



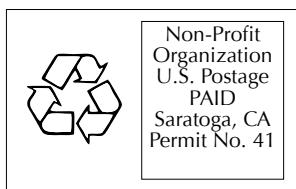
New STEM elective to be offered next year.



How clubs thrive at other schools.



Baseball looks to qualify for CCS.



THE saratogafalcon



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COMPETITIONS

History Bowl varsity team sweeps Nationals

BY Kevin Chow

The members of the History Bowl team made history themselves last weekend, winning all three major events in an unprecedented sweep of the National History Bee and Bowl National Championships in Arlington, Va.

The varsity A team, consisting of senior co-captains Bruce Lou and Ethan Ngai, senior Nitya Sampath and junior Nathan Ney, won first place after a

nail-biting rematch against last year's champion, the Liberal Arts and Sciences Academy (LASA) of Austin, Texas. Roughly 250 teams competed. The Falcons lost to LASA 380-240 last year in the final round, placing second overall.

"I don't think the team fully expected to win," Sampath said. "But this year, I think we realized that we wanted to win a lot more than we thought."

This year, the team maintained a sizable lead throughout the final round,

until the two teams were tied going into the last question 290-290.

"Getting stuck in a tie was exactly what I feared, but in the end, I knew I couldn't stand to lose by such a close margin," Lou said.

The last question went on for four lines before Lou buzzed in with a correct answer of Jugurtha of Numidia, making the score 300-290 in favor of Saratoga.

In addition to the National History Bowl tournament, some of the team

members participated in the U.S. History Bee and the History Bee, which was also held at the same location.

Lou, the defending champion of the U.S. History Bee, again captured first place, defeating Sam Blizzard of Northmont, Ohio 10-5 in the final.

Lou also participated in the History Bee, which is an individual, History Bowl-style competition sponsored by the same organization. Lou took first in this competition as well. ♦

No Easy Answer

COUNSELORS SUGGEST COPING METHODS FOR DEPRESSION

BY Claire Chou, Katherine Sun & Eileen Toh

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), suicide accounts for one in five deaths annually among 15- to 24-year-olds. Because of recent events, high-achieving, high-pressure schools in the Bay Area have seen a renewed focus on the subject.

As reports of teens who have attempted or committed suicide have increased in the area, many parents and students have begun to blame academic pressure for teens' suicidal thoughts. Others, including counselors and students, counter that suicide involves far more complicated variables.

"When we deal with people who are suicidal or have suicidal thoughts, there are a whole lot of factors," Counseling and Support Services for Youth (CASSY) counselor Jessica Wang said. "It is never just academic stress."

CASSY is a counseling service for students that was brought to campus at the be-

>> STRESS on pg. 4



MICHELLE CEN

SWIMMING

Chinese transfer brings team rare talent

BY Stefanie Ting & Rachel Zhang

Roughly 100 out of the China's 1.4 billion population train with China's national swim team.

Junior Jack Xie, a recent transfer, was one of these elite swimmers at the age of 13.

Typical workouts had him in the pool for two hours at a time and swimming 6,000 meters alongside Olympians like Zhang Lin.

Today, after immigrating to the U.S., he is swimming

on the Falcon team as well as for the PEAK club team.

In China, he won dozens of medals from competitions such as the Asia Junior Athletics Championships, a meet that includes the top swimmers from all over Asia. He moved to Saratoga in February in pursuit of a higher education and the opportunity to swim against tougher competition.

Standing at 6'2" and weighing 176 pounds, Xie

is the same height but 18 pounds lighter than his role model, American Olympic swimmer Ryan Lochte.

Built with long legs, Xie has a lengthy body, allowing him to efficiently slice through the water. He effortlessly crosses the 25 yards of the pool in just seven strokes.

Although Xie's build allows him to swim more eas-

ily, he still needs to dedicate long, grueling hours of practice in hopes of reaching his goal.

"My short-term goal is to do my best and win CCS," Xie said. "In order to do that, maybe I need to cut some basketball time off."

In March, Xie hurt his knees, while playing basketball with his friends. Suffering from a slight injury, Xie reduced his training regimen to only dryland workouts

>> XIE on pg. 17

>> what's inside

■ UP ALL NIGHT

Are all-nighters helpful? Reporters explore the consequences of sleep deprivation. pg. 6

■ PRANK WARS

Joke's on you! Teams battle it out. pg. 10-11

■ OH SNAP!

MAP student pursues film Junior Saro Acharya chases a career in the media industry. pg. 12



AP Spanish 6 to be discontinued next year

AP Spanish 6 will no longer be offered starting next year. According to World Language Department Chair and Spanish teacher Arnaldo Rodriguez, three students are currently enrolled in the class, and only two signed up for next year. The class has been taught by Rodriguez in the same sixth period as AP Spanish 5.

"[The course] has been [taught] as an independent studies class supervised by me, and I am stepping down from that responsibility," said Rodriguez, who also administers the Spanish 4H and AP Spanish 5 classes.

Only students who are a year ahead in the course ladder for the language reach the Spanish 6 class; most students finish at Spanish 5 or 4. These few students who are a year ahead will not have a Spanish language class to take during their senior year.

Sophomore Nidhi Jain, enrolled in Spanish 4H this year, won't be able to take a Spanish course in her senior year, as West Valley offers no class.

"It might be a lot more time consuming and it's an inconvenience that it's not here at SHS," Jain said. "For me personally, it's really unfortunate."

— Karissa Dong and Tiffany Zheng

Rolling block schedule up for discussion

The decision to implement a rolling block schedule is now being reconsidered by a district committee. The new committee will work with principal Paul Robinson and the school's Leadership team to come up with the most student-friendly 2016-17 bell schedule, starting in May of this year.

The committee will most likely comprise 20 to 30 students, parents and staff members from both Los Gatos and Saratoga High and a hired outside facilitator.

Robinson said that the committee's first meeting in May will set the dates for its future meetings, which will officially commence in August. By the end of first semester next year, the administration should know exactly what the bell schedule will be for the 2016-17 school year.

Robinson also noted that the school will most likely follow the committee's recommendation, even if it proposes different schedules for Los Gatos and Saratoga.

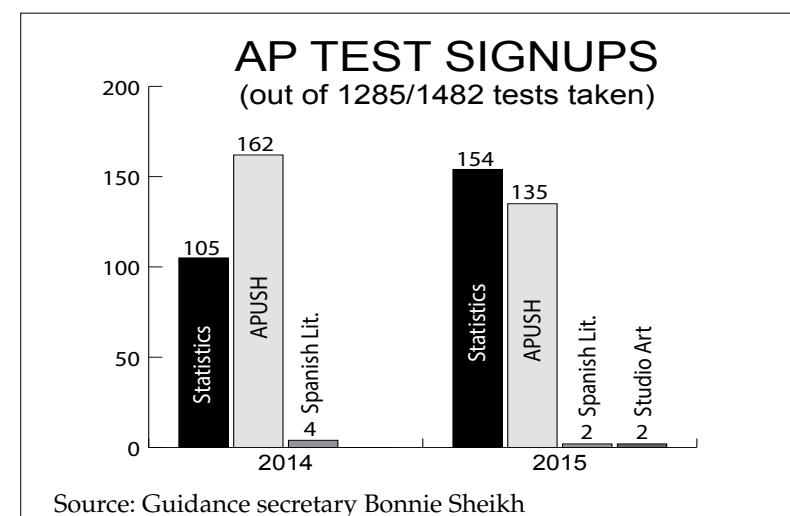
"The committee is very open," Robinson said. "It still honors what our Leadership team wants; that is to make sure our [new] schedule really meets the students' needs."

— Caitlin Ju

>> corrections

On April 3, 2015, The Falcon published an article entitled "Race against the clock: Teachers talk grading." We would like to clarify the graphic that accompanies the story, which states that the average class has roughly 25 students; the it should have said that a typical teacher has 30-35 students per class. In addition, the article may have indicated to some that teachers have students grade their own essays, which is not true. In reality, all major writing assignments are graded by teachers.

>> falconfigures



Students anticipate Senior Ball

BY Rachel Hull
& Michelle Leung

Senior Ball will take place this year at Levi's Stadium on May 23. The theme is "Night Under the Lights."

Bids started at \$140 with ASB and \$150 without during the week of April 20 and will continue rising in price until May 15. Throughout the year, the senior class held fundraisers such as Mr. Saratoga, MOD Pizza and Dippin' Dots in order to reduce bid prices.

According to senior class vice president Madison Gress,

DANCES

DANCES

class officers chose Levi's as the venue because it was "the most exciting and the most unique" place for a reasonable price.

Earlier in the year, the venue was leaked, but class leadership tried to dispel rumors before the official reveal.

Gress said that the level in the stadium where prom will be held has "a really nice" window view of the field, a balcony that students can walk onto and the option to go outside.

"It's really wide open, so there's going to be a lot of movement," Gress said.

>> picturethis



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA

SPRING MUSICAL >> Seniors Natalie Miller and Dan Kawadri sing at a rehearsal for their last high school musical, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," playing the roles of Rosa and Jasper Bud, respectively.

EVENTS

Junior Prom: a class success

BY Allison Lin
& Anant Rajeev

Three hundred guests dressed to the nines and attended Junior Prom at Silver Creek Country Club on the night of April 18. Following the theme of F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby," guests sipped on mocktails and danced the night away.

As buses pulled out of the Saratoga High parking lot at 5:30 p.m., students attending the dance buzzed with excitement. The commute to the venue was approximately 30 minutes, but students enjoyed the ride and chatted with their friends.

Upon arriving, they were escorted into an extravagant lobby with pillars, paintings and ornaments, which led to a circular ballroom decorated like the interior of Gatsby's mansion.

"The venue was absolutely beautiful," said junior Josh Dey. "The view from the balcony was breathtaking and the lounge and seating area was terrific."

"We were blown away when we visited the venue, but we were especially wor-

ried about the space inside because remodeling was taking place during our visit," said junior vice president Spencer Yen. "However, people loved the lounge, bar and dancing."

Each round table, seating 10-14 guests, boasted ostentatious centerpieces hand-constructed by parent decorator Laura Tillett.

The DJ blasted the bass nonstop and at one point, the vibrations caused part of a light to fall out of the ceiling. Luckily, students directly beneath were unharmed.

Many attendees, however, felt the DJ was not as good as they would have hoped.

"Some of the DJ's music selection was sometimes hard for students to dance to," said junior Daniel Eem. "However, I think he did his best job to make the night successful."

Dinner was served to each student at his or her table. Guests received steaming plates of either vegetarian ravioli or chicken and rice.

"The meals were both nutritious and delicious," said junior Supriya Singh. "There was definitely sufficient food in both the vegetarian and non-vegetarian dishes."

As the night progressed,

DANCES

DANCES

"You're going to be walking to get your different food and then from one side to the other and dancing, so it's really open and spacious."

Gress hopes that Senior Ball will prove an unforgettable memory for everyone.

"I'm just looking forward to a last night for everyone to come together as a class and have a lot of fun together," Gress said, "because I feel like it's the end of our four years together, so it's going to be a really fun night where everyone can just relax for the last time before graduation." ♦

ENGINEERING

Digital electronics program to be offered

BY Emily Chen
& Aini Nachiappan

Digital electronics, a new elective course that will be the third class added to the Project Lead the Way program, is tailored to sophomores, juniors and seniors, and will teach students about technology and give them hands-on experience in engineering.

Physics teacher Kirk Davis and math teacher Audrey Warmuth are tentatively planning on teaching this class together. The course will give students a better idea of whether they should continue pursuing engineering in college.

"This is a really useful class because kids can learn to build circuits, make things around them work and see how technology is fundamentally designed," Davis said.

Davis enjoys digital electronics due to his fascination with digital technology and analog, topics that involve logic and trigonometric sine curves. He also enjoys figuring out how to make complicated things, such as circuits, work.

In college, Davis took chemical engineering due to his interest in electricity. In his computer science classes, he recalls "doing stuff on stone tablets back in the day."

He didn't have computers to run everything so he used punch cards to key in instructions.

Because technology has changed since Davis attended college, he feels



Physics teacher Kirk Davis, who may teach the new class, explains Newton's Third Law and how forces come in pairs using his visual aid of pears to junior Darby Williams.

that the program trained him and provided knowledge to help him teach the course.

Davis is looking forward to giving students exposure to material that will be easier to comprehend due to its interactive learning style.

"I'm going to learn a lot, so for me, that's really exciting," he said. "I like teaching kids how to do something practical."

Junior Avi Arjavalangam plans on taking this course because of his interest in engineering. He wants to "learn comprehensively about electrical engineering" through the course in comparison to trying it out on his own time.

"I'm looking forward to being

able to essentially make my own simple computing device because it is fascinating how you can create something so complex out of such small parts."

In preparation for the upcoming class, Davis and Warmuth attended a two week training program last summer.

"[The administration] is pretty careful about making sure we have some background in electrical engineering," Davis said. "They want to get everybody up to speed."

Davis is genuinely excited to teach this course due to his interest in electricity.

"Electricity is kind of black magic when you think about it," he said. "It's really whacked out, but it's what makes the world go around." ♦

MUSICAL

Creative rendition of 'Edwin Drood' shines

BY Melissa Magner

[compared to other shows] is that the audience doesn't passively observe the production, but instead interacts with cast members and determines [how the cast members] perform," Thermond said.

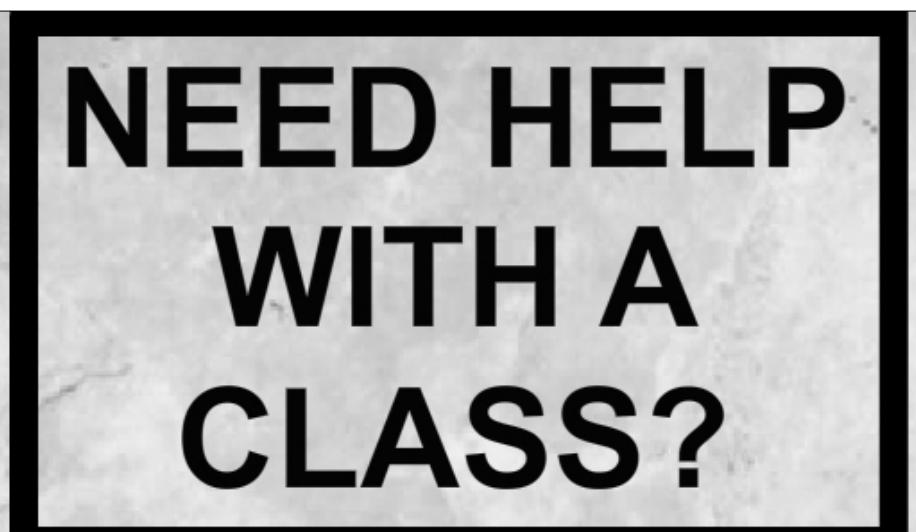
Because of this, the cast faced new challenges when preparing for the show, such as refining their improvisation skills.

The show faced other challenges as well. According to the stage manager, senior Melissa Rogan, although the melodies and harmonies were "hauntingly beautiful," they were also rather difficult to grasp.

"Being able to vote [on the ending of the play] was really interesting," junior Nina Harris said. "The audience was really able to get involved in a new way."

Director and drama teacher Sarah Thermond said that the addition of audience participation was what made the show so unique and interesting to watch.

The main difference with this show



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ACTIVITIES

Robotics competes at World Championship

BY Aditya Chaudhry

Members of the SHS robotics team, the M-SET Fish, were awestruck at the sheer number of people seated in the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis, Mo., on April 22-24. They weren't there to see a sports game; rather, they had arrived at the world championships of the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Competition (FRC).

Like every other team there, they had spent the past six weeks constructing a robot that would stack plastic packing totes to play this year's game.

"It was an amazing experience getting this far in the competition and learning how we can improve from some of the best teams in the world," junior team president Naveed Riazat said.

STRESS >>

continued from pg. 1

ginning of the 2013-2014 school year. Since then, it has assisted dozens of students on campus who have asked for mental health services and support.

What the CASSY counselors have found is that stress is a part of many students' lives, whether it stems from dealing with relationships or questioning identities. Wang said it is important for all people, especially depressed individuals, not to reflect too much on the past or to worry about what lies ahead — what matters more is living in the present and dealing only with what they can handle at one time.

"Sometimes, we look at depression, and some people think that it comes from being caught up in the past," Wang said. "There can be many regrets from the past, and I think that we [also] view the future with a great deal of anxiety, but the present is the only place where we have any power or control to change anything."

Learning to cope with stress

According to Wang, staying resilient and using coping mechanisms to deal with stress such as speaking to counselors or joining support groups, are often more effective and realistic than attempting to reduce academic stress in a demanding environment like Saratoga High.

CASSY counselor Erica Smith said one way for students to reduce stress is to have "unscheduled time" each day. Within this, students can "find things that have no purpose, [do] things that [they] just love and enjoy and pass time."

"[The ways to spend this time are] different for everybody," Smith said. "It doesn't have to be for college or for a class — it's for you."

Some activities that students can benefit from in their unscheduled time include meditating, exercising, taking baths, listening to music and watching

According to sophomore officer Nicole Lin, the team was overjoyed to qualify for the world competition this year. The last time the team qualified was 2010.

The championship had eight divisions with 75 teams in each division.

Inside each division, the top eight teams, after qualification matches, create an alliance of four robots, and these alliances play against each other until a winner is determined. The winning alliance of each division then face off against each other until a world champion is determined.

After playing through their qualification matches, the M-SET Fish was chosen to be part of second seed alliance (the alliance partners for the second place team) in the Curie division, named after the famous

scientist Marie Curie.

"It was a great feeling to actually get picked," junior hardware lead Navid Mokhlesi said. "It was a great alliance and we are proud [to] have been a part of it."

In St. Louis, the team played 10 qualification matches in their division before moving onto quarterfinals.

In quarterfinals the four alliances with the highest average score over two games move on to semifinals. The team was not able to get a high enough average score to move on to the semi-finals.

The world champions who won the entire event was comprised of three California teams and one Texas team.

The alliance was made of team 1678, Citrus Circuits from Davis; team 118, Robonauts from Houston; team 1671, Bu-



The M-SET Fish pose with their display at the FRC world championships.

chanan Bird Brains from Madeira; and team 5012; Gryffingear from Palmade.

Lin said the competition also let students interact with repre-

sentatives from major companies and schools like MIT.

"This has been one of the best experiences for everyone on the team," Lin said. ♦

movies. According to USA Today, surveys have shown that most students go online, exercise or play video games to manage stress.

Apart from this type of "self-care," Smith said, having connections with people outside of social media and technology is just as important.

"People can be lonely, and it is really easy for people to be mean behind a social media filter," Smith said. "Connecting through social media is a lot different from having a real connection with somebody."

In fact, social media can be part of the problem, she said. Stripping away the body language from a conversation can hurt truthful communication, thereby isolating individuals who need help. And while less intimidating, online communication can be less emotionally intimate than reaching out to others directly.

Wang speaks from past experience from having worked as a mental health therapist at Gunn High School, which, along with Palo Alto High School, has had several students commit suicide in recent years. She has seen students who feel so lost that they are unable to identify factors of their

"We've had some parents who really want us to address [academic stress], and we keep telling them it's not that simple."

counselor Erica Smith

own depression.

"Trying to fit into something that doesn't fit for you can make you sad," Wang said. "And there are just people that are so depressed they can't see the reason why or can't tell us the reason why. And those can be scary cases."

Senior Sonal Pai agrees that there are many factors in suicide besides academic pressure.

"It's the easy scapegoat for our stress initiator because it's the one thing [many students] are focused on right now — not only through our own self-pressure, but through peer pressure and parental pressure as well," Pai said.

Smith said that parents are especially likely to subscribe to the belief that the suicides result from academic stress.

A disorder in the shadows

Suicidal thoughts can also stem from depression, a mental disorder that negatively affects the way people feel, think and act. According to a study in 2012 by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), 9.1 percent of teens aged 12 to 17 suffered from depression.

Smith said it is important to realize that depression is not the same as feeling sad. She finds that people often use the word "depressed" when they are feeling sad in order to be taken more seriously, forgetting that depression is a disorder, not a temporary feeling or state.

The emotional pain that people with depression experience is felt in the brain the same way physical pain is felt, to the point that they may experience heart attacks. In order to cope with this type of suffering, people should reach out for

seven tests this year because of the two AP Physics tests.)

"I've been studying them over the past few months. I dedicate a day of the week to each subject," Tsai said. "That keeps me on top of things so I don't have to cram in the weekend before."

In addition to upcoming AP tests, juniors took the Smarter Balanced Test last week. The test included an English Language arts section and a Mathematics section. Last year's juniors took a trial test, while this year's juniors took the

actual full-length test.

According to the California Department of Education, the test "utilizes computer-adaptive tests and performance tasks that allow students to show what they know and are able to do."

Juniors took both portions of the test on HP Chromebooks or Dell desktops.

Unlike the previous STAR test, students had to write an essay on top of answering multiple choice questions for passages or audio presentations.

These parts of the test align with the

new Common Core standards that have been implemented in schools nationwide.

Junior Josh Dey said he did not find the new-style test draining, unlike most standardized tests he has taken this year. Nevertheless, Dey disliked the Common Core ideas embedded into the test.

"I didn't like the fact that for math we had to explain our answers in words — it's not something I'm used to doing and was probably the most challenging part of it," Dey said. ♦

TESTING >>

continued from pg. 1

Tsai. Tsai is taking six AP classes this year: Government, AP Spanish Language, AP Environmental Science, AP Physics and AP English Language and Composition. He says he is taking the seven accompanying AP tests because not doing so would be a "waste of the effort [he] put in this year." (He is taking

CLUBS

Social Justice sparks thoughtful discussions

BY Emily Chen
& Katherine Sun

The signature red bandanas tied around their heads, their red lipstick and denim jackets stood out in the midst of students' everyday attire. On March 23, these individuals wanted to do more than just arrive at school in matching outfits.

Members of Social Justice Club dressed up on Career Day as Rosie the Riveter, a World War II-born American

image who encouraged women to help the war effort by working in factories, in an effort to raise awareness of the wage gap in the U.S. today.

The Social Justice Club, founded by junior Caroline Oliver near the beginning of this semester, meets Tuesdays with adviser Amy Keys in room 006.

The 10-member club provides a place where students can discuss and learn about current social issues.

"I wanted to have a space for students to talk out how they felt about current issues," junior Caroline Oliver

cates for equal civil liberties and rights, and has participated in political rallies.

"I know that I'm very personally interested in it," Oliver said, "so I just kind of assumed that other people would be."

She guessed correctly. Club member junior Maya Sriprasad joined in order to debate and share her own ideas with others.

"It's really cool how I can sit down with a bunch of my peers and discuss hot-button topics in our society," Sriprasad said. "Beats just thinking about them in my mind."

Starting this club was more fun than Oliver had anticipated, although there

were and are still occasional difficulties in facilitating the discussion at meetings.

"Everyone is really opinionated, so trying to get people to focus on one thing can be kind of hard, but that's [both] a pro and a con," she said. "I'm so happy that everyone has opinions, and I find that there's very rarely a time when there's an awkward silence."

In the club, members work on projects centered on an idea of their choosing; for instance, the Rosie the Riveter dress-up and the upcoming wage inequality bake sale focus on the topic of feminism. Oliver plans to sell baked goods to girls for 78 cents while boys must pay one dollar "just to hone in that symbolic message that this is what we're facing right now."



Left: Founder of Social Justice Club junior Caroline Oliver dresses as Rosie the Riveter. Right: Teacher Amy Keys poses with junior Christine Raj in her classroom on Career Day.



Courtesy of AMY KEYS

SPEECH AND DEBATE

Two seniors win second place at state tournament

BY Maya Prasad
& Amulya Vadlakonda

only 48 teams in the entire state that qualified, and the elimination processes was tough, according to Raj.

"States wasn't like most tournaments because it [was] more intense," Raj said. "If you lose two rounds, you're eliminated immediately."

Throughout the last four years of speech and debate, Ong and Raj have developed their skills and managed to create a strong partnership after being paired last year.

Parliamentary debate, which allows for only 20 minutes of preparation time before a round begins, has helped them improve their argumentation skills.

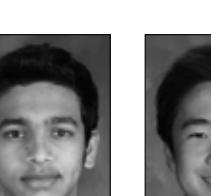
Given any assertion, Raj can "explain why you have never been more wrong and why you have never been more right." Then, Ong can explain why that argument is more logical and accurate than any opposing statement.

"That is how we win, and how we plan on winning in the future," said Raj.

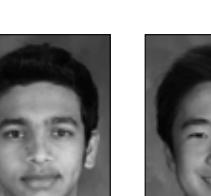
Although this was the last debate tournament for Raj and Ong as a team, Raj is continuing his preparation in order to participate in the National debate tournament for World Schools Style debate, which is similar to parliamentary debate, in Dallas.

"Getting second place was definitely amazing," Raj said, "but at the same time it was bittersweet since we found out we had lost."

Ong and Raj competed against the best of the state's debaters. There were



Raj



Ong



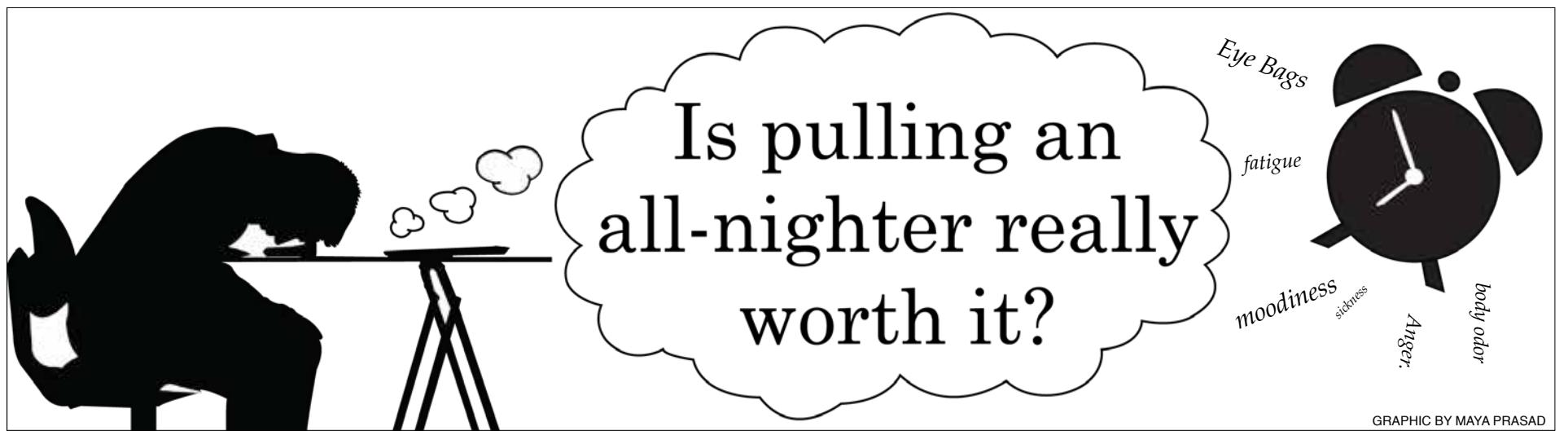
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BY Vibha Seshadri
& Tiffany Zheng

We all have experienced the dreaded days of having multiple tests on the same day along with a project or paper due. At times, 24 hours are insufficient to do all we're trying to do, so we are tempted to pull all-nighters. While this may seem smart at the time, research proves it to be detrimental in the long run.

All-nighters corrode a student's health; they cause students' bodies to ache with fatigue and their minds to grow dull during school hours, since neither have been given the opportunity to rest.

According to U.S. News Health, pulling all-nighters also causes people's memory to worsen since it prevents the brain from repairing itself.

In fact, getting a few hours of sleep is a better use of time than half-heart-

ed cramming in the early hours of the morning.

In addition, pulling all-nighters is injurious to students in the long term. Sleep allows our bodies to rest and prepare for the next day.

If students do not sleep, their immune systems weaken.

And, if students miss school due to illness, they will create an even larger workload for themselves than manageable.

Lack of sleep affects not only students' immune systems, but also their moods. According to the UC Berkeley Psychology Department, all-nighters induce temporary euphoria. While this may seem like a good thing, associate professor of psychology and neuroscience at UC Berkeley Matthew Walker notes that, with good rest, the brain finds a good balance on the "mood spectrum"; without it, the brain is prone to

constant mood swings that could lead to bad behavior. Pulling all-nighters not only leads to ghastly eye-bags but also alters two significant hormones: leptin and ghrelin. Leptin tells the body when it is full, and ghrelin urges the body to consume.

When students are sleep deprived, their bodies produce more ghrelin and less leptin, potentially resulting in weight gain and digestive problems. According to Dr. Brian Abaluck of Sleep Health Centers in a University of Pennsylvania medical conference on sleep, students who pull all-nighters are more easily have been avoided if students had planned better.

Besides following the school's constant advice to avoid overloading their schedules, students should also start working as soon as possible and reward themselves with short, periodic breaks to refresh their minds.

Sleeplessness can modify the way bodies filter glucose, resulting in higher chances of diabetes and kidney failure. Abaluck notes that the body handles glucose the same way, regardless of its age. Thus, people should not assume

that being younger allows them to be at a lower health risk when engaging in unhealthy activities.

Instead of pulling all-nighters, students should better their time management skills.

Students who procrastinate for three to four hours a day put themselves in a position of choosing between an all-nighter, or going to sleep without finishing their homework, a fate which could easily have been avoided if students had planned better.

Besides following the school's constant advice to avoid overloading their schedules, students should also start working as soon as possible and reward themselves with short, periodic breaks to refresh their minds.

This way, they will be able to socialize with their families, finish homework and also sleep for at least six hours and maybe more. ♦

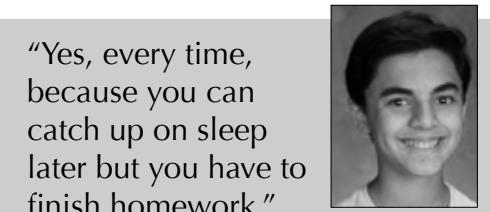
>> togatalks

Is pulling an all-nighter worth it?



"No, it's not worth it because I end up falling asleep in every class."

junior Alice He



"Yes, every time, because you can catch up on sleep later but you have to finish homework."

junior Samir Vaidya



"Yes; when you get all your work done it's really relieving to be done by the morning."

senior Eunju Pak

Drought restrictions tiresome but needed

BY Jason Zhao

High up in the Sierras, where a few feet of white snow should cover the peaks, there is nothing but yellow grass and dry streams.

This year, California has recorded its lowest amount of rainfall in the past 60 years.

As a result, Gov. Jerry Brown recently announced a mandatory restriction on the use of water.

In truth, farmers are getting hit hardest by the drought. The agriculture industry has already cut 17,100 of the state's farm jobs and has lost \$2.2 billion this year alone. Dairy and livestock will lose another \$203 million.

Since additional limitations would further ruin businesses, it is better for the state to limit the water usage in urban areas. It is our responsibility to preserve water sources.

The drought restrictions encourage better water management, including increased conservation of and investments in new supplies such as recycled wastewater, groundwater storage and stormwater collection.

With no clear end to the drought, we need to get used to the new normal of using less water.

more expensive water bills, they still do allow for basic necessities such as washing and cooking. The restrictions are a necessary change to conserve water for the future, even after the drought ends.

Some critics argue that agriculture, representing about 80 percent of water usage, takes up much more water than urban areas do and that it is not fair to make lives harder in urban areas when water could easily be cut back in the agricultural industry.

In truth, farmers are getting hit hardest by the drought. The agriculture industry has already cut 17,100 of the state's farm jobs and has lost \$2.2 billion this year alone. Dairy and livestock will lose another \$203 million.

Often times, some students, while appearing to participate in a project, contribute subpar work. Consequently, other students in the group are forced to redo that lackluster portion, unnecessarily eating hours out of their day to compensate for a less caring peer.

Giving a single grade for a group project provides slackers with an incentive to repeat their parasitic behavior in the future. Teachers who still use the older one grade system should switch to the newer individual grading system, which promotes the principles of equality, fairness and good work ethic. ♦

Group projects need individual grading

BY Eric Sze
& Stefanie Ting

To help the slacker or not? When put into mandatory group projects, responsible students are often forced to pull the dead weight of their lazy peers.

It remains a mystery as to why a few teachers still stubbornly clutch to the system of giving group grades on these projects. The practice has major flaws, particularly by inviting those who do not put any effort into their project to continue their mooching behavior.

Even so, the worst part of group projects is not the research or even the endless collaboration with the other members, but rather seeing the slacker receive the same grade as actual contributors.

Although some teachers have taken steps to make the grading of group projects fairer, usually by assigning a self/group-assessment rubric to give students an opportunity to provide feedback to the teacher regarding the effort levels of each individual, others still give a single grade for a five- or six-person task.

Another frustrating aspect of group projects is the student who acts superior to the rest boasting how he or she will most definitely complete multiple tasks in a timely fashion and with quality.

But when the due date looms near,

the work submitted by that student shows little potential, displaying obvious lack of effort. Furthermore, upon being contacted by other group members, the student fails to respond, which burdens his or her peers to desperately clock in hours of work until the first blush of dawn in attempts to drastically increase the quality of their project.

Even so, the worst part of group projects is not the research or even the endless collaboration with the other members, but rather seeing the slacker receive the same grade as actual contributors.

Though many may object to having limits placed on their water usage — after all, restrictions won't lead to more rain — the restriction is still a good plan. Not only do they teach people to live more conservatively, but it also helps to save water for the future.

There are penalties of up to \$500 for violations of the restriction, like washing cars without hoses equipped with a shut-off nozzle and allowing lawn sprinkler water to run into the street. The restriction will be enforced by local water agencies, but state officials said that they may clamp down further in the future.

Though the restrictions may result in

NEW EDITION

STAFF POLICY

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No-HW weekend needs planning

>> candid caricatures



KELLY XIAO

may fall behind on material and consequently reduce review time for the test or skip less important lessons to make up for the lost time. This could negatively impact students by rushing study time and glossing over important material.

Without the careful planning of no-homework weekends, teachers

should also be carefully con-

sidered; the most recent one came at an especially bad time, as teachers scrambled to give out the last few tests before Spring Break. Many teachers told students before the weekend that they did not have to study, but students with multiple tests the next week were bound to do poorly if they did not do so.

Yet, even with adequate planning, no-homework weekends should not become routine, or even frequent. Weekend homework allows teachers to spend more time teaching new material in class and less time reviewing.

The few no-homework weekends that are granted to students should be planned well in advance and observed by all teachers. Only then will these weekends become a truly stress-free time for students. ♦

UC schools should prioritize Californians

by Bruce Lou
& Arman Vaziri

In 1994, 96 percent of University of California (UC) attendees were California residents. In 2012, only 86 percent of UC students were from the state.

The reason? Out-of-state students bring in more money. While it's only natural for out-of-state students to want to attend the UC system — which is the best public school system in the country — many hardworking and deserving in-state candidates are being passed over for out-of-state cash cows.

The difference in tuition is marked between in-state and out-of-state students: \$13,844 for in-state students, \$25,064 for out-of-state students. Instead of having a quota for out-of-state applicants, the UC system should simply let them compete with the rest of the applicant field. If the UC system is still cash-strapped, then it can petition the state government for more funding.

It's unjust to Californians to exclude them from the education that their tax dollars paid for. Simply put, if applicants from other states want to attend the best public university system in the world, then they should prove themselves worthy by competing against California students. ♦

Blue-collar workers still deserve respect

by Karissa Dong
& Katherine Sun

down upon them when they are making a perfectly respectable, honest living.

In addition, jobs viewed as "dirty work" — those of custodians, gardeners, plumbers and construction workers — are necessary to a functioning community.

Despite this, blue-collar workers are often subject to disrespectful and condescending treatment; many assume that they are somehow inherently less hardworking or intelligent.

Yet while required skills and training of a manual worker, for example, may not compare with that of an engineer or biologist, all honest

work deserves respect. The jobs they perform — cleaning, constructing household parts, preparing fast food — are tasks that must be done. In the end, it simply comes down to whom they are done by.

Even if these workers are only in these jobs by necessity, we should respect the fact that they are stepping up and doing their part. Just as success in school does not define a student's worth and humanity, it is crucial to keep in mind that a person's job — whether CEO or custodian — does not either. ♦



May 1, 2015

Pao's case shows Valley's gender bias

by Nidhi Jain

Silicon Valley is the home of Apple, Facebook, Google and an extremely low percentage of executive females.

The Valley's success can be attributed to its companies, where both genders work equally hard on their projects, spending day after day meeting difficult deadlines and striving to revolutionize the world.

But when promotions are awarded, the genders do not receive equal recognition.

For every 20 individuals promoted in the Silicon Valley, only around three are women, according to Fortune magazine.

According to Business Insider, women hold a mere 11 percent of executive jobs at Silicon Valley technology companies even though they make up nearly 30 percent of the staff.

For venture capitalist firms like Kleiner Perkins Caufield and Byers, this percentage is even lower, according to Babson College, at 6 percent.

The maximum percentage of females who were ever in the venture capitalist industry was 10 percent in 1999.

With this blatant gender discrimination, Silicon Valley would seem to be ready to make greater efforts to minimize the gender gap, but this has not been the case.

Despite the push for girls to study STEM-related fields, the workforce fails to show significant advancement toward gender equality. The trend seems to be that many women enter STEM fields, but only a few actually reaching the top levels.

Ellen Pao, one of the few successful female venture capitalists, serves as a prime example of female discrimination in the workforce.

An Asian American with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Princeton University, according to Fortune magazine, Pao was pursuing the American Dream for thousands of individuals.

Pao later filed for sex discrimination, but a jury's final verdict exonerated the firm from any sort of gender bias.

The jury's justification was that Pao seemed to truly not be working to the best of her ability at the firm.

Pao was criticized for not having the correct characteristics necessary for a venture capitalist and for being too reserved.

However, it is unclear whether her performance reports were poor as a result of her genuinely insufficient business-related actions or because her

changed all that. The case decided the question of whether Pao fell victim to gender bias at Kleiner Perkins Caufield and Byers.

According to Pao, a relationship she had with co-worker Ajit Nazre had fallen apart. Soon after the breakup, she allegedly found herself being ignored, "omitted from several business meetings, and undermined with her portfolio companies," according to Fortune magazine.

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Pao was criticized for not having the correct characteristics necessary for a venture capitalist and for being too reserved.

However, it is unclear whether her performance reports were poor as a result of her genuinely insufficient business-related actions or because her

coworkers were simply not fond of her previous relationship with a coworker and wrongly correlated business with personal relationships.

Although the verdict has stirred much controversy, both sides can agree that the case shed light on the disparity between female and male roles in both the workforce and daily life.

As Pao said, "If we do not share our stories and shine light on inequalities, things will not change."

At Pao's firm, and at most companies in the Silicon Valley, there exists an unfair double standard. Women are scolded for being aggressive, while men are rewarded for their "persistence." The men then go on to be promoted, while the equally qualified women are left behind.

Silicon Valley companies need to realize that the issue of gender discrimination is alive and well; until real equality becomes the norm, stories similar to that of Pao's will be hidden behind the booming businesses of a technological era. ♦

But a court case decided on March 27

Campus drinking ban won't fix rape culture

by Michelle Cen
& Shreya Tumu

Dartmouth College President Philip Hanlon announced a ban on hard alcohol for all students on campus in January.

His decision, made in light of recent sexual assaults at college campuses, mirrors other recent Prohibition-esque bans begun by Brown University, Swarthmore College and the University of Virginia.

Although Hanlon and other colleges have good intentions, the ban is actually misguided and ineffective.

The assault of women is a much larger and deeper societal issue that cannot be remedied by a simple alcohol ban.

At first glance, the hard alcohol restriction may seem reasonable since, according to One in Four USA, half of reported sexual assault cases involve alcohol.

However, banning alcohol on paper will not effectively prevent free-willed college students from drinking at parties. Just as during Prohibition in the 1920s, people will find ways to bypass the system.

The U.S. authorizes adults over the age of 21 to drink, an ineffective and already unpopular law; likewise, Dartmouth's policy, preventing students of all ages — and even above 21 — from

drinking hard liquor on campus, stands little chance of success.

The policy is even counterintuitive, as students may be encouraged to visit clubs outside of campus and hold parties there instead, exposing themselves to more danger overall in the absence of campus supervisors.

Dartmouth's ban will not only fail to succeed as proven by the historical failure of Prohibition, but also fail to target America's rape culture, which condones sexual assault.

According to the national One in Four organization, one in four college women have survived rape or an attempted rape, and the actual number of cases is much higher than reported.

At Dartmouth, women report that they feel unsafe in fraternities and must travel in buddy-systems when attending parties.

Rather than try to ban alcohol, Dartmouth should allow students to learn about respecting one another's boundaries, especially those of females.

There need to be more campus-based sexual assault programs that educate students. Colleges should also create stronger policies to encourage the reporting of sexual assaults as well as discipline the offenders with harsher consequences.

Dartmouth has already taken key

steps toward addressing these issues by adopting a more stringent sexual assault policy and educating incoming students.

The college aims to build an environment in which sexual assault, gender-based harassment, domestic violence and stalking are not tolerated.

Instead of an ineffective alcohol ban, these are the types of programs that will more effectively curb actual assaults and change the culture that puts women in danger. ♦

Students are also taught not to act as silent bystanders during sexual assault. The college enforces timeliness for reporting a sexual assault for most effective action.

Equipped with a stunningly attractive neon-blue wig, I displayed my gorgeous costume to a world not yet ready for newspaper experiments, true beauty or Katy Perry.

I began to really think about it. If my brother hears about this, he'll forcefully demand that I reconsider my life and fashion choices — I was risking my life for the chance to appear hideous.

After the thousandth time I had to fling my luscious locks out of my face, I threw off my wig.

I'm not one to shy away from attention. In fact, I liked the spotlight, as short as it lasted, and I loved how I instantly threw people off balance.

I got a lot more compliments later on in the day by people informing me "you can't go outside wearing that." Although this could be seen as an insult, I'm positive they just feared that I would be instantly drafted into a strenuous career of modeling. Others were trying to pull the wig off of my head, likely in disbelief of my breathtaking beauty.

Paris Hilton was right; confidence really does bring attractiveness. A neon-blue wig, however, does not. ♦

Senior rediscovered joys of reading for fun

by Bruce Lou

rather lines of dull text to be picked apart and analyzed under the microscope.

It was an all-too-common story, and one of the great tragedies of high school — how a place of learning actually shuts off the greatest source of learning in the world.

But if my story ended here, there would be no point in continuing. Instead, I once again became an avid reader, an even stronger one than I had been before.

The spark to pull myself out of not reading was starting Quiz Bowl in my senior year, a game that tests knowl-

edge, with history and literature being a full half of the distribution. I knew that to excel, I would have to start reading again.

It was a l m o s t like work; it didn't seem natural, it didn't seem like fun. But my drive to win managed to overpower this initial resistance. Within a short amount of time, I started to like reading again.

There's so much schools don't have the time to teach, so in reality, we leave school not knowing very much at all. Only through reading outside of school can we fill in those gaps. ♦

senior Bruce Lou

May 1, 2015

New restaurant offers affordable options

by Atirath Kosireddy
& Rotem Shaked

ingredients like teriyaki, Japanese mayonnaise and sesame oil.

The menu welcomes customers when they walk into the restaurant, hanging from the wall and listing 27 seasonings and flavors of wings, including "Blackberry BBQ" and "Carameлизed Tamarind."

The establishment's small, modern and squarish interior is inviting and spacious for its size.

Wingbox satisfies two audiences: those who eat regularly at restaurants and those who favor something more unique and exotic.

It only took around seven minutes for us

to arrive there, which is convenient for students with a 40-minute lunch break to drive somewhere, get their food made, and drive back to school to make it to their next class in time.

The fusion works surprisingly well, especially with Wingbox's boneless wings, which resemble Orange Chicken but boast a more sophisticated and developed taste.

Hence, Wingbox's menu satisfies two audiences: those who regularly eat at restaurants and lean towards more traditional and simple chicken, and those who favor something more unique and exotic.

We had to wait only around five minutes for our \$9 takeout boxes full of chicken and rice.

Both the Kamikaze and Saigon Alley chicken were juicy

and tender, on top of the soft, white rice that came with the order.

The restaurant's menu, in fact, is not only limited to chicken; its sparkling lemonade menu with flavors such as watermelon, strawberry and passion fruit complements its pouty dishes perfectly.

Although the Wingbox staff takes a couple of minutes to prepare the drink, it is well

worth the wait.

The lemonade has a fresh, fizzy and fruity feeling to it that was enjoyable.

Even with the high-quality dishes and diverse menu, Wingbox manages to keep its prices low enough for students to want to return and try new dishes.

All in all, it is fair for us to say that Wingbox thinks outside of the box. ♦

</p

PRANK WARS

REPORTERS COMPETE TO PLAY THE BEST JOKES ON EACH OTHER

SECOND PLACE

Sophomores surprise with 'tasty' treat

BY Maya Prasad
& Jenny Qian

When we heard the phrase "prank wars" in a newspaper story discussion, we jumped on the idea, imagining the demise of our competition as they ran into Saran Wrap that covered doorways and found themselves glued to their chairs. But never did we realize the amount of time and effort it takes to prank someone. It took almost three hours to set up just two pranks.

Our first prank was perfect. Right after the bell for tutorial rang, we sprang out of our class and rushed to the cafeteria, picking the closest table in the back corner to set up.

Fortunately, both took one Oreo from the container. But Caitlin happened to pick some that were not filled with mayonnaise, since that column was closest to her. Amulya picked one from the group of mayonnaise-filled Oreos and took a bite.

We couldn't help but break out laughing as Amulya's face slowly scrunched up. "WHAT IS THIS FLAVOR!" screamed Amulya.

For the next prank, Maya asked sophomore Trevor Leung

for his sister Michelle Leung's number; she was our next target.

But as a prank on Maya, he gave her all of his friends' numbers along with Michelle's. Not knowing which one was really Michelle's number, Maya then sent an anonymous text to all of the numbers with a picture of Leonardo DiCaprio and said, "To stop receiving the Daily DiCaprio, reply with STOP."

Michelle fell for this prank and replied "STOP" but she soon turned the joke on Maya as she logged onto Trevor's Facebook account and told Maya that Mr. Robinson's number was among one of the numbers Maya had contacted.

Our plan worked, but we ended up making fools of ourselves since we both freaked out, thinking that the principal had received our text and worrying about what to tell him.

Sadly, when Maya tried the same prank on Caitlin, it didn't work out, because Caitlin had Maya's phone number. Oops.

Overall, our pranks were not executed as well as the other teams', but ours were rather intricate and

THE bigidea

Team 'Pranksta Gangstas'

Pranks accomplished:

- After secretly filling some Oreos with mayo, the team disguised them in the box. Rivals obviously ate the oreos.

- Jenny and Maya anonymously sent pictures of Leonardo DiCaprio to the seniors in a fake text subscription, the "Daily DiCaprio."

Judge's comments:
The team diligently prepared many Oreos to deceive their enemies, a feat deserving of second place. Also, their ability to involve people not in the competition was impressive.

incited many hilarious reactions from our competitors.

We're happy to say that even though prank week is over, we still have a couple tricks up our sleeves. ♦



GRAPHIC BY EMILY CHEN

THIRD PLACE

Unmotivated senior team fails to retaliate

BY Rachel Hull
& Michelle Leung

We knew it was war when we walked into the J-room and saw our faces displayed across the computer desktops. The desktop photos were unflattering, and we cringed upon seeing the humiliating portrayals of our sophomore and junior year selves.

Michelle walked unsuspectingly to the parking lot after school one day to find a parking ticket on the windshield of her car. Being a responsible student, she had never received a parking ticket before.

Her eyes scanned the ticket as she contemplated what it could be for — and then she noticed that it was signed by Maya and sophomore Maya Prasad to open a fake cheese puff can with a springing snake inside. Her reaction was of confusion — not exactly the terrified scream we had hoped for.

Before that, we had only completed one small prank: getting sophomore Maya Prasad to open a fake cheese puff can with a springing snake inside. Her reaction was of confusion — not exactly the terrified scream we had hoped for. After having been pranked ourselves, we knew we had to step it up.

Daily DiCaprio" and informing her that additional costs would be charged to her account. Since Michelle rarely gives out her phone number, she felt vaguely suspicious and tried texting "STOP" back as directed by the message, only to receive a follow-up message thanking her for subscribing to an additional stream of pictures.

But Michelle was able to turn the situation around by tricking Maya into thinking that she had actually texted principal Paul Robinson. We sat back and gleefully watched as Maya threw a fit via Facebook Messenger.

After letting her suffer for a few hours, we revealed the truth. It was psychological manipulation at its finest. We then decided to launch our own attack by bringing back some traditional pranks.

Rachel placed a whoopee cushion under Maya's spot on the J-room couch and a fake spider on the couch for good measure. To our dismay, the whoopee cushion made no sound. Rachel chickened out at the last minute and removed

THE bigidea

Team 'Senioriot'

Pranks accomplished:

- The team convinced Maya to open a fake cheese puff can, surprising her with a springing snake.

- In response to the "Daily DiCaprio" joke, Michelle and Rachel tricked Maya into thinking she accidentally pranked principal Paul Robinson.

Judge's comments:
Although the team attempted many traditional pranks, the seniors did not care enough to accomplish them. Better luck next time!

the spider before Maya could see it, not feeling cruel enough to take advantage of Maya's fear of bugs.

Rachel slightly regretted her merciful act later that day when she discovered a "For Sale" sign on her car's windshield, selling her car for \$20 or a pack of gum.

Thus ended the war and the half-hearted attempts of two unmotivated seniors. Our final verdict: We're too old for this, anyway! ♦

FIRST PLACE

Team embarrasses rivals with creative jokes

BY Caitlin Ju
& Amulya Vadlakonda

At the end of this newspaper prank war, it is safe to say our team was the winner.

But to be honest, neither of us were very well versed in the intricate art of pranking.

We attempted to Google "best pranks that are safe to do at school because we don't want to get in trouble," but due to a lack of the Post-its and bubble wrap the pranks online required, we were sure we were going to fail.

Fortunately, we were pleasantly surprised to find that the other teams had either forgotten about the prank war or were just incapable of reaching our level, because we were not pummeled nearly as badly as we thought we'd be.

After hours and hours of brainstorming ideas and enlisting some help, we decided to list our best ideas and finally get on with the pranking.

First, we scoured Facebook and the depths of photo albums to find two uncomfortably close pictures of Maya Prasad, one of Jenny Qian, one of Rachel Hull and one of Michelle Leung.

We made the pictures the desktop backgrounds of all the J-room computers*.

When Maya, Jenny and Rachel finally arrived in the J-room (Michelle was already there), their reactions were priceless.

Rachel was distraught; Jenny started laughing hysterically at Maya, who desperately tried to switch the background away from her face.

Not bad for a first attempt, if we do say so ourselves.

We then moved our efforts to a prank specifically on the senior team: Michelle and Rachel. The ideas were endless once we found

out that they both drove cars.

We placed a seemingly realistic parking ticket on Michelle's car after sophomore Trevor Leung, Michelle's brother, helped us to identify the car and remove her parking permit.

Kudos to Google Images for giving Michelle a huge heart attack.

The best part of the prank was that we signed the parking ticket "Maya and Jenny," which made Michelle and Rachel direct all their revenge on the other team.

Needless to say, Michelle and Rachel completely fell for it. Next thing we know, Maya, Jenny, Michelle and Rachel are involved in an elaborate prank involving Mr. Robinson, Leonardo DiCaprio and the fear of expulsion.

Caitlin brought the chairs and Amulya brought the popcorn. It was quite a show.

It took them a while to find out that we were the ones who pranked them.

One of the highlights was Maya trying to pull the same Leonardo DiCaprio prank that she had used on Michelle again on Caitlin, where Maya texted Caitlin with the message "To stop receiving the message

badly as we thought we'd be,

After

hours

and

hours

of

brainstorming

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war.

Amulya, who has the biggest weakness for all things sugar, happily took a bite. Immediately, she knew she had fallen for Maya and Jenny's elaborate scheme. They walked into the J-room with huge grins on their faces. Who takes the time to put mayonnaise in Oreos, anyway?

In Amulya's defense, Anant

was

eating

out

of

the

box

as

well

but

Maya

and

Jenny

were

smart

— or just lazy enough

— to only put the salty mayonnaise in half of the cookies to ensure that we would fall for it.

(Caitlin would like to add that she picked one of the normal cookies without the mayonnaise inside, but was instantly suspicious when Anant offered the cookies to us when we walked into the Journalism room.)

By the end of the two weeks, all the teams were pretty tired of the war, but we still had one last trick up our sleeves.

Rachel's car remained untouched throughout the whole entire war, and we needed to rectify that immediately.

Caitlin bought a "For Sale" sign

and, with the help of two seniors, we stuck the sign on the front of her car, marking it for the price of either \$20 or a pack of gum.

Sadly, we didn't stick a round to see the results.

Moral of the story?

Don't eat

Oreos

from

Anant

Rajeev,

always

take

videos

of

your

friends'

heart

attacks

and

either

recount

their

reactions

a

hundred

times

to

embarrass

them

or

just

post

the

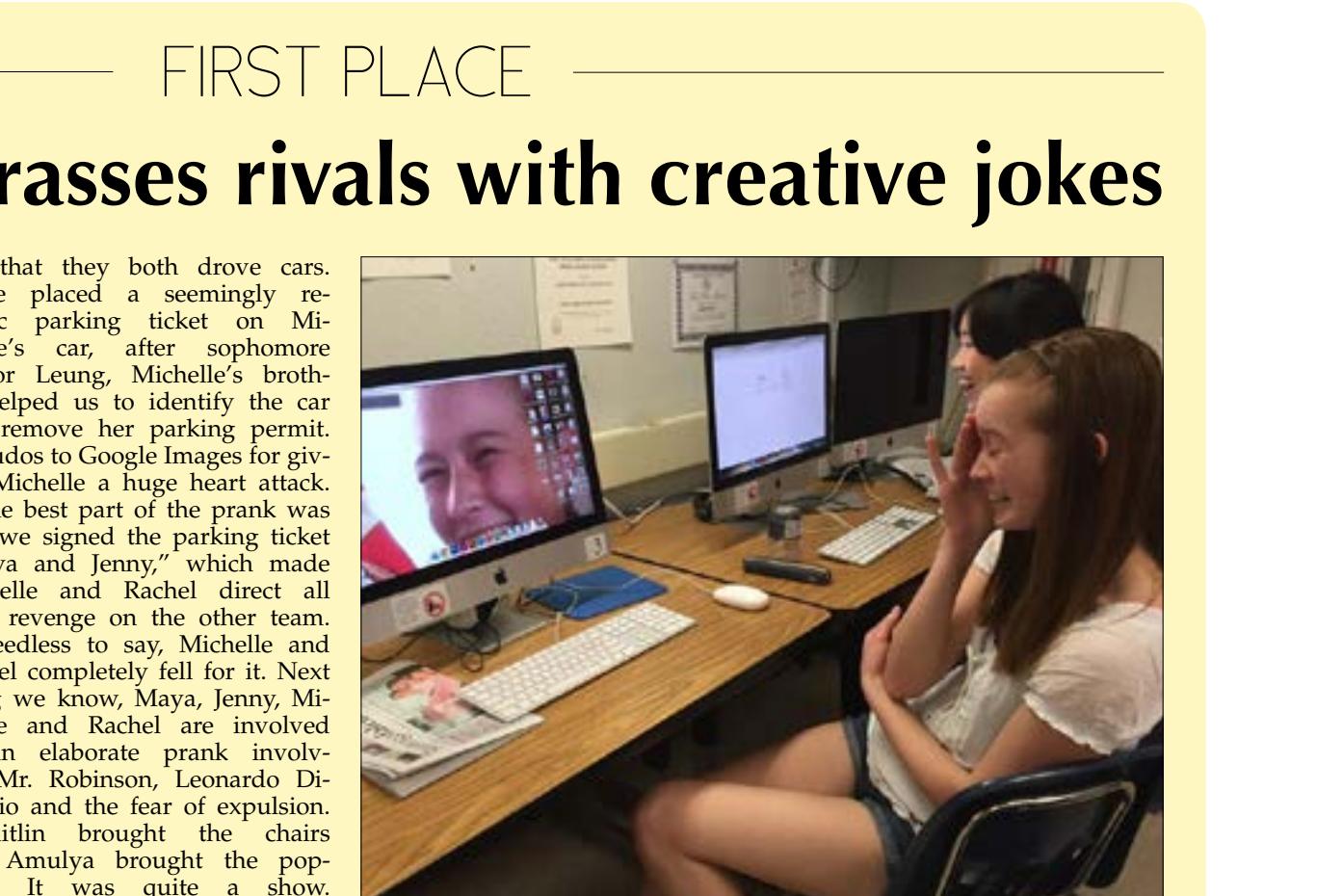
videos

on

Facebook.

We are definitely willing to do this prank war again, and this time you'll know not to underestimate us sophomores. We might have another prank monster on our hands.

"Signed, Maya and Jenny." ♦



May 1, 2015



BREAKING BARBLES

Indian-Americans defy stereotypes in entertainment

BY Shreyas Tumu

called "Matt & Ben," which she co-wrote with a college friend.

A Super Bowl commercial called "Are Indian Women Invisible?" portrays Mindy Kaling, a renowned Indian-American author and actress, trying to hail a cab in New York City without much luck.

"After years of being treated like she was invisible, it occurred to Mindy Kaling she might actually be invisible," the narrator says.

Although the commercial is an advertisement promoting Nationwide Insurance, it reveals an unfortunate truth about how minorities are treated in America, especially in Hollywood. Despite the increase in cultural awareness in the 21st century, minorities must still fight for their rightful place.

Fortunately, minorities such as Indian-Americans are beginning to occupy a more prominent role in mainstream media.

Kaling, for one, has proven herself far from invisible. She started off by portraying the chatty character Kelly Kapoor on "The Office" before becoming a writer, producer and lead actress in her own show, "The Mindy Project," and publishing two successful books. One of her books, "Is Everybody Hanging Out Without Me (And Other Concerns)," was nominated for Goodreads Choice Awards Best Humor and is rated 4.3 out of 5 on Amazon.

Though Kaling is now seen as one of the most accomplished Indian-American women in the entertainment industry, it wasn't an easy journey for her.

When she was a 19-year-old sophomore at Dartmouth University, she interned on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien." She took jobs as a babysitter and a production assistant for a cable-television psychic, which she described as "depressing."

But bigger and better things were waiting for Kaling, now 35, and she did not lose hope. In 2002, Kaling played Ben Affleck in an off-Broadway play

"The Mindy Project," which airs on FOX, is about a young OB/GYN doctor, Mindy Lahiri, who balances her personal and professional life, surrounded by quirky co-workers in a small private practice.

Aside from her job as a doctor, Kaling's character isn't portrayed as the stereotypical Indian. While Indian-American characters are usually written as conservative and modest,

Lahiri lives a fast and flashy life that resembles that of Kaling.

Kaling's less-than-conventional Indian upbringing is also reflected in the show. For instance, although Lahiri is a doctor on the ex-

show, an acceptable and respected job per "typical Indian standards," Lahiri doesn't let her success in the career world define her personality.

Furthermore, brief references are made to Indian culture, but not so much that they take over the character's identity. In the show, Mindy's brother drops out of college, and Mindy does not react well to the news, confiding in her coworker Danny, "Do you know what it's like for Indian immigrant parents to have their son drop out of college?" This line may in fact be one stereotype of Indians that holds true, but it's the furthest the show goes in generalizing and stereotyping Indians.

Kaling has the opportunity to be in control of how her character, Lahiri, is portrayed on national television. Other Indian-Americans in the Hollywood industry, however, are not given this opportunity and are unfortunately victims of racial stereotyping by the media.

One of these victims is actor Kunal Nayyar's character Rajesh Koothrappali, who is sometimes derogatorily stereotyped in the show "The Big Bang Theory."

To start, Rajesh has a thick and overdone Indian accent.

The creators of the show insist on highlighting only Rajesh's Indian characteristics, missing the opportunity to bring a fresh character to Hollywood.

Admittedly, despite the drawbacks of the character, Rajesh allows for the possibility of Indian

culture to international audiences of the show, which is some progress, however small it may be.

The truth is that the Hollywood industry lacks prominent Indian actors and roles. There are only a few other minor Indian-American characters, such as Cece Parekh in "New Girl," who is only half-Indian, and Tom Haverford (who doesn't even have an Indian name) in "Parks and Recreation." All of these Indian-American characters have side or supporting roles.

In the music industry, even fewer well-known Indian Americans have broken into the mainstream.

Most people can perhaps name only one Indian-American singer: Jay Sean, who was a one hit wonder in 2008 with his song, "Down." Another famous Indian-American songwriter and singer is Norah Jones, daughter of American Sue Jones and Indian sitar virtuoso Ravi Shankar. She is famous for her songs "Don't Know Why" and "Come Away With Me" and won five Grammy awards for her solo album in 2003.

It is often hard for aspiring Indian-Americans to succeed in the industry, since most Indian parents don't approve of such non-practical careers. But Jones breaks such ground because she chooses to be individualistic and doesn't consider her race as a block in the road to success. Her presence in the music industry gives hope to many other Indians who have dreams to have a career in the industry.

Indian culture needs more exposure in the entertainment industry. Deterrence from immigrant parents, discrimination and a lack of Indian-American characters in scripts of TV shows are all barriers that hinder success in Hollywood for Indian-Americans. But with characters like Mindy Kaling and Rajesh Koothrappali, perhaps Hollywood is becoming more diverse and open to Indian-American characters. And that, at least, is a step in the right direction. ♦



MINDY KALING

Saro Acharya: the next James Cameron

BY Anand Rajeev
& Deepthi Sampathkumar

This past month, junior Saro Acharya spent 20 sleepless hours on a weekend, eyes glued to his Macbook screen attempting to finish editing his Media Arts Project (MAP) short film: "Mishaps and Misdeeds."

Acharya endured every minute of it. "It was really challenging, but I loved every second of it" he said.

"Film, at its basis, is storytelling and I love that aspect of it," Acharya said. "I'd like to be a director or even a writer, either on television or on film."

Acharya's role models in the film industry have furthered his passion for filmmaking.

The biggest idols to me as a filmmaker are Alfred Hitchcock, Quentin Tarantino and Joseph Gordon-Levitt," Acharya said. "It's a bit of an odd trio. I love Hitchcock for his ability in building suspense, Tarantino for his uncompromising sense of fun."

Acharya began to admire Gordon-Levitt after his creation of a website called HitRECord, which is dedicated to online content creators to share and collaborate on projects, a concept that Acharya has taken much interest in.

According to Acharya, his experience at the Department of Design Media Arts was very beneficial because he studied new techniques and fields including



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA

Junior Saro Acharya intently focuses and steadies his camera before he takes a shot.

fact, much of Acharya's interest in film stems from MAP.

"MAP is one of the biggest influences in my life," Acharya said. "The teachers, the students, the course, the program in general feels like one big family."

Being a part of MAP even prompted Acharya to attend a summer film camp at UCLA to further his knowledge.

According to Acharya, his experience at the Department of Design Media Arts was very beneficial because he studied new techniques and fields including

film theory. He will attend the camp again this summer to work as a teacher's assistant.

At DMA, Acharya hopes to gain further hands-on experience that will help him pave a path to his career in cinema.

His classmates also appreciate his skills as a film-maker and collaborator.

"Saro [Acharya] is such a great team player. His camera skills are phenomenal and he helps everyone in his group do much better," said junior Meghan Shah. ♦

May 1, 2015

Marvel introduces diverse superheroes

BY Megan MacInnes

Recently, Marvel Entertainment has been diversifying its cast of superheroes. It no longer has just old classics like Storm, Black Panther and Nick Fury; now there's a black Spider-Man, a black Human Torch and a Muslim Ms. Marvel.

While there's still a long way to go for equal representation, Marvel is taking a step in the right direction when it comes to representing different ethnicities and cultures.

The upcoming Fantastic Four reboot movie in August also has a black star, Michael B. Jordan, who will play Johnny Storm, the Human Torch, who has typically been blonde and blue-eyed in past movies. The director, Josh Trank, states that Jordan was picked because he fit the character rather than to be politically correct, but nonetheless, people have kicked up a fuss about the race-bending move.

Spider-Man, one of the most beloved comic book characters, is actually a perfect choice to be portrayed by a person of color. Spider-Man represents the story of the underdog who isn't born with special powers or a billion-dollar trust fund; instead, he is an average high schooler caught in a freak accident.

The struggle of an average kid against extraordinary adversaries resonates

with people all over the world who face discrimination. Plus, the premise behind Spider-Man's identity-concealing full body suit is that anyone can be Spider-Man, whether black, Latino or both.

There are also some rumors that Morales could appear in a new Marvel movie. This exposure could be the start of a new era, one of racially diverse main characters, rather than supporting characters, as in previous superhero movies.

Finally, and perhaps the most groundbreaking, is Kamala Khan, a teenage Pakistani Muslim girl who became Ms. Marvel in 2014 after the previous Ms. Marvel took up the moniker of Captain Marvel. Ms. Marvel was previously an Avenger with superstrength, flight and the ability to project energy.

Khan, however, is a hero on a much smaller scale, much like Spider-Man. She just fights crime locally with her morphing powers.

Khan's series relates not only her struggle to cope with her new powers, but also her challenges as a Muslim girl growing up in New Jersey. For instance, in the first comic, Khan

and her friend are shown talking about her friend's choice to wear a hijab, going to the mosque and her schoolmates' subtle Islamophobia.

This is an advance in positive coverage of Muslims. Since the events of 9/11, there's been a huge stigma against Muslims, exacerbated by the Charlie Hebdo attacks and the negative portrayal of Muslims in American Sniper. As of late, many Middle Eastern people seen in movies, TV shows and comics seem to be terrorists. It's time that Muslims are given a chance to be seen as heroes, not villains, in mainstream media.

Superheroes of color are becoming the norm in major roles rather than sidekick characters, and their representation can only get stronger from here. ♦

People seen in movies, TV shows and comics seem to be terrorists. It's time that Muslims are given a chance to be seen as heroes, not villains, in mainstream media.

Superheroes of color are becoming the norm in major roles rather than sidekick characters, and their representation can only get stronger from here. ♦

'To Pimp a Butterfly' beats expectations

BY Jade Bisht
& Arjun Ramanathan

For example, in TPAB, Lamar speaks of running home, trying to find himself and attempting to shut out any and all criticism.

In addition, Lamar explores issues like violence and oppression of African Americans in songs such as "Hood Politics," "Institutionalized" and "The Blacker the Berry."

The album stands in stark contrast to Lamar's last-released album from 2012, "good kid, m.A.A.d. city," as TPAB focuses on soul searching and soothing jazz, the album soars above expectations, as each of the album's 16 songs captures the soulful charisma and witty remarks of Lamar.

Labeling Kendrick Lamar's most recent album "To Pimp a Butterfly" (TPAB) as confrontational is an understatement. With aggressive lyrics and soothing jazz, the album soars above expectations, as each of the album's 16 songs captures the soulful charisma and witty remarks of Lamar.

TPAB displays itself as an equally, if not more, aggravated album that takes a more calm and soulful twist on handling anger.

He references lyrics from past pop stars and repeats the chorus frequently. We can't help but find the catchy beat and clever

lyrics constantly stuck in our heads.

Lamar also uses the album to showcase his obvious distaste for the fame in his own career and the music industry as a whole. Though he is a prominent figure in the industry, he is averted to the "evils of Lucy," or the devilish grasp of money and publicity. Lamar combines blatant insults with mellow tunes to create a subtly aggressive album.

Above all, Lamar incorporates seamless transitions and a meaningful story that flows throughout the album. From aspiring dreams to dealing with an identity crisis, each song carries listeners through the tough — to say the least —



ALL GRAPHICS BY MAYA PRASAD

RapChat: the app that gives everyone flow

Young \$\$
Old Swag

Apoorv Kwatra & Neelhar Thumay

went from just journalist rappers to international celebrities.

Everything changed one fateful day in spring, when fellow staff member junior Deepthi Sampathkumar showed us the perfect app to further our rapping skills: RapChat.

No other app could compare to the artistic freedom RapChat gave us when it came to rapping. We had hit the mother lode.

The app allows a user to pick his favorite beat and then allows him to record over it for 20 seconds. The user's voice is then autotuned to sound like that of a rapper.

Perhaps the most appealing part of the app is the social aspect. After creating their own rap, users can share it with their friends who use RapChat, creating a light-hearted competition as everyone attempts to spit the best fire in town.

RapChat also allows users to share their raps on Facebook and Twitter, which gives users yet another way to flaunt their rapping abilities.

RapChat allowed us to show our fa-

mous raps to all of our 8 fans. Within minutes of downloading the app, we were hooked. Who wouldn't want to be able to rap like a professional?

After spending hours rapping to different beats and sharing our raps with our friends, we still had not had enough. There were just so many possibilities with Rapchat. We could freestyle, we could write our lyrics down, we could even go a capella if we wanted to.

During the week following our download of RapChat, our rapping had hit its peak. Once, we video chatted during Ms. Tseng's Chinese class to have a rap battle.

Although Ms. Tseng noticed, we didn't get in trouble, most likely due to her infatuation with our artistic ability. Rather, we got a mildly dirty look, so we decided that enough of our gift had been shared with the world that day.

OK, that was a bit of an exaggeration.

But still, RapChat is one of our favorite apps of all time. It presents all the necessary tools to make anyone a rapper, even an amateur. But if you want some real help, just talk to the pros. We are here every day. ♦

>> THE idealRap

Shoutout to Lil'

WORD GIVEN: Newspaper [Neehar]

Newspaper, starts with N, ends with R just like my name. Rapping so easy, I treat it like a game. Got Kwatra on my left ain't got no fame. Raps coming at light speed but I'm still not rushin', I just won, shut up, end of discussion.

WORD GIVEN: Yearbook [Apoorv]

Yeah the word is yearbook I rap off the top with no hook Just a thesis, y'all wanna see this I'm hungry so I'mma eat some Cheezits. In the rap game, I'm like Yeezus. Just like Kanye, you know what they say. Last name West, but I'm the best.

Abe moonlights as a jazz band drummer

BY APOOR KWATRA
& TREVOR LEUNG

With a gleam in his eye, history teacher Kirk Abe fanatically waves his drum sticks as a pointer for his lecture about Industrialism's impact on European countries.

While being a history teacher may be Abe's primary job, he spends most of the remaining time with his family and music.

He is a drummer in two jazz bands, the Footnotes, which has about 15 members, and LARK (an acronym for the band members' names), a quintet (formerly a quartet). He also fills in as a freelance drummer for other bands.

Since his youth, Abe has played the drums. Popular rock bands like Rush were part of the rock music trend during Abe's teen years, and they influenced him to become a musician. He transitioned to playing the drums in jazz music and now practices anywhere from half an hour to an hour most days.

"[Music] allows people to express themselves in a different way," Abe said. "It allows for experimentation."

As of now, Abe is content playing in the two separate bands.

The Footnotes and LARK rehearse once a week. LARK performs about

once a month at places like cafes, and the Footnotes perform whenever they are hired.

Abe said that their music is intended for people of all ages. He enjoys playing in these bands because the pieces they select are distinctive.

"There's a standard repertoire of songs that jazz bands play," Abe said, "but we try to choose ones that are not played a lot."

As a freelance jazz drummer, Abe can fill in missing drummer spots within all bands. He said that it is common for jazz musicians to freelance.

Musicians can also play jam sessions in public places such as restaurants. At one of those jam sessions, Abe met Jeff Ballard, one of the top jazz drummers in the world.

"It was like playing in a basketball game and [hearing], 'Steph Curry's here, and he's going to be playing in the pickup game,'" Abe said. "I totally froze up."

From these experiences, Abe has gained respect for all musicians. He even helps the jazz bands at Saratoga High School by sharing his experiences from gigs and giving advice on what to look for in songs.

"I have appreciation for students who are in the music program," Abe said. "And I definitely have appreciation for



History teacher Kirk Abe plays the drums before a gig on Dana Street in Mountain View.

all the hard work the music teachers here in our music program devote to music."

His love for music extends into the classroom, as shown through his musical references during his lectures. In his World History class, while teaching Imperialism, Abe uses music to tell about history.

Looking back, Abe believes he has found a balance between teaching and music. He encourages student musicians to continue playing music as adults, even if it is simply a hobby.

"Later, you'll be able to play and have fun," Abe said. "There would be an empty space [in my life] without jazz." ♦



TEACHERS PURSUE PASSIONS

GRAPHIC BY MICHELLE CEN

Señor chose teaching over chemistry and never looked back

BY OKSANA TRIFONOVA

his hands to be able to catch the snake, but we wouldn't let go [and] just kept screaming and screaming."

Eventually, his dad was able to free his hands, capture the snake and skin it later.

But Rodriguez's childhood wasn't all fun and games. He was a serious student, showing talent in teaching. Armed with a chalkboard and notes, Rodriguez organized study dates at his house with his friends and led group discussions.

In his senior year, Rodriguez seized an opportunity to be a high school exchange student at Lakewood High School near Los Angeles. His choice to go stemmed from a memorable childhood experience when he went to Disneyland.

Growing up in the countryside in his native Costa Rica, Rodriguez enjoyed a happy childhood. The second oldest of five children, he always had companions to play with.

"We were always climbing trees, swimming in rivers, taking hikes through the mountains and stealing oranges," Rodriguez said.

Sometimes, when his father, a pilot, received a break from work, his choice headed to the beach or hunted snakes — one of his father's favorite hobbies.

One of these snake hunts was particularly memorable: an enormous snake coiled around his father's legs, and Rodriguez could only watch helplessly as the frightening scene unfolded.

"Coming from Costa Rica, I was so impacted by [Disneyland] that I believed that it was real," Rodriguez said.

After staying in the U.S. as an exchange student for a semester, Rodriguez decided to finish his senior year in the U.S.

He then applied to several colleges, including UCLA, before deciding to live

with his aunt in San Jose and attend San Jose State University.

His father wanted Rodriguez to eventually go back to Costa Rica and get a job in industrial chemistry, manufacturing products like pesticides and soaps.

Even though he enjoyed chemistry, Rodriguez admits that he never really felt a calling for the scientific field.

"[Chemistry] was [my father's] vision," Rodriguez said, "but it was not mine."

At the end of his sophomore year in college, Rodriguez decided to pursue a career in education.

After he completed a class presentation yearly to Cuernavaca, Mexico, to learn at the Bachillerato Internacional Universitario and stay with families there for a week. He had also arranged for Cuernavaca teens to come to Saratoga as exchange students and experience life here.

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Parents' success sets high expectations for teens

BY Ariell Liu
& Vibha Seshadri

The signs of wealth are everywhere in Saratoga. In the back parking lot, it's not unusual to see three or four Teslas, parents waiting patiently for their kids to finish school. It seems that virtually every student has an iPhone 6 or the equivalent. College counselors who cost thousands of dollars and well-paid tutors are the norm for many students.

As adults from previous generations have achieved financial success, their children have reaped the benefits of a relatively leisurely life. Especially in cities like Saratoga, children's access to numerous comforts, such as luxury cars, tutors and entertainment, calls into question whether this generation can easily have a grasp of financial reality.

The younger generation

Andrew Kohut from Pew Research Center states that two in three respondents of a national research survey think the younger generation would be less financially successful than their parents.

However, most respondents from developing countries think their children would be "better off" than their parents because of the direction of their emerging economies.

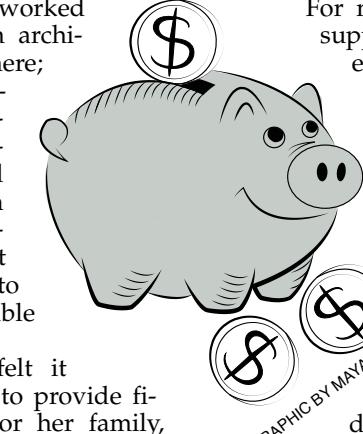
The younger generation in wealthy communities like Saratoga faces a different kind of obstacle: dependence. As

observed by the multitude of European cars and plethora of fancy gadgets seen around school, many students rely on their parents' financial success. As a result, many students are harshly shaken to reality upon leaving home, and placed in situations where they need to rethink their financial situation.

The path to monetary stability

Many Saratoga parents are immigrants who had to overcome many obstacles to provide their children with the luxuries they have today.

Sophomore Jessy Liu's mom, who came from a middle-class family in China, worked hard to obtain an architecture degree there;



GRAPHIC BY MAYA PRASAD

however, upon arriving in the United States, she re-enrolled in school and obtained an accounting degree, which she felt would allow her to have a more stable lifestyle.

Liu's mother felt it her responsibility to provide financial stability for her family, and thus her priority changed from focusing on her own future to focusing on her children's futures.

"She doesn't regret any of her deci-

sions, but would still love to take the time to pursue architecture again if she ever gets the chance," Liu said.

Liu attributes her mother's success to her hard work. At the same time, she feels that her access to exceptional resources as a result of her mother's hard work may deter her from achieving her own financial success because she has become accustomed to obtaining what she needs at ease.

"I can reach for higher goals and still have something to fall back on," she said.

Transition to financial independence

For many students who have been supported financially by their parents for their whole lives, the transition to self-sustainment can be challenging.

Class of 2014 alumnus Cristina Curcelli is one such student. Her parents agreed to support her through college years at Dartmouth, but after that, she is on her own.

"I see college as the perfect time for a transition from reliant to independent, because I've essentially been given four years — largely funded by my school — to learn," she said. "Part of that learning is figuring out how I'm going to support myself in the future."

Curcelli has started her path toward financial independence by taking various jobs at school. She is on a work-study program at Dartmouth, which allows her to work an off campus job as a way of paying off an some of her tuition.

Last term, she worked four to six hours a week at America Reads, a campaign to ensure literacy for all children. This term, she is working at her school's spirituality center 12 to 14 hours a week.

Likewise, senior Anna Sabel, who will be attending Brown University next fall, plans on working this summer at a local coffee or bagel shop.

Before heading to college, Sabel wants to understand what being "financially responsible" entails, so that she will be more aware of her spending habits in college.

"I think the hardest part about monitoring spending in college is that you have so much freedom to [spend money], and it's often hard to find a limit," Sabel said. "I know that if I'm spending my own money, I'll get a better sense of when enough is and feel more responsible for my spending."

Sabel plans on majoring in computer science. Although she knows that this major often leads to a substantial income, she believes that the happiness she will obtain is more rewarding.

"So long as I have a job in the Comp-Sci field, I will be happy, whether or not I make a huge salary," Sabel said. ♦

Engineering assistant lends past experiences to class

BY Summer Smith
& Kelly Xiao

As students are challenged with the task of making a car that can travel the quickest in the class, Gene Leichner wanders the classroom contributing his priceless insight to the students who have found themselves with a glitch in their car. He leans over one car that only travels in circles, tinkering with the gears. "Have you tried loosening this gear?" he asks the student engineer who constructed it.

Leichner works as a volunteer assistant teacher for engineering and math teacher Audrey Warmuth in the Intro to Engineering class. Each day, he observes students and answers their questions. Outside of class, he helps Warmuth and engineering teacher Matt Welander develop class exercises and projects.

"He offers some real insight," said Warmuth. "He lends a feeling of authority [...] that reflects on the subject matter."

Leichner began working with Warmuth last year, but before helping out in the classroom, he aided the robotics team. However, once he saw the engineering posters go up on the classroom walls and the projects begin to clutter the room, he couldn't resist checking out the engineering class.

"I took a chance," Leichner said. "I told [Warmuth] what I had seen, and I said, 'Would you like somebody to help you do that?' Now that's crazy; [imagine,] out of the blue, somebody says 'Let



FALCON // EILEEN TOH

Seniors Kimberly Zai and Ranjini Nagaraj show Gene Leichner their finished machine.

me come help you.' I mean, you [had to] be nuts. [But] she said yes."

However, Leichner isn't just any interested passerby. Leichner brings with him years of experience in the field of engineering, having worked for multiple projects and companies. Before launching into his background experience, fingernail tapping the rough wooden table for emphasis, he warned, "Many things I'm going to tell you will seem like they were [from] the Dark Ages, [but] they weren't dark to us; we thought we were right on the edge of things."

His next step was to take up a teaching position at the University of Illinois. After nine years, he was an associate professor with tenure despite only working part-time, spending the other half consulting and doing research.

"I thought this was the right thing to do because I thought if you were actually working in the field, you would do a better job of teaching because you'd be more practical in the way you think, and I still believe that," Leichner said.

As it turns out, he had meant the computer.

Leichner went to the University of Illinois in 1947 as an undergraduate in Electrical Engineering. He worked on

computers that consisted of thousands of vacuum tube. Once in the field, he made the transition to the new innovation in computers: transistors.

Seven years later, Leichner burned out. It was at this point that he joined the SHS staff. Warmuth, for whom Leichner has nothing but praise, did not doubt accepting him for a second.

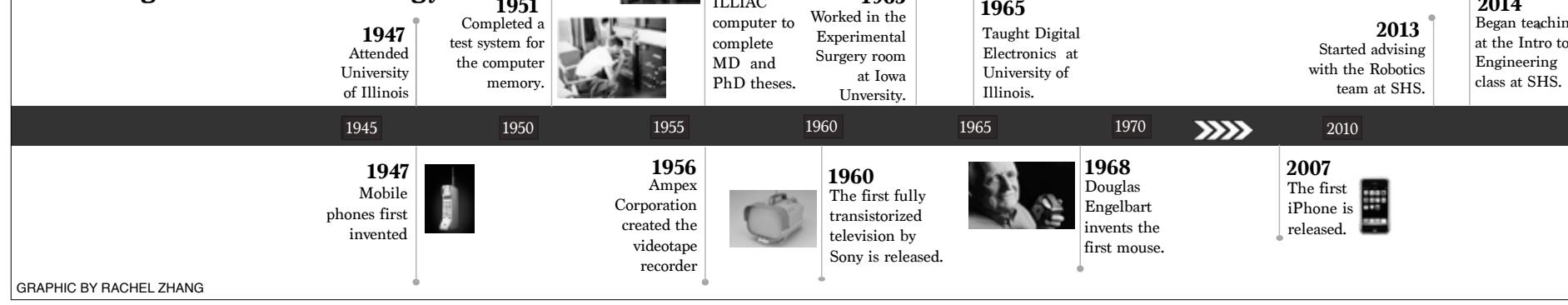
"[Warmuth's] an amazing woman," Leichner said. "[When] you get to know [people], you see some that are not confident about their position, [which often] shows by their lashing out at people. Never, ever has she done that."

He is amazed by his students' eagerness to learn and their strong work ethic. Leichner is aware of the stress many students face.

"I know that this doesn't come free," Leichner said. "But it sure is nice to deal with such people." ♦

Through the years:

Tracing the career of Gene Leichner and the growth of technology



GRAPHIC BY RACHEL ZHANG

sports >>

saratoga falcon.org/sports

XIE >>

continued from pg. 1

and curbed his swimming conditioning. Connected to a rectangular device by the fingers, Xie swam with this common known contraption called a paddle that prevents him from using his legs to move. A week later, Xie returned to his regular conditioning.

Another setback loomed over him in the beginning of the season. Due to the schools' transfer restrictions, Xie was unable to compete for the school team at first. After sorting out the legal hurdles, Xie, free from limitations, is now swimming for the Falcon team and ready to focus on accomplishing his goal.

How good is Xie? His current times qualify for U.S.A. Swimming's U.S. Open, a meet one level less competitive than the U.S. Olympic Trials, and the Summer Junior National Championships, a national level meet for swimmers 18 and under.

Both of these meets require a much faster time cut than the CCS championships. The CCS championships are held in short-course yards, with one lap totaling 25 yards. In China, the pools' courses are only held in long-course meters or short-course meters, where one lap measures 50 meters or 25 meters, respectively.

Despite this disparity, Xie adapted quickly and swam in a short-course yards pool at the Speedo Sectionals Championships held in Austin, Texas, from Feb. 25-28. Racing alongside athletes whose average age ranged from 18 to 40, he posted times that would have placed him either first or second in the majority of his events in last year's CCS.

During that year, Xie swam in the Water Cube, the swimming venue of the 2008 Beijing Olympic games, five days a week. Ever since Xie has moved to Saratoga, he has learned to adjust to the new environment and practices.

Although Xie took English classes in China, they were not sufficient. The language barrier has made communication and comprehension difficult in classes for Xie. In casual settings, Xie can successfully continue conversation with a few stumbles and pauses.

As they relentlessly work toward accomplishing his goals, which encompasses swimming in college but not professionally, Liu has remained humble and considerate.

"I have not yet heard him complain no matter how hard the workouts were," Liu said. "He is a respectful and kind person and does not let his success in the pool change the way he treats the people around him."

As they relentlessly work toward accomplishing his goals, which encompasses swimming in college but not professionally, Liu is optimistic for Xie's future.

"We have set short-term and long-term goals, and he is taking steps working towards them each day," Liu said. "I am confident [Xie] will reach his goal[s]." ♦



Courtesy of JACK XIE

Junior Jack Xie swims in the 200-meter individual medley during a Chinese meet in 2012.

Zhang Lin in the 400-meter freestyle in the 2008 Beijing Olympics, while his father is a weightlifting coach for the Chinese National Team.

With the encouragement of his parents, Xie embarked on his competitive swimming career at 10.

In 2010, Xie transitioned to a vigorous program at Yuying High School, where he trained under China's National Team's coach, Wugang.

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JV players primed for varsity teams in '15-'16

BY Caitlin Ju

>> TheRANKINGS

1 = Boys' Tennis (11-1)

2 = Boys' Golf (10-2)

3 ^ Boys' Volleyball (6-0)

4 ^ Boys' Baseball (12-10)

5 ^ Girls' Lacrosse (5-6)

6 = Badminton (2-4)

7 = Girls' Track (1-4)

8 = Softball (1-5)

9 v Boys' Lacrosse (1-7)

10 v Boys' Track (0-5)

11 v Boys' Swimming (0-4)

12 v Girls' Swimming (0-4)

The JV soccer team fared much better than last season, during which the team did not win one game. With a new coach and freshmen players, the team placed third in the De Anza League.

Sajwan, who plays mid, believes the past season has helped motivate him to keep training during the summer and go on frequent runs.

Besides playing club soccer, which he says "grows [his] vision for the game," Sajwan has coached at the American Youth Soccer Organization since fall of last year. He helps set up drills, provides his own drills and advice and gives individual coaching to the members.

"Coaching on AYSO has been one of the most brilliant experiences of my own life," Sajwan said. "As a coach, I don't just want to nurture the boys' soccer skills but their overall character as well."

Though JV sports may not get as much attention, many of these players, who plan to work hard and continue to play in their spare time, have the same passion and potential for their games.

"I liked being on JV because it's less pressure," Chaganti said. "You have more time to work on your technique and times. But [my] end goal would still be to get on varsity in all three sports." ♦

BASEBALL

Team battles adversity to finish strong in league

BY Allison Lin

A rebuilt Falcon team has been battling adversity ever since the league season began. With so many new players, they have managed to overcome an early losing streak and win most of their recent games, putting them in a position to win playoff games against top teams.

As of April 24, the team's record was 12-10 overall. League playoffs begin in early May.

On April 17, the team clinched a crucial 2-1 win against Mountain View in an away game. Having defeated the Spartans 5-3 two days earlier, the Falcons were eager to complete the series sweep.

The games against the Spartans aroused "high emotions throughout the week with many instances of aggression from both sides," said senior infielder Billy Vithanage. Even though the second game nearly ended in blows, the Falcons were able to take the high road and walk away with their wins.

During Spring Break, the Falcons competed in the Crown Classic Tournament at Valley Christian, which pits teams from different leagues against each other. The Falcons placed third, one of the highest standings they have achieved in the past couple years.

The week-long tournament began on April 6 with a 6-5 win over Leigh. They made a miraculous comeback from a 5-1 deficit, and put up four runs in the seventh and one run in the eighth with timely hitting and baserunning from junior right fielder Michael Schillage, sealing the win.

The Falcons played San Benito two

days later, losing 6-1 in 10 innings. According to junior infielder Jackson Williams, they left too many runners on base early in the game and made base-running mistakes. In extra innings, the Haybalers had a rally that secured the win.

On April 11, the Falcons faced Wilcox in a battle for third place in the tournament. A few weeks earlier, the team was swept by the Chargers in two league games. However, during the tournament, the Falcons won 5-3 behind strong pitching from senior Evan Lindeman.

"Sometimes we create our own adversity and sometimes it comes in different forms, but our guys have battled and really done well in those situations."

coach Adam Varteressian

On April 3, an action-packed game unfolded against powerhouse Palo Alto. Last season, the Falcons and Vikings vied for the league title, and Saratoga managed to take the championship.

In this game, the Vikings had a chance to win in the bottom of the seventh, with the score tied at 4-4. With one out and a runner on third, the Vikings had an opportunity to snatch the game from the Falcons' claws. However, a grounder was hit to freshman second baseman Robert Scott, who threw to senior catcher Adin Roskoph to record the out at the plate.

The Falcons played San Benito two

BOYS' TRACK

Senior bids fond farewell to final team seasonBY Karissa Dong
& Ami Nachiappan

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His story of success in the sport, however, began with a budding interest in middle school.

Harter began his running career in eighth grade when he joined cross country to spend more time with his friends. He soon realized that he had the potential to succeed in this sport.



Harter

"I had never even thought about running," he said. "I just wanted to do it as a means of staying in shape."

Harter decided to stick with the sport, quitting basketball and baseball in eighth grade and later soccer in junior year as well. In freshman year, he joined cross country and track and continued both throughout all four years in high school.

"People here are really dedicated to track," he said. "It's fun talking with teammates for hours on a run."

Fellow runner senior Steven Sum feels that Harter adds "intensity and competitiveness that infects the rest of the team."

"[Harter] has inspired me to work

harder because of his dedication that I admire and respect," Sum said. "He's a great sportsman and a person that I strive to emulate."

Sum has enjoyed watching Harter develop as a runner and hopes to keep in touch with him after high school.

"I'll miss his sense of humor and the sayings that he makes with our distance runs," Sum said. "He's become one of my best friends, and it's fun going to meet with him."

Many individuals qualified for prestigious invitations.

"I'm definitely going to miss the guys on the team," he said. "We're all going to different colleges so not being able to see them is definitely something I'm going to miss the most."

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Graduating sprinters reflect on past four years of trackBY Karissa Dong
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The girls' relay team, which also included junior Kylie Stokes and senior Puck deRoos, finished second with a time of 53.82.

"For relays, it's mainly about creating a foundation," Gigoux said. "You have to be there for each other."

The girls lost to Fremont 44-83, leav-

ing the team's league record at 1-4.

Several athletes took part in the CCS Top 8 meet on April 17 hosted at San Jose City College. DeRoos placed third in the high jump with a height of 5 feet and also competed in the 100m hurdles with a time of 16.56, while freshman Chloe McGhee ran a 16.78. McGhee had a time of 49.29 in the 300m hurdles, and Cummins ran a 13.70 in the 100m dash.

For Gigoux, the meet against Fremont was her last. Because she "runs funny" due to her compartment syndrome, her aching shins developed stress fractures. After dealing with the pain for three weeks, Gigoux got crutches on April 16.

"When I got put on crutches, I was crying," she said. "Now that the season

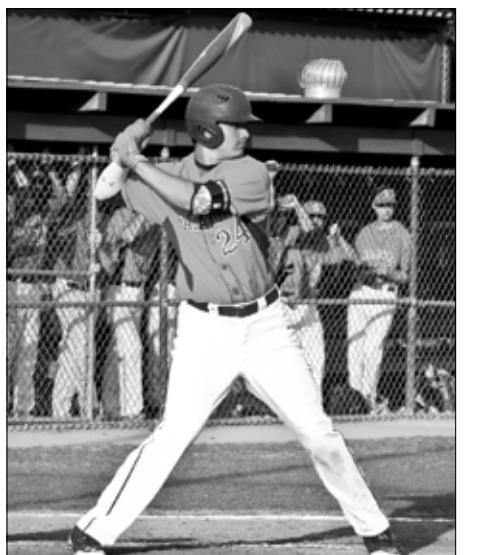
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Even before the injury, this season was challenging for her because her shin problems prevented her from performing as well as in previous years.

Cummins, a fellow sprinter and close friend of Gigoux, says she will miss the motivation that she brings to practices.

Gigoux is the team's cheerleader, she said. "It broke our hearts knowing she couldn't finish off her last year doing what she loves, but she finished strong and continues to support us, which shows a lot about her personality."

Like Gigoux, Cummins struggled to deal with injuries: her iliotibial band in her knee prevented her from practicing



Senior Avery Gigoux eyes the ball to swing against Los Altos on April 22.

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With grins on their faces, the Falcons walked away with a 6-5 win, satisfied with the feat they had accomplished on the Vikings' territory.

"I was thinking 'He's right; I wouldn't have it any other way,'" Casini said. "What's a baseball game without [any] adversity?" ♦

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>> snapshots



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA



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FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA

Senior pitcher Joey Medeiros throws a curveball in the game against Los Altos on April 22.

The main cast of "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" lines up during dress rehearsals on April 23.

Senior forward Christina Crolla charges for the ball in the senior night game against Gunn High School on April 23.

Juniors Camille Bismonte and Isha Mangal sing with the Oxford a cappella group Out of the Blue in the McAfee Center on April 3.

Junior faces struggles during prom preparation

cloud princess



Helen Chen

My experience with Junior Prom was all I had envisioned it to be — at least the dance itself. However, while the venue was breathtaking and the food delicious, preparing for prom was far from glorious.

If anything, everything leading up to prom was stressful and painful due to my poor planning skills.

After waking at an ungodly hour of 5 a.m. to shower, I turned to my homework, which I (my mom) hoped I would finish before leaving for prom. Unfortunately, as a sleep-deprived junior, even after a cold shower, I was back asleep within half an hour.

With pre-prom at junior Shazia Gupta's house starting at 2 p.m., I decided I would have enough time to get ready if I got to senior Eunju Pak's house by 1:15 p.m.

I spent the rest of the morning in agitation thanks to my six-year-old sister's undeveloped piano playing which added to my growing frustration.

After completing photo forms on the way to Eunju's house, I arrived to an empty house. Believing I was the only person in her house, I panicked at the sound of footsteps, only to realize that it was her dog Angel and her sister, sophomore Yoonju Pak.

At 2:15 p.m., Eunju had still not returned, and conflicted, I texted junior Aakash Thumayt to save me.

By the time he got to Eunju's house, Eunju texted "two minutes away" leaving Aakash confused when I told him to just leave with the people he was already taking.

By 2:20 p.m., with Eunju standing on a chair and me holding hairspray and the curling iron, Eunju began curling my hair, only to realize she forgot to brush it before she started. We made good progress in 10 minutes, but I spoke too soon when I told her it looked good when she dropped the curling iron on me five minutes later.

There is now a nice dark brown splotch of dead skin on my right shoulder. #thanksEUNJU

Because her parents did not know that I was in her house, we struggled to get me out of the house after we finished, eventually deciding that jumping her fence was the only solution. In a dress. Without shoes on.

After, because my date sophomore Kevin Chow and I struggle with communication, Eunju and I spent another 15 minutes driving around the neighborhood looking for his house.

After calling and texting around

seven people, we found his address and arrived at his house at 3:20 p.m. with school pictures at 3:30 p.m.

Upon arriving at Kevin's house, he opened the door in a T-shirt and jeans and informed us that he had been doing math. Needless to say, he had to dress hurriedly.

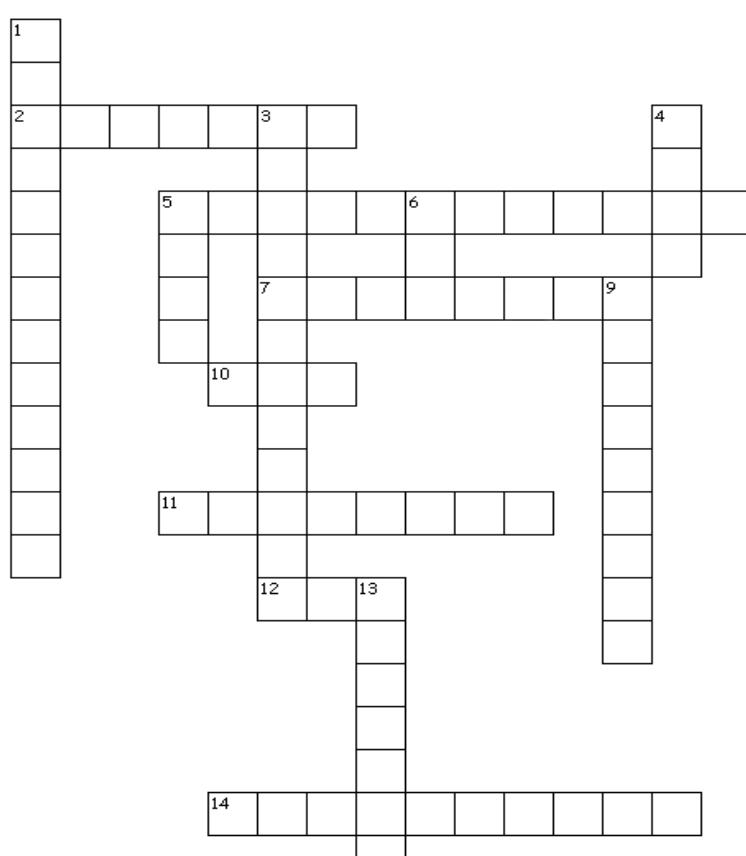
Miraculously, we got the school parking lot at 3:32 p.m., but I realized that I had left the photo forms at Eunju's house. Deciding that we would figure it out later, we took corsage and boutonniere pictures in the gym, took school pictures and decided to go to the last of pre-prom photos.

Although pre-prom was more stressful than it needed to be, at least I'll know to plan better next time.

The rest of the prom went smoothly with the exception of an incident with Shirley Temples and another that involved my dress as a cape — but that's another story. ♦

>> CROSSWORD

Answers can be found in this issue.
Key online at saratogafalcon.org.



ACROSS >>

2. Palo Alto mascots
5. City that the AP Euro class went to for field trip
7. The high school that Spanish teacher Arnaldo Rodriguez attended near LA
10. The accessory that reporter Kevin Chow wore
11. State that won March Madness
12. Big Bang Theory interracial star
14. Who got murdered in the school spring musical

DOWN >>

1. Junior whose house got TP'd for spring fling
3. The volunteer engineering assistant
4. The business club at Harker School
5. Junior who is the next James Cameron
6. Teacher who is a drummer
8. State that percussion went to for WGI competition
9. School that banned hard alcohol to target America's rape culture
13. Recent transferred elite swimmer

>> Cassandra King and Oksana Trifonova

>> top ten

WAYS TO COPE WITH AP TESTING

10 Cry. Kleenex is all you need in this world.

9 Netflix. Binge watching "Friends" always takes precedence over chemistry.

8 Drop your AP classes. A fail on your transcript was inevitable anyway, right?

7 Bubble in "B" for every question. There's a 25 percent chance that you'll get a 5, right?

6 Actually do all the practice tests in the prep book. Ha. Good one.

5 Buy a Barron's prep book. You'll be halfway there.

4 Carbo-load before your test. AP Biology teacher Cheryl Lenz's room is always open.

3 Get a good night of sleep. 2 a.m. is always better than 3 a.m.!

2 Miss the test. It can't hurt you if you don't take it!

1 Cram. Wait until the night before and start studying then.

>> Ariel Liu & Anant Rajeev