't Ask, Don't Tell Policy

For 18 years, gays and lesbians serving in the military were forced to live a lie every day. Signed by former President Bill Clinton in 1993, the policy prohibited gays serving in the military from revealing their true sexuality.

The law was originally intended to protect closet soldiers from harassment but then became a policy that prevented gays from revealing themselves if they wanted to continue serving in the armed forces.

More than 14,000 gay service mem-

bers have been discharged since the signing of the policy.

The repeal

Now, after almost two decades, President Barack Obama finally signed the repeal on Sept. 20 that put an end to the isolation that gays previously endured while serving in the military.

At the signing ceremony, admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said, "I want to thank all the patriots who are here today, all of them who were forced to hang up their uniforms as a result of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'—but who never stopped fighting for this country, and who rallied and who marched and fought for change."

Finally, America has broken down the long-awaited military barrier separating gays from other U.S. citizens, granting them the full rights everyone deserves.

>> THE bigidea

DADT policy repealed

The policy Gay people serving in the military could not reveal their true sexuality.

The repeal President Barack Obama signed the repeal on Sept. 20, after almost two decades of the policy.

Support of the repeal A recent poll showed that more than three-fourths of the American population supported the DADT repeal.

The repeal of this law brings the country one step closer to ending discrimination in our country. The fact that more than three-fourths of the American population supports the repeal of DADT shows the progress of our country as a whole over the years.

Thousands of gay and bisexual soldiers who were forced to stay closeted before can now take pride in their identity, but the repeal of the Don't ask, Don't Tell policy has taken the nation closer to the ideal of equality in the country.

lifestyles

saratogafalcon.org/features

Can you ... Pay for food in just pennies?



>> Amy Jan & Lillian Chen Penny for your thoughts?

Right and early Sunday morning is the perfect time to grab some coffee. After rummaging through our houses for coins, we found about 624 pennies.

At Starbucks, we bought a drink worth \$3.50, amounting to 350 pennies. When counting up even 100 pennies is time consuming, who would want to count up 350 pennies just for a drink?

Staring at the pennies with wide eyes she said, "All right, let's do this."

Then she began counting the coins. We were very surprised at how nice she was about it. After all, she would have the extra work of counting change, and to top it off, it was early in the morning.

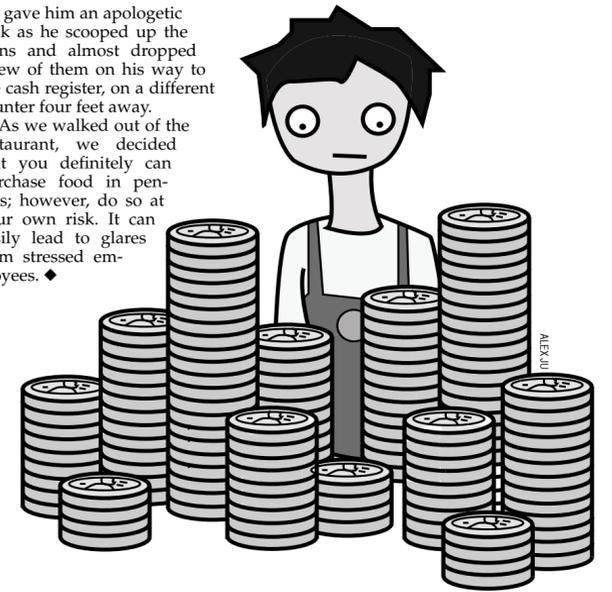
After our visit to Starbucks, we ventured to Togo's to see how their store employees would react to our piles of change. Our total purchase at Togo's ended up being around \$3, consisting of a regular sized drink as well as a small bag of chips.

As we dumped the large container of pennies we had with us, the look on the Togo's employee's face was not as friendly. His eyes grew bigger as more and more pennies came spilling out.

We attempted to count the pennies as swiftly as possible, seeing that the employee was becoming a bit anxious. Quickly pushing the mound of pennies to the employee over the high counter,

we gave him an apologetic look as he scooped up the coins and almost dropped a few of them on his way to the cash register, on a different counter four feet away.

As we walked out of the restaurant, we decided that you definitely can purchase food in pennies; however, do so at your own risk. It can easily lead to glares from stressed employees.



>> togetalks

What would you do if you were a cashier and your customer paid in all pennies?

I'd tell them to make all the heads face up because I'm superstitious about that."

senior David Adler

I would be annoyed at first, but I would eventually help them count out the change."

junior Nikki Bedekar

I'd tell them to wait to the side and then I would help all the other customers out first."

freshman Tanuja Mohan

Nit picks at La Vic's

FALCON REPORTER CONCLUDES LOCAL MEXICAN RESTAURANT UNSATISFACTORY

by Ingrid Hong

Since I had heard good things about La Victoria Taqueria, also known as La Vic's, in downtown San Jose, I had high expectations.

Although the range of Mexican food I've had has been limited to Chipotle and Taco Bell, I still believe I have good judgment in food. Unfortunately, La Vic's didn't live up to its reputation.

When I clambered up the steps to enter the restaurant, there was a stench from the trash area near the door ... ugh. Automatic 1 star. Very unsanitary.

I came in right before the start of lunch hour, so the wait was about 10 minutes. Not too bad in that respect.

I ordered the "Super Burrito" since I had been craving one the entire day. When I tried it, though, there was barely any guacamole inside. Also, the meat was very salty. The sauce helped hide some of that salt.

The rice inside the burrito honestly was not my favorite. Since I was super hungry, I continued to eat my burrito but gave up two-thirds of the way

through as the rice became mushy.

I grew up eating rice practically every day, so I am a very picky rice eater. The burrito wasn't that great, simply tasting like any other burrito. Let's just say their "famous orange sauce" was interesting. Good tang and a good kick from the spice. It wasn't all that it was hyped up to be. I actually liked the green sauce better; it was more flavorful and not too spicy.

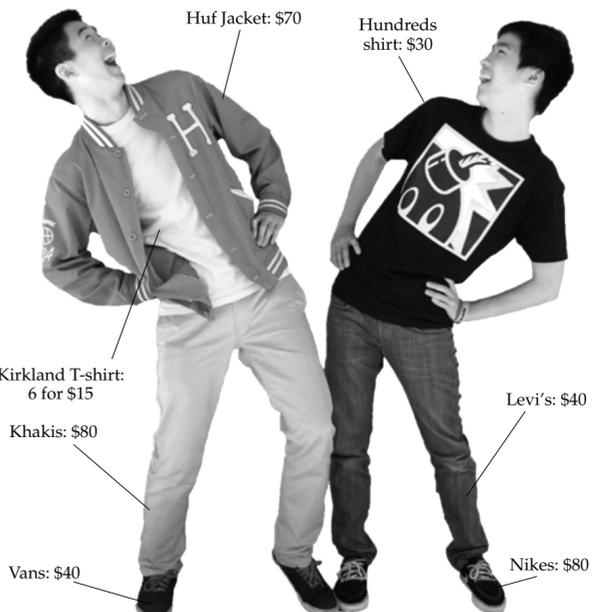
I don't mind giving La Vic's another try, but I'll probably come back for their other entrees, not the burrito. Maybe an order of carne asada fries?

While their meals weren't as satisfying, their drinks I came in right before the start of lunch hour, so the wait was about 10 minutes. Not too bad in that respect.

At only \$3, it comes in huge cup that won't even fit in a normal cup-holder in your car. What's in it you ask? Basically water, pieces of strawberries and sugar. Surprised that sounds good?

Though I was disappointed with how it turned out, I'm still considering going back and giving it another shot. People tell me to try the quesadilla, so maybe I'll give that a try next ...

STYLE FILES



Kirkland T-shirt: 6 for \$15

Khakis: \$80

Vans: \$40

Huf Jacket: \$70

Hundreds shirt: \$30

Levi's: \$40

Nikes: \$80

Derek Chao, 11 Cody Cai, 11

October 21, 2011

SCARE AT OGA

SEE HOW STUDENTS CELEBRATE OCT. 31



ALL GRAPHICS BY ALEX JU

Pumped for Pumpkins

Teachers and students compete to make the best Halloween pumpkins. Judged by Falcon reporters Vivian LeTran and Jay Mulye



Matt Torrens
History Teacher (& kids)

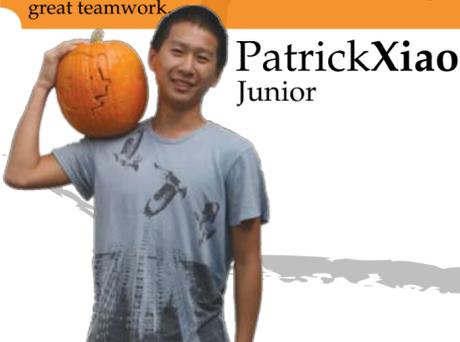


Leah Aguayo
Ceramics Teacher

VS.
Judges' Pick

Time spent: 60-90 minutes
Best quality: Family teamwork
Judges' take: The eye patch with a skull used on the pumpkin gives the pumpkin a unique personality. Torrens' work in collaboration with his kids displays their great teamwork.

Time spent: 90 minutes
Best quality: Creative swirl detailing
Judges' take: The detailed swirls that go around the pumpkin give a fancy, elegant, artistic touch. It shows time and effort put into each feature. The Jack Skellington face takes a new twist on the generic pumpkin face.



Patrick Xiao
Junior

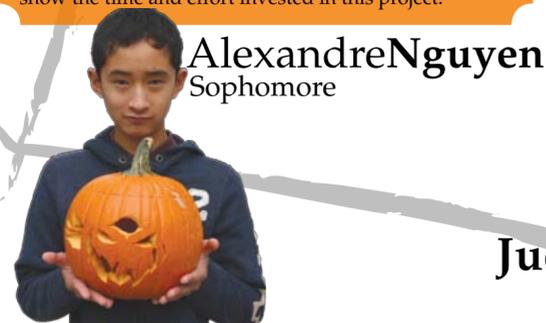


Jennifer McAfee
Freshman

VS.
Judges' Pick

Time spent: 90 minutes
Best quality: The nostalgic Charlie Brown idea
Judges' take: The side angle of Charlie Brown is very creative, charming and vintage. The careful, precise lines show the time and effort invested in this project.

Time spent: 60-90 minutes
Best quality: School spirit
Judges' take: This pumpkin takes a new approach to the pumpkin carving contest with spirited red, blue and white colors spray painted on. The vibrant colors are eye catching and exciting.



Alexandre Nguyen
Sophomore



Louise Guy
Senior

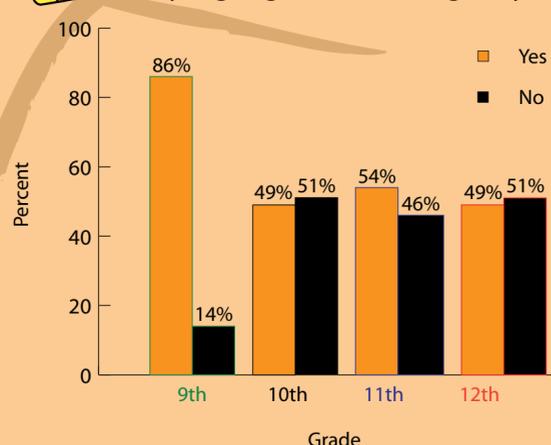
VS.
Judges' Pick

Time spent: 30-45 minutes
Best quality: Scarieness
Judges' take: The pumpkin has a scary appearance showing the true meaning of Halloween. The different shapes and cuts surrounding the face leave the actual picture to the viewer's own interpretation and imagination.

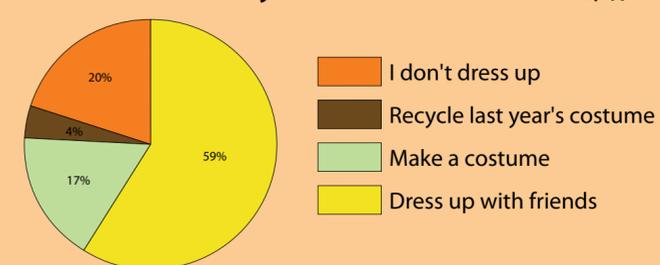
Time spent: 90 minutes
Best quality: Nightmare before Christmas theme
Judges' take: The carving is very neat and clean, and the smooth lines give the pumpkin a sharp look. The Nightmare before Christmas theme is scary and shows personality. The words on top of the pumpkin are a nice touch.

Spooky Statistics

Are you going trick-or-treating this year?



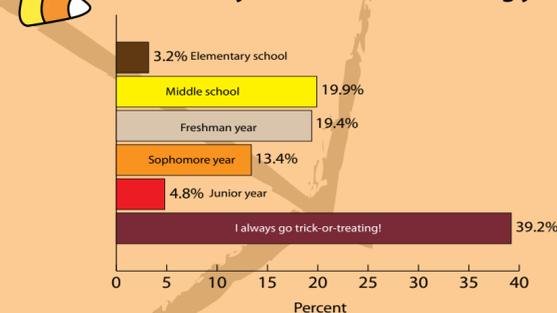
What's your costume like?



How many pieces of candy do you get on an average Halloween?
(Values reported over 1,000 not included)

78

What was your last trick-or-treating year?



189 students surveyed
Graphs by Michael Lee

Less candy, less costumes, less excitement



>> **Jay Mulye**
Juicy Jay

Every year when fall comes around, and I see pumpkins everywhere, I remember the eagerly awaited Halloweens of my past. Back in elementary school, I couldn't wait to carve pumpkins, go to haunted houses, walk in the annual Halloween parades and eat an abundant supply of candy. Now as I proceed through high school, my excitement for Halloween has gradually faded.

The first holiday of the school year, Halloween was the holiday that I

looked forward to the most when I was younger. The most exciting part of Halloween was seeing the different costumes that kids were wearing in school.

I wore a variety of Halloween costumes throughout elementary school, ranging from a fat clown with a rainbow afro to a Jamaican wizard. When our school had costume parades for everyone to show off costumes, my friends and I made a game of guessing which people were hidden behind which masks.

As a child, it was a terrifying experience for me to walk through a haunted house without assistance of a parent because there might be a "monster" waiting to give a startling sensation from around the corner. Yet when I was six, I decided to walk through the haunted house by myself.

After many graphic displays and frightening scares, I may have wet my pants. However, I managed to leave the haunted house with a gleam of confi-

dence in my eyes, creating a memory that would come back to me each year.

On Halloween in seventh grade, it seemed that I was the only one out of my friends to dress up. Everybody seemed too busy to come with me that night.

So I set out alone for trick-or-treating, and as I walked around the neighborhood, I noticed that most kids around me were half my size. As a lady at the doorstep was putting candy into the little kids' bags, she told all of them how they were looking cute in their costumes. But when I stepped forward for some candy, she gave me a blank stare and dropped one small piece of candy into my bag. I felt like I could not fit in.

After coming home at the end of the night, I thought to myself, "Why did I go trick-or-treating this year?" I was searching for an answer. Was I trick-or-treating for the spirit of Halloween? Was I hoping to meet my friends in the neighborhood? Was I doing it to show

off my Jamaican wizard costume? Or was I doing it just for the candy? For a few minutes, I pondered those questions. The answer, I had to admit to myself, was that I had gone only for the candy.

Now in high school, while most of the younger kids in the neighborhood start to go trick-or-treating with a bag in one hand and a flashlight in the other, I, instead, am in my room with a pencil in one hand and a textbook in the other, using my time productively.

I do not bother to go to the party store to buy any hats or masks. In order to take part in the Halloween spirit, I choose to help out my parents by distributing candy to the kids at my door.

Even though I am not as involved in the Halloween spirit as I was in elementary school, I will always remember the special memories of Halloween that I have experienced as a child. For now, I figure that one piece of candy should be enough to satisfy me on Halloween. ♦

Keeping up with

A Guide to Planking

Follow these simple steps and you are sure to become a prolific plunker in no time!

Step 1: Assume an expressionless face

It is critical that the plunker is not smiling during the picture; smiling will ruin the entire plank. Instead, take a few deep breaths and focus on making your face as emotionless as possible.



Step 2: Select a flat surface and lie face-down on it in planking position



This step is the essence of the plank: keep arms at the sides, and maintain a horizontal position.

Step 3: Take the picture, and upload to Facebook or other websites



Share your plank with all your friends via Facebook or other online medium. "You like this."

>> Paul Jung

Planking goes viral among SHS students

By Vivien Lu & Nikkil Ramanathan

Passing time has gone far beyond watching paint dry or watching grass grow. "Planking" has turned into a pop cultural phenomenon.

"You can't help but want to try it out," senior Rachel Le said. "It is very spontaneous and it gives us something to do no matter where we are."

To execute a plank, the plunker must lay expressionless on his or her stomach and have his fingers and toes pointing back. After the picture is taken and the plank is done, the plunker must name their plank and upload it to Facebook or another online social media outlet.

Over summer, junior Samantha Cheng made her Facebook profile picture one of herself planking on the Bruin in UCLA late at night.

Gary Clarkson and Christian Langdon claimed to have invented this "lying down game" while traveling in Europe and becoming bored of their simple poses back in 2000. It was later shortened to planking in 2009 after wide popularity in Australia.

Now, all across the world, people are planking in all kinds of places and taking pictures of their various planks, and comparing their planks to see which ones look the coolest.

Planking has become so popular that even celebrities such as NBA star Dwight Howard, pop star Justin Bieber, and master chef Gordon Ramsey have posted pictures of themselves planking.

Planking has become a world-wide craze mainly because of its relative simplicity. All it requires is a good setting to plank in, and somebody to take the picture.

"I think planking is really popular because it's so dumb," Le said. "You can't help but laugh because it looks so ridiculous."

A good place to plank is usually a random spot that

no one would ever think of stopping at, according to Le.

After being exposed to planking online, more people have been tempted to try it for themselves, either out of curiosity or boredom.

"I did not want to do it at first," Le said. "I was actually peer pressured because my friends think it's really funny, so sometimes we just do it for laughs."

However, planking can be dangerous in some occurrences. In one incident in Australia, while 20-year-old Acton Beale was trying to plank on the seventh story floor of an apartment building, he fell off the balcony and died.

"I first saw planking on the news, after hearing that people died from doing it," Cheng said. "This made me curious. My friend and I wanted to do something memorable at our summer camp, so we decided to take a risk for a good picture."

"When I was laying face down on the ground," Le said, "I was thinking that I couldn't believe I was doing this and how I hoped no one could see me."

Planking pictures, however, are not limited to only solo shots. There are planks such as the double plank and the synchronized plank in which multiple people are either planking on each other, or provide the support for another person to plank on.

The success of planking has inspired other people to create their own original poses, which include "batmanning", "owling" and "teapotting."

Batmanning involves hanging upside down from one's feet; owling is a variation of planking in which a person squats like an owl; and teapotting is another variation in which a person acts out a teapot in reference to the children's song "I'm a Little Teapot."

"All of these new planking trends are really dumb," Cheng said. "However, they make for really good pictures, which makes it fun." ♦

Student Plankers >>>

STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE A VARIETY OF PLANKING POSITIONS IN CREATIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND SHARE THEIR PICTURES ON FACEBOOK.

Right: Seniors Ben Chung, Jonathan Koo, and Eric Wang perform a group plank after watching fireworks on the Fourth of July. "We thought, 'Oh, why not use other people to plank on?'" said Koo. "And thus, the creation was created."



Bottom: Junior Laila Ghahghahi planks over a bin of "tropical mangoes" at Lucky Supermarket.



Right: Junior Sasan Sadaat demonstrates "owling", a variation on planking, at a museum in Rhode Island.



Left: Junior Courtney Ruppel planks in the "feminine products" aisle at Lucky Supermarket in Saratoga.

Bottom: Junior Samantha Cheng planks on the bruin structure at UCLA during a summer camp.



POP CULTURE

Facebook changes frustrate users

By Jonathan Young

After a tough day of school on Sept. 21, one of the first things students did was, of course, check their Facebook. Only on that day, they were in for a surprise—one that many of them did not like.

When users logged on to Facebook, they quickly noticed glaring changes. The most prominent of these was the up-to-date "ticker" on the right side of the page, connected to the top of the chat bar. In addition, the site had mixed the "top" and "recent" newsfeed into a confusing jumble of new and recent posts.

Another change that was made earlier in the year was the split of chat into two sections; one of the person's most chatted friends, the other an alphabetical list of all other online friends. In addition, a new "lists" feature was added to the left side of the page to allow people to categorize their friends by their relationships.

Many find these changes to be useless annoyances and a waste of time. They feel that the "ticker" makes stalking much easier and find the old newsfeed more convenient.

One opponent of the new Facebook is sophomore Isabel Malcomson. She dislikes the changes to the newsfeed and the chat bar.

The fact that the chat is divided into two different parts is bothersome, according to Malcomson, and she wishes it were still in alphabetical order.

"The updates are useless and make everything a lot more confusing," Malcomson said. "It was fine the way it was."

"I can understand why they want to do things like this and try new things, but I don't think they understand that people don't want changes unless there's something that actually could be changed," Malcomson said.

However, there are some who like the changes with Facebook. Sophomore Ethan Gelfand argues that the new "lists" addition on the left side of the page makes it easier to view the

news of the people users are close with. He believes that he will use this feature more in the future.

"I know I will learn to love [the lists feature] later as the lists make it easy to see what the people I choose to see are doing and the people of my future college to see what they do. It's neater and more organized," Gelfand said.

He did, however, voice a dislike with some of the other updates, especially the changes made to the top and recent news.

"The only thing that annoys me is the new [newsfeed]. I liked the old one where you just click top news and then click recent news; that was easier," Gelfand said. ♦

New Features: Good or Bad? >>>

Newsfeed Changes

It's informative, but it makes things too complicated and people never get time to get used to a facebook layout.



junior Neal Sigantoria

News Ticker

I'm not interested in what every friend of mine is doing at every moment, so the ticker is pointless and too personal.



senior Salmaan Javed

Groups on Facebook

They're efficient because everyone [in the group] can get the same info.



sophomore Phillip Cai

Chat List

It's more convenient because the people I chat with the most are on the top.



sophomore Stephanie Ho

Skeptical columnist embraces 3D "Lion King"



>> Sabrina Cismas

It's Cismas Business

Some of the greatest acts of recycling can be found in the business of movie making. For a fraction of the work, producers can manipulate an old storyline into many sequels, or even more easily, reintroduce a classic movie to theaters in 3D. I have often ignored horrible sequels, comforting myself

with the thought that the good originals still existed, but, alas, when one of my favorite movies had been tampered with, I could no longer avert my eyes.

"The Lion King," Disney's greatest animated movie, made a limited time debut in 3D at the end of September. I first learned of this atrocity from a billboard ad while driving.

I nearly crashed. How could they? Is Disney, the animated film central and the owner of Pixar, so low on ideas that they resort to distorting this original, timeless classic? When one thinks of movies with the label "Walt Disney Masterpiece Collection," images of richly colored, hand-drawn, musical movies viewed from home VCRs come to mind. Such classics don't need any extra editing or add-ons; they are called masterpieces for a reason.

With this disposition, I entered a 3D movie theater to watch "The Lion King" on Sept. 23 out of pure curiosity. I watched the movie around 25 times when I was little and even went to the refurbished one in Las Vegas last year. I could not miss another presentation of this "tour de force."

As the movie started and I put on my 3D glasses, I was once again, for the first time in half a dozen years, immersed into the African savanna and the kingdom of Pride Rock.

It shocked me to see that from the very beginning, the 3D was extremely subtle. The perfect aspects were chosen to be accentuated, from rays of light to raindrops. By having the 3D focused on the nature, rather than on the animals' every movement or on chucked items,

the world of the Lion King became more vivid, emphasizing the characters and the storyline.

The surprises continued as I saw that the images had not been re-digitalized. Everything still looked hand drawn and the colors were warm, not sleek and shiny. Even on such a high quality screen with the add-ons, the creators chose to tweak the movie on a minuscule level, making the viewing experience very natural.

It is true that some of the greatest acts of recycling can be found in movie making. Memories came back to me of watching this movie as a kindergartner in P.J.'s, and those same emotions that I had felt as a child resurfaced during the movie. Once more, I couldn't wait to be king, and indeed, I felt the love that night. ♦

CLASSROOMS CONNECT STUDENTS TO TEACHERS' LIVES

Cochrum's bio room: a jungle of her travels

BY Derek Sun

A room can tell a lot about someone. For earth science and biology teacher Lisa Cochrum, her room, 1017, is a place for her to share her stories and adventures.

When students first walk in, they usually notice the mountain of toys sitting on her desk, ranging from snakes to chickens and even to pig piñatas.

"Most students nowadays give me stuffed animal pigs because we dissect pigs every year in bio," Cochrum said with a laugh.

Aside from toys, a standard hammer sits atop her whiteboard, attracting many eyes to the oddity of the object.

"Ms. Thomson and I visited a science fair, and we saw the Myth-busters team of Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage," Cochrum said. "We wanted their autograph really bad, and all we had was this mallet, so we asked them if they would sign the mallet and take a picture with us."

According to Cochrum, the reason she personalizes her classroom is that she has always been annoyed by barren walls. When Cochrum was a student in Palo Alto High, she was constantly stuck in classrooms adorned with bare walls that lacked anything to look at.

"With my ADD, I tended to zone out, and when I zoned out, I liked to look at interesting things, and in most classes I had nothing to look at," Cochrum said.

"It was really annoying. Since then, I knew that I would decorate my classroom."

Now that Cochrum is a teacher, the discomforting walls of her students years have been replaced with photos of her travels. Cochrum has traveled all over the world, from the hot savannas of Africa to the tropical forests of South America. She and her travel mate, biology and AP Environmental Science teacher Kristen Thomson, have shared good laughs traveling together.

One prominent picture upon her wall reminds her of the joys of traveling with Thomson. They traveled to Borneo, a country filled with swamps and crawling with leeches.

Cochrum wanted a picture with a leech to show her students, but it refused to bite her. Instead the leech seemed to have an affinity for Thomson.

"Every time I put the leech on my skin, it would jump right off. It was funny and frustrating at the same time."

Cochrum still jokes about this trying experience, and in contrast, Thomson is playfully upset about how Cochrum's blood had an immunity to leeches.

The knick knacks in her room preserve the memories of her life, making her feel at home in her class.

"My classroom is a fun way to express my life and let my students get a feel of what I like to do," Cochrum said. ♦

Time flies for Kucer's butterflies

BY Jackie Gu

A stranger walking into science teacher Bob Kucer's classroom, room 1012, would probably be overwhelmed by the sprawling mass of colorful butterflies covering the walls and ceiling. Perhaps mixed in with the intimidation, however, is a dash of intrigue—what's the story behind the butterflies? Why are there so many, and how long did it take him to amass such a number?

"A couple of my students, maybe around 1998, were doing a project with a professor at San Jose State University. I went over to SJSU for them to show me what they were doing, and while walking down the entomology hall, there were a few of these butterflies," Kucer said.

"I brought the idea back to SHS and had students sign them or leave a message on them and pin them to the walls and ceiling."

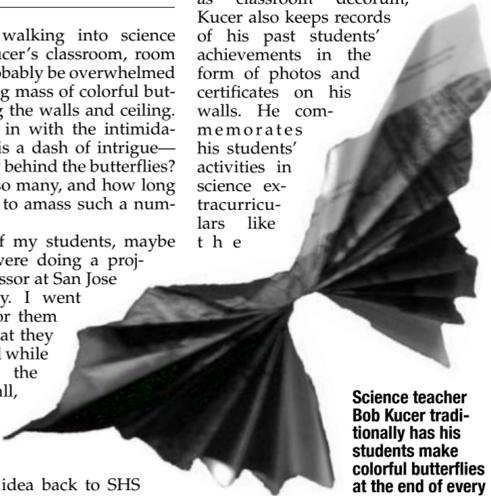
The tradition, which has stuck ever since, has produced some interesting side effects.

Several of the messages left on the butterflies, while not particularly appropriate, have struck Kucer as highly memorable.

"Maybe there are profanities on ones still on the walls and ceilings, but one of the best messages was on a butterfly...that actually fell during an AP Biology test," Kucer said. "When students returned to class a couple of days later, I read to them what was on the butterfly, 'Kucer, hope you burn in hell!'"

Aside from the folded butterflies

as classroom decorum, Kucer also keeps records of his past students' achievements in the form of photos and certificates on his walls. He commemorates his students' activities in science extracurriculars like t h e



Science teacher Bob Kucer traditionally has his students make colorful butterflies at the end of every school year.

Synopsis Science Fair, Intel Science and Engineering Fair, National Youth Leadership Forum on Medicine and more.

Additionally, many of the photos act as flashbacks to Kucer's past teaching jobs in other middle and high schools. Every year, starting from his first years teaching middle school students at St. Felicitas Catholic School to today, is memorialized in some way on his classroom walls.

"As a past SHS principal once said, it's like a museum in here," Kucer said. "There's a lot of good stuff on the walls. It's very hard to accept that 32 years of teaching have occurred." ♦



Kucer

"...In most classes I had nothing to look at. It was really annoying. Since then, I knew that I would decorate my classroom."



science teacher Lisa Cochrum



Science teacher Lisa Cochrum owns a mallet signed by the Myth-busters team Jamie Hyneman and Adam Savage when she attended a science fair with fellow science teacher Kristen Thomson.

>> online extra

For an inside scope on history teacher Mike Davey's classroom, visit:

www.saratogafalcon.org

Art room sings Cher

BY Grace Ma & Karen Sung

Walk into the office of room 202, and instead of the paintings students would typically expect in an art teacher's office, one's eyes immediately notice the photographs of Cher, an American pop music artist, all over the walls.

Art teacher Stephen McCue first became a fan of Cher when he saw her on the "Sonny and Cher Show" as a 7 year old. Seeing Cher sing "Half Breed" on a white horse, McCue was immediately drawn to

her. "I just looked at her and said, 'Wow. I've never seen anyone like that before.' She was striking," he said.

McCue's passion for Cher is clearly illustrated on the walls of his office. Since he first started collecting Cher pictures five years ago, McCue's office now boasts countless pictures of the artist he bought online, mostly from eBay and Cher fan sites.

The pictures in his office follow

Cher throughout her successful career. One poster shows Cher posing when she was 26 years old, and another more recent picture captures her at 65.

McCue's passion for Cher is so strong that his students can feel it every time they step into the room.

"I think his pictures of Cher are a bit unusual, but it's one of the things that makes him unique, which is a good thing," said sophomore Eric Taw, a former student of McCue. ♦



McCue



Art teacher Stephen McCue hangs his most recent photo of Cher from the musical film "Burlesque."

LOCAL HISTORY IS SEXY!

BY Sabrina Cismas

"Local history is sexy." This bold phrase is plastered onto a sign pinned to history teacher Matt Torrens's classroom wall. If the rest of the decorations that camouflage his classroom are any indication of the past, then history, is indeed, very alluring.

Spanning one entire wall, license plates from all 50 states shout states' proud slogans, except

for 13 gaps sprinkled throughout the line. Those 13 missing license plates are of the original colonies placed on the front wall.

It all started at a gas station garage in Colorado, where Torrens explained to the mechanic that he is a history teacher and would love to have a license plate he saw on the garage's wall.

"[The mechanic] said sure, and

Torrens's students get blast from the past



Torrens

every time we stopped for gas, I asked to have a license plate because most gas stations have them," Torrens said.

In a pepper shaker at the back of the classroom next to his desk, Torrens keeps some proof of his popular John Brown story.

Two years ago, he took an AP US History class to the Madronia Cemetery near downtown Saratoga to witness a

ceremony where ashes from abolitionist John Brown were sprinkled on top of his wife's grave in this cemetery.

When the speaker was not looking, alumnus Jae Lee scooped up ashes into a container.

"He captured John Brown's ghost," freshman Sydney Torrens said with a shiver.

Torrens weaves his interests into his classroom, sparking a stimulating learning environment. ♦

HYDE ST.

BY Allison Toh

"I come to my room and hear wailing and screaming. They had been wrestling, and one of the boys had dislocated his knee."

So recounts assistant principal Karen Hyde as she reflects on one of the many memories that have occurred in her small office over more than three decades as the assistant principal.

Hyde's office, while small, is home to the ASB, leadership class, various commissions and other groups. The popular room is the center of the school's activities.

Hyde's office always seems to be bustling with activity as students are often happily chatting, writing announcements or saying a quick hello. Students distinguish the room courades as the "Hyde's Street" sign

placed above the door.

"I would like to have my room clean and orderly, but with a plethora of kiddies living here, I'm lucky if they save me a seat," Hyde said.

The assortment of pictures from school spirit events, dances and football games are Hyde's favorite items in her room.

"Most of the stuff here are pictures from kids or pictures of kids," Hyde said. "The oldest thing here, other than me, are the pictures of old leadership kids: ASB, senior

class, rally, etc."

With Hyde's upcoming retirement at the end of the school year, the idea of having to completely clean out the office of its pictures and memories is bittersweet.

"I don't even want to think about cleaning out this room," Hyde said. "The memories that I've had with everyone and these kids in here have been amazing. You live here long enough, and [the room is] just all the souls who lived in here as well." ♦

Boitz's photos date back 1997

BY Grace Ma & Karen Sung

When head of the music department Michael Boitz came to Saratoga High in 1997, there were only 11 students in the entire orchestra program.

Fourteen years later, the department has expanded to hundreds of students. With the construction of the McAfee Center in 2005, music performances are no longer held in the school gym decorated with blue tarp and poinsettias.

The journey of Boitz's music department memories are displayed

in the panorama of pictures hanging on the walls of the music building.

He started hanging pictures after the building's remodeling 12 years ago, and since then, his collection of pictures has steadily expanded to fully cover the walls of the building.

The framed photos vary from artistic snapshots of the music program taken by alumni to senior pictures, which have become a tradition for the graduating class to give to Boitz as presents.

Each one of the hundreds of photos in the music building has a story behind it, which is one of the

reasons that makes the room so sentimental.

"Every one of them is there because they represent the [alumni] during some point in history," Boitz said.

Boitz hopes that the pictures he puts up in the music building will inspire the current students to dream big.

The photos represent the value of his love for teaching and show the growth of his students as they learn from their passions.

"[The photos] are up there be-



Photo collages of past performances and students adorn the music buildings walls in close clusters.

cause I like the students to see some of the history that's taken place before, and what's possible," Boitz said. ♦

A 'WILD SIDE' TO SARATOGA

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Students and teachers divided in perceptions of the 'Saratoga bubble'

by Roy Bisht & Edward Dong

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Just over two weeks ago, on Oct. 5, disgruntled employee Shareef Allman killed three and wounded seven of coworkers at a Lehigh Cement Company plant, situated on Stevens Creek Boulevard a mere five miles away from Saratoga High.

Although neither of these incidents directly threatened the school or its students, some have begun to wonder if Saratoga is really as safe as it seems. Such violence occurring in the area suggests that the image of a safe and sheltered Saratoga may be illusory.

"There's a misconception in our school that

since we live in a rather affluent area, we are a lot safer," junior Venkat Munukutla said. "But we're not that far away from places where things happen."

Senior Samantha Hoffman agrees. "It doesn't matter if it's just 'Saratoga.' There's going to be crime everywhere, so personally I wouldn't feel safe walking around most parts of Saratoga at night," Hoffman said.

Hoffman admitted that the cement plant shooting burst the "Saratoga bubble" in her mind.

"Having such a dramatic shooting occur so close to home really showed me that Saratoga is a lot closer to danger than we think," Hoffman said. "Cupertino is just as safe as Saratoga, so couldn't something just as bad happen here?"

Besides these high-profile incidents in and near Saratoga, reports of nighttime drug use at Wildwood Park and Congress Springs Park also taint the city's reputation for safety.

Some students have shied away from visiting those places at night. Junior Neil Prasad believes "people should not choose public areas for their illegal activities like drugs if they don't want to get caught or put others in danger."

However, many students consider Saratoga a safe city with minimal criminal activity and subscribe to the perception that drugs do not constitute a major concern for the community.

"I haven't really heard of any problems from other students or my parents, because my parents are in the mindset that drugs and crime don't exist in this neighborhood," sophomore Priyanka Krishnamurthi said.

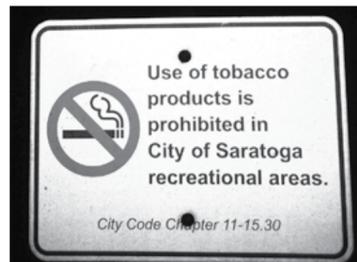
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Nevertheless, Reyes is not surprised when friends tell him about alleged drug use in various public locations in Saratoga. Like many of his classmates, he thinks he can guess who the drug users are.

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"In health class, besides just teaching about drugs, the school needs to teach kids about prevention more," Krishnamurthi said.

World geography teacher Rick Ellis agrees that education is important. "In health classes, the freshmen are talking about drug use and alcohol use a lot, so rather than just enforcing rules, there's some good education going on trying to inform kids of the dangers."

However, Ellis believes that the school cannot be totally responsible for preventing illegal activity across the city.

"I think the city and the school would be naive to think it doesn't exist, and it should be something that is constantly on their radar to deal with," Ellis said. "Unfortunately, it takes a village to raise a child, so it's not only what we're doing at school, but what's going on at home [and] what's going on in the community."

According to Prasad, another possible solution to reducing the amount of illegal activity in the city is to implement more lighting in the city. At night, Saratoga is essentially pitch-black, so drug usage easily goes unseen in places like parks.

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>> togatalks

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Drug, alcohol use taint Wildwood park's reputation

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by Sarah Hull & Samuel Liu

A 20-second walk up a side trail in Wildwood Park near downtown Saratoga leads visitors into an area enclosed in shrubbery, one that is littered with Cans Light cans. Secluded by a ring of tall trees, the park is notorious among students as a prime location for drug usage late at night.

One drug user, a student who wished to remain anonymous, said that it is common for older students to smoke and drink in an area just behind the park.

Bought by the city in 1968 and renovated three years later for a total of \$142,000, Wildwood spans four acres and is rated 4.5/5 by yelp.com users. Many expressed positive experiences involving nearby restaurants and the versatile playground.

However, a few local shop owners have also noticed that the park frequently attracts drug users.

In the center of Saratoga's downtown, Maryann Serpa's gift shop, Skin Prophecy Boutique, overlooks Wildwood Park. She is always on alert, she said, for suspicious characters.

"Have I seen actual drug abuse [at Wildwood Park]? No," Serpa said. "Do I know that it exists? Yes. Do I see the police turning the corner here all the time? Absolutely. Have I seen people come

up the hill that look like drug dealers? No question, there's no question in my mind."

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The sign also clearly states that no one is allowed in the park after sunset, yet local residents frequently hear the ruckus of partying and yelling well past midnight.

"There's a lot of laughing and yelling, and it's not scary or anything, but they sound under the influence, like they're having a good time," said resident Bonnie Wright, mother of freshman Mackenzie Rosenthal, who has lived near the park for 15 years. "Just the fact that they're there [after dark] and for different reasons is alarming."

In response, neighbors have taken to calling sheriff's office every time they hear a disturbance after dark, which can happen as often as once a week during the summer months, according to Wright.

"When the weather's really nice in the summertime, we definitely get more [noise]," said Wright. "We and the other neighbors have to call [the sheriff] a lot.

The sheriff is very responsive, though; they come out every time and make sure everything is OK."

Sophomore Jack Ryan's family, also residents of the surrounding neighborhood, called the sheriff just a few weeks ago when they woke up to terrified screaming coming from the park at 3 a.m.

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In daylight hours numerous children play on the playground and in surrounding grassy area while other residents hold barbecues and picnics. Once the sun has gone down, however, residents are reluctant to spend time in the area, according to Serpa.

"Partly what makes the community uncomfortable is the way the park is positioned," Serpa said. "It sits back on the creek and [residents] get a little nervous about walking down there."

"You sort of feel like if something happened down there, no one would know it. I left my car down there because of a



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Even though not all surrounding neighbors have been affected by the nighttime culture in the park, it's clear that the child-friendly atmosphere of the park that exists by day can sometimes give way to illegal activities at night. ♦



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definitely remember some calls at Wildwood Park that involved some drug use and a few fist fights," Cutforth said. "However, then, like now, the activity was very few and far in between."

While Wildwood Park has become known for drug and alcohol abuse, Cutforth said that these were not the issues that residents complained about.

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However, from a report of Cutforth's that covers the activity at and near Wildwood Park from Jan. 27 to present, the

notorious drug use certainly has been present at Wildwood.

In the report, Cutforth included two incidents of marijuana possession in Oct. 2011 and one in May on Big Basin St., the street adjacent to Wildwood Park. Additionally, several DUIs were present.

Public intoxication was frequent as well, with incidents in April and May. The Saratoga police has investigated six total drug busts since Jan. 27.

In addition, in the official city document of the Public Safety Department, the target expenditures on the public safety department decreased by about \$140,000 from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012.

Administrative analyst Crystal Mor-

row of the Saratoga City Manager's Office cited this, adding that communicating with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office is much easier than creating another full department for Saratoga.

"While we are spending less on law enforcement this fiscal year, it is largely due to restructuring, billing and strategically reducing enforcement without significantly impacting services to the community," Morrow said.

While the local police is aware of the issues around Wildwood, the decrease in budget intended for the problem suggests that the police believe the problem can be contained without a dedicated Saratoga police department. ♦

>> falconfigures

48 Arrests made in Saratoga since 6/27/2011 for intoxicated driving, drug possession, possession of illegal weapons, and more

19 Number of empty beer cans *The Falcon* found in Wildwood on 9/23/2011

6 Drug busts in Saratoga since 1/27/2011

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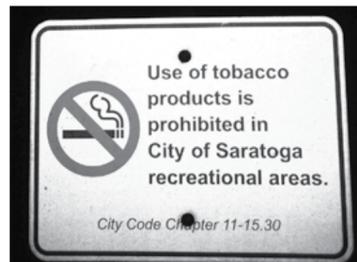
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notorious drug use certainly has been present at Wildwood.

In the report, Cutforth included two incidents of marijuana possession in Oct. 2011 and one in May on Big Basin St., the street adjacent to Wildwood Park. Additionally, several DUIs were present.

Public intoxication was frequent as well, with incidents in April and May.

The Saratoga police has investigated six total drug busts since Jan. 27.

In addition, in the official city document of the Public Safety Department, the target expenditures on the public safety department decreased by about \$140,000 from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012.

Administrative analyst Crystal Mor-

row of the Saratoga City Manager's Office cited this, adding that communicating with the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office is much easier than creating another full department for Saratoga.

"While we are spending less on law enforcement this fiscal year, it is largely due to restructuring, billing and strategically reducing enforcement without significantly impacting services to the community," Morrow said.

While the local police is aware of the issues around Wildwood, the decrease in budget intended for the problem suggests that the police believe the problem can be contained without a dedicated Saratoga police department. ♦

>> falconfigures

48

Arrests made in Saratoga since 6/27/2011 for intoxicated driving, drug possession, possession of illegal weapons, and more

19

Number of empty beer cans *The Falcon* found in Wildwood on 9/23/2011

6

Drug busts in Saratoga since 1/27/2011

FOOTBALL

Injuries accompany Mountain View loss

BY Roy Bisht & Nikil Ramanathan

The scoreboard may have only said Saratoga lost 42-14 to Mountain View, but the game was much more damaging than just the final score.

In the Oct. 14 game, the Falcons lost senior running backs Troy Doles and Jerriek Lee to broken legs, senior lineman Sean Walsh to a broken back, and junior linebacker Henry Wei to a concussion.

The Falcons, now 2-4 in league play, will face league powerhouses Palo Alto tonight and Milpitas next Friday.

"Them not being here really hurts our depth on the offensive line and running back positions," said senior defensive lineman Eric Van Noorden. "However, it also gives others the chance to fill in and better improve the team."

The injuries will certainly not go unnoticed. Doles, the reigning team Most Valuable Player, had rushed for 128 yards and been the leading receiver with 165 yards. Lee had been the team leader in rushing yards with 286. Walsh and Wei had both established themselves as consistent defensive starters, as well.

The Falcons have faced adversity throughout the year due to injuries and will have to do the same now.

"Juniors have had to step into tough positions and one way seniors are having to go both ways (playing offense and defense)," said Van Noorden. "Also many players are having to memorize multiple positions."

Early in the game, the Falcons fell behind when the Spartans scored in both the first and second quarters. Saratoga answered back in the second quarter with a 25-yard run by senior quarterback Mitchell Casas and later on a 3-yard run by Lee. Mountain View would go on to



(Left) Doles fights off a defender and breaks through a hole in the football game against San Benito on Sept. 16. (Right) Senior fullback Jerriek Lee gets past a defender in the Homecoming game against Los Altos on Sept. 30. Both Doles and Lee broke their legs in a Oct. 14 loss to Mountain View.

score 28 unanswered points and ultimately win their Homecoming match-up versus the Falcons.

With Doles, Lee and junior running back Bryson Yates all out for the season with injuries, the Falcon running game has lost much of its strength. This season, the running game has been the Falcons' offensive strength, with almost twice as many rushing yards (892) as passing yards (503). Running backs sophomore Davis Berryhill and junior Eric Castronovo will most likely share time at the position now.

"I really think that due to the injuries and just all around lack of depth, we should become more of a passing team," Berryhill said.

Even though the team has lost their three top running backs, they still can utilize the speed of Berryhill and Castronovo. Berryhill has also been an in-

tegral part of the Falcon running game with 178 rushing yards and two rushing touchdowns.

"[Berryhill] has a very bright future and Eric has promise," senior lineman Jeremy Wallin said. "They've had a lot of experience up here this year so we believe in them."

The offense may have been hit the hardest with this slew of injuries, but the defense will also suffer considerably. In addition to losing senior lineman Mitchell Faylor earlier in the season to a leg injury, Walsh, Lee, Doles, Yates, and Wei all contributed defensively to the team as well.

"Because everyone plays both offense and defense, whenever we lose one player it's more like losing two players," junior wide receiver Stephen Ruff said.

With the abnormal number of leg injuries occurring, the question of wheth-

er there is a lack of conditioning in the problem has been brought up; however, players believe that the series of injuries has just been a cluster of untimely accidents.

"It's definitely not the coaches' fault," Berryhill said. "I think it's just mainly bad luck."

Even though the team will miss the on-field presence of all of the players that they lost to injuries, the team realizes that at this point the only thing that they can do is just move on and play through the injuries.

"It really does hurt the team emotionally when multiple teammates go down, but we still have to fight and play through it," Castronovo said. ♦

ATHLETE OF THE ISSUE

Dozier third in family of four Ballin' Brothers

BY Roy Bisht & Dylan Jew

With three other brothers who play baseball and other sports, junior Kyle Dozier has grown up surrounded by competition—playing everything from backyard Wiffleball to varsity baseball at Saratoga High.

"My brothers and I would play sports all the time at home or at Congress Springs Park," Dozier said. "They always kept throwing the baseball or football around or shooting a basketball and it's helped me improve a lot throughout the years."

Over the years, the Dozier brothers have participated in sports ranging from wrestling and basketball to football and baseball. The Dozier brothers first entered the school with Trent, who graduated in 2008, and will leave with his youngest brother Quinn, who is currently in sixth grade.

Dozier has been a significant contributor to the varsity basketball and baseball teams since his freshman year.

"Being a freshman on varsity was fun but a very different experience," Dozier said. "By playing out of my

age, I got to challenge myself."

Dozier led the basketball team as a freshman with 27 steals and averaged 6.4 points per game. On the baseball diamond, he hit .306 and earned an All-League Honorable Mention Award while playing alongside his brother Bryce, who graduated in 2010.

Dozier did not stop dominating during his sophomore year either, as the JV football quarterback he won the De Anza League Offensive MVP Award and as the baseball team's starting center fielder he received an All-League Second Team Award.

Dozier is faced with a lack of time for other activities, including homework.

"Sometimes I just have to power through," Dozier said. "But practices generally don't run that late, so I usually have enough time."

Even though the burden of homework and playing three sports a year is a daunting task for any high school junior, Dozier believes that all the work that he puts in is worth it.

"Sure, it may be a lot of work," Dozier said. "But in the end, I think the most important thing is it's all about having fun." ♦



(Counter clockwise from top) Dozier throws a pitch in a baseball game last year. Dozier puts up a shot in the basketball game against Live Oak last year. Dozier returns a kickoff ball and looks for space in the football game vs. San Benito on Sept. 16.



FIELD HOCKEY

Tough midfielder inspires with energy

BY Ingrid Hong

It was the second half of the home game against Los Gatos, the school's rivals and one of the most important games of the season. The steady pounding of rain added to the intensity of the game. Suddenly, a small, speeding body dodges the towering defenders and maneuvers her way towards the goal. Using quick wrists and thinking, junior Jenni Miller, a center midfielder, pulls a deceptive move and scores, flustering her opponents. Miller once again proved herself as a leading player with another goal against the Presentation Panthers on Oct. 13.

Only 15 minutes into the first half, Miller managed to score a goal. She diverted her defenders using fakes and sharp pulls, hitting a straight shot into the corner of the goal. The Falcons won 2-1.

Playing since seventh grade at Redwood Middle School, Miller has grown to become a major asset to the varsity field hockey team.

"I went to a summer camp at Stanford [before trying out in high school]," Miller said.

Field hockey requires immense mental and physical toughness. While players must be conditioned to sprint while hunched over, they must also be mentally tenacious in order to use smart decisions on the field and recover from mistakes. Miller isn't just physically talented; she is also motivated.

"When it gets really intense and I'm close to scoring, it makes me play better [knowing there's pressure on me]," Miller said.

Making a mistake on the field can decide the fate of a game, but having the ability to recover from mistakes is an important skill to acquire as a player grows.

"I get really mad at myself, then I think 'OK, I have to make it better because I feel bad letting down my team,'" Miller said.

She says she can't wait to play the competition in the final weeks of their season. Not only does the team have a new coach, but also new players who can drastically improve their game this year.

"I feel like we're going to do a lot better than we did last year. I really like our coach because she's brought new ideas to the team and we also have some new players," Miller said.

Miller's upbeat and positive attitude brings energy that enlivens the other players around her.

Teammate Neha Vellanki expands and said, "I think she has a really positive attitude and she motivates us during our halftime talk."

Junior Courtney Ruppel agrees and added, "She's always there to crack a joke or do something funny to cheer the team up if we're down."

Gracefully skilled, yet dynamic, Miller seems to glide past her opponents with ease and makes hard-to-achieve



Junior Jenni Miller snatches the ball away from an opponent during a match against Gilroy at Saratoga on Sept. 28. The Falcons tied the Mustangs 1-1 in a tight battle.

skills look simple. Her sharp skills push other players on the team to do better. Without a doubt, Miller's intensity, upbeat personality and hardworking attitude clearly reflects her ability to perform well on the field and has caused

her to become a notable and crucial part of the team this year.

As of Oct. 13, the team has a league record of 2-3-2. The Falcons played hard and went into overtime in all three of the tied games. ♦

GIRLS' TENNIS

No. 2 Kalyani Narayan: ready to step up to any challenges

BY Amy Jan & Karen Sung

Now a No. 2 singles player on the girls' varsity tennis team, sophomore Kalyani Narayan is not an easy opponent to beat. After nine years and countless hours spent at clinics and private lessons, Narayan is a talented player with the potential to play at the college level. However, her tennis career did not exactly start that way.

When Narayan picked up her first tennis racket, she loathed going to practice. Tennis wasn't exactly her idea of a sport that she wanted to play.

"My parents had me start playing tennis because they liked to see me play

a sport rather than sit at home," Narayan said. "I hated it at first."

Soon after, she started playing competitive tennis because her parents realized the potential she had. Currently, she is ranked 20th in the Northern California Girls' 16 division.

"Playing in tournaments is very stressful, but I know the team has my back," she said. "As long as I step up my game, I know I can do well."

The No. 1 singles position, currently played by senior Crystal Yen, is a tough spot to step up to. Since Yen is one of the best players in the state, Narayan looks up to her as a role model.

"After my matches, Crystal will always be there to lecture me. If I play badly, she scolds me like my parents," Kalyani is a very lively person to be

around. She knows how to make people laugh and does her best to keep the team's spirits up," Bedekar said.

Although there are times when Narayan has to move up to play No. 1 singles, she is not intimidated.

"Playing one or two singles is very stressful, but I know the team has my back," she said. "As long as I step up my game, I know I can do well."

The No. 1 singles position, currently played by senior Crystal Yen, is a tough spot to step up to. Since Yen is one of the best players in the state, Narayan looks up to her as a role model.

"After my matches, Crystal will always be there to lecture me. If I play badly, she scolds me like my parents,"

Narayan said. For the school team, Narayan hopes that it "will win CCS and NorCals, but we will see what happens."

First, the 11-2 (7-1 in league) girls must beat undefeated Monta Vista on Oct. 25.

"I played well against Monta Vista [last time] because I like the mood that goes around when we are playing a competitive team," she said.

Although the team lost 4-3 to the Matadors on Sept. 29, Narayan is confident that the team will continue improving throughout the season to defeat the rival school next time, as long as the girls keep trying hard and maintain a positive attitude. ♦

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

Sophomore sets sky high standards

BY Edward Dong & Matt Foley

"You have to have good leadership qualities, you have to be fast and you have to be willing to hit the floor," sophomore Katelyn Mollahan said, explaining that her position as setter on the girls' volleyball team involves more than just setting the ball up for a hit.

Mollahan began playing volleyball when she was 7. In fifth grade, she joined the volleyball team at her former school, Sacred Heart.

Since her freshman year, Mollahan has played the setter position for the varsity team.

"If someone shanks a pass, it's my job to get the pass and put it back in the court so someone can hit it over," Mollahan said.

A good setter is crucial for the team to succeed. Mollahan must set a solid foundation for the offense, said the team's coach, Brad Frederickson.

Although the varying quality of passes often affects her performance, Mollahan received "what were often poor passes" but made "great sets allowing hitters to score," Frederickson said.

concern while on the court. "As the setter, you are one of the team's leaders besides the team captains," Mollahan said. "Everyone looks up to you, so your attitude matters a lot on the court."

Although the captains normally take on the role of pumping up the team, the setter also is significant in getting the team back on track.

The game against Milpitas on Sept. 29 highlighted the team's ability to make a comeback against a tough opponent. Frederickson said it was the first time "where the girls really persevered in a close match."

Losing 24-23 in the last set of the match, the team refused to give up and came back with a 29-27 win, thus securing their 3-1 victory.

Nonetheless, Frederickson believes the team has improvements to make, especially in terms of passing, serving and maintaining more intensity throughout the game. Mollahan is confident that her team has the ability to achieve these results.

"[Right now] I think we're playing the best we've ever played," Mollahan said. "We've had a couple of tough games this year and the most recent ones have taught us that we need to fight for something and persevere." ♦

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GIRLS' WATER POLO

Freshman is a key factor to team's success

BY Paul Jung

Sprinting down the pool in a match against Cupertino last month, freshman driver Mackenzie Rosenthal called for the ball and received a perfect pass from goalie Alison Knysh. Within seconds, she was looking into the eyes of the opponent's goalie. Faking a shot to the left side of the goal, Rosenthal then reared back and fired a deadly shot into the right corner, sinking the ball into the net as part of a 15-1 win over the Pioneers.



Freshman Mackenzie Rosenthal makes a pass over a defender to her teammate in a game against Harker on Oct. 4. The Falcons ultimately lost their game to Harker 7-10.

With three years of experience playing water polo, it was no surprise the freshman was chosen to play for varsity her first year. Already earning multiple goals in the first few games, she has quickly found her place as a key member of the team.

"It's really cool because not a lot of freshmen make varsity," Rosenthal said. "All the team members are really nice, and we're all best friends now."

Rosenthal has played water polo with the Stanford club team since age 9. Her experience has given her the skills to become a strong player for the team.

"Mackenzie is a lot of good insight because she's been playing for a long time," junior hole set Claire Schwartz said. "She's had a lot of experience."

Rosenthal's main strengths are offense and shooting, according to Schwartz. Her ability to make smart plays and create opportunities for shots makes her a menacing offensive player in the pool.

"Mackenzie is a key player for the team," senior utility player Nicole Shadman said. "She's as important as our upperclassmen in the games."

Rosenthal previously played basketball and soccer before starting water polo. She plans to do swimming in the spring, either with a club or the school team. She feels positive about the team and is enjoying her first season in high school.

"I feel like we're doing pretty well as a

team," said Rosenthal. With a 4-4 record as of Oct. 11, the players feel invigorated by their impressive performance, due in part to Rosenthal's contributions to the team.

"We've done pretty well so far this season," said Schwartz. "We've lost to a couple teams but we feel like the next time we play them we can beat them."

According to Schwartz, the key to a successful season for the Falcons will be to "play smart and work on defense." With strong players such as Rosenthal on the team, the Falcons said they should be able to finish near the top of the El Camino League. ♦

>> scoreboard

Sept. 28	Lynbrook 8, Saratoga 6
Sept. 29	Saratoga 15, Cupertino 1
Oct. 4	Saratoga 7, Harker 10
Oct. 12	Fremont 7, Saratoga 5
Oct. 13	Santa Clara 6, Saratoga 2
League record (as of Oct. 13): 4-4	

GIRLS' GOLF

Thareja's hard work contributes to her success

BY Derek Sun

Sophomore Nikki Thareja sits in the crouch position, measuring the distance from her to the target, just like a tiger. Tiger Woods, that is.

She has only been playing golf since eighth grade, but since the first time she picked up a club, she has been hooked.

"Most people think golf is boring, but it is mentally exhausting. It requires

players to plan three or even four strokes ahead to beat the opponent," Thareja said.

Thareja is the No. 11 player on the varsity team and has continued to compete with the best of the best, helping the Falcons win three of their opening matches. According to her teammates, Thareja has the natural talent necessary to excel at golf, but that isn't her best attribute.

"Not only is Nikki an excellent golfer,

she is smart and works hard," sophomore golfer Emily Nguyen said.

Thareja practices three times every week as a way to relax and get away from her hectic schedule, which not only consists of school, but also dance. She credits her success to her hard work and relentless desire to succeed.

During the season, Thareja has worked on all facets of her game to become an all-around player.

The work Thareja has put in has clearly reflected on the course as Saratoga is off to a great start beating Homestead, 222-247, and Live Oak, 268-279. Fellow teammates have said that her playing ability has helped the team, but the selfless sophomore directs her own personal success to the success of the team.

"I think I'm getting better, but it's not about me, it's about what the team needs to win," Thareja said. ♦

BOYS' WATER POLO

Steven Cho: sophomore phenom

BY Jackie Gu & Bradon Judoprasertijo

Scoring a goal is one of the most rewarding feelings for any athlete. Sophomore Steven Cho experiences that exhilaration more than eight times every game.

As one of the utility players on the team, Cho is best known for his versatility and array of offensive techniques. "I'm the most aggressive at offense and I always try to score," Cho said. "I just like beating other teams."

Cho has been playing water polo since about third grade, when his older brother, now 21, picked up the sport as a high school freshman.

"I used to play soccer, but I had asthma so I had to switch to swimming and water polo," Cho said. "I like it because it's fast paced and you can do anything you want in the water."

Cho dedicates 12 to 15 hours during school weeks to water polo. He also plays club water polo at Stanford. Every other week during the high school off season, Cho wakes up at five or six in the morning to drive 65 miles north to Moraga just to compete.

"Water polo is his life," senior driver Eric Wang, who has been playing with Cho for two years, said. "It's like his wife, mom, dad and kids put into one."

While most water polo players complain the most about morning practices, Cho said that the toughest part about being a water polo player was staying in shape aquatically.

"I'm used to waking up early. I think swimming and conditioning are the worst parts, mostly just swim sets," Cho said. "Being fast in water polo is key."

His perseverance pays off: As the star scorer of the team, Cho usually makes the vast majority of the goals each game. He averages eight of the team's 12 average goals a game.

"He's a really talented player, has a really accurate shot, and he's really dedicated to water polo," junior driver Tyler Tanaka said. "Everyone on the team knows that he loves the sport more than anything, even more than the girls."

The team is currently 3-2 in leagues, having lost only to Wilcox and Lynbrook. The next big game for the Falcons will be away against Wilcox on Oct. 18. For coverage, see the saratogafalcon.org. ♦

POSTSEASON PONDERINGS

Giants fan dismayed with season



>> Derek Sun

It's always Sunny in Saratoga

On Sept. 24, Giants fans dipped their heads in defeat and sulked. What had seemed like the budding of a dynasty turned out to only be a one-hit wonder as the Giants failed to make it into the playoffs after a World Series championship in 2010.

The San-Fran faithful were disappointed because after one of the most exciting underdog stories, the least expected team to win the World Series toppled the Texas Rangers, stunning the baseball world, but failed to make the postseason.

The Giants were led by their starting rotation that featured an MLB-best 3.36 ERA during the regular season. They also possessed the bat of top prospect and Rookie of the Year Buster Posey and the maniacal closer Brian Wilson.

With none of their major players departing, it seemed that the Giants had a fantastic chance to repeat as World Champions entering the 2011 season.

Their offense seemed it wouldn't miss a beat as it jumped into the new season, but a few days into the season, speedy offensive spark plug Andres Torres injured his left foot. The next major Giant to visit the disabled list was the beloved Pablo Sandoval. After losing 40 pounds over the off-season, he added a huge offensive plus in the lineup, protecting Buster Posey in the lineup.

But on May 25, everything changed. In the 12th inning against the Florida Marlins, Posey was involved in a freakish defensive collision at home plate, breaking his leg and tearing several ligaments in his leg as well.

This injury would require surgery and meant that Posey would be sidelined for the rest of the season. This injury devastated the Giants lineup as it struggled to produce runs for the pitchers without the potent bat of their young star.

Not only did the injury bug hit the Giants offense, but also the pitching staff. Wilson was injured with an oblique strain. Freddy Sanchez, a former batting title winner, also suffered a season ending dislocated shoulder in June.

As the Giants lost players to injury, the offense sputtered to almost a stop this season as it ranked in the last five places for RBIs and home runs, something they were famous for in their 2010 magical playoff run.

Missing their clean-up hitter, Posey, the rest of the hitters struggled to get on base and drive runners in. Aubrey Huff and Cody Ross, both 2010 playoff heroes, barely hit above .240 this year.

After being on the disabled list, offensive expert Torres couldn't pick up where he left off in 2010. He hit a horrid .221 as a leadoff hitter.

After an offensive drought in the 2011 season, the Giants hope to regain. The Giants hope to sign all-star Carlos Beltran and hopefully sign one more slugger to aid the offensive game.

A struggling offense and injuries ultimately sunk the Giants' chances of being World Series champions again. Although fans are disappointed in the lack of Orange October this year, the Giants head into the off-season ready to revamp their offense, and ultimately parade down Market Street one more time. ♦

BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

Young runners lead team

UNDERCLASSMEN SHOW PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

BY Samuel Liu & Minu Palaniappan



Courtesy of NOW AND FOREVER STUDIOS

Last year, many considered then freshman twins Will and Sam Guy to be the "future of cross-country." Yet the addition of several promising freshmen this season—Andrew Harter, Steven Sum and Komdean Masoumi—has given the school even higher hopes for the future.

"I think we have a chance to go to states this year," junior David Zarrin said. "Our top five [runners] have to step it up though. But next year I think we can easily get to states due to our youth. We'll have a strong team next year."

Placing third out of 13 teams, the sophomore runners excelled at Crystal Springs, arguably the hardest course of the year and highly competitive.

Out of 173 runners, freshman Sum came in first, 52 seconds ahead of his closest competition. Sophomore twins Sam and Will came in fifth and sixth, respectively.

Their first time at Crystal Springs, Masoumi and Harter placed 6th and 8th out of 124 for the freshman races.

"The beginning of the race was easy, because there weren't many hills. But

the third mile was really hard since there were tough hills. I pushed it at the end [though]," Harter said.

With Sum, the Guy twins, Masoumi and Harter, the team has acquired a

core group of talented runners. "Our fastest runners are the freshmen and sophomores," captain senior Eren Veziroglu said. "[They're] the future of our team." ♦

GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

Schlossareck hopes for swift recovery to help team succeed at CCS playoffs

BY Aanchal Mohan

Injuries challenge all athletes at some point in their careers. All one can hope for is a short recovery period. Junior co-captain Courtney Schlossareck has been hoping for a quick recovery since she received a knee injury during the 2010 cross-country season.

Schlossareck opted for knee surgery, sidelining her for the entire 2011 track season. Although the surgery took place four months ago, the recovery process has taken longer than she expected.

"I got knee surgery last June and I was hoping that I would be fully ready for this year's season," Schlossareck said. "I didn't expect it to take this long, but I am working my hardest to make sure I train as much as I can while still making sure I don't overwork my knee."

For Schlossareck to be eligible to run at CCS (she was not able to run last year due to her injury), she must participate in at least two of the regular season's four cluster races, and risk putting more stress on her knee.

"The league requires runners to run in a certain number of races in order to qualify for CCS," Schlossareck said.

Crystal Springs is a 3.1-mile race, notorious for its agonizing hills, yet Schlossareck had to participate in it on Oct. 6 since it is a league meet and not a scrimmage like most of the other races the cross country team runs.

"I didn't run [Crystal Springs] for time," Schlossareck said. "I wanted to make sure my knee didn't give out, so it was more of a workout than a race."

With the girls' varsity roster not completely finalized, the team will count on Schlossareck to be well in time for CCS. Her return would bolster the already veteran-laden roster and give the team

"I wanted to make sure my knee didn't give out, so it was more of a workout than a race."



junior Courtney Schlossareck

a better chance at qualifying for the state race.

Not only does the rest of the team look up to Schlossareck as a runner, but they also respect her for her upbeat attitude and willingness to help others no

matter the situation. "[Schlossareck] has always been a good runner," junior Maya Nag, Schlossareck's teammate for the past two years, said. "She always remains positive and encourages us to run our hardest."

While the team counts on Schlossareck, it is still uncertain about its varsity roster. "We have a lot of very qualified runners," Schlossareck said. "The only issue is there is a huge gap between the veteran varsity runners and the newer runners."

To ensure this gap is healed in time for CCS, the team has been making sure the younger runners catch up to the veteran runners.

While the Falcons diminish this gap, the team can hope Schlossareck will be running her hardest come CCS at the end of November. ♦

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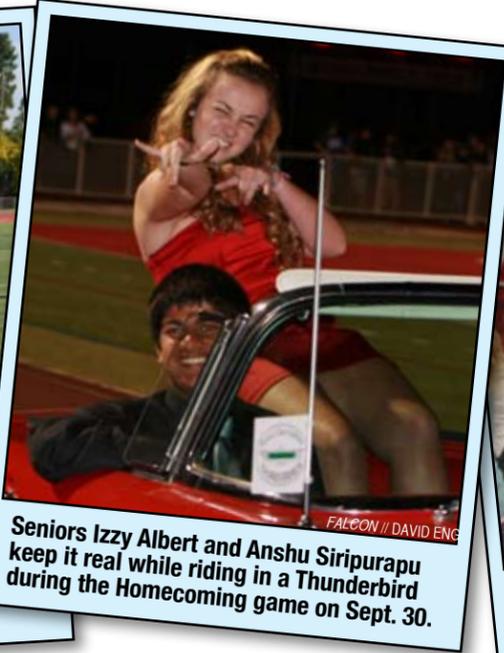
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polaroids



FALCON // ANOOP GALIVANICHE
French and Spanish classes play an intense soccer match during lunch on Oct. 13. The French class won 1-0.



FALCON // DAVID ENG
Seniors Izzy Albert and Anshu Siripurapu keep it real while riding in a Thunderbird during the Homecoming game on Sept. 30.



FALCON // OLIVIA CHOCK
Seniors Kathleen McClellan and Tiffany Tu waltz in AP Lit to display poem forms on Oct. 7.



TALISMAN // KYLIE TSENG
Juniors Stephen Ruff, Tavius Woods, and Jason Seo participate in the colonial debate during APUSH on Sept. 26.

buzzworthy >> Assassins 'kill' for prize money

BY Amy Jan

You may see several students around campus with red spoons braided into hair, strapped down to wrists or gripped tightly in their hands as if their lives depended on it.

In an effort to build staff chemistry—and have some fun—*The Falcon* newspaper is hosting a game of Assassin. Each player is assigned a target to kill. Targets “die” by the tap of their assassin’s spoon when not carrying their own red spoon. When assassins successfully murder their assigned target, they assume their target’s target.

“I stalked down my target on the Falcon server so I have their whole schedule memorized, but I haven’t actually been able to find them yet,” junior Jackie Gu said.

The staff of SHSTV also played a version of “Assassin.” Senior Nicole Shadman won the game, so teacher Tony Palma will treat her to lunch. The only difference between the two staffs’ games is that SHSTV used “safeties”—items students hold on to in order to be safe instead of spoons.

“The safeties were so random each week.

Going along with the safeties made it exciting,” senior Priyanka Arunkumar said. “One week we had to carry around a pet rock that was required to have a face on it.”

Not all attempts to assassinate have been successful, however. According to junior Brandon Judoprasertijo, on his first attempt to complete his mission, his spoon shattered upon impact, thus alerting his target who to watch out for.

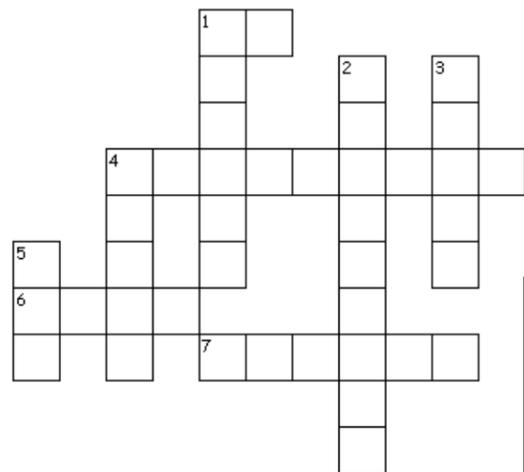
“From that point on, [senior Roy Bisht] kept stroking my face during newspaper with his spoon to taunt me,” Judoprasertijo said.

The current prize money is at \$90, but jackpot continues to increase because spoons are constantly being stolen. Since people need spoons to avoid being assassinated, they need to repurchase one for \$1.

“Last year Utara [Sivaram, last year’s editor in chief] would buy donuts for the staff so if I win I think it would be pretty cool if I did something like that to make everyone’s money contribution count,” Judoprasertijo said. ♦



crosswordpuzzle >> Hunt for answers!



Name: _____

Fill out this crossword with your name on it to enter a raffle during tutorial at room 303 for a \$5 prize.

Across

- Saratoga alumnus who goes to Carnegie Mellon, worked at Facebook over the summer
- M-SET club president
- Columnist that didn't enjoy her experience at La Vick's restaurant
- New special education section's Specific Academic Instructor

Down

- Science teacher who attended Susan G. Komen Breast cancer walk
- Break dancer from Japan in the senior quad day
- The Homecoming king
- Math club president
- Sophomore who has played water polo since third grade

topten

COSTUMES TO WEAR FOR HALLOWEEN

- Obama. Costume complete with a birth certificate.
- Wolf. Oh wait, Cerbone's not here anymore.
- Lady Gaga. You are what you eat.
- Sophia Grace. Not that blonde girl sitting next to her.
- Crop tops. They're scary enough.
- Voldemort. Learn how to hug as awkwardly as possible.
- Aunt Jemima. Things could get sticky.
- Snooki. Figure out how to shrink by 2 feet, buy a bumpit, and get a fake tan.
- Junior guy. All you need is a white tee, high socks, and a cocky attitude.
- Preppy Asian. Oh wait...



>> Roy Bisht
Nikhil Goel
Cullan McChesney

Chickens and rooster noodle soup



>>Samuel Liu

What can't he do

The subtle smell of dung and life wafts through the pristine air of my backyard. Green grass and modularity are broken by a chicken coop, where the chickens have eaten everything green. Two years ago, my family bought four chickens from a chicken farm, not only for fresh eggs, but also for testosterone (I'll get to that later in the story).

My mom had done some reading, mainly on backyardchickens.com. Knowing my disgust for eggs and all things organic and healthy, she bought four starling chickens, otherwise known as egg-laying machines, for \$8 a piece. Don't name them, my mom had warned over chicken soup.

At first, my 50-pound dog nearly killed them all, although I surmised that she was merely trying to say hello, in her own unorthodox way. The chickens settled in and gradually became friends with my dog, mainly because she protects them from coyotes and skunks. For

the negligible cost of our table scraps, one chicken transforms grape peels and spoiled rice into one fresh egg a day.

Actually, there has been a well-documented rise in backyard chickens, most likely due to fears of Salmonella and the recession. Over two years, this cost-effective strategy has saved my family at least \$200 in eggs, has rid our backyard of many pests, and provides my mom with free, nutritious manure.

Still not satisfied, my mom went Internet sleuthing again and bought two roosters and one hen from an organic chicken farm.

Interestingly enough, the organic hen lays green eggs, and one morning I literally had green eggs and ham. And I had always thought Seuss colorblind.

The roosters grew, and with their 5-month-old testosterone, they strutted around like bosses, crowed at 5 a.m., and attempted to... uh, mate with the bigger hens when they weren't watching.

Twice the size of the pathetic testosterone fueled roosters, the hens usually attacked them after an encounter. It was a disgrace to manhood.

Before you go out and buy some roosters, you should know that they are not allowed in Saratoga because of their obnoxious crowing. They are, however, allowed in the form of soup. I'll get to that later.

One morning, when she was cooking an egg for me, my mom pointed out a black spot in the yolk.

After I had eaten it, she told me, not guilelessly, that the black spot was actually a rooster's sperm. That's reason number 732 for not eating eggs.

Because of Saratoga's rooster law, we knew we couldn't keep them for long. My grandpa from China insisted that young, growing boys should consume young roosters for the high levels of testosterone that supposedly promote growth.

As a sidenote, did you know that chickens can live without their heads? The record for a chicken's survival without a head, apparently, is about a year and a half.

Before an animal rights activist mob raids my house and steals my chickens, I will note that we bought the roosters from a farm that allows them to be killed for food. Besides, my grandpa has done this sort of thing hundreds of times (in China, of course), and the killing was quick and clean.

My grandpa made the roosters into soup. It turns out, my dog and I share an affinity for live, fresh food. Rooster soup was delicious, and I Asianified it by adding noodles.

Here's the moral of the story: don't name your chickens. They might not taste as good in soup. ♦