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SENIOR MAGAZINE
Class of 2014's best and worst moments.

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Boys' tennis makes CCS finals.

Saratoga High School >> Saratoga, CA
An Independent School Publication

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Laughing her way to excellence

A look into the classroom of teacher Audrey Warmuth, who was named district teacher of the year. **pg. 6**

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Amy Chua's new controversial book "The Triple Package" disparages certain cultures with unsupported claims. **pg. 8**

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Chemistry teacher's husband is a world-renowned pianist who has performed in places such as Carnegies Hall. **pg. 14**

SPORTS

Hits and misses

After a year of ups and downs, The Falcon ranks teams by performance and other factors. Find out who flopped and who topped. **pg. 16**

COUNTDOWN TO GRAD

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SATURDAY

MONDAY

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THURSDAY

Prom: Students look forward to their last dance at AT&T Park.

Awards Night: Seniors presented honors for high school achievements.

Beach Day: The graduating class spends a day at the Boardwalk.

Graduation: Congratulations and best of luck to the Class of 2014!

STAFF

Chin's departure angers students

GROUP PROTESTS ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION

BY Rachel Hull

The news that history teacher Jim Chin will not be returning for the 2014-15 school year has recently sparked outrage across the school. A group of students have petitioned the administration for his reinstatement.

The change.org petition, which was started by sophomore Kelly Xiao, gained over 500 signatures and dozens of student testimonials the first night of its release on May 20.

A Falcon opinion article written by senior Samuel Liu lamenting the loss of Chin got 2000 hits in an hour after being put online on May 20.



Chin

The administration's decision not to give Chin tenure or have him return to school next year was fairly routine, but what set it apart from other cases was the overwhelming student support for Chin and anger with the decision by the administration.

After being informed of the administration's choice, Chin resigned rather than being "non-re-elected," which might have hurt his future job prospects.

Chin said he did not want to leave the school, and the administration did not tell him exactly why he will not be coming back.

Principal Paul Robinson declined to comment on Chin's

departure from the school because it is a personnel issue.

Chin said he believes the school is looking for a teacher who is completely polished. He added that there was no specific deal breaker that resulted in his departure.

History teacher Kim Anzalone told some of her students that the administration felt Chin needed more experience with teaching. According to Anzalone, the school recommended that he work at another school for a year and try returning to Saratoga afterward.

Chin said that if given the choice, he would have liked to stay here for as long as possible because of the sense of community and the bonds he has

>> **STAFF** on pg. 5

BOND: JUNE 3 ELECTION

Voters to decide on renovation proposal

BY Devin Zhao

A school repair bond, which covers funding for possible renovations for both Saratoga High School and Los Gatos High School and requires 55 percent of voters to pass, is on the June 3 ballot.

If passed, \$99 million would be given to both schools for renovations and upgrading current technology.

The school repair bond, called Measure E, is similar to the Measure B bond passed in 1998, the last time the schools did major facility upgrades.

Principal Paul Robinson said the Measure E campaign includes informational mailings and a phone bank where people call voters to gain support.

"Voter turnout for these types of elections are low, so it's important that [we] get the folks that support [the] measure to get to the polls on June 3," Robinson said. "If all of [our] supporters vote, then it should pass."

The bond will cover updating old classrooms, science labs and educational technology to 21st-century standards; repairing aged and leaky roofs; making athletic facility improvements; providing additions to music and theater facilities and supporting more strategies for energy conservation and management on campus.

Assistant principal Kevin Mount said the process of drafting a master plan required

>> **BOND** on pg. 5

news >> **briefs**

Music groups travel to Spain this summer

This summer, members of the school's orchestra and band will be traveling to Spain and two ensembles will perform: the symphony orchestra and the symphonic wind ensemble. The trip will take place from June 21 to July 4.

They will perform in the city of Valencia at the Palau de la Musica de Valencia, in the city of Penescola at the Penescola castle and in Barcelona at the outdoors concert hall Parc de la Ciutadella as part of the city-sponsored Musica Als Parcs Program.

Both ensembles will also perform in the all-glass enclosed concert hall Palau de la Musica de Barcelona, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and at the largest indoor concert hall in San Sebastian.

The cost for students to participate is approximately \$4,000, according to junior cello player Jasmine Deng.

In addition to the band and orchestra, some Spanish students will also attend the trip, and their itinerary will be based on school exchanges and visits with other schools in the area. Arnaldo Rodriguex will accompany the Spanish students on the trip where they hope to learn more about the history and culture of Spain. The Spanish students will serve as interpreters and announcers. ♦

— Shazia Gupta and Oksana Trifonova

Juniors awarded at annual CSF ceremony

Twelve juniors were recognized for their academic and leadership achievements on May 21 at a breakfast in the cafeteria organized by the guidance department and the school's CSF (California Scholarship Federation) club.

These students were nominated by their teachers, who presented the awards during teacher collaboration.

Five awards were given for math and science, six in the humanities and one for leadership. Many awards were sponsored by various universities.

"Any of the students that received awards there could've gotten awards in multiple disciplines," English teacher Suzanne Herzman said. "At the end of such a taxing year, it's good to look around and see you're not alone, there are other people trying to keep that fire going."

Students were notified about the award ceremony in mid-April, but did not know what type of award they would be receiving or which teacher had nominated them.

Junior Linus Lu, recipient of the Williams College Book Award, said the recognition was a nice surprise.

"In an environment that's dominated by numbers, grades and scores, it's nice to see recognition based on a holistic evaluation," Lu said. "That's better than any possible grade or score." ♦

CSF Award Winners

- Bausch and Lomb Honorary Science Award:** Calvin Shih (Presented by Cheryl Lenz)
- Brown Book Award:** Deepti Kannan (Presented by Natasha Ritchie)
- California Mathematics Council Certificate:** Kevin Chiang (Presented by PJ Yim)
- Frederick Douglass and Susan B. Anthony in Humanities and Social Sciences:** Ethan Ngai (Presented by Matt Torrens, Jerry Sheehy and Kim Anzalone)
- George Eastman Leadership Award:** Jennifer Miller (Presented by Matt Torrens)
- Harvard Book Award:** Max Chang (Presented by Amy Keys)
- MIT Leadership Award:** Boyu Pang (Presented by Kirk Davis)
- Mount Holyoke College Book Award:** Anna Sabel (Presented by Natasha Ritchie)
- Rensselaer Medal Winner:** Mounika Narayanan (Presented by Audrey Warmuth)
- Wellesley Book Award:** Sabrina Chen (Presented by Suzanne Herzman)
- Williams College Book Award:** Linus Lu (Presented by Ken Nguyen)
- Xerox Award for Innovation and Information Technology:** Aditya Aggarwal (Presented by Debra Troxell)

— Sabrina Chen and Ariel Liu

>> correction

In the "What's Inside" sidebar on page one of the May 9th issue, the Falcon incorrectly stated that the "Redwood math curriculum changes" story was printed on page 3. However, this story has been held back and is in this issue on page 7.

>> picturethis



FALCON // JADE BISHT

SENIOR TALENT SHOW >> Seniors Sean Su and Alvin Huang perform at the May 20 event. According to senior class treasurer Rick Roy, the show sold over 150 tickets, raising \$1,200 for the senior class.

MUSIC

MESH benefit concert a success

by Jade Bisht

Saratoga and Redwood musicians came together on May 13 to participate in the Music Education with Saratoga High (MESH) program. After alumni and head of the program Michelle Won graduated, seniors Lauren Casey-Clyde and Gloria Liou took the reins in hopes of creating a show that would benefit both high school and middle school students.

Originally created by alumnus Walter Hsiang in 2010, MESH is a mentoring program aiming to unite students of all ages by sharing common interests in music. Upperclassmen teach younger students and provide advice every Wednesday morning, in preparation for the MESH concert.

"Leading MESH with [Liou]

has been a great learning experience," Casey-Clyde said. "Both of us have had to learn how to communicate really well between the band and orchestra sides."

After enjoying studying under mentor alumni Justin Hang as an 8th grader, freshmen Jaewoo Lee wanted to follow in Hang's footsteps and teach younger students.

"It really helped my teaching skills, and it was great seeing them get a lot better while still having fun," Lee said. "I learned that the kids can be really creative. They made up our 'hat flip' at the end, which put a nice touch on a super fun experience."

The show included songs from "Mamma Mia!," "Indiana Jones," "Pirates of the Caribbean" and by pop artists Lorde

and Pharrell Williams along with other pieces. Liou said that the concert allowed upperclassmen and underclassmen to collaborate on ideas for their performances.

"It was really great to see how they improved, and I'm glad I had the opportunity to get to know them better," Liou said.

Although Casey-Clyde and Liou are graduating, they have high hopes for future years with the program.

"It's exciting when it comes time to 'hand down' the legacy to the next grade," Liou said. "Being able to not only go out to play music and help the kids, but also organize the concerts and work with the other high school students has been a rewarding and unforgettable experience." ♦

CLUBS

Terra inspires environmental change

by Ashley Chen & Tiffany Zheng

With California in the midst of a three-year drought, students are seeking ways to promote water conservation.

Junior Vivian Roan, for instance, has co-founded Terra Environmental. The group works with Saratoga's Environmental Club and California Scholarship Federation to organize volunteering events and raise awareness about environmental issues. Because their members come from a diverse array of schools, Terra has bimonthly meetings on weekends.

Terra also inspires action with multimedia projects, like their water conservation videos and periodical articles on Facebook and their website (www.terraenvironmental.org), written by their journalist correspondent branch of leadership.

For instance, Roan said, Terra's water campaign from earlier this year tried to reduce student usage of plastic water bottles.

"[The Plastic Bottle Initiative] was designed to raise

awareness regarding the dangers of plastic bottles to the environment while also reducing overall plastic bottle use in schools," Roan said. "We distributed stainless steel bottles to various high schools in the Bay Area along with an information flyer."

The money for these cam-

Due to the current drought, it's really important for people to [save] water.

>> junior Vivian Roan

paigns are funded by sponsors, and just last year, Terra filed for a 501(c)(3), a tax-exempt organization that offers the opportunity for non-profit organizations to be exempt from federal taxes. However, the group has run into some issues.

"We haven't heard back in over a year, so we're trying to expedite the process," Huang said.

Junior Vincent Huang, who serves as vice president of public relations, said that Terra's

current goal is inspiring water conservation.

"Due to the current drought in California, it's really important for people to [save] water, which is [what] we're going for right now," Huang said. "We made a video that we're trying to distribute on conserving water and what it means for California as a whole."

Around once a month, Terra holds volunteering events geared towards the improvement of the environment.

Recently Terra organized an event at Ulistac National Area in Santa Clara, former golf course and the last natural reserve in the city, where students planted trees.

Huang said one of Terra's struggles is spreading the word about volunteer events. "We're trying to create a network with South Bay high schools so we can [promote] events better," Huang said. "It's difficult to [do anything with] audience that [is] virtually non-existent."

In the future, Huang said, Terra wants to organize an environmental conference like TEDx to share their ideas with other groups. ♦

FALCON FOCUS: CELIA KOHLER

Junior pursues unique trapeze passion

BY Michelle Leung & Kelly Xiao

Junior Celia Kohler looked down at the ground 30 feet below her. She knew it was risky — at just 7 years old, people told her she was too little. But being the daredevil she was, she breathed a sigh, closed her eyes and took a leap of faith.

"It was fantastic and I got hooked," Kohler said.

Kohler now returns to the same place she first tried trapeze, Cancun Yucatan, Mexico, for a two-week vacation during part of every summer and while there, she practices trapeze. It is a sport that runs in the family.

"My mom used to do trapeze, but my brother is scared of heights and my dad is not flexible," Kohler said. "Trapeze is definitely a form of gymnastics so there is definitely an element of flexibility."

Trapeze is a sport she practices and performs for fun, although the lack of trapeze centers around Saratoga makes

it difficult for her to practice at all during the rest of the year.

The trainers at ClubMed, a trapeze and water skiing club in Mexico, all recognize and help instruct her, and she picks up where she left off the previous summer every year. She also performs at ClubMed.

In the 10 years she has been practicing trapeze, Kohler has faced some mishaps. Three summers ago, she attempted a Rollie Pollie, where a trapeze artist sits on the bar, then flips off the back and assumes a parallel position to the net in the air with arms stretched toward the catchers.

Kohler's wires crossed, and she ended up in a tangle.

"They talked me out of the tangles," Kohler said. "They basically told me where to put my arms and legs to get back onto the bar in the position I was supposed to be in."

In addition to the Rollie Pollie, Kohler also performs tricks like the splits, where



Courtesy of CELIA KOHLER

Junior Celia Kohler does a flip 30 feet in the air during one of her trapeze practices.

an artist does the splits upside down, and the Bird's Nest, during which an artist arches upwards with legs overhead.

Kohler gains confidence through practice free falls under ClubMed instruction.

"For horseback riding, once you fall, then you know it's not that bad," Kohler said. "But before you fall, you're freaking out."

Trapeze is an unusual sport for students to pursue, but Kohler feels drawn to it. She even hopes to continue in college.

"It's an amazing sport. It's fun and not too complicated, but it can be so beautiful if you do it right," Kohler said. "Flying through the air and trusting your partner that he'll catch you is a rush." ♦

>> New leaders chosen for 2014-2015 school year

DRUM MAJORS

"[Eddie] knows a lot about the details of how the music program works and has vast experience with leadership both within and outside the band," sophomore Katie McLaughlin said.



Junior Eddie Chen

"Stephen is an excellent musician; I always see him play saxophone or piano with such precision and focus, which will translate onto the podium easily," sophomore Katie McLaughlin said.



Junior Stephen Peng

"Josh is a really fun person to be around and his energy and ability to connect with others will make him a very accessible leader for the band," junior Stephen Peng said.



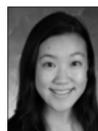
Junior Josh Pi

"Katie definitely deserves the position despite what grade she is in. She has incredible leadership and musical skills, and she gets along with a lot of different people," junior Josh Pi said.



Sophomore Katie McLaughlin

NEWSPAPER EICS



Junior Sabrina Chen

"Sabrina is insanely organized, has gone through several journalistic trials and is a brilliant writer," senior Samuel Liu said.



Junior Megana Iyer

"Megana is really hardworking and goes the extra mile to make sure that each issue of the newspaper is flawless," junior Amy Lin said.



Junior Amy Lin

"Amy makes a really great editor-in-chief because she's really good with asserting her authority but also respecting you as a writer," junior Simi Srivastava said.



Junior Deepti Kannan

"Deepti is obsessively driven, ambitious and also an amazing writer," senior Samuel Liu said.

YEARBOOK EICS

"Cindy is really willing to do all the work she is assigned to do," sophomore Yena Jeong said. "She is so good at polishing breakouts."



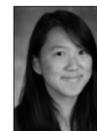
Junior Cindy Cheung

"Varna is one of the hardest workers I've ever seen," sophomore Yasmeen Mardi said. "She's so meticulous and so qualified, and she is an all-around nice person."



Junior Varna Jammula

"Tesia is not afraid to take on abstract spreads with a creative approach," senior Jennie Werner said. "I know she'll use this design talent next year to create a unique book."



Junior Tesia Sun

REPORTING BY ARIEL LIU

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SENIORS

Class of '14 celebrates its graduation

BY AnantRajeev & SimiSrivastava

The senior class will end their final year of high school with a bang — just around the corner lies the long-awaited Beach Day, Awards Night and, of course, graduation and Grad Night.

Tomorrow, the Class of 2014 will celebrate its senior prom at AT&T Park. The \$450 million, 41,000-capacity stadium is traditionally home to Major League Baseball, but for one night — May 31 — one of its lounges will be transformed into a dance floor.

Senior Parth Kejriwal said it was “pretty awesome” that the senior class was able to book AT&T Park for prom, and he was most looking forward to “the experience of having a baseball park all to ourselves.”

Senior class vice president Ingrid Hong added that she is excited about the amenities AT&T Park offers.

“It’s tradition that senior prom be somewhere in San Francisco, but we wanted to find somewhere that was iconic to the city rather than just a hotel,” Hong said. “AT&T Park fit our description perfectly and I think the location will attract anyone who is on the fence about going.”

Hong and the other senior class officers have organized guided tours of the stadium, access to stadium seating, an outdoor patio with a fire pit and JumboTron access that allows students to display photos on the big screen.

Senior class treasurer Rick Roy said one of their goals is to improve the

event from last year.

“We are bringing in better food and making sure we have sufficient accommodation like being able to fit enough dance space and tables for all the attendees this year,” Roy said.

However, the senior class officers did run into some financial adversity along the way. For this reason, starting bid prices were \$140 for all students, even those with ASB cards. Compared to previous years, this was a high cost.

Senior talent show raises money

The senior class also hosted the talent show on May 20. The event takes place every year to help fund senior activities such as prom and Beach Day.

The show was won by seniors Raj Thakker, Rohan Hardikar, Kush Maheshwari, Neel Tiwary, Rick Roy, Nikhil Goel, Priyanka Krishnamurthi, Ruchi Jain, Trishika Shetty and Nina Jayashankar and juniors Mounika Narayanan and Meghna Chakraborty and sophomore Sanam Mohan for their Indian dance act.

Teacher Hana Chen and attendance secretary Mandy Armes and seniors Brandon Le and Mostafa Rohaninejad judged the show.

“[The talent show] went well,” Roy said. “We sold about 150 tickets and made about \$1,200. It was a success.”

Grad Night back on campus

Along with the talent show, the senior class will be going on the annual beach senior beach day trip to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk on Monday.



FALCON // JADE BISHT

Contestants, senior Jason Tatman and junior Blake Propach, serenade senior Mostafa Rohaninejad with a rendition of Les Misérables at the senior talent show on May 20.

Finally, Grad Night comes back to campus this year after being held at Great America last year. Following the June 5 graduation ceremony, which starts at 6 p.m. on Benny Pierce Field, seniors will bring their high school experience to a bittersweet close.

The event is headed by chair parents Sarah Rothenberg, Sushama Thakker, Katherine Tseng and Cindy Zuccarino.

According to Zuccarino, this year’s Grad Night will focus more on the seniors having fun.

“We have shifted the importance from the decorations to the activities and games,” Zuccarino said. “The campus will still be decorated to fit the theme, but it will be the activities that

the kids will remember.”

Grad Night decorations are being financed by the senior class fundraiser at Hong’s Gourmet Restaurant in downtown Saratoga that took place on May 19 and 22. The restaurant agreed to donate a percentage of sales from both lunch and dinner on both days.

The four Grad Night chairs are anticipating a successful night that seniors will enjoy as SHS students.

“We would like the seniors to know we recognize their hard work in earning their graduation from SHS and Grad Night is one way the parents can show their appreciation,” Zuccarino said. “Grad Night is the time to relax and have fun.” ♦

COLLEGE ADVICE

Tackling dreaded apps

SENIORS SHED LIGHT ON THE PROCESS

BY DorrieTang & TiffanyZheng

As seniors celebrate graduation, juniors frantically stress over the dreaded college applications that lurk just around the corner. After surviving one of the most stressful years of their high school career, seniors shared some insights that will ease the process.

Step one: Make a well-thought out list of colleges to apply to.

Senior Nick Chow, who will be attending Princeton University, selected colleges to apply to based on his interests in history and economics and his research into schools’ programs.

“Before even researching colleges, also, I had a good idea which schools had strong programs,” Chow said. “I also got a lot of advice from students who applied to colleges in the years before me and family friends who gave me helpful tips on applying.”

For senior Zofia Trijullo, who will attend Barnard College of Columbia, strong theater programs as well as small details about certain aspects in schools that made the difference.

“Research and visiting are super important to make sure that each college you’re applying to has what you’re looking for,” Trijullo said. “Everything is important even if it seems small; I ended up not applying to a couple schools because I didn’t like their dining halls.”

Senior Austin Du, who is going to University of Pennsylvania (Penn) in the fall, chose the majority of the schools he applied with the help of a college counselor as well as experience from his older brother. Du was also impressed by Penn’s psychology department and

interdisciplinary course policy, factors that solidified his decision to apply.

Step two: Write college essays, early. Essays are notorious for keeping seniors locked in their rooms or late at night.

Du found his material through a Medical Explorers youth group at the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center that he signed up for. The group let him give a speech at the Rotary Summit Center, which became the subject of his Common App essay.

Trijullo said taking advantage of the opportunities presented to her and doing what she loves factored into her college application, where she had a strong portfolio that reflected her passion.

Step 3: Build good relationships with teachers.

“It’s [very] fulfilling to develop a lasting relationship with a teacher because you can learn so much in their classes and they also provide an engaging dynamic perspective on things you’re learning about,” Chow said.

For his college letters of recommendation, Chow did not strategize according to which teachers were known to be better letter writers, but chose the ones who he thought understood him well and knew what his interests are.

In the end, however, getting into college is just another stepping stone, and seniors advised that students should avoid getting too caught up in the admissions process.

“Seize every opportunity and get out of the house,” Du said. “Grades are important, but many people end up ruining their senior year because they detach themselves from social events during their junior year and never learn how to be a normal teenager again.” ♦

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STAFF >> Chin not returning

continued from pg.1

formed with students.

During his two years at the school, Chin became an adviser for several clubs, including mock trial, and also assisted the History Bowl team.

Petition signers, including Xiao, met with Robinson on May 19. According to Xiao, Robinson claimed the school had little involvement in Chin’s departure.

“We were told that the board had received a letter of resignation from Mr. Chin,” Xiao said, “but when we asked if Mr. Chin would still remain as a teacher if he hadn’t submitted the letter, Robinson gave no definitive answer.”

When Chin began working here in 2012-13, he was assigned a probationary status (as most new teachers are), meaning he could be dismissed at any time without cause. Administrators ob-

served him three times each year.

This year, Chin underwent the “probationary 2,” in which he was more closely examined. When this period ended on March 15, the administration chose not to give Chin tenure.

The administration began conducting interviews for Chin’s replacement during the week of May 5. Many students are sad to see him leave.

“Everything in his class was fun,” said junior Vivian Roan, who had Chin for World History last year said. “From simulations of battles to lectures, Mr. Chin made everything interesting.”

Anzalone said Chin was both professional and fun with his students.

“The department is sorry to see him go,” Anzalone said. “We think he brings a lot of energy and a lot of thinking outside the box into the social studies department.” ♦

BOND >> Facility upgrades

continued from pg.1

a lot of collaboration with Bartos Architecture, the firm that the district is working with. Mount said the school has received a lot of input.

“There was a series of stakeholder meetings where different groups came in and provided input, stating what they wanted,” Mount said. “It was a pretty long process.”

Mount added that the architecture firm provided most of its input in the beginning phrases of the plan.

“The firm presented a variety of scenarios in terms of how we might do some things,” Mount said. “Many people weighed in their opinions, and we narrowed down the scenarios, some because we needed way more money than we could ask for. The master plan was assembled, taken down to the Board of

Trustees of the district and the Board ultimately adopted a version of the master plan.”

Robinson added that the Green Team is also helping with green renovations by working with the Design Team and giving input to architects.

“The obvious energy savings by becoming as green as possible will help tremendously,” Robinson said. “We will always have energy costs, but with some newer green technology we hope to decrease those expenses.”

Robinson hopes that the bond will ultimately pass, and if it does, the school has a lot of work to do.

“It could take [five to 10] years to complete everything,” Robinson said. “There are too many unknowns to define the scope exactly and it’ll be a lot of work to bring SHS into the 21st century, but it’ll be very exciting.” ♦

SARATOGA LIBRARY

Teens log summer reading for pleasure with online program

BY SweeeyaRaj & JihauYu

The Saratoga library will begin its annual online summer reading program for teenagers on June 1 to encourage them to read in their spare time.

Teens can sign up online at the library website between June 1 and Aug. 17. The program will run until Aug. 31.

The new program, now online as op-

posed to previous years, will allow teens to participate even if they are on vacation.

Students will be able to log the books they read over the summer online by entering the book title, their rating and an optional review. Although the library has recommended books, any books will count as summer reading.

According to Birgit Vogler, the teen librarian for the Saratoga Library, every

teen who logs at least one book in the program will receive a free book, a coupon for another free book at the Book-Go-Round and a coupon for Saratoga Chocolates in downtown.

Everyone logging books will be entered into weekly drawings for gift cards (Starbucks, Yogurtland) and everyone logging at least five books will be entered into a county drawing for an iPad mini and a Google Nexus Tablet.

Vogler stressed the importance of teens reading over the summer. According to the Project Cornerstone survey from October, only one in five students at SHS read for pleasure, a trend the library seeks to reform.

“Reading just five books over the summer can prevent summer reading loss and therefore students will be better prepared for the new school year,” Vogler said. ♦

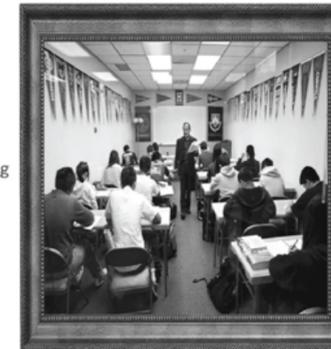


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AWARDS

The art of storytelling

WARMUTH NAMED TEACHER OF THE YEAR

BY Sabrina Chen & Deepthi Kannan

Anyone who's ever been in math teacher Audrey Warmuth's class recognizes the sound of her laughter. Contagiously enthusiastic, her laugh punctuates math puns and Canada jokes (Warmuth's accent is decidedly Canadian). And many students will tell you that it's just that enthusiasm that makes Warmuth's classes so compelling.

These days, Warmuth has even more reason to be happy: She's been named district teacher of the year for 2014-2015.

"It felt really good and it definitely put a smile on my face," Warmuth said. "It's a little embarrassing too and a little awkward because I feel like there are a lot of really good teachers on campus. Honestly there are teachers who are more creative and more innovative than I am."

Though modest, Warmuth has not only helped lead the school in completing the six-year WASC report, but has also taken on an entirely new engineering class this year as part of Project Lead the Way, a program she hopes to grow in coming years.

The teacher-of-the-year award switches between Saratoga and Los Gatos, and is decided by a committee of previous award recipients, headed by the most recent SHS recipient, history teacher Mike Davey. The committee votes on nominations presented by staff members and determines the award recipient.

"If [Warmuth] isn't [qualified], nobody is," principal Paul Robinson said. "She's always been a great teacher in the classroom and to also see her step up as a leader, it showed another side to her colleagues."

From engineer to high school teacher

The irony is that Warmuth did not envision herself being a teacher growing up.

When she was 16, she pranced around campus with the same enthusiastic smile equipped with braces and her thick glasses. Even back then, she was at the top of her class and gravitated toward math and science.

"I absolutely made up my mind, I did not want to be a teacher," Warmuth said. "I just couldn't wait to get out of high school. I thought, 'I will never come back.'"

But she eventually did. After Warmuth graduated from McGill University in Montreal she was hired as an engineer for Bombard Jay,

a company similar to Boeing, some 30 years ago.

Her workplace? A "fishbowl." No cubicles, no offices, no windows. Just one vast room lined from wall to wall with over 200 desks. Only six belonged to women — it was a time when the engineering workplace was dominated by men.

"Of the six women, three were secretaries, two were engineers and one was a woman draftsman," said Warmuth, who was one of the two engineers. "It wasn't always a comfortable place to be."

Ready for a change, Warmuth moved to California after marrying her husband, also an engineer, who got a job in the Silicon Valley, where they started a family. For the first few years, Warmuth stayed home to take care of her two kids until they reached kindergarten.

With her kids going off to school, Warmuth had to make a life decision: Go back to work as an engineer or try something new. She said she struggled at first due to having "no network of support."

She had a breakthrough when she read a book called "What Color is Your Parachute?" an interactive book to help guide people in their life decisions.

"I [discovered that] what was really, really important to me were the people I work with more than anything else," Warmuth said. "Not where I was working, not how much money I make, not even really what I was doing, but who I'm doing it with."

Driven by her love for helping people and "caring about the next generation," Warmuth got her teaching credential in math at San Jose State and started working at Lynbrook High School, where she stayed for 11 years before coming to Saratoga in 2005.

Like many veteran teachers, Warmuth said she struggled with the transition to teaching at first — especially when it came to classroom management.

The "brutal" first year

"NO." The word resonated in her ears. A student had just talked back to her in class, and a flustered, inexperienced Warmuth had shakily ordered her to "get out of [the] classroom." But the



Teacher Audrey Warmuth helps sophomore Anu Arjavalingham during Intro to Engineering.

girl refused. "And so now, it's a standoff," said Warmuth, subconsciously affecting the didactic tone she adopts while teaching. "If you have a standoff and you're in a position of authority, you have to win because if you don't win, then all chaos is going to ensue."

Taking a short breath, Warmuth dialed the office with her classroom phone, saying "I told her to leave and I told her to go to the office and she's refusing to go. You need to get down here NOW."

Little did Warmuth know that "now" was the trigger. In minutes, six men — the principal, vice principals, security officers — converged on her classroom door, expecting an "explosive situation."

The "poor girl" began to cry. "The reality is as a teacher, you're the adult in the room and you're the one who is supposed to be in control, and it should've been up to me to never let it happen," Warmuth said.

This was typical of Warmuth's first year as a high school teacher. "It was just brutal that first year," Warmuth said. "There were times when I would just drive home crying and thinking to myself, 'I can't believe I made this decision.'"

In the years since, Warmuth said she has learned how to handle difficult situations. "I think part of what's nice about being a more experienced teacher is you have a mastery of what it is you want to have happen in the classroom," War-

muth said. "What happens is that kids feel like 'oh the teacher kind of knows what she's doing' and they can kind of relax a little bit."

Warmuth no longer has to worry about conflicts with students. In recent years, the challenges of teaching have had to do with refining techniques and lessons she has taught many times. One example is the dreaded Taylor series.

Though she tweaked the lesson every year for the past eight years teaching Calculus BC, she was never completely satisfied with how she was explaining the material, until she took a different approach this year.

Mastering the art of storytelling

"That was easy. I don't see what the big deal was."

The words were music to her ears. Warmuth had just finished teaching the Taylor series using a new visual approach to explain derivations on graphs. Her sixth-period Calculus BC class understood the lesson completely.

After the 2015-2016 school year, students who score highest on the test will take a hybrid path that will strive to combine Common Core 6, 7, 8, Algebra 1 and Geometry in a three-year period, according to superintendent Lane Weiss.

Students in SUSD as well as in other local schools, such as Los Gatos and Cupertino, will be required to take a math placement assessment at the end of fifth and sixth grade, as they already have this year.

"[The students'] performances will act as a snapshot of the school for the staff, grade 11."

Another reason is the science behind methods of learning, he said. In 1995 through 1997, when the pathway most parents and students are accustomed to now was introduced, not much information about how the brain learns or processes information was known.

"When more research was conducted, ideas about how to craft curriculum to fit learning processes were thought of," Weiss said.

Another part of adding Common Core had to do with being college and career ready, Weiss said.

Concerns from the community

Some parents have expressed concerns about these changes, particularly about students' ability to accelerate in math. This is mainly because they see it as a step backwards from the original math track, and because many people believe it acts as a national agenda to

BY Melissa Wagner & Nupur Maheshwari

The Saratoga Union School District (SUSD) Board of Trustees approved new math courses that focus on Common Core concepts and methods during a meeting on Feb. 25, resulting in a new math track for younger students. This math track, however, has caused some concern from parents.

Effective next year, the change will affect incoming sixth graders. In order to adapt to Common Core, the set of standards adopted by all California schools, district officials said these changes strive to encourage a deeper understanding of subjects by having students interpret questions and answer with responses that show their thought processes.

The switch to Common Core not only affects California. Forty-five other states have also adopted it.

Students will end up taking one of three math pathways. The first option is to take Common Core 6 in sixth grade, Common Core 7 in seventh grade and Common Core 8 in eighth grade. The second is to take Common Core 6/7 in sixth grade, Common Core 7/8 in seventh grade and then Algebra 1 in eighth grade. For the upcoming year, the students who score highest on the placement test will take the third path: Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1 and Geometry, the current accelerated track.

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showing them what their students are capable of," said SUSD educational director Roberta Zarea. "It will also show the staff the student's areas of weaknesses, and how to make adjustments in order to meet the student's needs."

Using the information from this test, as well as other information relevant to the student, such as a diagnostic test (MARS Test) score, the staff will then place the student on the track that best fits his or her level of math.

Work to do

The district staff has an overall idea of what they would like to do in the new world of Common Core, although they still need to gather the materials, figure out technology and train their teachers.

"We have a lot to do," Weiss said. "But I don't see not changing as an option. The reason for this is because staff and students will be held accountable for performance for performance on the 'Smarter Balanced' assessment in grades 3-8 and then

SUSD Educational Director Roberta Zarea

Oftentimes changes are hard, and not having seen what this new track will encompass makes the parents rightfully concerned.

SUSD Educational Director Roberta Zarea

COMMON CORE

SUSD's math track changes raise concerns

"tell people what to do."

Parent Cynthia Miller is among those parents who have expressed concerns with Common Core.

"We have a community that is very math and science focused," Miller said. "They tend to want more math and science for their children's education, and what they saw was less."

She said adopting Common Core in California may be a step backwards, considering that California had previously adopted a set of math standards that had students completing Algebra 1 in eighth grade, which was a more accelerated pathway than most other states.

Weiss, while understanding this concern, has a reason for the changes.

"What is misunderstood is the fact that Common Core in itself is more advanced," Weiss said. "Because students are required to show so much understanding, Common Core can be harder and more rigorous."

Perhaps the most controversial topic has been whether most students will be able to reach calculus during their junior year, as many currently do.

Considering the California framework, taking Algebra 1 in eighth grade and thus taking calculus as a senior is considered an accelerated course, according to Weiss.

Weiss said that compared to other schools, the Saratoga schools are "double accelerated." If the students want to take calculus their junior year, however, qualified students will continue to have.

The district staff isn't sure what kids will get into which track yet, especially because this is the first year that students have taken the assessment. Reaching calculus in junior year, however, is a viable option.

Rishi Kumar, another parent who has expressed concern, said an accelerated math track is essential for a better opportunity to get into an elite university.

"Students will not only have the chance to raise their GPA if they perform well in that class, but also show a more rigorous course load when applying to college," Kumar said.

Weiss said that in order to have the option of taking calculus as a junior available, the district originally proposed having two math periods for stu-

dents on that track. It was simply one of the many ideas that weren't finalized, but this one in particular caused major fallout.

"The problem is that in the most accelerated track, we are attempting to fit five years of math into three years," Weiss said. "This will cause a lot of cramming, and extremely fast-paced paced learning. With two periods, we thought we could space it out, but it would cut out an elective."

The loss of an elective was a tentative idea proposed by the administration, which many parents also protested against.

However, this the district staff is confident that the new system will work out, even if not everything has been decided upon yet.

"The bottom line is that we want our students to succeed in the future," SUSD board president Arati Nagaraj said. "Education is constantly changing, and Common Core is part of that change. I believe that if we work together, Common Core can be a great tool in furthering our children's education and preparing them for the future." ♦

>> thebigidea

Common Core Math

When it starts
The 2014-2015 school year.

Who it affects
Incoming 6th and 7th graders.

What's new
The new Common Core curriculum focuses on developing students' ability to analyze and go deeper into problems. Courses will cover less but go deeper into the material.

The new course options
There will be three different paths. The first is to take Common Core 6, 7, and 8. The second is to take Common Core 6/7 in 6th grade, 7/8 in 7th grade, and algebra 1 in 8th grade. The third option is the accelerated track: Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, and then Geometry.

Source: Superintendent Lane Weiss

ACADEMICS

Self-studying allows for testing without AP classes

BY Anant Rajeev & Devin Zhao

Sophomore Alice He, eyes glued to a computer screen and ears encased in a set of cheap headphones, was shaking with nervousness as she clicked the

button to launch her AP Chinese Language and Culture test on the AP test date this year.

Hours of outside classes and mountains of prep books were all about to pay off in the next few hours. The delay caused by those who had to be taught how to register for the AP test didn't help.

Something about her situation might have struck other AP test takers as strange. She takes Chinese 5 Honors, but took the

AP test a year early because she wanted to get the test out of the way.

Although students in AP classes usually take the AP tests associated with them, many students in recent years have chosen to self-study for AP tests.

Students also see a chance to get ahead in their studies and be able to take more advanced classes in college, giving them more time to take classes they are interested in.

Those who attend AP classes frequently have homework and tests to reinforce the concepts that appear on the AP test, while those who do not must rely on study textbooks and their own motivation to learn those concepts.

For He, who took an outside class every Sunday to prepare, her motivation was to free up more time for APs her junior year.

"Knowing that junior year I'll be packed with heavy courses and especially more AP's, I figured I could get the Chinese AP over with quickly so I don't need to stress about that in the future," He said.

He said she thought her class prepared her for the AP test, even mirroring the test preparations one would expect in the AP class.

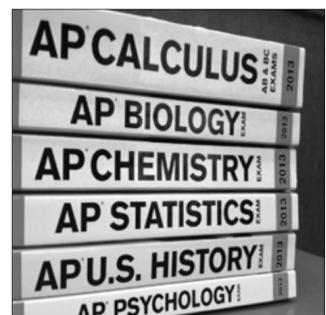
"I thought I was pretty prepared, since the class I took outside gave me a lot of Chinese readings and vocabulary to study throughout the year," He said. "We practiced speaking and a lot of multiple-choice problems during class."

For any test takers who are thinking of taking AP tests outside of class, He recommends

>> thebigidea

AP Tests sometimes taken by self-studiers

- AP Psychology
- AP Macroeconomics
- AP Microeconomics
- AP US Government
- AP Chinese
- AP Spanish
- AP French
- AP Computer Science
- AP Statistics
- AP Literature
- AP Language
- AP Chemistry



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that they should try to prepare to exceed the AP standards to comfortably secure their ideal score.

Sophomore Josh Dey, who self-studied for AP Computer Science, believes that students engaging in this path must be disciplined in their work habits.

Dey chose to self-study because he wanted to be less pres-

sured while learning the subject while finding ways for him to learn well.

His motivation came from all sorts of different places, all inspired by getting a great score on the AP test.

"Thinking about doing well on the test beforehand drove me to study even more diligently and patiently for it," Dey said. ♦

COMMUNITY

Veterans honored on Memorial Day by Saratoga

BY Becky Hoag

There is an immense silence as the American and Californian flags slowly rise to the top of the pole, pause, then float back down to half-mast. The young Girl Scout caller asks everyone to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in unison. The Redwood Middle School percussion starts up, and the march to the Madronia Cemetery begins.

Saratoga's Memorial Day Ceremony has taken place each year on the last Monday of May for the past 86 years and this year, was scheduled to be on May 26. It is sponsored by the Saratoga Foot-

ball Club and is important to the city's residents.

"This is the oldest and most valuable civic community observance of our city," Foothill Club and Saratoga-Los Gatos Combined School District Board member Cynthia Chang said.

Many groups and organizations are involved, including the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, the 4H Club, the Redwood Middle School percussion, the Saratoga

High School choir and orchestra and, of course, war veterans.

"It's such a great event that combines young and old families, civic groups, church groups and many others who get together in respect and recognize our collective debt to the veterans," Chang said.

The ceremony begins in front of the Memorial Arch, which was dedicated in

1919 to Saratoga residents who died in World War I, with some words from the president of the Saratoga Foothill Country Club.

After the Girl Scouts raise the flags and the Redwood percussion starts up, the procession makes its way to Madronia Cemetery where students and veterans speak about their experiences and express gratitude for Americans who have served or are serving now.

One of the speakers this year was a 28-year veteran of the Army and Army Reserves named David M. Kennedy. He began his service in 1968 at the age of 25, eventually serving in Iraq. ♦

>> togatalks

I love that she creates an atmosphere where we can be very on task but still have fun and enjoy ourselves."



junior Anna Sabel

I remember hearing her energetic voice for the first time as she outlined the material we would cover [and] thinking: This is going to be one incredible year."



junior Max Chang

"It's a journey of exploration and discovery and growth and you can just feel yourself growing on the inside," Warmuth said. "In the end, you can look behind you and see where you've gone, it's like 'wow [we] have really traveled an incredible journey.' ♦

Chua's 'Triple Package' to success a failure

by Gitika **Nalwa**

I've been wondering about this Amy Chua phenomenon. If you haven't heard, she is a professor of law at Yale University who authored a bestseller in 2011 on the virtues of obsessive child-rearing by domineering Chinese mothers, a.k.a. Tiger Moms.

This book, "Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother," immediately sparked controversy because of its highly self-assured parenting style, which was viewed skeptically by many. Notwithstanding this controversy, or precisely because of it, the book sold extremely well. This in turn appears to have prompted Chua and her husband Jed Rubenfeld, also a professor of law at Yale, to put out a sequel, "The Triple Package," published in 2014 and reviewed earlier this year in the Falcon's Feb. 14 issue.

The second book is even more controversial than the first: It provides a recipe for cultural transcendence. What is the "triple package"? Chua and Rubenfeld define it as comprising a superiority complex, insecurity and impulse control. That's it, and you are on your way to breeding a superior culture. Nothing about enjoying what you do, pursuing your passion or helping others.

"The Triple Package" claims to codify traits of the following cultures that the authors consider most successful in the American milieu: Chinese, Jewish, Indian, Iranian, Lebanese, Nigerian, Cuban and Mormon.

Chua and Rubenfeld offer some statistics, but mainly anecdotal evidence, to claim that it is the "triple package" that has led to the success of these cultures as measured by their educational, financial

and occupational attainment. But the authors' suspect methodology brings into question their conclusions.

First, Chua and Rubenfeld do not establish correlation. They fail to show that each of their supposedly successful groups embodies each of the three traits.

Their evidence is based on individual case studies, like when they describe how Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor overcame her circumstances, whereas rigorous research requires data sampling across large populations not only of cultures they perceive as successful, but also of those that they don't.

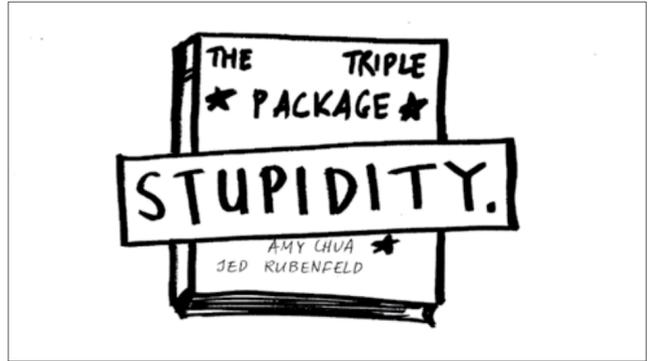
Next, even if Chua and Rubenfeld established correlation, which they do not, correlation does not imply causation.

To take a recent example, Steve Jobs, not a member of any of these ethnic communities but an astounding success, was a complete jerk.

One could argue that Jobs's success was in part due to his sneakiness and dishonesty and that these traits are as disproportionately present in any successful group as is any component of Chua and Rubenfeld's triple package.

Third, Chua and Rubenfeld's generalizations fail to acknowledge the diversity within each community. Surely, not all Chinese moms are tiger moms, as Chua would have us believe. To me it appears likely, for instance, that most if not all Chinese American Nobel Prize winners did not "benefit" from status-conscious tiger moms. I am going by the mere fact that none of these winners attended an Ivy League or similar "elite" school for their undergraduate studies, which I suspect most or all could have if they had been driven toward that goal

>> candidcaricatures



HELEN WONG

by their moms.

The most important flaw of the book, however, may be that Chua and Rubenfeld do not measure upward mobility as a metric of success — that is, they do not measure the likelihood of children moving into a higher socio-economic-educational strata of society than that they were born into as a metric of success.

Unlike earlier Falcon reviewers, I find this book a racist creed that stereotypes every culture — both the ones the authors commend and the ones they implicitly denigrate — on the basis of hunches and anecdotes, rather than by careful analysis and study.

If you want to succeed, here is my triple package for you: Work hard, persevere and enjoy what you do. If you don't believe me, ask your parents. Regardless of their ethnicity, your successful parents will concur. ♦

one measures success based on upward mobility. The groups identified by the Chua and Rubenfeld are mistakenly deemed more "successful" precisely because they ignore the substantial advantages that children in these groups have over others in regard to the education and wealth.

Professors Ming Zhao of UCLA and Jennifer Lee of UC Irvine argue precisely this. Lee proffers in Zócalo Public Square that Mexican Americans are the most successful immigrants in America when

see ads consisting of flawless, tall and beautiful girls, the idea of how you are supposed to look melds with the idea of photoshopped beauty.

Because of our unrealistic idea of beauty, things like this "game" can hurt us more than anyone could imagine.

This loss of confidence often leads to risks that women take with their health, most often involving weight. Not only is this dangerous, but it's upsetting as well because we are confident with their body. The question arises: How do we punish these boys? The problem is, you can't.

This can be prevented from happening in the future, however — if we continue to stress that real beauty isn't the

deceiving images plastered upon the faces of photoshopped models; if we stop commenting on others' looks and creating the fake idea of what beauty really is. Because, after all, there is no correct type of "beautiful".

The girls who were affected badly by the "game" are no doubt going to feel torn apart and incredibly self-conscious about their looks. It's going to be something they remember, because whether girl or boy, nobody likes to get rated on looks, or how much they're worth.

What may seem like a game solely to get prom dates descended far below the surface into a world of rankings and who's "hot or not." At the end of the day, although we should realize that no rating accurately describes who we are as people, it still can hurt us, which is why games like these should be punished. ♦

'Prom drafting' at Calif. school shameful

by Melissa **Magner** & Nupur **Maheshwari**

During a time when teens often feel the need to compare themselves with others, being ranked solely on looks is usually the last thing teenagers want to face — especially when that ranking is carried out by their peers. Teens tend to struggle with confidence and self-worth, and being "rated" is most likely not on their wish list.

Unfortunately, the boys at Corona del Mar High School in Newport Beach, California did exactly that.

The school is currently under fire for a "game" that boys participated in during the weeks prior to their junior prom. In the game, the boys purchased draft tickets, and then girls were drafted as dates to prom. Some boys paid as much as \$140 for a "first-round pick."

Girls are not only being treated as items or property that can be bought, but many are also being stripped of their confidence.

Whether the girls at the school "honor" the rules of the draft or not, the game itself is a sign of how twisted these boys' perception of girls is.

If this is our world, it's no wonder girls lose confidence in their own body image.

The girls who are being "bought" by boys as dates are in essence being treated as property. No person should have a price placed upon them, whether it be based upon by popularity, looks, etc.

Teenage girls have always had a hard time feeling confident with the way they look. When you constantly

Girls are being treated as items or property that can be bought.

Controversial literature belongs in curriculum

by Oksana **Trifonova**

Blood dripped from Hassan's pants and stained the snow black. Amir could barely look into his puffy eyes, those that seconds ago twinkled with the excitement of running a kite. Sobs replaced his happy shout, "For you, a thousand times over!" This is a scene in the novel "The Kite Runner" by Khaled Hosseini, in which the main character's best friend Hassan is brutally raped.

These are the kinds of scenes that fill the pages of works taught in classrooms across the country. Yet, for many, a confrontation with these words can result in a sense of horror. For especially sensitive people, these controversial topics can

leave a lingering feeling of depression or anxiety.

This issue has prompted the question of whether it is acceptable to require students to read material that may later on have a negative impact on them.

But the truth is that without such reading experiences, students will likely be less prepared to handle difficult events in their own lives.

Almost every classic contains controversial material. Think of "The Things They Carried," which includes graphic scenes of violence against innocent civilians and "The Catcher in the Rye" with its vulgar language and themes of sexual frustration.

Both these novels are regarded as

distinguished literature with profound messages and themes.

Controversial literature has always been a large part of famous literature. Shielding kids will do nothing but give them an illusion of the world and they will never have to face the hardships and moral dilemmas that are so significant in controversial literature.

In Saratoga, there is an illusion of a perfect life, with no racial or socio-economic hardships or discrimination. Studying controversial texts allows students to alter this perspective on the world.

For example, "The Kite Runner" deals with the main character undergoing a transformation and realizing that he had

always been a tourist in his own country, living a privileged life free of worries protected by his father's money. While reading this book, students can relate to the main character and think about the "Saratoga bubble."

If the students' parents are still concerned about protecting students from emotional damage, they must realize that their censorship is a paper shield, since controversial material is present in the media surrounding them.

Instead of trying to escape hardship, schools should help students to accept it as part of life and encourage them to find solutions to these horrors and tribulations, rather than simply shrinking away from them. ♦

New APCS format demonstrates positive shift for more flexibility

>> candidcaricatures



HELEN WONG

Next year, the AP Computer Science class will become a blended class, mixing traditional classroom learning with education through the Internet in the form of teacher-made videos.

Students already achieving at a high level will only have to attend class to take assessments; otherwise, attendance will be optional, and students will learn primarily from math teacher Debra Troxell's instructional online videos and the completion of assignments.

This change represents a positive shift in how the school approaches education. It's a sign that the administration is acknowledging that the traditional classroom method may not be the best fit for every student.

All students learn at their own pace regardless of age or class, and transforming APCS into a blended course allows for more control over learning pace. By being able to access videos online and only having to show up on designated test days, students will be able to parcel their time more ef-

fectively and acquire more personal flexibility with the subject itself.

Of all the classes at SHS to test the blended method on, APCS is the best one for trying out such a change. It is the one most likely to succeed: The course is already taught with a heavy emphasis on online video usage.

The blended class method would have minimal effects on the course-

work; pragmatically speaking, only the physical attendance and the in-person teaching experience would be significantly affected.

If this experiment goes well, the change could potentially be extended to other classes that are heavy in technology and Internet usage.

Some people might claim the loss of the traditional classroom learning experience is too much for most students, but the option of taking APCS as it has always been remains open. There should be no reason for complaints from any quarter.

Making APCS a blended class is a risk, but in the end, the benefits are likely to outweigh the negatives. All that remains is to see how effective the new class is in practice. ♦

Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board

Editors-in-chief Sabrina Chen Megana Iyer Deepti Kannan Amy Lin	Opinion Editors Bruce Lou Helen Wong	Reporter Helen Wong
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The Saratoga Falcon staff voted 14-3 in support of the editorial.



Drought's effects demand to be addressed

by Rotem **Shaked** & Arjun **Ramanathan**

California is generally known for its calm weather, good vibes and scenery. Under the state's beaches, however, lies a dangerous problem that has gripped the state for three years — drought.

In Saratoga, there is not much of a difference in the economic outcome that the drought is bringing. But the more that cities like Saratoga ignore the worsening problem, the worse it gets for rural communities throughout the state.

Too often, many of us continue to take long showers and consume large amounts of water, regardless of the state's environmental condition.

As the drought worsens, the price of fruit is going up, the cost of water irrigation skyrocketing and citizens of Cal-

ifornia are being asked to take efforts to conserve as much as they can.

While other countries, or even states like Texas, seem to be able to handle their intense respective droughts fairly well through more efficient irrigation systems, it seems like the Bay Area doesn't bother to focus on conserving water and instead lets the problem fall on the farmers and to neighboring areas.

In March, Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited the Silicon Valley and talked about how California could benefit from Israel's experience with its own drought.

"California doesn't need to have a water problem," Netanyahu said. "Israel has no water problems because we are the No. 1 recyclers of waste water, we stop water leaks, we use drip irrigation and desalination."

While Israel is more forced to deal with its problem than Californians, we may one day face similar threats and urgency if we don't act early and start reducing water usage now. The drought has clearly put us in our place and forced us to be conscious about the state that California is in.

The drought cannot be stopped by us, as we as people don't control rains and climate changes. What we should do in order to stop the drought is to conserve and be cautious about water and its uses. The consequences for continued waste could be minor in the short term, but in the future, the supply of water is in jeopardy as the state grows and demands increase.

With more awareness and conservation, the state's standard of living can be saved. Without it, the future looks much less golden than it should be. ♦

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: BITTER STUDENT REACTION TO CHIN'S SUDDEN DISMISSAL

Dear Falcon editors,

This message is to the administration as well as to every student in this school. It has come to my attention that next year you intend to get rid of Mr. Chin. I can tell you with absolute conviction that it is one of the biggest mistakes this school could make. Mr. Chin is probably one of the best teachers at this school and he is definitely one of the most dedicated. He is constantly working until 8 or 9 pm. I physically see him working, making worksheets and lesson plans for the next day. He strives to not only give his students historically accurate documents about each topic, but also give them other points of view. Where any other teacher would give us an American source about the horrors of the German conquest of Europe,

Mr. Chin would search online for hours to find sources from Germany and the Nazi army.

Furthermore, Mr. Chin is the future of history teachers. Over the past few years, we have tried to change fact-based history courses to focus more on analysis. Simply put, in Mr. Chin's class, we don't just learn about what happened, but why it happened. I took Mr. Chin's World History class last year, and, this year, I am in APUSH. What I learned from that class has helped me on numerous occasions, and I owe my grade to Mr. Chin. Since it was World History, he didn't just focus on the American perspective of the war, but I would go home after his lectures and research it. Through lectures, debates, and various other activities, he inspired numerous students to want to learn

about history.

Finally, I accept that I am simply one person whose personal anecdotes and evidence about Mr. Chin are unverifiable. I understand that this will most likely have no impact on the your decision to get rid of Mr. Chin. However, I challenge you to find one of Mr. Chin's students who didn't walk out of his class a better student. I am but one of many people who would like Mr. Chin to teach here next year.

Additionally, if you didn't like anything about his teaching style, he is a very adaptable teacher, and I'm sure he can fix the issue.

In conclusion, reinstate Mr. Chin. Without him, it is going to be a little bit less GREAT to be a FALCON! ♦

— junior Jerry Yang

May 30, 2014

FROM EDUCATION TO VACATION

STUDENTS REFLECT ON THEIR 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR The truth about junior year, the hell year

BY Maya Ravichandran

Every day when I walked in to Spanish class during sophomore year, I would hear all the juniors complaining about the inhumanly large amount of homework they had to complete, the impossible tests they had coming up and the two hours of sleep they usually got. This didn't surprise me because that was basically all they talked about.

Back then, I wondered if junior year was really as terrible as they described. So, I asked them. They stared back listlessly with tired eyes, gaunt faces and permanently frowning mouths; their appearances answered my question.

During the summer, I refused to think about what was to come in the next year. Despite my initial glimpses of what junior year was like, I decided to push down my pessimism and embrace the new beginning.

So school began, and in the very first week of school, I had a total of four quizzes. Four. Granted, many of them were class policy quizzes, but they were still quizzes.

For the next nine months, I did indeed experience much of what my classmates had warned me about. There were nights I was up so late I wondered what people were thinking I was doing at 3 a.m. Sometimes my hand would cramp up after a long block of writing English journals, and it would take a while before I could feel normal circulation in my fingers. When I would occasionally lose my graphing calculator, I would run around frantically trying to figure out how I was going to do calculus without having to spend a hundred dollars on a new one. (Of course, when I found the calculator under a pile of papers, I would laugh at myself for being worried.)

Studying for SAT tests as well as doing homework was not a pleasant experience either. I memorized words that I didn't even think existed. I have never used "obstreperous" in a sentence and probably never will. (Awkward, I just did.)

Somehow, I ended up going through all of the experiences that I had been told about, and it was not at all easy.

There were late nights and too many tests and homework assignments. But when I was a sophomore, what the juniors did not tell me about were the amazing classes and moments that junior year also held.

As much as I hated studying for tests, I loved the moments in class where everything just flowed. Discussions about books, group projects and funny presentations in class made some of the stress melt away.

One day in Honors English class, when we were reading "Hamlet," my teacher Amy Keys asked two students to act out a scene, while another two students read their lines out loud. Since Hamlet was supposed to be acting crazy, the whole class laughed at the antics of the student who portrayed Hamlet. I laughed so hard my stomach hurt. It was painful yet hilarious. Though both of their faces were bright red, I could tell both the actors enjoyed it as well.

If there is one thing that did make junior year harder than necessary, it was procrastination. I admit, sometimes I put off assignments a little longer than I should have.



Junior Maya Ravichandran works diligently on her APUSH homework.

I had free time, but I used it for less productive things, like catching up on TV shows instead of getting ahead on English reading. Procrastination is your enemy. No matter how lovely that nap sounds, fight the urge. Trust me, it will feel better once all your work is finished.

Yet, I will also admit that many students exaggerate the amount of homework that juniors receive. While it is much more than sophomore year, it is still possible to get eight hours of sleep every day and still get stellar grades. I have friends who can sometimes get more than eight hours of sleep.

I have no idea how, but they do it. Basically, the homework stress level depends on how diligent the student is.

As the year winds down, I think I am a stronger and wiser person for surviving junior year.

Now that it is over, first semester senior year will be round two because this time I've got college applications as well. Oh, dear. I fear for my sanity.

Sophomore achieves 'true princess' status

BY Helen Chen

I have to admit, I had never considered myself a confident, outspoken person in public. I have always shrunk away from encounters with people because, let's be real, any time not spent in my room sleeping or surfing the Internet is pretty much wasted.

OK, not really, but still, I never imagined that I'd be waking up at 5:30 on a Saturday morning to drive to speech and debate tournaments instead of sleeping the morning away.

From the people I have met to the skills I have gained, being a part of the individual events team for speech and debate has been more than just another

activity to list on my resume.

Because of speech and debate, I found a way to share what I felt. In my original oratory speech, I was able to convey that although my childhood dream of wanting to be princess is impossible, I am happy with who I am.

To me, that is what being a "true princess" is, the princess I had always wanted to be.

In the same way, I hoped my dream of becoming a princess would help convince others to follow theirs too.

Embarrassing myself in public is something I have had little trouble with, but being given the opportunity

to do so in front of strangers and calling it a speech was something I could not easily pass up. I would never see the people I performed in front of again, right?

I was wrong. Judges came up to me, as well as other speakers in my rounds. They remember me as the "ballerino printheess," as senior Jason Li so aptly put it. (In my speech I actually said that I wanted to be a gymnast cloud princess, but it is what it is.)

Going to tournaments and speaking while making a complete fool out of myself was only the beginning of numerous memories from the year.



Chen

From being nicknamed the baby of the team, to listening music and playing cards, to going to get Ikes sandwiches to jumping in fountains at the Santa Clara University invitational, there was never a shortage of things to do during free time at tournaments.

In fact, I even discovered a new pastime: making my friends into princesses by coloring around their faces in snapchats. Inspired by my speech, I confidently turned others into Ariel and Cinderella, drawing dresses and hair to transform them.

While I know that I'm not actually a princess, in any case, making other people into temporary princesses is definitely good enough for me. ♦

A lesson well learned: Sophomore ends year with SAT

BY Gitika Nalwa

It happened one fine afternoon over spring break. I was lazing about, doing nothing, as one tends to do during a vacation. Then, my dad got this brainwave, this brilliant idea, another way for me to get ahead.

I would take the SAT subject test for math on May 3, he declared proudly. Yes, of course, how brilliant.

Months before, it had come to my attention that many of my classmates in my Trig/Pre-Calc Honors class were going to subject themselves to this monstrosity of a test, but I simply rolled my eyes at them and laughed. They're insane, I thought. But at that moment, I was reminded that this is Saratoga. And now, it seemed like I was the insane one. All right, time to reconsider.

Why not? Might as well get it over with, my dad said. My brother had put in all of two days to prepare when he took the test his junior year. Why couldn't I? Math is easy. I was just wasting my break. Why was I always behind? Studying would only take a few

days. Ah, how simple my dad made it seem. A sigh. A frown. OK, I said.

We pulled out the infamous Barons book, a flimsy blue College Board workbook, and a stopwatch. I plopped everything on my bed, where I usually study, and I put on my black glasses with the chipped frames.

And so it began. It took longer than a few days.

For the next two weeks, I spent every spare minute struggling through practice tests and figuring out how to use my TI-84; no easy feat, I promise you. And then, just a week before the test, we came to a realization: I was not going to be ready, not then, and probably not by the June SAT math subject test either.

So, I took the Math 2 test the following Saturday in a second-story APUSH classroom at Bellarmine College Preparatory.

I walked up a flight of stairs, went to room 204 and sat down to take the test. One hour. 50 questions.

Time's up.

I was on number 40 — 10 to go. Looking back, I could probably blame my performance on my dad, the time constraint or a small breakfast. But in all honesty, I'd just have myself to blame. I

True, speed can come with practice, but practice can only get you so far.

There is a point at which you cannot improve. Else, everyone aspiring for a perfect score would have it. In my opinion, it is not because you need to study harder or do more practice tests; it is because you cannot process the information fast enough. You do not have the right mindset.

That's something that many students do not understand, not just with SATs, but with school, with classes and with sports. It is something that I failed to fully understand until the end of my second year in high school.

If you can't handle something, maybe you should just take a deep breath, ignore your Tiger parent and try it again next year. And if you are capable, if you are one of the insane, an incoming sophomore who plans to take the SAT next June, then I have just one thing to say to you.

See you there. ♦

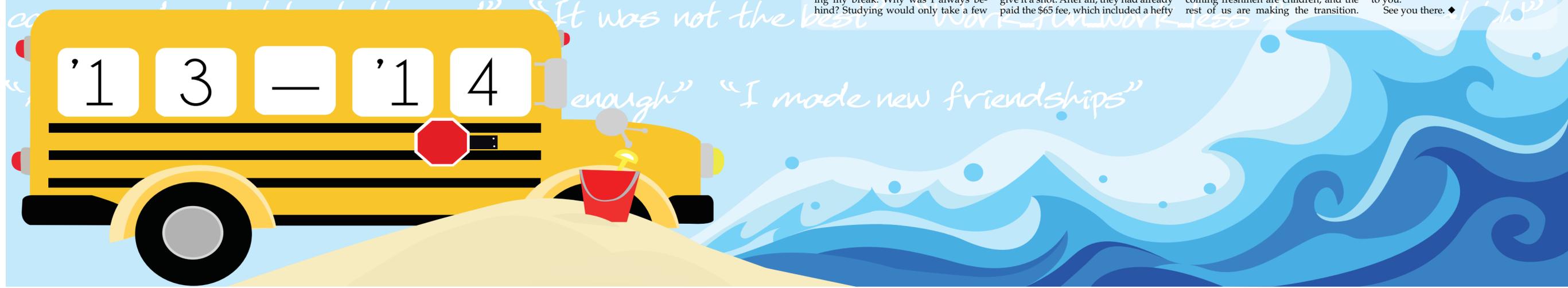


Nalwa

>> togatalks

Can you describe your freshman year in a sentence?

<p>It was different from what I expected, but I loved the freedom high school allows."</p>  <p>freshman Jenna Berlinberg</p>	<p>I had new experiences with old friends while making new ones."</p>  <p>freshman Joshua Ho</p>	<p>It was definitely a change from middle school but a positive change."</p>  <p>freshman Amulya Vadlakonda</p>
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Teachers recommend summer reads

ENGLISH TEACHERS LIST SOME OF THEIR FAVORITE PLEASURE-READING BOOKS FOR STUDENTS

The Jungle
Beloved
Lolita
Middlemarch
Frankenstein

>> Amy Keys

- "Bleak House" by Charles Dickens
- "East of Eden" by John Steinbeck
- "Black Swan Green" by David Mitchell
- "Interpreter of Maladies" by Jhumpa Lahiri
- "Twelfth Night" by William Shakespeare

['Twelfth Night' is] not only my favorite Shakespeare play to teach, but also my favorite play to see. It does a really nice job of combining humor and depth — real tragedy and sadness. It's funny, but even the humor has a dark undertone that's real; it's bittersweet.

>> Erika Cobain

- "Sarah's Key" by Tatiana de Rosnay
- "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel
- "All the Names" by Jose Saramago
- "Young Woman and the Sea: How Ederle Conquered the English Channel and Inspired the World" by Glenn Stout
- "Small Wonder" by Barbara Kingsolver

Kingsolver writes about the aftermath of the 9/11 tragedy. I gifted the book to my grandmother earlier and discovered it on her bookshelf during our own family tragedy. Reading the short stories while spending hours in hospitals helped buoy me through grief during the slow decline and death of my paternal grandmother. This is not a sad book, it is a collection of what wonders arise when one shifts perspective during the most difficult challenges.

>> Cathy Head

- "Jane Eyre" by Charlotte Bronte
- "Ender's Game" by Orson Scott Card
- "The Stand" by Stephen King
- "Harry Potter" series by JK Rowling
- "Shogun" by James Clavell

'Shogun' may be a long book, but it's a fast read, as many of my freshmen will tell you, and it makes memorable the complex history surrounding East-meets-West. Of course, the love story is classic — dangerous, forbidden, redemptive.

>> Erick Rector

- "Inferno" by Dante Alighieri
- "The Picture of Dorian Gray" by Oscar Wilde
- "The World According to Garp" by John Irving
- "Dubliners" by James Joyce
- "The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals" by Michael Pollan

Joyce will make you feel fancy, Wilde will make you fancy. To hell with Dante!

>> online extra

For the complete list of teachers' book recommendations, visit:

www.saratogafalcon.org

Into the Wild
The Hours
Cat's Cradle

Sophomore's latest obsession: Hogwarts is Here

What if I told you the Internet offered an opportunity to do extra homework — without getting any sort of credit — and what if I told you I took it?

(You'd say I'm crazy, I'm guessing.)

I swear, though, I have a good reason. This homework isn't from just any old school; it's from Hogwarts.

Thanks to Hogwarts is Here (HiH), a new Harry Potter fan-site that offers online classes that correspond with the classes Harry took at Hogwarts, I've successfully put off even more school work than I normally do.

It all began when I read about HiH on a website and decided to make an account. Unlike Pottermore, another Harry Potter interactive website, HiH isn't officially sanctioned by the great J.K. Rowling or whoever has the rights to Harry Potter intellectual property. Instead, it's created by volunteer fans. That means they understand one fundamental aspect of Harry Potter fandom: We want to choose our own houses.

Let's be real. When I first signed up for Pottermore maybe a year ago, the

Sorting Hat put me into Hufflepuff, and I was so offended that I started over with a new account. Hufflepuff is the worst because they don't have any special distinction.

(Just kidding, y'all. Hufflepuffs are loyal and open-minded.)

Another thing that HiH handles well is the concept of House points. Unlike in Pottermore, in which you get points by "dueling" (a.k.a. typing in letters) or making potions (extremely time-consuming and easy to get wrong), earning House points in HiH is actually meaningful since you earn points by taking classes, which are taught by the volunteers.

I signed up for astronomy, because I was trying to learn a little real-life knowledge to supplement my Harry Potter obsession. My first assignment was to research a constellation.

Yes, I was actually writing a mini-essay on the constellation Andromeda instead of studying for my math test the next day. Bad life decisions are my forte, as you can tell. But it was all worth it... sort of. I got 100 percent on that particu-

lar astronomy essay and somewhat less than that on the math test.

Of course, the so-called "essay" was only 300 words and around 150 words was making up an alternative myth about the creation of the constellation. And my grader was an anonymous volunteer, who might've just been in a mood to give everyone full points that day.

After completing this assignment, I moved on to the second lesson on Mercury. Each assignment is preceded by a short article on the topic, like a textbook excerpt, and quizzes round out the end of some lessons.

What's most impressive about HiH, though, isn't my dedication to procrastination, but the amazing volunteers that run the site. When I first made an account, the site crashed all the time because of server overload.

But only a few days later, they had

already brought in people to help them stabilize the site. And although HiH does feature ugly banner ads, I understand they need them to pay for site upkeep.

In fact, the sheer breadth of the curriculum is astounding. HiH offers a multitude of courses, including history of magic, transfiguration, charms, potions and more. Each course is nine weeks, and volunteers grade assignments. You can even buy textbooks that are also fan-written with wizard money you get from the wizarding bank, Gringotts. I can only imagine how many people contributed to this project.

Thanks to them, though, I have a new go-to site for wasting time. Since HiH doesn't have an explicit goal, and the "goal" is just to take fun classes, I can spend an infinite amount of time there.

Call me crazy. Honestly, I don't care. I have astronomy homework to do. ♦

GRAPHIC BY ROTEM SHAKED

ASHLEY CHEN
Ashley Ketchum

THE saratogafalcon

May 30, 2014

ENTERTAINMENT >> 13

A guide to becoming a manga addict

Hey. You there. You, the freshman who got bored after finishing two minutes of homework. You, the junior who's pulling her hair out worrying about the two SAT II's she has to take in a week. And you, the senior who needs an excuse to procrastinate.

DEVIN ZHAO
The Devine

Why not become a manga addict? What's manga, you ask? Simply put, manga is pretty much the Japanese version of comics except slightly more erotic, fight-packed and suspenseful. Those who would like a video representation should go for anime.

Now, I present to you the 100 percent, Devin Zhao guaranteed guide of how to become a manga addict.

1. Choose your manga
First of all, you must find that one manga that's going to get you hooked. Websites such as Mangafox, Mangahere, and every other Manga (insert word here) contain free manga and cater to your tastes.

Once you've gotten on your manga site, bookmarked twice to be sure, a list of new chapters face you. Now is the time to be awed.

It's time to find that one series that you're going to obsess over for the rest of your manga-addicted life. But first, you must read the top three mangas of any manga website: "Naruto," "One Piece" and "Bleach," or else you'll be isolated from the rest of the manga community.

What are you waiting for? Start reading. You'll get so hooked that you can't leave your screen.

2. Throw away the trash
After reading all your favorite mangas four times over, you've discovered that school is irrelevant compared to finding out how Donflamingo from "One Piece" gets pummeled by Luffy in the next few chapters, one chapter per week.

You've also created the optimal schedule for reading your favorite manga the moment it's released to the public. After extensive research, you've discovered that doing homework can be delayed to maximize the time you spend reading manga. Studying for tests becomes trivial, while barely maintaining minimum grades becomes the norm.

You might notice your lack of sleep due to too much reading, but that's nothing that 5-Hour Energy drinks, coffee and late afternoon naps can't fix.

Eventually, you'll notice that manga has replaced your friends and even your family. You live the life of a scavenger, searching the back of the refrigerator for leftovers and expired food, and then go back to your laptop to resume reading.

When the grading period ends, you'll find that your grades have deviated majorly from what colleges want, but that's insignificant in the grand scheme of things. Your parents won't be proud of you to say the least, but all the females in

"Rosario + Vampire" will always accept you for who you are.

3. Lose your desires
After repeated encounters with your tiger mom's sharp bamboo stick, your slightly battered mind has pieced together that you'll have to get a job one day, and you need education to achieve that.

Finals week has arrived, and you need to make a comeback with your grades. Saturday morning comes, and with more than 48 hours before your first final, you feel that you have more than enough time to relax. A few chapters of that new manga wouldn't hurt, right?

As one chapter leads to another, you think that watching the anime version would

be more accurate in displaying the characters' feelings. Then, hours later, you've watched all the

episodes of the anime and read all the fan fiction you can put your hands on. With your mind at peace, you can begin studying.

Then you look at the clock; it's Sunday night, 10 p.m. You swivel your head to stare at your bedside mirror — Good Lord, your hair's messy and unkempt, and your body smells like dried sweat. You need to shower, eat and shave; there's no way you can get a good night's sleep and study for your final.

You lean back in your chair, breathing in the late night air. Manga has come back to ruin your life, and there's nothing you can do about it. Maybe one day you'll get rid of that addiction, but you'll have to manage for now. ♦

GRAPHIC BY ROTEM SHAKED

Spider-Man 2: 'Amazing' or disappointing?

FILM BOASTS OUTSTANDING ACTORS

BY ShreyaTumu

"The Amazing Spider-Man 2" swung into action on May 2, earning \$35.5 million on its first Friday, a figure that includes \$8.7 million in Thursday sneak previews. I can only conclude that the movie is a great success. I found it to be a perfect combination of hilarious, dramatic and serious scenes.

Peter Parker (Andrew Garfield) had his fair share of heartbreak: His biological parents left him at a young age and his uncle Ben died. Now, however, he has superpowers, such as squirting spider webs from his fingertips, a result of a bite from a radioactive spider.

He juggles his high-school relationship with Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone) and his role as the vigilante of New York City, defending it from a slew of supervillains from the mysterious company Oscorp.

With an all-star cast, including Jamie Foxx playing one of the supervillains, the movie was bound to be a hit. I, for one, watched it for Garfield and his amazing acting. It was gut-wrenching to watch my favorite superhero cry in more than one scene, and these scenes do what most superhero movies don't: They show that even the bravest of men have soft spots and can be vulnerable too.

Although Stone was tossed into playing the "girlfriend" role, there was one thing that makes her different from the usual superhero characters' girlfriends: Gwen Stacy knows about her boyfriend's alter ego and his duties to New York City.

The movie was careful, however, to not make her the typical over-protective and continuously worried girlfriend. Stone shows just the right amount of love and care for Peter Parker, so the movie doesn't turn into a romantic comedy. Furthermore, Stone and Garfield are together in real life, so the chemistry there is true and believable.

Because I have never read any of the

"Spider-Man" comics, I cannot relate this movie to anything else but the original installment of the "Spider-Man" movie series starring Tobey Maguire. I can say, though, that Garfield is a better actor and, might I add, far more attractive than Maguire.

To be honest, the main reason I chose to see the movie was solely because of Garfield, considering I'm not the biggest fan of superhero movies. Casting decision; he is not only charming, but his acting is also realistic, resulting in an outstanding performance.

Additionally, DeHaan's face was made for his role. He looks so vulnerable, yet his devilishly diabolical eyes with his side-swept gelled hair is a perfect combo for a dangerously evil villain who is also a young, rich and stuck-up kid.

Spoilers included in the next paragraph:

Another unique aspect of the film is the plot twist at the end, when Gwen Stacy dies, but for good reason. The director does a spectacular job subtly hinting Gwen was going to suffer a tragic end, but the audience was still surprised since most movies close with a happy ending. I felt like crying, but I knew that it was the best possible ending the movie could have.

So if you love action, comedy and romance, or if you just want to drool over Garfield, go get your tickets now. ♦

MOVIE GENERALIZES WOMEN, CLICHE

BY AshleyChen

"The Amazing Spider-Man 2" is entertaining. Some might even say funny, dramatic or well-animated.

But amazing? Not quite. Sadly, director Marc Webb relies far too much on unexplained plot and backstory, with a healthy dash of sexism and worn-out cliché, to craft his narrative.

The film follows Peter Parker (Andrew Garfield), who acts as New York City's personal superhero, and his battle against his former friend Harry Osborn (Dane DeHaan) and Spider-Man fanatic Max Dillon (Jamie Foxx).

Supporting Parker throughout the movie is his girlfriend, Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone), who embodies the 1950s trope "Damsel in Distress." To

put it simply, without her boyfriend, Gwen has no purpose in the film.

Case in point: Literally every single one of Gwen's scenes features Peter. The few moments that she shows a spark of personality, Peter has to show up and save the day for her.

In fact, Peter goes as far as breaking Gwen's heart because he's afraid she'll get hurt, then creepily stalks her throughout New York because he can't handle their relationship being over. If Peter really cared about Gwen, he wouldn't force her to stay away from

him; instead, he'd tell her about the risks and let her make her own decisions.

This is a failure on the movie's part because it legitimizes unequal relationships, an especially damaging message to young men who might now think this is appropriate behavior.

Spoilers in the next two paragraphs:

In the movie's climactic battle, Peter first essentially handcuffs Gwen to a car so she won't follow him to the battle, even though she's the only one who knows how to turn New York City's power grid back on. When she finally makes it to the battle, the most important contribution she makes is to press a button when Peter tells her to.

Again, this choice weakens the film by reinforcing the stereotype of women as inferior, especially in combat situations, instead of portraying equality between men and women.

As for the antagonists of the movie — it doesn't get any better. The first guy is electrical engineer Max Dillon, who initially worships Spider-Man. After an accident at work, he gets weird bluish skin and starts attacking Spider-Man with electricity, because he believes Spider-Man set him up to be shot.

Unfortunately, during that particular moment in the film, I was too confused by the plot to be amazed by the visual effects. His transition from happy-go-lucky Max to Electro, who would kill innocent people without a second thought, was not explained at all.

The other main villain is fabulously wealthy heir Harry Osborn, who spends his days obsessing over the prospect of getting Spider-Man's blood to save his life. Because this is totally the first time I have seen the excuse "My daddy didn't love me, so I'm now an insane serial killer."

In short, "The Amazing Spider-Man 2" sticks to Hollywood's tried-and-true formula of marginalizing women and giving the generic "White Male Hero" the spotlight. If that's what you want, by all means buy your ticket today. ♦

GRAPHIC BY JANE PARK FALCON // SIMI SRIVASTAVA

Fashion's new hype: a junior's Hypebeast life

BY Simi Srivastava

Whoever said "Image isn't everything" was most certainly not a Hypebeast.

The shoes. The pants. The shirt. The jacket. The belt. The watch. But most importantly, the brand. From head to toe, Hypebeasts like junior Patrick Huynh must put all of these factors into consideration when putting together the perfect outfit.

Millions of Hypebeasts like Huynh follow the trends and fashions of exclusive and limited brands such as Kaws, Original Fake, Obey, The Hundreds and Supreme.

"A Hypebeast is limited to only fashion," Huynh said. "Hype' is what is new and has a lot of popularity and the word 'beast' technically means you're obsessed with something."

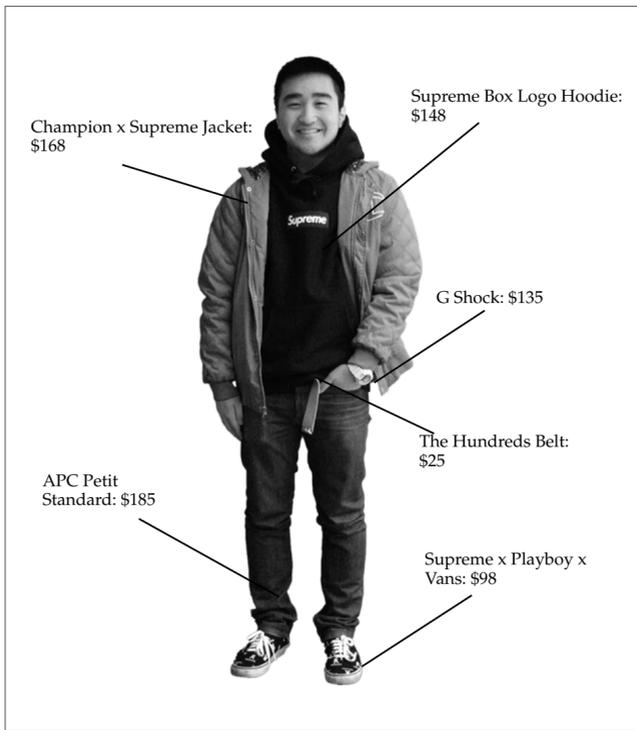
Huynh said he first became interested in Hypebeast clothing when his sister's boyfriend introduced it to him a few years ago.

"It's interesting to follow the different designs and versions of products and the limited amount of merchandise a brand produces," Huynh said.

Huynh spends around 15 minutes per day shopping for new styles and brands. He mostly shops for outerwear including jackets and hoodies because they allow him to layer different styles together, creating dimension in his various outfits.

Huynh said that what defines a Hypebeast brand is the limited-edition factor as well as the community that purchases it.

Products that most Hypebeasts purchase cannot be found on the retail websites of department stores. Instead, Hypebeasts look at forums like Hypebeast.com in order to connect with others with



Junior Patrick Huynh displays his costly Hypebeast wardrobe. Total value of outfit: \$759.

the same interests.

On the forum, Hypebeasts can buy and sell products. There are three main tags that can be put on items: "fs" meaning for sale, "wtb" meaning want to buy

and "ft" meaning for trade. Huynh said that "for sale" and "want to buy" work in a similar way. If a seller has a product, he or she posts a photo of it with the description. If a buyer is

looking for a specific product, he or she can post what product they are looking for on the forum. From there, both buyers and sellers can negotiate prices and deals.

According to Huynh, the "for trade" tag is not as commonly used as the others due to various scams involving some people not keeping their end of the bargain.

"The person who ships first has a high chance of getting scammed if the second person doesn't agree to ship afterwards and they keep your item as well as theirs," Huynh said. "There's been a lot of scams going on recently."

The forum also features various discussion threads where Hypebeasts can review new products, communicate with fellow Hypebeasts and post thoughts on gaming, skateboarding and other lifestyles.

Many people, including Huynh, use the forum as a way to make money off of selling limited edition products for inflated prices.

Huynh said that limited edition or limited quantity products create a high demand for the product. An example of a limited product is the pair of Nike and Supreme combined brand shoes that hundreds of people including Huynh bought for \$250 that is now being resold for up to \$800.

This shoe is Huynh's most expensive clothing item, and Huynh plans to resell it when it gains even more value. This, Huynh said, is how he earns money to support his hobby of spending money on clothes.

"I know that one day when I stop buying all this hyped up clothing, I will be able to sell everything I own for a much higher price than I got it," Huynh said. "There is always someone else who wants it." ♦

Nakamatsu's spouse spans the world as concert pianist

BY Tiffany Zheng

Jon Nakamatsu, husband of chemistry teacher Kathy Nakamatsu, is a world renowned musician who has performed in places such as Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York. In a review for the New York Times, esteemed critic Allan Kozinn commended him for "having both a solid technique and a gentle, introspective, interpretive spirit."

"I believe that on stage, one can experience every emotional state possible — sometimes simultaneously — from exhilaration to apprehension, peace, happiness and even loneliness and great sadness," Nakamatsu said.

When he was 4, he played his first piano at Challenger Preschool. Nakamatsu was immediately fascinated that he "could press levers and somehow produce magical tones."

"We weren't allowed to touch the piano, however, and the first time I did, I was given a time-out," he said. "I thought, if they protected the piano that fiercely, it must be a secret worth discovering!"

Nakamatsu went to Prospect High School and eventually went on to Foot-hill College. He later transferred to Stanford where he received a B.A. in German Studies and an M.A. in Education. He also taught a German class at Saint Francis while he was pursuing his dream to become a concert pianist.

At the same time, Nakamatsu studied music privately and admits that it

was "often difficult to reconcile with the busy academic schedule." Nakamatsu met Mrs. Nakamatsu in 1991 during graduate school at Stanford where they became instant friends.

Perhaps his greatest achievement was winning the gold medal at the tenth Van Cliburn competition in 1997, a prestigious competition held once every four years where only 30 of the most talented pianists in the world play.

Like her husband, Mrs. Nakamatsu loves music. She played the piano and flute when she was young, and she even took voice lessons briefly, eventually developing an "eclectic" range of tastes, according to her husband.

"She makes some very astute observations about what I do and her reactions are always informative to me," he said. "I think there might be a little musician inside

of her somewhere, though she probably won't admit it." Nakamatsu's schedule is packed with concerts and travel all over the world, but Kathy manages staying alone at home. She too is busy with school and time passes very quickly. She also uses technology to keep in touch.

"When we bought our house, he wasn't home, but we looked at pictures on the web," she said. "Every now and then, something bad happens when he's gone — like when our roof was leaking and rain was dripping into our living room — but both our families live nearby and help out."

However, Mrs. Nakamatsu admits that she "never gets tired of hearing him



Jon Nakamatsu performs at the California Theater with the Symphony Silicon Valley.

play," and has learned a lot about how professional musicians practice. Most of the time, she is "in awe" when she listens to her husband perform.

"It's always neat to hear him play with a symphony — at home, I only hear the piano part, so it's neat to hear what it sounds like with the entire orchestra playing with him," she said. "Sometimes I'm a little nervous, especially if he's playing a new piece, but usually I'm incredibly proud."

Nakamatsu performs wherever he is invited to perform. Usually, his tours are planned between one to three years in advance. Nakamatsu estimates that he is on the road around 75 percent of the year.

Sometimes he performs as infrequently as once a week, but it can also be five or six times a week.

While some may be overwhelmed with nervousness, Nakamatsu describes live performance as a "strange phenomenon" due to the seemingly withdrawn-from-reality experience he has while playing.

"On one hand, we all live in the present and experience the event with its usual mundane distractions (people talking, opening candy wrappers, coughing)," he said. "But on another level, it can become completely transcendent and profoundly moving — a sort of temporary departure from one's reality that is difficult to describe in words." ♦

Anime club grows: Rising in popularity

BY Shreya Tumu

Eight years ago, the anime club had just three students. Today, the club has more than 25 members. On Thursday afternoons, they can be seen sitting on the floor of room 301, watching a new episode intently, with the club adviser and animated graphics teacher, Cathy Leather, sitting nearby.

"I used to watch anime and anime is absolutely fabulous," Leather said. "This is my fourth year advising the anime club and it is growing significantly."

Anime is a style of Japanese film and television characterized by colorful graphics and action-filled plots.

Many are eager to join this unique club. In the last year, the club has gained new members of all different ethnicities.

"I think what this says about our school is that many people are open minded about other cultures, which is great," said sophomore Katherine Liu, the public relations manager of the club.

"I think many people prefer subbed [Japanese dialogue with English subtitles] anime and that's what we watch in anime club," Liu said.

The club previews various anime series by showing the first episode of each show. They have watched episodes from

shows like "Darker than Black," "Clan-nad" and "Aohana." Some students in the club enjoy one show over another and have watched the complete series at home.

"My favorite anime is probably 'Full-metal Alchemist: Brotherhood,'" Liu said. "It's kind of violent but the plot and characters are really good."

The club has employed a voting system to see which show its members would like to watch. This has been especially helpful considering that there are thousands to choose from.

"The great thing about anime is that it's stretched over different genres," co-president sophomore Camille Bismonte said.

As co-president, Bismonte is in charge of organizing parties for the club and bringing the anime to school.

Her brother Miguel Bismonte, who graduated with the Class of 2013, was also once co-president of the club. He convinced her to follow in his footsteps.

Bismonte's biggest responsibility right now is organizing a trip to Anime-Con. Just like Comic-Con, Anime-Con allows fans to meet the creators of their favorite shows and dress up as their favorite characters.

This is the most important event for



Students act out a scene from the supernatural anime Code GEASS during a meeting.

the anime club, scheduled to be held on May 24 in Downtown San Jose. Last year was the first time Bismonte went to the convention with the club.

"My favorite part was seeing all the merchandise you can't get anywhere else, like anime figures and posters, and artists that you can only find online," Bismonte said. "You are able to see the real artists themselves doing what they

do best, [making anime]."

For most of the year, though, members watch anime from the comfort of room 301. They find that the club provides a way for students to de-stress.

"I like how everyone unwinds in the club," Bismonte said. "The school itself is so academically oriented. It's relaxing to just watch something with all your buddies." ♦

For sophomore, parents' divorce underscores family

BY Andrew Jiang & Ariel Liu

Sophomore Kunal Kathuria, then an 8-year-old going to school at Challenger School, sat quietly in the back of the car as his mother drove him home from school. He could tell something wasn't quite right.

After what seemed like forever, they finally arrived home. Because the blinds had broken earlier in the week, the room was dark and obscure, amplifying the already tense atmosphere in the room. Breaking the silence, his mother told him, "Kunal, we need to talk."

The next few minutes passed by in a blur. He heard phrases like "it wasn't working out" and "we will not all be living together in the same house anymore," but he didn't truly understand what these words meant and the impact they would have on his life.

Deep down Kathuria knew his parents' marriage would never last — they had always been arguing for as long as he could remember — but he never really faced the reality of his parents' situation until his mother said the powerful words "your father and I are getting a divorce."

In the eight years since, Kathuria and his sister alumna Sarika Kathuria have lived in two houses and maintained separated relationships with their father and mother.

In the end, Kathuria said the divorce was a positive change. Through the ordeals of divorce, he was able to develop a greater appreciation of his family.

"Even though there's two separate sides of the family, it still brought [the family] closer because there is no longer the constant fear that a fight would happen," he said.

Though the divorce rate in America has been steadily increasing since the year 2000 — now about 50 percent — many believe that Indian parents do not typically get divorced.

Kathuria's case, however, defies that stereotype. According to Kathuria, many people in the Indian community look down on those who are divorced.

"[Some people said my mom] should've just stayed married and kept

the family together," he said. "Instead, she was different and decided to get a divorce, which is fine with me now."

The first few months, however, were the toughest — every night, he expected his father to return home from work only to be continually disappointed when he never showed up.

After the divorce, Kathuria, his older sister and his mother moved to the house they live in now in Saratoga. His father moved into an apartment in Los Gatos, where Kathuria currently visits every other weekend.

"When I first moved to Saratoga and told people about the divorce, they would stay away from me," he said. "I don't think they really understood what divorce meant [because they were still young,] they just thought I was different."

Kathuria said he had nobody to rely on for comfort in the beginning of the divorce.

"I just told myself, it happened and I have to move on," he said. "This is one small thing in my life and many other kids have [had] worse things happen to them."

Now that he is in high school, Kathuria said his peers are more understanding when he tells them about his parent's divorce.

"[Now when I tell people], a lot of people [are] there for me," he said. Kathuria said the divorce also helped him become more appreciative of the people he loves.

To Kathuria, his grandparents are a continual source of comfort through the ordeals of the divorce.

He lived with them in San Jose for a few months and now views his grandfather as an inspirational role model and in a fatherly light.

"He came [to America] with \$45 in his suitcase and he built the entire family up," Kathuria said.

Just as a father would, Kathuria's grandfather took Kathuria under his wing and taught him life skills such as how to repair a door hinge and how to change a flat tire.

Recently, Kathuria has been spending time with his grandparents more often, taking care of them and helping them with daily tasks around the house.

"Because they're pretty old now, they need a lot more help with day-to-day

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POWER RANKINGS

CONTRIBUTIONS BY ANDREW JIANG, ARJUN RAMANATHAN, CATHERINE TANG AND DEVIN ZHAO

HOW DOES YOUR TEAM RANK IN THE FALCON THIS YEAR?

Based on the writers' opinions, this power rankings chart ranks teams based on performance during the year.



- 1. Boys' Tennis (11) Campus Presence: 2 Time Demand: 2 Improvement: 3 Winning %: 20 League Title: 2 CCS: 4 Star Player: **A. Xiao** Total: 33
- 2. Girls' Basketball (6) Campus Presence: 2 Time Demand: 2 Improvement: 3 Winning %: 20 League Title: 2 CCS: 3 Star Player: **D. Ramaswamy** Total: 32
- 3. Boys' Water Polo (7) Campus Presence: 4 Time Demand: 4 Improvement: 3 Winning %: 15 League Title: 1 CCS: 2 Star Player: **S. Cho** Total: 29
- 4. Girls' Tennis (5) Campus Presence: 3 Time Demand: 2 Improvement: 3 Winning %: 18 League Title: 2 CCS: 2 Star Player: **C. Ju** Total: 28
- 5. Boys' Golf (12) Campus Presence: 2 Time Demand: 3 Improvement: 2 Winning %: 15 League Title: 0 CCS: 4 Star Player: **C. Galvin** Total: 25

The team had many power players who helped them go undefeated in league play and reach CCS finals, where they lost 6-1 to Menlo, and the NorCal tournament. Led by a lineup strong in shooting and defense, the team was undefeated in league and got the No. 2 seed for CCS, where they made it to semifinals. The team won leagues after three years of placing second and losing to its rival Lynbrook. They moved on to the second round of CCS, where they lost due to Cho's injury. Despite most of the team consisting of underclassmen, the Falcons managed to have a nearly undefeated league season, winning championships and reaching quarterfinals in CCS. Despite losing key seniors, consistent play from newcomers and veterans alike propelled the team to go undefeated in league play and make CCS, where Galvin placed fourth.

Sport (last year's ranking)	Campus Presence (1-5)	Time Demand (1-5)	Improvement (1-3)	Winning% (1-15 lower league, 1-20 upper)	League Title (1 for lower league, 2 for upper)	CCS (0-5)	Star Player	Total	Evaluation
6. G. Volleyball (23)	2	3	3	15	0	2	K. Mollahan	24	With strong leadership, the Falcons' efforts during practices paid off throughout the season.
7. G. Water Polo (9)	4	4	2	12	0	1	N. De Roos	23	The team had a hard time adjusting to the El Camino League, but still made it to CCS.
8. B. Track (25)	2	3	3	12	0	3	S. Sum	23	Moving down a league allowed Track to win more meets and send more individuals to leagues.
9. Softball (4)	2	2	2	15	0	1	M. Lee	22	The many experienced players on the team led them to third in their league and into CCS.
10. Baseball (1)	4	3	2	9	2	1	T. Plesse	21	The boys were able to defend their championship by winning Leagues for the second year in a row.
11. B. Volleyball (20)	1	3	3	13	1	0	C. Leung	21	Despite injuries to the team's star players, the team held a strong season and won leagues.
12. G. Soccer (22)	2	3	2	7	0	2	S. Ho	19	In spite of many injuries and a smaller team, the team advanced to the second round of CCS.
13. B. Lacrosse (24)	3	3	3	10	0	0	C. Rothenburg	19	Despite losing most of their team, the Falcons had more success with experienced underclassmen.
14. G. Lacrosse (13)	3	3	1	12	0	0	I. Hong	19	An undefeated league season led the team to place third at SCVALS, propelling them to CCS.
15. G. Track (26)	2	2	3	7	0	3	M. Fagan	17	Led by strong athletes, the team performed very well individually but failed to do well as a team.
16. Football (3)	5	5	1	6	0	3	J. Walters	17	With injuries and the loss of key seniors to the team, the Falcons didn't play as well as last year.
17. B. Basketball (2)	4	4	1	7	0	0	M. Cole	16	The team's small size led to defeats against bigger opponents.
18. G. Swimming (21)	2	4	2	3	0	3	S. Ting	14	Despite losing a lot of meets, the team improved by not being last in its league.
19. G. Golf (10)	1	1	1	10	0	0	V. Roan	13	Although the loss of key players hindered the team with scores, the team still had a great season.
20. B. Swimming (16)	3	4	1	3	0	2	C. Borch	13	With powerful seniors and strong additions, the team did well individually through the season.
21. Field Hockey (8)	4	4	1	4	0	0	L. Jewler	13	The struggled to replace the 12 seniors who left the team last year and did not make CCS.
22. Badminton (14)	3	1	1	8	0	N/A	B. Chow	13	Despite strong showings from individual players, the team struggled to beat competitors.
23. Wrestling (19)	1	5	2	N/A	0	4	G. Grant	12	While the team struggled, senior Graham Grant and junior Christian Murabito placed high in CCS.
24. B. Cross Country (17)	2	3	2	N/A	0	3	S. Sum	10	Great running from junior Steven Sum and senior Drew Bryan helped the team in many meets.
25. G. Cross Country (18)	2	3	2	N/A	0	3	K. Chen	10	Although the Falcons did not win many meets, they kept a positive attitude and worked hard.
26. B. Soccer (15)	3	3	1	2	0	0	S. Guy	9	A lack of players from injuries prevented the young team from doing as well as they could.

BOYS' TENNIS

Menlo beats Toga for CCS championship

By Jihau Yu

Hopes for a CCS title for the boys' tennis team ended when the Falcons lost 6-1 on May 16 to five-time champion Menlo School.

"Losing to Menlo [is] more emotional since it was for the CCS championship, making it more difficult to remember that we carried a perfect record into CCS and all the way to the finals," assistant coach John Chui said.

Although the loss was one sided, the majority of the team felt that the match would have been winnable if the team had had the right lineup.

CCS rules allow teams to put players anywhere in the lineup, meaning that the No. 1 singles player can be put into No. 3 doubles. Because placements in the lineup are so flexible, setting up the players in the best positions is extremely important to win matches.

"We lost because we decided last minute to try and change our entire lineup for the match," said senior co-captain Sanjay Kaliyur, one of the team's No. 1 doubles players.

The team's original plan was to put all its singles players, with the exception of No. 1 singles junior Neel Bedekar, into doubles to win all of the doubles matches. Then place Bedekar at No. 4 singles against an opponent that he had beaten weeks ago, during the regular season.

However, the team changed its lineup last minute, putting Bedekar at No. 2 and pulled freshman Andre Xiao out of doubles and into the No. 4 singles spot. This resulted in doubles teams that had never played with each other.

"Switching the doubles up was a mistake because the teams had no chemistry with each other, making it difficult to get the doubles win," said sophomore No. 2 singles player Karthik Padmanabhan.

The team played CCS semifinals against Menlo-Atherton on May 14, managing to pull off a 5-2 win. At one point during the match the score was 2-2 with three matches to play. For a while, it seemed the Falcons were on the verge of losing, with Bedekar down 6-4, 5-2 and facing three match points.

However, Bedekar managed to come back and win the match, 4-6, 7-5 and 6-2, putting the team up 3-2. Later, Xiao, playing No. 2 singles, clinched the team's win with a victory. Freshman No. 3 singles player Kailas Shekar then won his match to make the overall score 5-2.

"Although we beat them earlier in the season, it wasn't as easy as we thought it was going to be, a lot of the matches were a lot closer and when it came down to 2-2, Kailas, Neel and Andre were mentally tough and managed to come through for us," said Padmanabhan.

Despite being seeded No. 2, the road to the CCS finals was not easy, as the team had to overcome a shortage of players in the quarterfinals due to AP testing.

Although the team missed five of its starting players including Bedekar, the Falcons still managed to pull off a 4-3 victory against Cupertino on May 12.

The team originally had 12 players so freshman Matthew Kermin and sophomore Avinash Arjavalingam from JV were brought into the starting lineup.

"It was fun to get pulled up and have a challenge," said Kermin. "To come



Senior Henry Ling reaches for a forehand in a CCS win against Monterey High School on May 9.

through for the team was very exciting and a dream come true."

All the singles players, with the exception of Xiao, were put into doubles hoping to sweep doubles and have Xiao win at No. 4 singles.

Marica then defaulted No. 1 singles, automatically giving Cupertino a free match and put Kermin into No. 2 and Arjavalingam No. 3 singles.

Cupertino also changed its lineup by putting the No. 1 and No. 2 singles players at No. 3 and No. 4 singles. In addition, the No. 3 and No. 4 singles players also got moved to No. 2 doubles.

"They thought they could surprise us with the change in lineup to come up with the win," Kaliyur said. "However, we countered them well by playing well and winning some clutch matches."

Despite the disappointing loss, the

team has had a lot of success winning the De Anza League and the Fresno High School Tennis Classic where the Falcons established themselves as one of the best teams in California.

The success of the team was not just limited as a whole. Bedekar lost 6-3 6-2 to the eventual champion Joshua Pompan, of York School, in the semifinals of the CCS individual tournament.

In addition, the team will play at Norcals on May 23-24 in Sacramento, however, to printing restrictions the results can not be covered.

According to Kaliyur, the team has a bright future.

"Since I'm the only senior in the lineup that is graduating, we won't lose a lot of depth, so we should have another good chance at winning CCS [next year]," Kaliyur said. ♦

WORKOUTS

Dancer struggles at exercise

Exasperated, I staggered to the side of the dance studio. I had been learning dance for eight years, and I was to graduate from the art form with a final debut performance in June of 2013. As the performance date neared, my dance teacher insisted I come to class to tweak my dance routine and to practice it over and over again.

Post practice, I couldn't feel my legs. I doubted if I could make it to the side of the room to get water. The worst part was I'd only been dancing for two hours.

Observing exasperation and my lack of energy, my dance teacher suggested I start a workout routine to improve my endurance.

A workout. Why would I even attempt to workout when dancing for two hours leaves me this tired?

I thought workouts were just about running or swimming. My teacher, on the other hand, proceeded to pick out a set of exercises for me to follow for a week, designed to increase my stamina.

The alarm rang on Saturday morning at 7:30 and I slugged out of bed. In the early dawn of the day, I traded my soft pajamas for a pair of workout leggings and headed to my gym room.

First step: stretch out. Second step: bike for 20 minutes. My teacher told me to "start off slow!"

I chose to ignore my teacher's advice and as I hopped onto the bike I began pedaling at a fast speed.

Ten minutes into the 30-minute work-

out, my teacher's words resonated in my head — actually more in my legs.

As the timer rang for 20 minutes, I sprang off the seat and crumbled down to the ground in exhaustion.

After taking a 30-minute break, I regained the energy to begin the third task: treadmill for 30 minutes. This proved to be not so bad, as treadmill running is something I've done before.

After the 30-minute treadmill run, followed by a 15-minute break, I proceeded to the final step: working with leg weights. Since I have a petite frame just shy of 5 foot 3 inches, my teacher felt that benching wasn't the ideal choice for me. Instead, she recommended exercises with leg weights.

Ordinarily jumping onto a two foot high box is not a problem for me. But with these weights on my ankles, gravity's effect seemed insurmountable. Despite these struggles, I was set on finishing the workout.

In the end, I realized that the workout was not only a test of my endurance but also my persistence. I learned that despite the sore ache in my quads, despite my constant urge to ditch the stationary bike and cave in, I somehow fought through.

Through this experience, I learned that although initially a situation may seem daunting, throwing everything you have into it and enduring through it is key. Without trying, you'll never know what you could have done or what benefits the situation has for you. ♦



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GIRLS' LACROSSE

Falcons make history, reaching league finals

By ShreyaTumu

Although the girls' lacrosse team won the league semifinal game for the first time in the team's history on May 14, they ended their season with a loss in the finals against Palo Alto on May 17.

The team won 9-8 against archrival Gunn during semifinals. During league finals, however, the Falcons lost a close game to Palo Alto, with a score of 15-13.

"This was the furthest girls' lacrosse has ever made it, and I'm so impressed with my team," senior captain and center Jennie Werner said.

In the May 17 game, the Falcons held strong for the first part of the finals game, with a wavering one to three-point lead. Near the end of the first half, Palo Alto caught up and gained a four-point lead but soon the girls caught up and narrowed it so they only had a two-point lead for the rest of the game.

Sophomore Erin Norris said playing

powerful Palo Alto required even more aggression than they bought.

"We could have crashed on [their] defense a little earlier to stop their amazing players," Norris said. "We could have created more opportunities by creating turnovers in transition."

On the other hand, many players went to the league semifinals in an enthusiastic mood because they were glad to advance so far, according to Werner.

"We went into our semifinal game against Gunn just wanting to play our best," Werner said. "Win or lose, we wanted to leave everything on the field because many of us knew it could be our last game."

The Falcons caught Gunn off guard, because the girls lost to them 9-1 the previous week and a win was unexpected. According to Werner, after getting frustrated, Gunn was unable to play as a team, and that's when the Falcons took advantage of it.

The team ended its season with an overall record of 13-6 in the Santa Clara Valley League. Major wins include ones against Sequoia High School on May 12, where the Falcons won with a score of 13-11 in the league quarter-finals. On



senior Jennie Werner



Senior Ingrid Hong guides the ball during the senior day game against Sequoia on May 7.

"We just worked our team strategy and focused on playing well together and the win came," Werner said. "I had never been so excited after playing a lacrosse game."

School, 12-4. Lead scorers included seniors Risha Shah and Ingrid Hong. Though the loss to Palo Alto High School was the last game of the season, it inspired the returning players.

"Every player was out on the field during the championship game and gave it nothing less than one hundred percent," Norris said. "We played like a team." ♦

SOFTBALL

Team loses in first round to Mt. Pleasant during CCS

By BeckyHoag

The softball team lost in the first round of CCS at home against Mount Pleasant on May 21 with a score of 8-6, ending its successful season. The Falcons placed third in the De Anza League with a record of 9-3.

Senior infielder Amanda Lee said the CCS game was difficult and they could have won.

"I thought that we had our opportunities to score throughout the game and didn't always take advantage," Lee said.

Despite moving to the com-

petitive league, the Falcons won four of six games in May. Even though the final league game against Wilcox resulted in a 6-5 loss, the Falcons still showed major improvement.

"The first time [we played Wilcox] they blew us out, but the second time we were right with them," junior catcher Analisa Ruff said.

Ruff said that once the team

found how to work together, they began playing better. Prior to the loss against Wilcox, the team defeated rival Los Gatos 8-2 on May 12.

Other wins, such as the 10-1 against Valley Christian on May 8 and the 6-1 against Santa Clara on May 9, showed the Falcons' improvement.

"Our team has definitely im-

proved," Ruff said. "[The season] started off rough, but we learned to work together."

The team now prepares to go farther in CCS than last year, where they couldn't get past the second round. Ruff believes that increasing the energy level will make a huge difference from last year.

"We always find ourselves quiet in the dugout and not paying much attention," Ruff said. "But as long as we're really focused and bring our game then I think we will do pretty well." ♦

>> scoreboard

May 8
Falcons 8, Wildcats 2
Falcons held rival Wildcats and upheld a sturdy defense to seal a win.

May 9
Falcons 6, Warriors 1
Falcons beat Valley Christian High in a scintillating win.

May 21
Falcons 6, Chargers 8
Despite loss, Falcons showed grit throughout the season.

TRACK AND FIELD

As records fall, eight athletes advance to CCS

By AshleyChen & DorrieTang

The track team concluded a successful season with a fifth-place finish by the boys and a 10th-place finish by the girls at the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League (SCVAL) meet hosted at Wilcox High School on May 16.

At CCS semi-finals on May 30, Saratoga will be represented by seniors Eric Ringsrud, Travis Stokes, Mady Fagan, Will Guy and Ben Glasstone, juniors Steven Sum and Puck de Roos and sophomore Tanner Zuleeg at San Jose City College. Their performance will determine if they qualify for the state competition, which will be held from June 6-7 at Buchanan High School in Clovis.

The highlight of the girls' team was high jumper Fagan, who broke the school record with a height of 5' 8.5" to win first place in the league meet. Fagan, who will high jump for the Division 1 University of Georgia track team next year, is currently ranked fifth in the state for girls' high jump.

On the boys' team, Sum placed first in the 1600m and 3200m with times of 4:23 and 9:32, respectively.

Sum is currently ranked 30th in the state for the 1600m and 16th for the 3200m.

Ringsrud took second and third in the 100m and 200m with times of 11.12 and 22.02 seconds, setting a new school record in the 200m. He also competed in high jump with a height of 6' 0" for first place.

In addition, Ringsrud competed with Stokes, Guy and Glasstone in the 4 by 400m relay finishing second in the meet with a time of 3:28 and are currently ranked in the top 10 for CCS.

Stokes also ran in the 200m for a time of 22.86 seconds. Zuleeg competed in the 12-pound shot put competition, throwing a distance of 44' 5" and finishing in fifth place.

In addition, de Roos competed in the high jump, achieving a height of 4' 10" to win fourth place. De Roos also competed in the 100m and 200m dashes and the long jump.



Junior Puck de Roos prepares to triple jump in a meet against Monta Vista on April 24.

According to junior sprinter Laura Cummins, the SCVAL meet was a satisfying end to the track season.

"Although there were disappointments and losses this season, we worked hard and we competed against very [strong] schools," she said. "We pulled through despite our team losing some runners from last year." ♦

Junior sprinter Avery Gigoux added that she hopes in the future, track will be more supported by the student body.

"Not a lot of people know the amount of work we put in and the training we go through for an event that lasts just a minute," Gigoux said. "If we had [more of the school's] support I believe it would push us harder." ♦

Although there were disappointments and losses this season, we worked hard and we competed against very [strong] schools.

>> junior Avery Gigoux

BASEBALL

Falcons repeat league champs, lose in CCS

By MilesAlbert & AllisonLin

The Falcons ended their season with a 2-1 home loss against Bellarmine in the first round of CCS on May 21.

The score was tied at zero until the fifth inning when an error left runners at second and third with no outs. After a ground ball, the Bells scored the first run, and soon scored their second on a blooper to the outfield. The Falcons were finally able to break through in the sixth inning, scoring on a wild pitch, but were unable to score more runs.

On May 16, the Falcons defended their SCVAL championship title, beating Palo Alto 13-4 due to the strong pitching of senior Eric Ferguson. The Falcons finished the season 8-6 in league, and 21-10 overall.

Ferguson mixed his pitches well, and induced a lot of ground balls to stop the strong Palo Alto offense.

"My focus in the game was to pitch down in the zone and let my defense work behind me," Ferguson said.

Ferguson's outstanding pitching resulted in the fewest runs that the Falcons have lost to Palo Alto this season.

In the end, the Falcons' offense gave them a huge lead, starting in the second inning with a leadoff home run by senior outfielder Tyler Plesse. The Falcons scored another run that inning, and continued the offensive attack over the course of the rest of the game.

"There was a lot of timely hitting and clutch at-bats that really broke the game apart and gave us a big lead," Plesse said.

Although Palo Alto was able to break through with a solo home run in the fifth inning, it was not enough to catch up to the lead the Falcons had established earlier in the game.

Earlier that week, the Falcons had defeated Palo Alto 8-4 away on Tuesday but lost 19-5 at home on Thursday, resulting in a final showdown at Palo Alto on Friday.

The week before, the Falcons had a similar pattern against Los Gatos in league semifinals. The team lost to the Wildcats 8-7 away on Tuesday, May 7, but won 8-7 on Thursday, May 8 and finished the series on May 9, crushing them 8-0 at the Los Gatos field. With a large crowd of supporters decked out in red and consistent pitching by junior Joey Medeiros, the Falcons showed the Wildcats no mercy. ♦

>> falconfigures

- 8 Games won by the Falcons in the De Anza League.
- 21 Overall number of games won by the baseball team.
- 1 Round the team lost in CCS. They lost 2-1 to Bellarmine.
- 18 Players on the varsity baseball team.

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Five individuals, four relays reach CCS finals



Sophomore Bradley Newton and seniors Cameron Borch, Patrick Wang and Sasha Samoilov pose after placing sixth in the 200 freestyle relay at CCS Finals on May 17.

By AndrewJiang & ArjunRamanathan

A total of 19 swimmers and one diver from both the boys' and girls' swimming and diving teams attended preliminaries on May 16. The next day, four swimmers, four relay teams and the diver returned for finals.

"I was pretty happy with how we did this year, both girls and guys," sophomore Bradley Newton said. "Last year, only [senior Cameron Borch] and I finished while this year a lot more [people] did."

Freshman Stefanie Ting placed fourth in the 100-yard breaststroke and 16th in the 200-yard individual medley, sophomore Lukas Andreason placed seventh in the one-meter dive, Borch placed 11th in the 200-yard freestyle and 16th in the 100-yard freestyle, Newton placed 15th in the 500-yard freestyle and junior Yayla Sezinger placed 16th in the 500-yard freestyle.

"I was seeded into preliminaries higher [for the 100-yard breaststroke], but considering it was my first CCS ever I think I swam well," Ting said. "I'm determined to place higher next year, so I'm definitely going to push myself even harder at practice."

Additionally, the boys' 200-yard freestyle relay placed sixth, the girls' 200-yard medley relay placed 11th, the girls' 400-yard freestyle relay placed 14th and the boys' 400-yard freestyle relay placed 16th.

The girls' 400-yard freestyle team, consisting of Ting, Sezinger, freshman Gillian Grant and junior Madison Gress, was seeded 19th before preliminaries, then went about four seconds faster in preliminaries, seeding 14th going into finals, and went just under three seconds faster in finals.

"We were all just really happy with our time improvement and to make finals, especially since two of the four relay members were freshmen and this was their first CCS," Gress said.

Although the team will lose several seniors next season, it looks to continue its success next year with its strong foundation of underclassmen swimmers.

"Next year, the team will be swimming pretty fast because we have a bunch of fast underclassmen that will be even faster next year," Newton said. "Hopefully, we'll smash the other schools." ♦



sports >> shorts

No.1 player Galvin represents boys' golf in CCS finals

The six starters on the boys' golf team competed against the best teams in the area during CCS at Rancho Cañada in Monterey on May 7 and had mixed results.

On the positive side, No. 1 player senior Christian Galvin shot one of the best scores of the day of one under par 70 and advanced to CCS finals as an individual.

As a team, though, the Falcons, with a total score of 419, just missed out on advancing.

"This was an amazing year for the team," Galvin said. "CCS didn't go quite as planned but it was still a great season that the remaining players can build on for next year."

Despite the team's failure to advance, Galvin was one of the top nine individuals to advance to CCS finals on May 13. With a round of 71, Galvin was tied as the fourth highest individual player.

"I was the first group done so I had more than two hours to wait in anticipation as to whether or not I would make it or if there would be a playoff," Galvin said.

Galvin became involved in a four-man playoff, lost by one and did not advance to the NorCal tournament.

"I had many opportunities to shoot one lower than I did and make it but that wasn't the case," Galvin said.

Although he did not advance, Galvin says he is still pleased with the round and will dedicate his time to preparing for college golf at Loyola Marymount, where he hopes to walk on to the team.

"Now I have to try to find the positives from the round and apply myself to my practice and try to walk on to play D1 golf," Galvin said. ♦

— Arman Vaziri

Boys' volleyball: after leagues, coin flip means no CCS

The boys' volleyball team tied with Wilcox during the league championships on May 9, and as a result, the two teams became co-league champions. The tie also resulted in a conflict: Which team would go onto the CCS playoffs?

To resolve this problem, the two teams faced off in a coin toss in which Saratoga lost. As a result, Wilcox got the chance to play in CCS starting on May 14.

"The coin toss was a super unfair way to decide who should go to CCS since it is all by chance," sophomore setter Chester Leung said. "They should've done a playoff match because the CCS bid is a chance for the best team to represent the El Camino League."

The team lost to Wilcox once before, on March 26, and the May 9 league championship game allowed them to avenge this loss, although the team was unable to move on. During the March 26 game, the team had half the starting lineup out due to injuries. Many players had to adjust to new positions, so the team felt that game was an inaccurate account of the team's potential.

"We only lost to [Wilcox] because half our starting lineup was either injured or in the wrong position," Leung said.

Leung said the team hopes to come back stronger next year despite the disappointing end to the season. Strong players this year included freshman outside hitter Joel Schneidmiller, Leung, junior outside hitter Michael Cole, and sophomore libero Spencer Yen.

"Since we have a pretty young team, I hope next year we come back stronger and better to win the CCS bid," Leung said. ♦

— Catherine Tang

>> snapshots



FALCON // JADE BISHT



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA



FALCON // SIMI SRIVASTAVA



FALCON // SABRINA CHEN

Josh Pi (11) and Simon Spector (12) run in the annual Color Run last Friday.

The senior class celebrates its last "senior power" chant at the last rally of the year on May 19.

Mukund Prabakar (11) debates a scientific issue against his classmates in AP Chemistry on May 23.

Erin Norris (10) passes the ball to a teammate in the girls' lacrosse senior day game on May 7.

Senior servant in sexy nurse costume draws laughs

For senior servant day, I, a poor, innocent soul, was auctioned off for \$13 to the evil Andrew Jiang, a sophomore Falcon staff member.

A bit of backstory: I was a sexy nurse in the Falcon round of Mafia when the staff played at the beginning of the year. Consequently, Andrew demanded I wear a sexy nurse costume and continue my legacy with this apt outfit.

So, a couple of days before senior servant day, we both went to Party City and Andrew picked out a sexy nurse costume with fish net stockings and a white nurse hat to complete the look.



JAY
MULYE
Juicy Jay

I was not particularly motivated to get out of bed at 6 a.m. on Senior Servant Day; I am accustomed to the free first period lifestyle so waking up early is not my cup of tea.

The reason I woke up so early was to avoid an awkward encounter with my parents. Let's just say it would not necessarily be a good start to their day if I were to greet them walking out the door with a sexy nurse costume in hand. Also, I needed to buy a double chocolate chip frap at Starbucks for Master Andrew.

My expectations for an empty parking lot so early in the morning fell short — I saw four girls around my normal parking spot, so I parked in the empty

lot near the construction site.

I stepped outside, checked to make sure the coast was clear, and quickly changed into the sexy nurse costume. The costume's scant coverage allowed me to really feel the briskness of the morning. I sat back in the car to assemble the remainder of my outfit. When I pulled up my fishnet stockings, my leg hair sprouted out of the diamond holes.

On the way to the journalism room, I refused to reciprocate the eye contact of many students in the hallway. I could see them giggling and judging me in my peripherals, but I kept my eyes locked forward and had a serious face. I met up with Andrew in the Journalism room and listened to his cruel and vulgar mockery. This included ferociously grabbing my

sensitive pectoral muscles, which he did periodically throughout the day.

During lunch, he forced me to defy my moral compass yet again by making me break school rules and take him off campus to In-n-Out. A group of girls from another school were checking me out as I walked inside the restaurant. Who could blame them? It's hard not to look at my very exposed, tanned, firm and defined chest.

Overall, this experience was definitely, how should I put it, unique? Some girls whistled at me—it was totally awesome! I don't know why girls hate it when guys check them out. It was a fun experience despite the abuse and I look forward to getting even with Andrew in the future. ♦

Kid sis will miss graduating older brother

There I was, 8 years old, facing another one of my brother's culinary "experiments": Broccoli Sushi. True to its name, the soggy, green vegetable was clumsily wrapped in a layer of seaweed. Why would anyone make this? And who would get roped into being its taste tester? The answer is quite simple: an aspiring young chef and his younger sibling.

Broccoli Sushi fell flat, but it did not deter my brother's culinary aspirations, and I, like every foolish younger sibling, remained his loyal follower. And loyal followers don't want to get left behind.

Maybe it's a common thought among younger siblings; maybe it's unique to me. For as long as I can remember, I've taken several small steps to measure up to my older brother's colossal stride. It has been a struggle, but I've managed. The only problem is that he's leaving me in just a few short months. And this time, I can't catch up.

UC Berkeley is snatching my brother, Sanj Nalwa, away from my flailing arms and I don't know what to do with myself. No more witty banter at the dining table. No more critiquing actors, a favorite pastime of his. No more getting dragged to Amici's East Coast Pizzeria before a movie of his choice. None of that. Not anymore.

Who is going to come with me at 2 a.m. as I venture into the kitchen for some cookies and milk? Who will distract me with improper jokes and unseemly catch phrases?

Yes, I will have my pick for dinner every night, I will have my parents' complete undivided attention and I will probably be more productive without my biggest "distraction" next to me all the time.

And, yes, I will be the master of the remote. I won't be subjected to lengthy Indie films with disappointing endings; I can finally watch good movies. Except ... there will be no one to sit beside me.

My brother and I are almost three years apart, yet I cannot feel the age difference in the least. We laugh at the same jokes, embarrass our family at fancy restaurants and prompt snooty salespeople to glower at us in expensive department stores. As an individual, I'm reserved, self-conscious and shy, but when I'm with my brother, I couldn't care less about what people think of me.

So why should the thought of my brother's absence frighten me? I know, there are plenty of perfectly content "only children" out there, but it's always been that way for them.

It's like this. The thermostat in my house has always been at 75 degrees. In several months, it will drop to 65 and I will, inevitably, reach for a tissue box and some Tylenol. But I'm not going to catch a cold because it will be 65 degrees; I'm going to catch a cold because the very thing that was constant for 15 years will have changed in two minutes.

And just like that, I'm not afraid because I'm going to be an only child. I'm afraid because, for the first time, I will be

an only child.

I know once junior year strikes, these fears of being alone will take a backseat, and SATs and AP classes will become my new biggest "distraction," diverting my attention from the empty space on the couch. At least, that is what I am hoping for.

What I'm essentially trying to say, in a roundabout way, is that I'm really going to miss my big brother. And, as strange as it seems, I'm proud to admit it.

I am going to miss him even though he duped me into doing things I regretted. Like when I was three he offered me five bucks to carry him piggy-back — I am still waiting for those five bucks. Or when he told me to put my hand on the glowing light bulb to see who could hold it there longer, but then after I burned myself, he revealed that he never intended to follow me.

But I can also remember the two of us trying to see how many Disney rides we could squeeze into a Day Pass, or who could wade deeper into the rip tides of Santa Cruz Beach. I remember him teaching me how to ride the Rip Stick when I was in elementary school — even though he did this by not letting me eat or drink until I learned.

Still, I will be sad to see him go. We are Dumb and Dumber, Jem and Scout and, as a teacher once told us, "quite the dynamic duo." I love my brother, but as Clair Huxtable from "The Cosby Show" put it, "I'm not going to miss [him] because I love [him]. I'm going to miss him because I like him."

And do you know what? I think he's really going to miss me too. ♦

>> topten

WAYS TO STUDY FOR FINALS

- 10 **Convince yourself you have no chance of success.** Blame your teachers for your failure.
- 9 **Bother siblings/pets** All distraction is good distraction.
- 8 **Slam your head against textbooks.** 3 a.m. desperation.
- 7 **Watch a "Friends" marathon and consume copious amounts of nutella** You need a break. From not studying.
- 6 **Emotionally eat your heart out.** Be ready to restock your refrigerator after finals.
- 5 **Skip all of your classes to study.** Ditch day every day.
- 4 **Take a break from your "Friends" marathon to watch reality TV.** You can convince yourself that you're far too smart to be studying.
- 3 **Drink every type of caffeinated beverage.** What is sleep?
- 2 **Spend hours on Facebook complaining about how you have no time to study.** Don't deny you've never done this before.
- 1 **Pray.** It's always a good idea.

>>> Jade Bisht & Simi Srivastava