



# THE saratogafalcon



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## TODAY'S LUNCH EVENT

# Club Rush includes 30 school-affiliated groups

BY Caitlyn Chen, David Fan,  
Elizabeth Lee & Neil Rao

The Quad will be full of hungry students and eager club leaders alike during the annual fundraising event, Club Rush, today. This year, the school is also allowing sports teams and commissions to fundraise in addition to clubs.

"ASB really wanted to make it a pri-

ority to help fund all types of groups on campus just to encourage student involvement," said senior Meera Rachamalla, a co-clubs commissioner.

Club Rush, which involves numerous programs selling food and drinks, is a time for clubs to attract new members and make money by selling food

Because some sports require payments upwards of \$250 for uniforms

and apparel, athletes can take matters into their own hands to make these costs cheaper for themselves, Rachamalla said.

This recent trend of helping fund all types of groups continues on ASB's goal of aiding students throughout the school. Due to the low involvement of clubs in Club Rush, however, the ASB decided to allow others to fill their spots.

"Club Rush normally gave all clubs an opportunity to make some money in an organized fashion, but since only 22 clubs signed up last year, we thought it would be a nice idea to let other groups like sports and commissions to participate," Rachamalla said.

Some sports teams participating in

>> **CLUBS** on pg. 3



## FLYING HIGH

### GIRLS' BASKETBALL WINS CCS FOR FIRST TIME IN SCHOOL HISTORY

BY Daphne Liu  
& Jenny Qian

As the clock ticked down at the Santa Clara University arena on March 5, the 10 girls on the bench burst onto the court to celebrate something the school's basketball program had not done before: win a Division III CCS basketball championship.

They defeated South San Francisco 55-46 in the championship game.

"I'm just so happy for them. It's something you dream about and I'm so happy

they've been able to accomplish this," head coach Mike Davey said. "I told them before they left at the end of the year, they'd be able to point to the trophy case and say, 'We were the ones that did that.' Nobody can ever take that away from them now."

The Falcons ended the first half of the CCS Championship trailing South San Francisco 29-26, but the girls soon bounced back by holding the Warriors to only five points in the third quarter. Their change

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Top: Students cheer at the March 9 game against Inderkum High. Right: Junior point guard Rachel Davey dribbles down the court for a fast break.

ALL PHOTOS BY SWEEYA RAJ

## SPRING FLING

### HOW SADIES GOT BACK ON SCHEDULE

Staff Report

For most of the year, it was looking as if there would be no Sadie Hawkins dance at the end of Spring Fling week, which this year will be held from March 28-April 1.

According to activities director Rebeca Marshburn, to avoid the ticket sales problems that last year's Sadies had, the administration removed it from the school calendar, upsetting those who were looking forward to an informal second-semester dance.

After an increase in attendance at Homecoming and Winter Formal, however, head dance commissioner Danielle Berkowitz-Sklar and head Spring Fling commissioner junior Eileen Toh began an effort to get it reinstated.

In January, they gathered numbers that showed the costs, profit and number of attendees for every school dance from the past eight years.

"We wanted to collect these numbers so that we could prove that we as commissioners are doing a good job in encouraging student participation," Berkowitz-Sklar said. "Spring Fling and

>> **SADIES** on pg. 3

## DOCUMENTARY

# 'Audrie and Daisy' film to be featured on Netflix

BY Caitlyn Chen  
& Elizabeth Lee

A victim of a sexual assault perpetrated by 21-year-old Matthew Barnett, 18-year-old Daisy Coleman from Albany, Mo., had nearly lost everything January 2012. Due to the case, her mom, Melinda had lost her job. In addition, her house in Maryville mysteriously burned down. She was kicked off the cheerleading team, "bullied incessantly" and urged to kill herself, which she attempted multiple times, according to Democracy Now!

While Coleman desperately tried to piece together her life, Barnett was sentenced to two

years probation, 100 hours of community service and \$1,800 restitution to Daisy's family.

Now, several years after the case, Coleman said that she is now "happier and healthier than ever," according to ABC news.

In the fall of 2012, and nearly 2,000 miles away, the Saratoga community mourned the loss of SHS sophomore Audrie Pott, also the victim of a sexual assault by boys she had considered to be her friends at a drunken party in a Saratoga home.

The two girls never knew each other, yet their similar stories connect in the new 95-min-

ute documentary "Audrie and Daisy," produced by Actual Films, a San Francisco-based film company. It premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, on Jan. 25, and is set to be on Netflix this summer.

For two years, the husband and wife director team of Jon Shenk and Bonni Cohen visited both Saratoga High School and Maryville R-II High School, Coleman's school, to film the documentary, getting perspectives about the situation by talking to the parents, friends, authorities, some of those who committed the assaults and Coleman herself, who gradu-

ated from Albany High School in 2015. Several Saratoga alumni including Amanda Le, Adrienne Kim, Allison Chan and Guita Pardis were featured in the documentary as well.

The film additionally includes footage of the Maryville and Saratoga perpetrators who committed the assaults. The boys who were involved in Pott's case were legally obligated to grant interviews to the documentary by the terms stated in their agreement in the civil lawsuit brought by the Pott family. However, under the terms of the agreement, their

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### CLASSES

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Reporters reminisce over Webkinz, Tamagotchi and old hangouts. **pg. 14-15**

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#### College auditions

Three band seniors share their experiences. **pg. 17**



news >> briefs

APES students visit Año Nuevo beach

The school's AP Environmental Science students traveled to Año Nuevo Natural Preserve in Pescadero for their annual trip on March 10.

Organized by AP Environmental Science teacher Kristen Thomson and Biology and Anatomy and Physiology teacher Kristofer Orre, the trip allowed more than 50 students to spend the day observing elephant seals in their natural habitat.

According to Thompson, Año Nuevo is noteworthy as it is one of the few places in the country where people can see elephant seals from just feet away. The trip underscored the importance of environmental protection for the students.

The students also hiked up the Año Nuevo Point Trail, which ended at a sea lion reserve.

"Our tour guides were super nice and had a lot of good, on-hand stories," senior APES student Luke Salin said.

This trip helped students reinforce what they had learned in class, since they had recently watched a documentary about elephant seals.

"The hike was very long, but when we finally reached the beach, we saw many elephant seals and [their] pups," senior APES student Nate Ney said.

The classes learned about how elephant seals have limited numbers because they were once hunted close to extinction and face environmental obstacles as a result.

"Starting from a small founder population, the elephant seal population severely lacks genetic diversity," Ney said. "Due to the population's similarity, we need to closely monitor their numbers to ensure a disease does not kill them off. Hopefully, they will continue a steady recovery."

—Frederick Kim and Jay Kim

Leadership, ASB volunteer at Sacred Heart

Lining up at the Sacred Heart Volunteer Center and awaiting directions from the center's supervisors, members from the school leadership class and ASB had the chance to help those in need during a volunteering experience during the morning of March 9.

During the event, students worked to provide food, clothing and other services to those who come to the center, ASB president Aakash Thumaty said.

"[Sacred Heart is] essentially a place where someone in need of assistance, such as those who are homeless or temporarily unemployed, can go for support," Thumaty said.

The help administered by the center includes providing basic necessities such as groceries and clothes. The center also aims to provide educational access to the underprivileged through classes and tutoring.

Thumaty said the students sorted donated clothes or helped families in need carry out large bags of food.

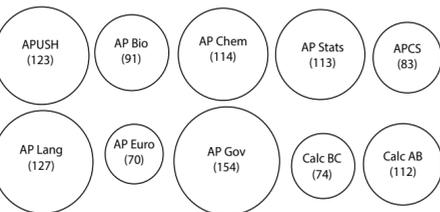
In their time there, the students also learned about the center and its attempt to decrease poverty in San Jose.

"We learned about the roots of the organization, how it functions and the support it provides for thousands of citizens in the San Jose community," Thumaty said.

—Neil Rao and Neehar Thumaty

>> falconfigures

Top 10 AP Exam Signups 2015-16 School Year



Source: Guidance secretary Bonnie Sheikh

—Amith Galivanche

>> picturethis



CLICK-CLACK >> Juniors Raina Kolluri and Mitali Shanbhag dance with Dandia sticks on March 12.

DANDIA

Juniors host Indian dance fundraiser

BY Jenny Qian & Neil Rao

To continue the spirit of the school's annual Bombay in the Bay (BnB) performance, the junior class officers held a Dandia celebration on the evening of March 12 as a fundraiser in the Large Gym.

Unlike BnB, where there is a mixture of modern and traditional dances, Dandia is a classic dance form where members move to the rhythm of cultural music while also battling iconic wooden sticks.

"[Dandia] is a fun way to spread a cultural [activity] that we usually wouldn't see in school," junior class president Ellicia Chiu said.

Around 80 people attended the event and the junior class raised about \$1,100.

The money raised will be used mainly for events such as junior and senior prom, according to Chiu. Such fundraisers make prices for prom bids cheaper.

The event included perfor-

Indian foods, including mango lassis and samosas, for all attendees.

There was also a professional Henna artist for those who wanted to decorate themselves.

For junior class representative Jessy Liu, Dandia was not only a great social event but a way for her to gain better understanding of Indian culture.

"BnB is a performance that people go to see and it's amazing and hugely impressive, but it's a spectator experience for those who aren't participating in the dances," Liu said. "With Dandia, anyone can come in and grab a pair of sticks and dance or just really jam out to quality Bollywood music without needing prior knowledge or practice."

mances from BnB's top dance acts such as the All Men's Dance (AMD), the All Girls' Dance (AGD) and Toga Tamasha. Altogether, a couple of dozen students performed in the event.

Along with the dances, the class also served traditional

FIELD TRIPS

Students travel to Cuernavaca, Mexico

BY Roland Shen

Two dozen students soaked up the sun, improved their Spanish and built cultural bridges during the annual exchange program in Cuernavaca, Mexico, held during February break.

On the trip, they visited VIP movie theaters, learned different forms of Mexican dancing and even spent time relaxing at a lakeside resort.

The program has been running for over 10 years now in the city, and it is revered as a long standing tradition for the Spanish department at the school.

"The reason I've gone on the trip so many times is because of all the friendly people that I've met in Cuernavaca," said senior Allen Li, who has gone on the trip three times.

The students on the trip all

attended school at the Bachillerato Internacional Uninter (BiU), where they all took classes for grammar and communication.

The students were divided up into classes based on their respective Spanish levels at SHS.

Saratoga students were all separated into groups of two, in which they would live with different Mexican host families as roommates.

Living with these families also helped the students to practice their Spanish while also learning more about Mexican culture.

After class each day, students participated in interactive activities to allow them to learn more about Mexican culture.

"These included learning about different types of Mexican dancing and climbing the

giant pyramids at the ancient city of Teotihuacan.

"I really liked it when we went to the lakeside resort because it gave us time to relax and forget about both real school and Spanish school for a day," freshman Janelle Jin said.

Students were able to quickly make friends with the Mexican students at BiU through the different activities that students from both schools took part in.

The trip gave participants new experiences and opportunities to practice Spanish. Those who attended the trip generally felt that it was a productive way to spend the break.

"I feel a lot more confident speaking Spanish now, and overall I gained exactly what I wanted from the trip," junior Wesley Lau said. ♦

CLUBS >>

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this year's Club Rush include the field hockey team.

"Our roster was pretty small last year, so we're hoping that Club Rush can raise awareness about the sport and recruit new members for next year," said junior Kelsey Kinoshita. "We'll be using the money for apparel and equipment."

With field hockey being the first sport to take part in Club Rush so far, they are hoping to lead the way for more to join in, said Kinoshita.

Like last year, designated tables for each group will be set up in the quad. Students will once again have to exchange money for tickets, which they can purchase food with.

"Our club hopes to get some more attention to increase membership while also raising funds for our club," Acts of Random Kindness president se-

nior Michael Chyan said. "Also, overall [we] just [want to have] a good time, because spreading happiness is what we look forward to."

A total of 23 groups are participating in the event and 17 clubs including Interact, speech and debate, and Indian Cultural Awareness Club.

Since Chipotle, Jamba Juice

and In-N-Out were the most popular choices last year, they will be sold again this year. The Science Club is offering Chipotle, Marine Biology club is selling Jamba Juice and Acts of Random Kindness has In-N-Out. Additionally, popcorn

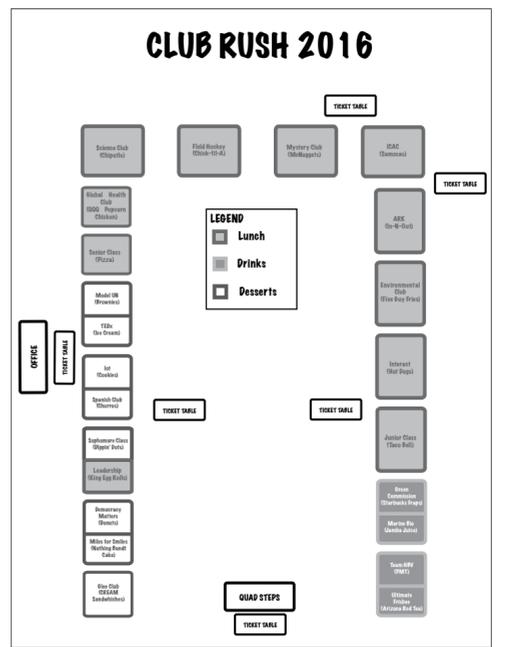
chicken from QQQ, Starbucks frappuccinos, Chick-fil-A, Five Guys, Yogurtland, Arizona iced tea and churros will be sold. The sophomore class has Dippin' Dots, the junior class has Taco Bell and the senior class has pizza.

"Club Rush allows us to raise funds that can help our class with various things such as junior prom next year," sophomore class treasurer Nathan Chin said. "We thought Dippin' Dots would be a good idea since it seems popular, and hopefully we are able to profit and add to our savings."

Last year, the 25 groups that participated made an average of \$200-300 each. After a successful Club Rush last year, Rachamalla hopes that this year will be just as good if not better.

"I think it's a great opportunity for dying clubs to advertise and gain new membership," Rachamalla said. "I hope that this event lets clubs get enough money to fund any projects they [want] to accomplish this semester." ♦

hope that this event lets clubs get enough money to fund any projects they want to accomplish. co-clubs commissioner Meera Rachamalla



GRAPHIC BY MAYA PRASAD

SADIES >>

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dance commissions worked a lot this year together, and we wanted to show that we are capable of planning another dance.

But even though Sadies has the tradition of not having as many attendees as other dances, they found that since fall of 2014, there has been a significant increase in student participation in dances.

This year, the number of attendees skyrocketed for Homecoming, and Winter Formal received more attendees than ever before. Along with a table chart of these numbers, Berkowitz-Sklar also collected at least 150 signatures from students who expressed interest in attending Sadies if it were brought back.

On Feb. 29, the pair met with assistant principals Brian Safine and Brian Thompson and presented a PowerPoint that included the numbers and reasons Sadies should be added back to the school calendar.

They also provided Safine and Thompson several sheets of signatures, with Berkowitz-Sklar emphasizing that it only took her two days to collect the signatures.

Safine and Thompson found the appeal convincing and asked the commissioners questions about chaperones and

the location of the dance. The commissioners were asked to find four teacher chaperones and arrange a DJ for the dance, which were finalized on March 9.

The commissioners and administrators decided that by March 18, a week before Sadies, 100 tickets must be sold in order for the commissioners to continue with planning the dance. Since this minimum number of tickets sold was reached last-minute for last year's

Sadies is one of the only casual dances that we can have this year, so it is important to keep it on the calendar. junior Danielle Berkowitz-Sklar

Sadies, the commissioners are planning to publicize the dance by spreading the word and creating promos for students to buy tickets in advance to secure the dance's date. As of March 14, seven tickets had been sold.

To encourage more participation, Marshburn encouraged the Spring Fling commission to come up with a theme for Spring Fling so that students would be more willing to dress up for both spirit days and Sadies.

The theme they chose was "Spring

Fling on the Silver Screen," with each day inspired by popular movies and characters.

"Last year, there was no overall theme and only a group of arbitrary spirit days, so many of the students weren't as willing or encouraged to participate," Marshburn said. "With this theme, students can be more excited to dress up."

According to junior Yuna Kim, one of six Spring Fling commissioners, it will be easier for students to be encouraged to dress up each day since movies are an everyday part of students' lives.

The individual themes for the weekdays are: Magical Monday, Time Travel Tuesday, Heroes and Villains Wednesday, Throwback to Homecoming Thursday and Formal Friday. "We had to make sure that each day would have interest groups of students," Kim said, adding that students could even reuse Peter Pan and "Star Wars" attire from Home-

coming. To correlate with the week's theme, the dance's theme will be Partners in Crime, referring to famous dynamic duos, like Batman and Robin, Mario and Luigi and Mickey and Minnie Mouse in movies.

Though Sadies is well known as being the one dance that girls are supposed to ask boys to, the commissioners are trying to emphasize that Sadies is actually a dance that students can come with their friends to "just have a good time

and kick off Spring Fling."

While commissioners have been planning the week, the rally commission has been preparing for the Spring Fling Rally on March 25, planned to be the longest rally of the year. Aside from a few games, several boys from each class perform their quirky and hilarious Powderpuff cheer routines in support of their classes throughout the rally.

According to head rally commissioner senior Isa Berardo, to encourage more participation, students are going to be judged on overall spirit, and the winning class will be able to choose the end-of-the-year rally theme for May 13.

"We will be looking to see if classes are standing and always cheering and whoever is the loudest and most enthusiastic class will be determined by the teachers," Berardo said.

In addition to the boys working on perfecting their moves for their cheers, the girls from each class have been practicing and coached weekly by their class' football team players for the upcoming Powderpuff games. The games will commence on March 29 during lunch on the field.

During Spring Fling week, commissioners hope students will be able to destress and enjoy a week filled with memorable festivities that help unite the classes together as a whole.

"[Spring Fling] is like the Homecoming of the second semester," Marshburn said. "It helps blend the classes together and students can go all out and participate in all of the different activities." ♦

HISTORY BOWL

Team works hard to fill losses, prepares for nationals

BY Neil Rao

In hopes of continuing their success from the past year, the school's History Bowl team is looking to succeed in the upcoming National History Bowl Tournament during the week of April 11 in Washington, D.C.

After class of 2015 alumnu Bruce Lou led the varsity team to first place last year, the team has tried to make its way without his guidance.

"Because of [Lou's] absence, it's been hard to fill in the gaps that he left," junior captain Bryant Chang said. "We [have] had to rely on constant practices and a good work ethic to make our current team strong this year."

Captains senior Daniel Eem and ju-

nior Mason Tian and Chang have contributed to the growth of the club as a whole.

They have focused particularly on working with the JV members so that the team will stay strong in the future, according to Chang.

Throughout the season, the club attended five major regional tournaments, including Quiz and History Bowl competitions, to prepare themselves.

"It prepares you in that you can see where your team stands compared to other good opponents and who your best players are," varsity competitor Arjun Mishra said. "But nationals is much harder, [so these tournaments] also help you gain confidence in your own ability and the structure of the competition."

One of the tournaments the team has competed in was the tri-annual Berkeley Quiz Bowl Cup on Feb. 20.

Here, the varsity team compiled a total of five wins and three losses, as they

prepared for nationals.

Heading into the national tournament, the team is looking to not only try to place highly, but also prepare the team for future years, Mishra said. ♦

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## EVENTS

## Benefit Fashion Show supports charity

by Allison Lin

Over 200 students, ranging from freshmen to seniors, woke up excited on the morning of Feb. 27. During the day, they prepped and pampered themselves in anticipation of the grand night ahead: the annual Benefit Fashion Show.

The clothing, mostly provided by local boutiques and retailers, was transported on racks to the Small Gym by activities director Rebeca Marshburn.

Meanwhile, upperclassmen girls were arriving at Michael Anthony's Salon in downtown Saratoga for their complimentary hair appointments. At the school, the Benefit commissioners and theme heads were

setting up the stage and silent auction.

All proceeds raised from ticket sales, private donations and the silent auction were donated to the Silicon Valley Children's Fund, a nonprofit organization that invests in programs to better the lives of foster youth in Santa Clara County.

This year, the commissioners were seniors Nicole Prowse, Nellie Jalalian, Nina Harris, Darby Williams, Jace Welton and head commissioner Sabrina Clark. The girls divided the task by using each other's strengths to their advantage. Jalalian was in charge of the audio and tech team, Harris oversaw the creation of the paper program and T-shirts and Clark organized

the silent auction and fittings. The commissioners began planning for the show last August.

Jalalian said she especially enjoyed devoting many hours and tutorials to planning the show with her fellow commissioners.

The themes in the show this year included Toga Wear (Dianne Stokes), Athletic Wear (Road Runner), Cultural (Saratoga families), Country Club (Gap), Wild West (Winchester Western Wear), Boho (Francesca's/Prim Boutique), Winter Wonderland (REI), Girls' Night Out (Kitsch Couture), First Date (Lotus Los Gatos/Banana Republic) and Prom (Group USA/Tuxedo Warehouse).

Besides issues with the stage



Sophomore Camilla Taysi and junior Samana Shah strut down the runway in their cultural clothes in the Benefit Fashion Show on Feb. 27.

lighting, the event ran smoothly. The silent auction raised slightly over \$3,000.

"I really enjoyed the differ-

ent categories and the music," said senior Cayla Zelanis. "I hope this stays a tradition at the school." ♦

## ROBOTICS

## Team reaches semis in first competition of season

by Roland Shen

After weeks of preparation by the teams involved, the First Robotics Competition (FRC) season has finally begun. The Saratoga team competed in its first tournament of the season, the Central Valley Regional, in Madera during the weekend of March 11.

At the tournament, the team won the Excellence in Engineering award, one of the three awards available that showcase

a team's engineering prowess. Saratoga's MSET team also became a semifinalist at the Central Valley Regional, beating the No. 4 seed, a team made up of Vander High School, Pleasant Grove High School and Clovis North High School, as the No. 5 seed.

"This year we had one goal and that was to get an engineering award," senior Naveed Riaziat said. "We never have won an engineering award in recent memory and it really validates the

progress our program has made."

Most of the team's robot was built during January and February, as they had six weeks to prepare after this year's challenge was announced. Each year, the team builds two identical robots: one for practice and one for competitions.

The game is played with two alliances of three robots, each of which try to cross a row of defenses to put foam boulders into goals, earning points for crossing a defense and scoring a boulder.

This year, the team had a large presence at the tournament. According to senior robotics president Kabir Manghani, more than 20 students went to Madera for the tournament.

Although the team has not yet qualified for the world festival on April 25-29 in St. Louis, Mo., they are hopeful that by the time they attend their next tournament at San Jose State on the weekend of April 7, they will perform well enough to qualify for it. ♦

## CLUBS

## Mock trial makes strides, places 11th in tournament

by Katherine Zhou

The school's mock trial team competed in the Santa Clara County High School Mock Trial Competition from Feb. 2-11 and placed 11th overall.

This was a huge improvement, as the team, coached by attorney Mary McDonnell and advised by history teacher Matt Torrens, lost all four rounds two years prior, and placed 13th last year out of 25 teams. Because only the top 10 teams advanced to the next round, the team was unable to move on to the quarterfinals.

On Feb. 9, the team faced off against Los Altos in its third round of competition, losing by only 1.4 percent. However, on Feb. 11 they defeated Silver Creek in their fourth round by 7.88 percent.

Senior Katherine Liu also won the courtroom artist award, an award given to the best drawing depicting the courtroom, for the second year in the row.

The team made many changes this year to achieve greater success.

"We definitely took a lot of the criticisms the attorneys had for us to heart, and [to] make [our performances] sound more natural," said junior Sarah Chang, who played the role of a pretrial attorney.

Teamwork was essential in boosting the overall score, because the team is scored as a whole.

"[Focusing] on objections this year [helped the team] respond in a dignified manner," said junior Peter VandeVort, a prosecution attorney. "We all worked together to make sure we could object and assist whenever possible."

Nevertheless, participants said there is still room for improvement next year.

They hope to have better communication, as only seven out of the 18 members had the same position as last year, making it difficult for them to adjust.

Participants also want to memorize their lines more thoroughly and take part in scrimmages with out-of-county teams that they usually do not compete against.

Ultimately, the team is proud of its performance this season.

"[Saratoga's placement is] an incredible feat," VandeVort said. "Seeing we lost all four rounds two years ago, this is an incredible shift." ♦

>> **the bigidea**

## Mock Trial's tournament results

## How many members are on the team?

There are 18 members on the Mock Trial team, including captains seniors Neeqi Tahmassebi and Karthik Padmanabhan and two alternates.

## How does the Santa Clara County High School Mock Trial competition work?

Schools are split into Prosecution and Defense teams, which face off with another school's teams. Each team presents their case in front of a judge and jury. Based on the results of the first four matches, they either advance or place.

## How much did the team improve?

The team improved by two spots from last year's 13th place to this year's 11th place at the Santa Clara County High School Mock Trial competition on Feb 2-11.

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## MUSICAL

## Busy cast manages to attend show rehearsals

by Vibha Seshadri

Junior Lea Moustakas twitched as her arms and legs remained confined with blue buckles to a hard, white chair. Her movements seemed so realistic that the audience, from time to time, began to subconsciously mimic her as they were drawn into her monologue during the Feb. 26 student production of "Good Morning Karina."

This year, the spring musical, which takes place on April 23, 24, 29 and 30, has had its rehearsal schedules overlap with three student productions; as a result, scheduling has been difficult for both the cast and the crew.

Moustakas, who played Dr. Karina Vor in "Good Morning Karina" and is playing Mimi in the musical, has had to balance her junior year coursework and rehearsals.

Some days, Moustakas would even arrive to school early so she could read "The Grapes of Wrath," the novel her English class was studying, uninterrupted before class. Moustakas also made sure to keep her teachers updated on how she was doing "physically and mentally."

"Teachers don't want you to be stressed, so they were really understanding to me during this period of time," Moustakas said.

Like Moustakas, senior Nina Nelson

has had to look for support and discipline to stay on top of all the work she has. Nelson has been juggling work, college auditions, the musical (in which she plays the lead, Sarah Brown), writing and directing her show "Good Morning Karina" and schoolwork.

"Last year, I didn't even know what I was up to in the next week," Nelson said. "But scheduling and planning things months in advance [gave] me a lot more motivation because I knew it could be done, and when it would be done."

While Nelson has been scheduling her time, drama teacher Sarah Thermond has been scheduling "Guys and Dolls" rehearsals for scenes that involve the fewest number of double-booked students.

For instance, if there were student production rehearsals and musical rehearsals on the same day, Thermond made sure that the timings never coincided.

"A lot of planning work at the beginning of rehearsals was done to try and make sure that being in multiple shows would be feasible," Thermond said. "I gave out a lot of advice on learning lines, and met with the student directors to help make sure they were planning their rehearsal schedules wisely, but other than that, we pretty much took it one show at a time."

Despite the scheduling conflicts and



Juniors JT Hulme and Sarah Traina read from scripts to prepare for the spring musical.

other challenges the cast of the "Guys and Dolls" has run into, Thermond says the cast is incredible to work with, especially because they are so willing to try out new things.

"We have more climbable furniture being created that we have in any musical since I've been here, so you can expect a lot of very visually-dynamic, fun, and high energy numbers," Thermond said.

As the cast perfects their portrayals, the tech crew is getting ready to create the perfect setting for them to do so on performance day.

Stage manager and junior Gaya Chatterjee has been working on recruiting

her crew and creating a workable schedule. Chatterjee currently attends Middle College at West Valley.

"I really do love drama and tech and I would never want to give any of it up, but my school work is also very important," Chatterjee said.

Chatterjee envisions this year's set building to be "educational" because it combines artistically utilizing lights, building with power tools, lumber and painting.

"It's really fun and exciting to see everything come together," Chatterjee said. "It really is a great sense of accomplishment because it is the last thing we do in the whole set building process." ♦

## SPEECH AND DEBATE

## Team succeeds in qualifying four students for states

by Vibha Seshadri &amp; Roland Shen

Throughout February and March, speech and debaters have worked tirelessly to gain coveted spots to state and national tournaments. When the string of consecutive tournaments came to an end, four won the chance to compete at the state tournaments.

At the Parliamentary and Public Forum debate state qualifying tournament held at Leland High on Feb. 26, seniors Aakash Thumaty and Alex Li went undefeated with a 5-0 record, qualifying for both the Tournament of Champions as well as the state tournament.

In parliamentary debate, teams are assigned their topic and position (affirmative or negative) just before the round, giving them 20 minutes to come up with their arguments.

In their final round, Thumaty and Li held the affirmative position for the

topic: "Resolved: California should ban the extraction of water for out-of-state usage." Li said that because both he and Thumaty are taking AP Environmental Science, they were well aware of potential arguments for the topic.

"It was especially fulfilling to win this highly competitive tournament and represent the South Bay," Li said. "Our plan for states is to redeem [class of 2015 alumni] Sudeep Raj and Michael Ong, Parliamentary debate captains from last year who lost in the final round on a 3-2 split decision."

Individual events competitors also found success at the Feb. 28 qualifying tournament at Milpitas High School. Sophomores Divya Rallabandi and Varun Viswanath placed first and second, respectively, in Oratorical Interpretation, and will compete at the state tournament. Freshman Arian Raj and sophomore Kyle Wang made it to semifinals in extemporaneous speaking at the same

tournament, but did not qualify for states.

Most recently, the team competed at the state qualifier tournament for Lincoln Douglas (LD) and Policy debate at Santa Clara University on March 4-5.

Those students included four Lincoln Douglas debaters: senior Shrey Desai, sophomore Austin Wang and freshmen Victor Liu and Hanlin Sun. Before each round, each debater in LD was assigned to the affirmative or negative side, and had to argue that position against their opponent who had been assigned the other position. They debated the March/April topic, "The U.S. ought to promote democracy in the Middle East," at the tournament. Wang went 4-1, making it to the elimination rounds, but was eliminated after the first round by a 2-1 vote.

Desai and Sun went 3-2 at the tournament and were one ballot short of making the elimination rounds. Desai also garnered the title of second speaker

at the tournament, meaning he was assigned the second most speaker points by judges. Liu went 1-4 and did not make it to the elimination rounds.

"With limited time, it's extremely vital that debaters learn how to 'condense' the debate effectively, and I definitely learned a lot about these topics from this debate," Desai said.

On Feb. 21, Desai and junior Siavash Yaghoobi competed in the California Forensics League (CFL) Policy/LD tournament at Sequoia High School.

The tournament did not contain any elimination rounds, but both Desai and Yaghoobi went 2-2. Desai said this tournament was important because it gave him the chance to practice his arguments for the March-April topic for the LD state qualifying tournament and national qualifying tournament.

The national qualifying tournament for LD will happen today and tomorrow at Bellarmine College Preparatory. ♦

## STANDARDIZED TESTING

## Juniors take newly designed SAT for the first time

by Caitlyn Chen &amp; Elizabeth Lee

The students crowded outside Archbishop Mitty High School on March 4 had nervous looks on their face, unsure of what to expect from the most important test of their high school career.

Among the anxious group of high schoolers was junior Nimisha Devanagondi.

"The test was definitely challenging because no one really knew what to expect," Devanagondi said. "But in a way, it levels the playing field because everyone had the same exact

preparation as I did."

Initially, Devanagondi wasn't planning on taking the SAT, as she had taken the ACT in October. But after seeing her scores from the October PSAT, she felt that the revised SAT suited her skill set better.

Devanagondi began preparing by taking the four official tests.

"I think the changes in the new SAT benefitted me because it was less vocab-oriented and

more like the ACT," Devanagondi said. "Also, it's less time-

pressuring than the ACT, which

Nguyen thought it would be beneficial to take the new SAT in March, because since it would be issued several more times, unlike the old one, he would have more opportunities to take it in the future.

"There were some vocab questions in the reading section that were tricky," Nguyen said. "The essay was also a bit difficult because the article

that was given lacked [content] to write about. But other than

is definitely a plus."

Similarly, junior David

to write about. But other than

that was given lacked [content] to write about. But other than

**"The test was definitely challenging because no one really knew what to expect."**  
junior Nimisha Devanagondi



# School finds SJSU professor to teach guitar

By Karissa Dong & Katherine Zhou

Junior Anna Dutro walked into her sixth-period class, Modular Guitar Study, one afternoon in late November and learned that music director Anthony Lanzino, who taught the guitar course and AP Music Theory, had left the school due to family reasons.

For the next two months, the class that Dutro enjoyed remained without an instructor, with only 15 students continuing at semester after several dropped the course — until Dr. Steven Lin was selected, in early February, to pick up where Lanzino had left off.

“[Lin] is a very patient teacher, which is a really good quality,” Dutro said.

Lin received an email alerting him about the position from music director Michael Boitz and applied for the job. He has taught guitar at San Jose State University (SJSU) since 2008 and runs private lessons in his studio.

“I grew up in Taiwan and wanted to learn how to play pop music,” Lin said. “My guitar teacher told me that pop guitar consists of just a couple of chords, and he [encouraged me] to try classical guitar.”

Since then, he has studied at the New York Conservatory as an undergraduate guitar performance major before studying at Yale University for his Masters degree.

“For most musicians, you want to come out performing but also teach [at the same time],” Lin said. “As time has gone on, I’ve performed a little less and taught more.”

In Modular Guitar Study, Lin has taken an unconventional approach to teaching.

Unlike college classes, which are centered around a single teacher’s interpretation of course material, this class is being taught “more like a P.E. or art class,” in which all students have their own individual projects to work on.

## COURSES



Modular Guitary Study teacher Dr. Steven Lin shows a chord to sophomore Caleb Co-bourn during sixth period on March 14.

Lin observed that even though college students are supposed to be more mature, high schoolers improve much faster.

“They’re [both high standard institu-

tions], and I knew that there was a certain calibre of students at SHS,” Lin said. “The students are really wonderful, and there’s not much more a teacher can ask for.”

## MUSIC IN MARCH

# MESH, choir, Winter Guard perform in events

By Karissa Dong & Katherine Zhou

March is a crazy time for college basketball players, but it’s also an extremely chaotic time for the hundreds of students in the music department.

### MESH concert celebrates music

Music Education with Saratoga High (MESH) held its fifth annual benefit concert, “The Magic of Music,” on March 17.

MESH, a music mentoring program in which high school students assist elementary and middle school musicians, is led by seniors Jennifer Veis and Darryn Gao for orchestral instruments and seniors Alice He and Aakash Thumaty for band instruments.

“The best part of tutoring the [kids]

is not only watching them grow as musicians, but also learning more about yourself as a musician,” said He, who tutored two seventh graders.

### Winter Guard heads to Vegas

Thirty-one Winter Guard members, who will leave today to Las Vegas for their second-to-last competition, the Winter Guard International (WGI) Vegas Regionals, will return on March 20.

This is the Guard’s first time in Vegas for Regional; in previous years, the event was held in Fresno.

“We are peaking at the right time, so [we’ll be] at the top of our game,” said sophomore Austin Shi. “There will be guards from all over the country and the skill we get to witness is very high. Being able to perform at the University of Nevada [will be] exciting.”

### Chamber Choir performs at event

Chamber Choir performed at the San Jose State University Choral Invitational on March 4, singing “Lift Thine Eyes” by Mendelssohn and “Makedonska Humoreska” by Todor Skalovski.

“This is our second time going,” junior Sarah Jin said. “I think we did a lot better.”

### Upcoming competitions

Today and tomorrow, the band and orchestra managers will be hosting the California Music Education Association (CMEA) competition.

Symphonic Wind Ensemble (SWE) and Saratoga Strings Orchestra (SSO) will also be traveling to Sonoma State University on March 23 for the fourth annual Invitational Wind Band and Orchestra Festival. Twenty-four groups

will be performing, along with the SSU Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

## >> bigidea

### Music Performances

**Music Education with Saratoga High (MESH):** MESH held its fifth annual benefit concert, “The Magic of Music,” on March 17.

**Winter Guard:** Winter Guard members will leave today to Las Vegas for their second-to-last competition, the Winter Guard International Vegas Regionals.

**Chamber Choir:** Chamber Choir performed at the San Jose State University Choral Invitational on March 4.

## CLUBS

# New to conference, DECA finds success in San Diego

By Roland Shen

During the weekend of March 3, 12 members of the DECA club traveled to San Diego to participate in a conference that drew people from all around California.

Organizers held competitions that tested students knowledge of finance and other business principles.

Even though the Saratoga club was new to this conference, they managed to do well in a

“I think the club fared well for its first year, although I certainly believe there is a lot to improve for the future.”

junior Naman Sajwan

couple of the competitions. In particular, sophomores Mervi Tan and Elora Pradhan placed fourth in Marketing Team Decision Making and qualified for the International Career Development Conference (ICDC).

“I’m really glad I attended states because it was a great opportunity to es-

ablish connections,” Pradhan said. “For ICDC, I’m not so worried about placing again. I just want to attend all the workshops and panels and hear what advice professional businessmen have.”

Other than competing at DECA events, there was also time for students to relax and have fun.

This year was DECA’s first year as a school club since 2014. The club was revived in this year by juniors Naman Sajwan, Saya Sivaram and Nidhi Jain.

Many club members are already creating plans to revise and improve DECA for next year, giving incoming freshmen a club that they can join and thrive in.

“I think the club fared well for its first year, although I certainly believe there is a lot to improve for the future.”

## SCIENCE BOWL

# Team finishes fourth at regional competition

By Kelly Xiao

The school’s Science Bowl A and B teams competed in the Regional Science Bowl competition on Feb. 6, during which team B placed fourth overall.

Though neither of the school’s Science Bowl teams will advance beyond the regional level this year, members believe the reason has little to do with lack of knowledge.

Instead, they struggled with buzzing in too early or too late on questions, according to co-captain Jacky Lee. Lee said that the members tended to buzz the answer first, or buzz too early to know the question.

During the competition, teams are split into four groups, which each compete in a Round Robin-style round. The top two in each group advance to double eliminations.

The A team placed third, so it did not advance, but the B team placed second and went on to another Round Robin. Team A lost to Harker and Albany, while Team B lost to Lynbrook. This year’s A team included seniors Alex Li, Brendan

Ney, Jacky Lee and Allen Shen, while this year’s B team included senior Nate Ney, juniors Austin Cai and Anthony Ding and freshman Joey Li and Michael Zhang.

Co-captain Lee attributed the team’s early elimination to an aggressive approach to buzzing during the matches against Albany and Harker, which were “pretty close.” Though Lee was disappointed by the A team’s losses, he said he was surprised by the B team’s performance.

“I think this year’s A team was the best we have ever had,” Lee said. “But due to unfortunate groupings, [we did not perform as well as expected]. [Even so,] B team had the harder grouping and they still passed.”

Though this year’s competition is already over, the team is still holding practices on Friday afternoons in AP Chemistry teacher Kathy Nakamatsu’s room.

“[In Science Bowl], you get to meet, bond and have fun with other people,” Lee said. “It [combines] all sciences, and it’s different from other competitions, which are usually written tests.”

## FILM >>

continued from pg. 1

identities were not revealed.

Both Cohen and Shenk recognize that their subject matter is controversial, but they hope that by acknowledging the tension between the accused and victimized, their film will provide an objective view of the situations.

“Our goal is to step outside [the tension] and really try to see the perspective[s] of all parties involved,” Shenk said. “I think any human would agree that we want to avoid people getting hurt, we want to avoid misunderstandings, we want to avoid people feeling regret.”

Principal Paul Robinson said that after Pott’s suicide, the school and the community have done a good job coming together and learning from it. In particular, they have established more support systems on campus.

Others who were close to Pott said they still keep her close to their hearts.

“[The tragedy] made me act more compassionately towards others,” said Le, a class of 2015 graduate and a friend of Pott who now attends West Valley College. “I still think about her often, but I like to stay positive and remember that her story has helped and is continuing to help so many others going through similar situations. She inspires me to help as many people as I can, and knowing her has helped me understand others and [their struggles].”



Le

Through the documentary, Shenk and Cohen hope viewers see the healing process and the positive change that has occurred in the communities.

In fact, the two directors were inspired to create “Audrie and Daisy” as they realized how ignorant they were about issues dealing with social media and teenagers in the current generation.

“As parents, we realized that kids are growing up in such a different environment than we grew up in,” Shenk said. “There is a new world out there and for the most part, parents don’t necessarily know how to have conversations with



AUDRIEANDDAISY.COM

The banner for “Audrie and Daisy,” a film bringing awareness about dangers teens face.

their child about these things.”

Cohen and Shenk said they hope their film will be shown in schools and community groups. They also hope to provide a framework for conversations about the social media risks and reality of sexual assault.

“When you talk about [these situations], bring things out in the open and have learning moments from these situations, there can be really positive change and people can be proactive about how they go about these things in the future,” Shenk said.

## BELL SCHEDULE

# Students may be able to take LG classes

By Summer Smith

Los Gatos High School offers a whole slate of electives that some students here at Saratoga would love to take — classes like Physics C, Japanese and Home Economics.

With the two school’s schedules aligning perfectly next year, students at both schools in the district may be able to travel from one campus to the other

during lunch, or other breaks that are long enough, to take a class not offered at their respective school for the second half of the school day, administrators said. But the details involving taking shared classes between the schools are still being worked out.

“Having aligned schedules gives us more opportunities to share students, but I think it will take some time to see what will actually happen,” principal Paul Robinson said.

Assistant principal Brian Safine said students taking classes at the other school will only come after teachers begin

teaching at both campuses, since it is easier for teachers to travel between the schools.

Many students are excited at the possibility of being able to expand the electives they could take.

“Greater diversity in students and classes would offer many new opportunities for the students,” junior Daviana Berkowitz-Sklar said.

“Many of my friends are very interested in the possibility of taking fashion and cooking classes at Los Gatos.”

Although the new start time and reduced lunch period may create issues, the new schedule is moving forward.

Each school is focused on making sure its own students are situated in the necessary classes.

Students will need to sit down with their counselor and see if the class fits their current schedule. From there, it becomes the student’s responsibility to set up transportation from one school to the other.

“There’s a lot that needs to fall into place, but there’s a possibility that didn’t exist when we were on different schedules,” Robinson said.

# Concerns rise over start time, length of lunch, collaboration

By Claire Rhee & Summer Smith

Since the school’s switch to a rolling block schedule for next fall, some parents and students have voiced objections to the 8:15 start time and the five-minute shorter lunch period for students.

One potential issue with the start time is increased traffic in the mornings, since the high school will have the same start time as Redwood Middle School.

“I’ve put calls into our local government to talk about what we can do [for traffic],” principal Paul Robinson said.

In addition to fears about morning traffic, having the same start time may cause drop-off problems for parents who have children at both schools.

However, Robinson said that the library will open for students who need to arrive earlier.

For many students, the biggest concern over the new schedule is the 35-minute lunch period, a 5-minute reduction from the current 40-minute lunches. Since the majority of upperclassmen who leave campus for lunch tend to return with only a couple minutes to spare before the

bell, the shortened lunch period poses safety problems with students speeding.

But to accommodate a 40-minute lunch in the new schedule, five minutes would either have to be tacked on to the beginning of the day or to the end, so that no instructional time would be lost, Robinson said.

“There’s certainly desire from a lot of [students] to have the 40-minute lunch,” Robinson said. “If there’s going to be any change [back to the 40-minute lunch], that’s something we can maybe do down the road.”

Another concern revolves around the scheduling of teacher collaboration meetings, which currently occurs on Wednesday mornings before school from 7:50 a.m. to 8:50 a.m.

Robinson said that the solution currently being discussed is to have the collaboration during the “empty” period at the end of the day, where an eighth period would go.

Although the day or frequency of collaboration has been undecided, Robinson said the school wants to schedule it after school because arriving at 7:15 a.m. is unrealistic for teachers.

Another activity that has

taken place on Wednesday mornings during collaboration is the Music Education with Saratoga High (MESH) program.

This program gives students the opportunity to mentor elementary and middle school musicians during their rehearsals.

Since Saratoga High currently starts later than the elementary and middle schools, the mentors are able to work with the younger students and then head to school with plenty of time.

However, with a 8:15 start time, the high schoolers will not have enough time to work with their students.

With this new schedule, the only idea that has been brought up is to have outside rehearsals, but this option is difficult for all of the participants since many are busy with other extracurriculars and other academics.

Although the new start time and reduced lunch period may create issues, the new schedule is moving forward.

“There may be some changes on our end [although] I can’t predict them, [but] we’re trying to keep [the schedule] consistent with what Los Gatos is doing as much as possible,” Robinson said.

## LIBRARY

# Reading in between the margins of the textbook room

By Neil Rao

Most students know where the textbook room is, but don’t truly understand the work employees there put in to keep the school’s books organized.

“The belief is that the [textbook room] only needs to operate during the first and last weeks of school. This is not true,” librarian Kevin Heyman said. “All of the plays and novels students read are managed and distributed through the

textbook room; every month, [about] 1,500 plays and novels are checked out and returned. That’s 3,000 books that need to be touched every month.”

Due to the sheer number of books that need to be constantly arranged and organized for the benefit of the students, the school must rely on dedicated workers to accomplish this, according to Heyman. Staff members like Nada Mac-esis and Gordon Blacett keep track of 34,000 books and in the

first week of school alone are in charge of distributing 9,000 books at the year begins.

With the exception of the first week of school, the textbook room is usually busy around deadlines, such as when students change from an AP or Honors class to a regular class or decide to attend class at a community college.

The textbook room also must take care of all necessary repairs and lost books, and the staff members must barcode

and track every book that goes into the school’s database of records while also ordering new textbooks.

“When new books are purchased, they have to be processed before they can be put on the shelf,” Heyman said. “For example, we have replaced the Spanish and French textbooks, AP Biology, Physics and US History textbooks, as well as Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2 and Trigonometry textbooks [in recent years].”

In addition, the textbook room must provide books for new classes, such as AP Government and Calculus. This is in addition to any novels or plays that English teachers have added to their curriculum, Heyman said.

“Managing the textbook room is a huge undertaking. Fortunately, we have Ms. Mac-esis and Mr. Blacett to make sure that the books are kept in order and distributed in a timely manner,” Heyman said.



## NEW COURSES FOR '16 - '17 SCHOOL YEAR

GRAPHIC BY MAYA PRASAD



### Dance Fitness class aims to lower student stress

During the guidance meetings held in the McAfee Center in February, juniors and seniors were formally introduced to the new P.E. elective class: Dance Fitness.

Seeking to reduce student stress, Dance Fitness will be a one-hour dance fitness workout consisting of a warm-up, endurance cardio and a cool down.

According to history teacher Kim Anzalone, a certified Zumba instructor who will teach the class, it will "incorporate Zumba Latin routines as well as hip hop and other current styles of dance."

Anzalone plans to host guest teachers along with student choreographers to lead routines and keep a "set" for about four weeks at a time.

"The class workout will be a bit over 60 minutes to [instruct] how to properly manage various body move-

ments and core," Anzalone said.

Junior Candace Chiang said the exercises Zumba provides release more tension than P.E., since she has attended many of Anzalone's off-campus Zumba classes in the past.

"I really enjoyed it," Chiang said. "[Anzalone] is really nice and a great [Zumba] teacher."

As the current AP U.S. History teacher and former JV and varsity girls' soccer coach, Anzalone has always dreamed of having this class.

"The stress level of the students was my motivation to develop and offer this class to Saratoga students," Anzalone said. "I would just like to pass on a healthy lifestyle to improve self-image and confidence while having a totally fun time." ♦

— Julia Miller



Anzalone

### Animated Graphics to be open to all students

In the past, Animated Graphics was open to only students in the Media Arts Program. The course taught fundamental skills needed for MAP, including how to use different programs like Photoshop and Flash Animation.

Starting next year, however, the class, will be open to all students in order to promote interest in MAP and media arts in general. The class was not offered this year and had been taught by former teacher Cathy Leather in previous years.

Animated Graphics focuses main-

ly on projects. Students create short animated stories, visually attractive infographics and even collages.

After learning many of the prerequisite programs, students are allowed to specialize in a specific area that they enjoy. The course offers flexibility in this regard, giving students creative control over their own interests.

In addition, students will receive grades on assignments mainly based on their skill level from previous years. ♦

— Roland Shen

### Sports Stats offers innovative alternative

Through the past year, AP Statistics teachers Seema Patel and Jennifer Mantle have been working on creating a new class that seeks to pair statistics with a field in which they are often crucial: sports.

"It is a new elective for students looking for a more interactive and different approach to mathematics," Patel said.

This class is tailored to sophomores and juniors, but anyone who has completed an entire year of Algebra 2 is eligible to enroll in the class.

Both Patel and Mantle hope to introduce a non-traditional and student-friendly approach to math that emphasizes the use of statistics in a

real-world application through videos of various sports team, such as the San Francisco Giants and the San Jose Sharks.

"Our goal is to allow students the opportunity to understand and learn how to analyze players' data," Patel said.

Other possible class activities include timing runners on the track, shooting free throws and analyzing percentages, and attending live athletic events.

The instructor will be announced once the school schedule for next year comes out. ♦

— Vivien Zhang

### Engineering in Design completes 4-year program

Engineering in Design and Development (EDD) will be introduced next year as a new elective for aspir-

ing engineers, completing the four-year engineering program. The class will be project-based with hands-on learning, exposing students taking the course to both valuable and rare real-world experience.

EDD will be the highest level engineering class out of the other three engineering classes: Introduction to Engineering Design, Principles of Engineering and Digital Electronics. As it challenges students to use the skills and knowledge they learned in the previous engineering courses, EDD will only be available to students who have taken at least two of them.

Although the curriculum for EDD has not been set yet, engineering and math teacher Audrey Warmuth envisions the first semester to have a series of design challenges that will

"develop technical skills" along with teamwork, cooperation and delegation of responsibility. For the second semester, she hopes to let the students build off of their own designs.

There are currently two engineering teachers, Matt Welander and Warmuth. But it has not yet been decided

who will teach the class. Some key challenges in the new engineering class will be in getting the correct software and hardware. Warmuth said "storing" and "distributing" materials will also be a problem.

According to Warmuth, there will also be the standard problems of creating a new class. "It is nearly impossible to know how to achieve the best results [for a class] until [it has been] taught for several years," Warmuth said. ♦

— Frederick Kim

### AP Studio Art lets students express creativity

For the first time next year, the school will offer AP Studio Art for

students who have a deep interest in the subject and are interested in art as a profession, art teacher Diana Vanry said.

According to assistant principal Brian Safine, the class will be available for students who have completed Art 4 Honors or have "otherwise shown very exceptional abilities."

The class will help students prepare artwork for college portfolios and competitions and will be held at the same time as another period.

"[A student has] to produce 30 works — 12 [of which] are related, 12 [of] which you consider your best artwork and six [of] which are very dif-

ferent to represent your skill in different media," Vanry said. "All of these

are to make up your portfolio which you turn in to CollegeBoard."

Sophomore Laura Chaland, a current Art 3 student who plans to take AP Studio Art when she is a senior, said that she hopes that the class will "give students more freedom [to] develop [their] own art style, which is always important."

Because the course offers AP credit, it will push students to improve, she said.

"I know [the class] will make me want to keep on improving, and it's good practice too," Chaland said. ♦

— Neil Rao and Neehar Thumaty

**The class will be project-based with hands-on learning, exposing students taking the course to both valuable and rare real-world experience.**

## Sophomores can take regular physics next year

by Caitlyn Chen & Roland Shen

In response to parent and student interest, sophomores will be able to take a regular physics class next year, according to assistant principal Brian Safine.

This year, science teachers Kirk Davis, Jenny Garcia, and Matt Welander are teaching a total of eight regular Physics classes. But due to the increase of students taking the class, there could be additional sections of the class next year.

The teachers who will be teaching the classes next year have not yet been

determined, but some incoming sophomores have enrolled in the class already.

"I chose [to enroll in Physics next year] because I definitely like Physics more than Chemistry, and I really want to go deeper into the subject since it's so interesting to me," freshman Ashley Feng said.

Feng said she is also planning on taking AP Physics in the future, but because Chemistry is a prerequisite for AP Physics, she will most likely take Chemistry junior year or outside of school.

For incoming sophomores like Feng who decide to take Physics next year,

Welander said there will be some topics the Physics class covers that they would have learned in Chemistry, such as significant figures, dimensional analysis and thermodynamics.

"There will be a couple of instances they may feel like they're behind the juniors and seniors in class but I don't think that's a big deal," Welander said. "Those are pretty small topics and I think if a student is advanced they can learn those topics pretty quickly."

To help the sophomores catch up to the upperclassmen in those areas, Welander said he's planning on providing

them with some extra resources.

But despite this new course offering to sophomores, sophomores must complete Chemistry in order to enroll in more advanced science courses like AP Chemistry, AP Biology, AP Environmental Science, Astronomy and even AP Physics itself.

"Some of those students may do it by doubling up in science," Safine said. "Some may just reverse the chemistry and physics sequence in 10th and 11th grade, but the ultimate idea was giving students choice in terms of their science discipline after completing biology." ♦

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## Apply to College - Prepare for Life

# Young adult novels are meant for all readers

by Claire Rhee

Cheesy? Maybe. Realistic? Rarely. But, good books for anyone? Definitely.

Young adult books, though they are often targeted towards teenagers, are still perfectly good books for readers of any age group. The category “young adult” should not be considered a restrictive label.

Books are meant to be read by a wide variety of ages, no matter what their genres might imply. Authors try to write books that are universally appealing so that their novels will become worldwide bestsellers. They would never write to discourage a person from reading their books, as their careers depend on how well their works sell.

“Young adult” books often involve predictable themes associated with teenagers, such as forbidden romance or escaping a hometown. Even so, these books often portray universally relatable topics including depression, love, suicide and bullying, which can relate to adults and children as well.

In the novel “The Fault in Our Stars” written by John Green, topics such as cancer and love are touched upon throughout the popular book. Three

of the characters, Hazel, Augustus and Isaac all have some sort of disease, including oxygen deprivation and blindness. Hazel and Augustus also fall in love during their time together.

Both topics, illness and romance, are ideas that people can relate to. There are many people in the world that, unfortunately, are terminally ill or who are in a relationship. The topics are not trying to attract one age group.

People read books because the storylines appeal to them, not because they are directed to an age category and are told to choose only from there.

An article against adults reading “Young Adult” books on the Slate Book Review states that people can read whatever they wish, but that “adults should feel embarrassed when what [they are] reading was written for children.”

However, that should not be the case. There is no need to feel embarrassed when reading a “Young Adult” book. Many of these books focus on mature topics. The author of the article even admitted that “Young Adult” books are now “more sophisticated than ever.”

Thus, these novels can actually attract all ages of readers and the embarrassment of holding up a stereotypical teenage

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novel should disappear.

Furthermore, reading is beneficial no matter what one is reading. According to a recent ABC News article, research has shown that reading requires your brain to use multiple different regions simultaneously, which can help improve the connection between brain circuits. Other research shows that reading also helps relieve stress. Ultimately, reading

benefits both the brain and the body, so it should not matter what type of book someone is reading.

In the end, books are books. They should not be pigeonholed as reading material for a particular age group. If a book includes captivating, engrossing details alongside an exciting storyline, people should not be ashamed to read it, even if it is labeled “young adult.” ♦

# AP/Honors classes should lessen tedious homework

by ShreyaTumu

It was 2 a.m. on a Tuesday during my junior year when I was scrambling to finish my journal prompts for a “Hamlet” Socratic seminar. At the time, I couldn’t believe I was still up so late even after keeping up with my journals regularly. I didn’t even know if I could remember what I was writing, only that I was filling up the lines.

By the end of the year, my English composition notebook was so thick with pasted typed pages that the binding was close to tearing, yet I couldn’t recall even one sentence I wrote. I couldn’t help feeling overwhelmed from the degree of work needed to keep up.

English 11 Honors is just one example of a class where I ended up wondering whether all my effort had paid off in my

actual understanding.

For example, I tried my best on my journals and analyzed the text thoroughly and diligently, yet when I took the unit tests for the novels I realized my own analysis wasn’t always synonymous with the correct analysis.

Personally the number of journal entries I was assigned to do felt daunting, especially because I like to spend a lot of time per question. I was overwhelmed even before I started and I couldn’t come up with original and creative analysis when my mind kept thinking about how much more work I had yet to complete in classes like AP Biology. By contrast, whenever I had two to four journal entries to do instead of eight, I would end up writing more thoughtful responses to each

and learning more.

Another course, AP Biology, had 4- to 8-page guided reading worksheets that didn’t prove useful to many students. Some students preferred to just read and interpret the text without

**The school should instead model its AP/Honors classes after college courses.**

them. As a result, those students found guided readings more of a hindrance than a help.

The multiple-choice section of AP exams require knowledge of specifically worded details from the textbook. When I did the guided readings, I worded the text in terms that I under-

stood, which was counterproductive because when it came time to take the tests, I was unable to understand what the question was asking. Thus, the central ideas were lost in all the information I was trying to absorb.

The school should instead model its AP/Honors classes after college courses — little to no homework, with most of overall course grade being determined by the midterms and final exams. Students benefit from less, but higher quality homework.

One of the greatest concerns of the school community is to lighten students’ load. The alternative of having more qualitative, not quantitative homework will work toward this goal and at the same time, allow students to learn significantly

from their classes.

Another option is to have more grades come from long-term papers and group projects.

This way, the students will have the chance to apply the information they learn in class to real-life situations. For example, a research paper on a biology subject would actually benefit the student in learning the subject matter because he or she would be exposed to real-life examples.

A class structure modeled on college courses would benefit the students because it allows them to absorb the important information and apply this information.

Much of the work in AP and Honors classes is 100 percent necessary, but I do believe that there is good amount of work that should be omitted from the course load. ♦

# To grow up, teens need freedom to explore their own choices

by RolandShen

These days, peers, teachers and parents pound students with different pressures. What many of these stressors have in common are decisions — ones that aren’t made by high school students but by other people in their lives.

This problem has gone so far that it is as though students’ lives are being completely programmed by outside sources. What classes they take, what activities they do and even what friends they have are all decisions too heavily influenced by others.

Many friends that I know choose classes based on what parents and school counselors want rather than what is best suited to himself.

Often times, students sign up for

classes or schedules that are much too rigorous for them and end up not getting the results that they want.

Here’s just one example of what I am talking about: I have a friend I met in elementary school. His entire life was bombarded with work from his parents, even when he was in third grade. He played the piano and violin for three

hours each a day and did math competitions. Even at such an early age, he went to sleep near midnight on many days.

He could not choose what activities he wanted, and he never attended birthday parties or went trick or treating with us. I knew that he wanted to come to all of our fun events, but his parents’ insistence that he practice his instrument all the time meant he couldn’t. Situations like these could be avoided

if adults and other influences loosened their hold on their kids and allowed them to think independently.

It’s best to let teenagers make mistakes and figure out matters for themselves, as making decisions for them only worsens the impact of future problems.

For example, many activities, such as math competitions and piano lessons, are forced upon kids despite their having little or no interest in these fields. Because they must spend time studying math or practicing their instruments, they lose time that they could have invested into more genuine interests or passions.

I myself have faced some of these problems.

I was first signed up for piano class in the second grade, and was forced to play the instrument until the end of my freshman year. I never really found any real interest in piano and felt that I wasn’t learning much at all, yet I couldn’t break loose of it. It was definitely a chore for the first

few years, and when I reached high school, it became worse. Each month I practiced less and less, until a broken wrist was my ticket out of it for good.

Other times, parents even try to choose friends for their children through parent collaborations. The preference of friends are usually those who would be the most “beneficial.”

The concept in itself is already extremely wrong; if nothing else, a teenager should have complete control over who he is friends with. This freedom is essential to development of normal social skills.

The best option is for parents to give more freedom to their kids, as they aren’t objects to be maneuvered through school and into college — they are future adults who need to learn to think for themselves.

Giving teens the freedom to make decisions on their own will bring them the most success in life, and they will be able to find genuine interests and develop loyal friendships. ♦

## THE saratogafalcon >>

FOURTH PERIOD

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The Saratoga Falcon is published six times per semester by the Advanced Journalism classes of Saratoga High School, 20300 Heritman Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070. Views expressed in The Saratoga Falcon are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the administration, faculty or school district.

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# Harsh absence policies need revising

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# Transracialism should not be considered real

By Isabelle Yang

As Japanese and Korean culture becomes increasingly popular in our society, my Facebook newsfeed has more and more often displayed posts about and links to koreaboo.com and various anime fan sites.

In addition to the casual fans who share this type of content, there are also extreme followers who subscribe to the idea of "transracialism": that members of one race can simply decide to identify with another race of their choice.

Although the term was originally used to describe adopted children raised in cross-cultural homes, transracialism is now used to describe extreme appropriation of ethnic cultures.

As the "Hallyu wave," which refers to the increasing popularity of Korean culture, has spread to the U.S., many fans that are not ethnically Korean have begun trying to "be Korean," following everything from Korean celebrities to Korean diet trends.

Recently, according to the Huffington Post, a Brazilian man claimed to have gone through 10 cosmetic surgery procedures to look Asian. "Max," who was determined to "become a Korean," changed his name to Xianh Nishi and

claimed that after his procedures he has "become much more handsome."

To obsess over another culture that is ethnically not ones own is odd. This extreme adoration that transracialism comes from is often based on excessive love for a certain culture's media. Because of this, many "aspiring Koreans" have a skewed perception of Korean culture, since it is almost entirely based on the culture portrayed in Korean dramas and other forms of media.

But real Korean culture — like any other culture — is not, and cannot be, accurately portrayed by its media. But many who subscribe to transracialism fail to acknowledge this, instead taking advantage of and stripping cultures of their uniqueness, which only further contributes to unfair and inaccurate stereotypes of minority cultures.

This topic gained further traction last year when Rachel Dolezal, the former National Association for the Advancement of Colored People charter head of Spokane University, sued Howard University for racial discrimination. Despite the fact that her parents are part German, Czech and Swedish, Dolezal claimed to be ethnically African.

The concept of transracialism should be discarded because it helps more

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privileged justify their appropriation of different cultures, while still experiencing the benefits of their true ethnicities. Many people are already stereotyping cultures by following unreliable sources found on popular social media sites such as Twitter or Tumblr. These stereotypes, such as "all Japanese girls wear school girl uniforms," are both unrealistic and offending, which opens the path for transracialism.

Aside from being distasteful, there is

the fact that transracialism is not a legitimate condition. A culture is not an outfit that one can choose to wear one day and throw away the next. Self-tanners, lip injections and an obsession with becoming another race or ethnicity cannot help anyone have a more "exotic" look.

It is unreasonable to believe that by simply following all of the latest trends of a country — or even getting thousands of dollars in plastic surgery — that you can become something you're not. ♦

# Texas abortion case reveals hypocrisy of laws

By Vibha Seshadri & Isabelle Yang

Remember when you began walking as a child? Your parents and relatives would test your endurance by giving you an endpoint to reach, and just when you thought you had made it, they would move further back, making you walk more. In this case, they were making you do more because you needed to learn how to walk.

Now imagine someone playing a game similar to this, one where the person shows you your destination but snatches it away the moment you are about to step into it. For many women around the nation, the journey to this end goal is similar to the experience of trying to get an abortion.

Most women who have abortions do so in their first trimester, when they either have the option of having a medical abortion or aspiration abortion. The latter of the two procedures requires taking two pills, approximately 72 hours apart,

and a checkup to ensure the abortion was successful.

A medical abortion, on the other hand, can be done in a matter of minutes. According to ourbodiesourselves.org, both procedures pose at least 10 times less risk than actually continuing pregnancy.

Yet, Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers (TRAP) laws are making getting an abortion harder and harder for women, especially in states in which abortion is frowned upon.

States, such as Texas, that do this are attempting to make abortion de facto illegal. This is unfair to those who believed that their government supported their right to an abortion. Women, especially younger girls who have been sexually assaulted, are not in a position to sacrifice thousands of dollars to travel across borders to get the medical help they want.

According to Texas' Omnibus Abortion Bill, abortion providers must make sure the hallways are 8 feet wide, and

they must have hospital admitting privileges. These regulations, if unmet, can be reason enough to close down abortion clinics.

In fact, there are only two clinics in Arizona and none in Louisiana. In Missouri, Maine, Arkansas, Wyoming and Mississippi, there is only one abortion clinic open in the entire state.

The Center for Disease Prevention and Control said that legal abortions end in death 0.00073 percent of the time, showing that abortions are safe. Thus, lawmakers and religious figureheads should not be attempting to control women's rights to their bodies.

In fact, no one but the mother has the right to say that a fetus. It is more important that the woman, who already has connections in this world and potential does not have those qualities thwarted for being denied the right to her own body and life planning.

The 1992 Supreme Court ruling in Planned Parenthood v. Casey states that women should not be faced with an

undue burden in abortion regulations. However, TRAP laws do place an incredible burden on many women seeking to obtain an abortion.

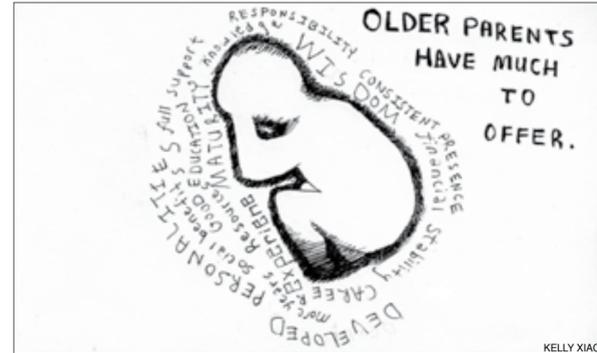
For this reason, the Supreme Court is now debating Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt in which Whole Woman's health is challenging Texas's laws.

If the court rules 4-4, the TRAP laws will remain constitutional, which will place remaining abortion clinics in harm's way. The hope for Whole winning depends on Justice Anthony Kennedy's vote. The decision will be announced in June.

Those who support TRAP laws claim they are doing so to promote women's health. But what is healthy about forcing rape victims to carry an unwanted child? Or for forcing a woman to carry the weight of a life they feel unprepared for?

Abortion providers need to remain free from unfair TRAP laws so they can operate properly for the benefit of women who rely on them. ♦

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my stepfather that he is "sixty going on seventy" — but though he's an older parent, his age hasn't stopped him from being a responsible father who can fully support his children.

My parents have provided my sister

and me with a stable home and a good education. While having kids too late may have its downsides, the decision to pursue a career and gain wisdom before having kids is one for which I am forever grateful to my parents. ♦

# Parents having kids later is more beneficial and practical

By Oksana Trifonova

My stepfather is 64, and I've always wondered if having a high school daughter and an 8-year-old daughter at his age is a normal thing. From what I've heard, it's not. Many parents have their kids too early and end up focusing more on their career or personal life than actually taking care of the child they created. We all know the MTV show "16 and Pregnant" and feel bad for the girls, as well as the children, who are featured on the show.

At the same time, many other cultures actually encourage young women, sometimes even teenagers, to have children. In part, this is because of the belief that younger mothers bear more energetic and healthy children. The mothers are also believed to recover more quickly from having children.

While this may seem like an old wives' tale, doctors have found that women who have children over 35 often suffer more complications in their pregnancies. However, these biological risks

are rarely caused by old age alone, and the small risk is outweighed by the probable social benefits of having kids later.

Children with older parents often are more academically successful, as they profit from their parents' wisdom. Older parents are also typically more stable and have more money, which means that the child benefits from financial security and responsible, consistently attentive parents.

In Saratoga, the vast majority of parents belong to the latter category. The average U.S. woman has her first child at age 25 these days, according to the Fiscal Times; by contrast, few Saratoga mothers have their first child at this young age. This may be because many in our community emphasize educational attainment and career advancement over having children.

My stepfather is a prime example of this phenomenon. Born and raised in Malaysia, he moved to the U.S. and began his medical studies. Only after years and years of practice did my stepdad get a job and have a kid. My mom often teas-

# 'Tasty' video deceives eager baker



Sweeya Raj

BuzzFeed is a website famous for news geared toward teenagers.

Their articles are short and to-the-point, filled with snippets of interesting, albeit not always important, information.

BuzzFeed's "Tasty," a new Facebook page with 42 million likes, uses the same snappy format to share recipes, providing viewers with 60-second cooking tutorials with countless cuts between scenes.

By creating the illusion of fast preparation, Tasty videos inevitably appeal to foodies like me.

In class, whenever we have a break, I pull out my phone and watch the newest Buzzfeed Tasty video, encouraging my friends to join me in drooling over Tasty's latest concoction on their Facebook page.

I rewatch my favorites, reminding myself of which ingredient comes next to test



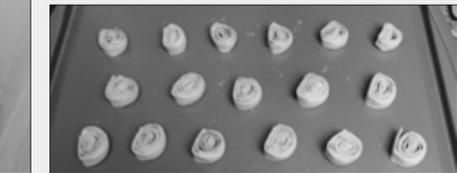
Snapshots from reporter Sweeya Raj's cinnamon roll baking experience.

my dedication to the Facebook Tasty page.

When the Lifestyles editors asked me to write a story on making a Tasty recipe, I was ecstatic.

I had always wanted to make one, I just never had the motivation until it became an assignment.

The hardest part for me was picking the perfect recipe from



FALCON // SWEEYA RAJ

multitude of videos on the page.

I scrolled through Tasty's Facebook page and watched the countless videos until I came across one of my favorites: Mini Cinnamon Roll Bites.

The recipe was simple enough and I had all of the ingredients already, so it was pretty easy to get started.

Standing behind the kitchen counter, I played the video and quickly realized that making the dish would not be as fast as it seemed online.

I had to pause the video every 2 seconds and replay certain segments because the video was so fast, and fast forwarded through critical parts like where to put the cinnamon and how to roll the buns.

Even though it took forever, I finally got the mini cinnamon rolls in the oven a solid 45 minutes after I began.

When I took them out, however, they were not nearly as aesthetically pleasing as the ones in the video.

I rewatched the video (for the hundredth time), trying to find where I had made a mistake in making the seemingly-delicious mini cinnamon roll bites.

When I found nothing wrong with how I made the rolls, I was disappointed with the video for misleading me.

From my experience, I found that making recipes off of Tasty is easy and time-efficient, but does not produce dishes of great quality.

Don't let the beautifully-edited videos fool you; your dish probably won't turn out as glamorous as pictured in the videos.

That said, my obsession with food videos isn't going to end any time soon, but I doubt I will use the videos to guide my cooking.

The delicious looking mini cinnamon rolls, as it turns out, took me an hour to bake, not 45 seconds. ♦

# The I(uv) of my life

REPORTER WEARS SUN VISOR TO SCHOOL



Isabelle Yang

Upon donning my fresh plastic "UV 80+++" visor, I had already appeared to have been a changed person. Aside from feeling protected from the sun and its cancerous death rays, being able to wear the famed "Asian mom hat" meant that I had finally reached the state of womanhood — at least, according to my Asian relatives.

A few weeks ago, my newspaper friends challenged me to wear an "Asian sun visor" to school for a day. Despite extremely judgmental looks from my mom, I was determined to prove that I could pull off a rather large black plastic sun visor.

Surprisingly, despite wearing a plastic visor that shielded my entire face, the only people who really cared to notice were the occasional "passersby" who would give me double takes but never stopped to say anything or comment on the new trend.

My day started clumsily, the tragic signature Isabelle style in which I almost forgot my mission to then be reminded by my mom that she loathed the idea of me "covering up my beautiful face."

Fourth-period newspaper went quietly, assuming that people were used to my antics, everything went smoothly. Lacking excitement, I turned to setting myself missions such as staring at someone for 5 minutes, not saying anything to see if they'd react.

Turns out, though, no one could see if

I was looking at them or not, so my first mission failed miserably.

Mission No. 2 was my time to shine: walking across the hallway from the journalism room to the English wing, which in itself was almost more embarrassing than funny.

Other than the occasional passing freshman who would look at me as if I had offensively worn a sloth onesie to school, few people actually cared to look or judge.

Both missions so far had been failures and rarely caught anyone's attention, other than some sparing glances. The only compliments I got almost always pointed out that, "you look like an Asian mom at the farmer's market," which I took gladly, as I'm pretty sure they meant, "Wow, you look really good; you should wear that every day!"

Based on my experiment, I wish I could say that people fell out of their chairs in shock at my fashion-conscious visor, or that I was on my way to becoming the next "style files" subject. What really happened, however, was people looked at me just as if I had worn a beanie.

This realization led to a mid sixth-period breakdown, because I guess my entire strangeness had just settled with my peers well.

Was no one concerned that I was wearing this bizarre hat? Did they think I was this weird that they had accepted me like this?

Finally, after a day of wearing an "Asian sun visor," I realized that keeping my skin supple, youthful and pale is in fact very accepted and if you want to do this to keep your skin youthful just buy the visor and meet up with me and we can be #squad goals! ♦

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# A Trip Down MEMORY LANE

Reporters reflect on their childhood experiences

Anant Rajeev poses with his friends at graduation.  
Courtesy of ANANT RAJEEV

Ariel Liu eats donut holes with her third grade group.  
Courtesy of GABBY FONTANILLA

Angela Lee and her friends graduate from kindergarten.  
Courtesy of ANGELA LEE

## My furry but faulty obsession with Webkinz

mill(er)ion bucks

Julia Miller (3rd grade)

Being the daughter of a fifth-grade teacher comes with its perks. In my six years at Foothill Elementary, my classmates were always envious that I had access to the all-powerful teachers' room and received friendly greetings from just about every faculty member on campus.

But my personal favorite was having my mom's classroom as a safe haven. Not only did it protect me from the burning California sunshine in the springtime, but I also had access to the computers there. As a third-grader with

a growing obsession with Webkinz, the most popular game for elementary school girls in 2008, this computer time was infinitely precious.

On the site, users adopt a virtual pet by purchasing an actual stuffed animal in stores and entering the code that came with the toy.

Once on the website, Webkinz users can play multiple games, build their Webkinz home and meet other Webkinz users.

Webkinz was my not-so-guilty pleasure. I was a borderline hoarder of these stuffed animals, with my collection reaching 14 Webkinz by the end of third grade.

However, this obses-



sion was acceptable since it was the most popular conversation starter among the third-grade girl population.

With my friends, I would constantly ramble on about the latest gem I had discovered in the mines for my all-mighty Webkinz crown or the new outfit I acquired for my pet panda to wear during her trip to the park.

In the midst of my obsession, I vaguely remember my mom being concerned for my mental well-being.

When I wasn't at school or doing homework, I was playing Webkinz.

It got to the point where I would get headaches from looking at a computer screen for too long while

mastering the Webkinz games to earn coins to buy more items from the store.

But like any fad, Webkinz trended and then lost popularity.

Soon enough, I neglected my stash of Webkinz stuffed animals due to the fact that no one thought they were "cool" anymore, and Webkinz had become just another phase within my elementary school life.

Webkinz was instantly replaced by none other than my future fourth-grade obsession, Club Penguin.

I left my palatial, multi-room Webkinz mansion and its 14 residents behind; and I won't lie, I missed it.

But, there was a new icy, penguin-filled virtual world waiting for me on the next tab of every window in my laptop, and I wasn't going to log off anytime soon. ♦

## That Time I ... used a poster to get better concert seats

good vibes

Vibha Seshadri (1st grade)

Who wouldn't want to watch a bunch of teenagers break out into song and dance every five minutes? My third-grade self was completely obsessed with "High School Musical" (HSM).

When my parents told me I could attend the HSM concert at the HP Pavilion with my best friend from Carden Academy, I thanked them with loud shrieks of excitement that are usually heard on roller coasters.

I counted down the days to the concert for over a month. Of course, we had to create a poster to be our accessory of the evening.

As wide-eyed, overly excit-

ed 8-year-olds, my friend and I probably spent five hours working on our colorful masterpiece — it had to be perfect.

We divided the poster into four quadrants, shading in each with a different color of the Crayola Crayon set.

We cut pictures of the cast and put them in each corner next to supportive comments, such as "You rock!"

At the concert, we ap-

proached an official, hoping he could give us directions to our seats. Concerned about where we would sit, we handed him our tickets. But that's when the poster worked its magic.

The concert official looked at it and said something along the lines of, "We have three empty seats on the floor — would you like to sit there instead?"

While my friend and I were spazzing out in excitement,

jumping around like a bunch of well, crazy 8-year-olds, my mom replied with the word that was running through our heads over and over again: "Yes."

Every time I hear "Stick to the Status Quo," "We're all in This Together," or "Breaking Free," I will always remember the awesome poster that allowed us to watch the cast of our favorite childhood movie from just 19 convert rows away. ♦

## Can you still take care of a Tamagotchi pet?

angelic angela

Angela Lee (2nd grade)

As a second grader, I got my first pet. Unlike my classmates' corgis and hamsters, my pet lived in an egg-shaped device. In fact, my pet wasn't real; it was a Tamagotchi.

Created by Japanese game company Bandai, Tamagotchis swept my second grade class like wildfire — everyone had to have at least one pet and dedicated hours each week to raising vir-



tual alien eggs into adults.

When I was challenged to play my Tamagotchi again, I expected it to be a breeze. A dozen patterned Tamagotchis laid lifelessly in my drawer; if I could play them as a second grader, playing them now should be easy.

However, I was incredibly confused after inserting new batteries into the device. When an egg appeared, my fingers lingered between the three blank buttons. After 30 seconds, a small, black bean-looking creature named "Babytchi" hopped out of the egg. When she called for attention, I fed her a loaf of bread.

Following her snack, Babytchi

pooped on the screen. Annoyed, I scanned through various Tamagotchi manuals to figure out how to clean and satisfy her. Babytchi's health meter revealed that she was hungry, unhappy and undisciplined — I was horrified. Frustrated at this needy and irritating jumping bean, I took a break from Babytchi, leaving her for a few hours without supervision.

But when I came back after two hours, an egg floated where Babytchi once bounced. Distressed, I recalled that Tamagotchis could die within a few hours, especially in early stages.

Initially, I was baffled at how I had once cared for dozens of Tamagotchis

up to adulthood while I now struggled to bring up Babytchi past her first stage. Then, I remembered that social media platforms had not been popular in 2007 and my homework then involved practicing cursive and coloring inside lines.

My short and not so sweet trip down memory lane ended there. Failing to nurture Babytchi not only gave me new reverence for my younger self, but it also showed me that some things are better left in the past. ♦



## Kufufu: our exclusive off-campus lunch spot

hit the qian

Jenny Qian (1st grade)

Looking back on their elementary school experiences, most people remember long recesses on the monkey bars or playing tag.

But for my fourth-grade friends and me, lunch was always spent off campus from Argonaut Elementary — in a tree, to be exact.

Kufufu, a tree named by the anime-obsessed juniors Jackie



Han and Christine Wang was named for the sounds anime characters make when laughing.

The tree was a secret hiding spot where my friends and I would hang after school and hide from the parents during lunch.

Despite getting in trouble by teachers numerous times, we only became more motivated in our rebellious childhood years to sneak off campus.

Every lunch, we rushed to eat our food and sprinted from the cafeteria. We began by casually walking toward the nearby playground.

As soon as the coast was clear, we one by one ran toward the Christmas-like tree that was near the way back of the school and into an opening that branched out into a long passage inside the tree.

It made a perfect resting place for us, and day by day, we all worked to revamp our new secret club house.

During morning break, we ran with our arms filled with bags of Hot Cheetos and hide them in the nearby bushes, picking them up after school when we would hang out inside Kufufu.

Squatting on rocks, we

would gossip about whatever anime series we had watched the night before or play with stuffed animals we had brought.

Throughout the last two years of elementary school, we constantly visited the place and introduced our hiding place to a couple outsiders, such as juniors Yuna Kim and Ellicia Chiu.

"No matter how much trouble we got into with the adults, we still continued running in there during school," fellow Kufufu inhabitant, junior Amy Chiang said. "I think the scariest part was when [Argonaut

principal] Mr. Chapman, got mad at us for going. But we couldn't help it, since we practically designed the entire tree area."

Even though the tree was cut down a few years ago, visiting the area still reminds us of our cool and rebellious days spent after school hanging out there.

Whenever someone brings up the word "Kufufu," we all still laugh at our silliness and our incredible stealth — but more importantly, we wonder how we managed to not get suspended from elementary school. ♦

## Staff capture the flag recaptures school memories

fifa god(s)

Andrew Jiang and Anant Rajeev (1st grade and kindergarten)

We have always been competitive people. Every since we were little kids, both of us wanted to win at everything — from playing Hot Lava Monster on the playground to participating on the school's water polo and soccer teams. Recently this competitiveness turned into a rivalry between the third-period and fourth-period newspaper staffs.

We decided to settle the dispute



over a game reminiscent of elementary school: capture the flag. Volunteering as the fourth-period team captain, Andrew saw it as an opportunity to seek revenge for all his embarrassing FIFA losses, while Anant viewed it as a chance to continue his winning streak.

As in every professional sport, we prepared for the competition in phases.

Step one: draft the teams. To encourage equality, we each chose five boys and five girls from our staffs. Andrew clearly believed he drafted a better team since he was on the team (as well as senior Jihau Yu); on the other hand, Anant had faith in third-period's teamwork and athleticism.

Step two: trash talk. The chat with

all the game participants became home to spats between the periods, condescendingly (and jokingly) roasting each other over who was better.

Step three: play. The game happened during a Friday tutorial on the upper field. Seniors Helen Chen and Fiona Sequeira made some critical captures throughout the game for third period, while sophomores Neil Rao and Roland Shen served as vital components for fourth period's survival.

The majority of the game was stalemate with each team exchanging points back and forth, until 20 minutes later when everyone was exhausted.

As out-of-shape second-semester seniors, we decided to end the game

at that point, so the game resulted in an old-fashioned tie. Although there wasn't a decisive winner, fourth period had five of the flags and third period had one. Regardless, the rules stated that to gain a point, all of the flags must have been captured. Andrew, along with the rest of the fourth period staff, knows who truly won (fourth, of course), but Anant just thinks Andrew was unwilling to accept the idea that the two staffs could be equal.

As far as deciding which staff is athletically superior, it looks like there will be a rematch in the future to truly decide if third or fourth period is crowned champion. But as for now, it looks like the FIFA game will have to stand. ♦

## That Time I ... expressed my hatred for No. 1 Evil Nerd

the little mermaid

Ariel Liu (2nd grade)

In third grade at Argonaut Elementary School, girls were my only friends, boys were my sworn enemies and cooties were a very legitimate concern.

Thus, when current senior Michael Owyang put pencil shavings in my hair



for sitting in his seat, I vowed to get revenge.

I'm sure Michael had no idea what he was getting himself into; he probably just really wanted his seat back. In my defense, his action catalyzed the events that followed.

As a budding journalist and writer at the ripe age of 8, I decided to express my anger in the only way I knew how: by creating a construction-paper burn book, in which I compared Michael to a cucumber, among other hurtful insults

that I hoped would prevent him from retaliating ever again.

I don't remember what exactly went into the book, but recently, Michael sent me a photo of the cover, and it consists of a drawing of something that resembles a vampire-ghost mix in one corner, his name spelled incorrectly in bubble letters under the words "No. 1 Evil Nerd" in the middle and "1,000 percent mean" written in another corner.

Clearly, I've never been very talented at math.

After that incident, Michael and I never really talked again until recently on the Disneyland leadership trip.

He told me that the book made him cry (just one of the multiple times I made him cry throughout third grade, apparently), and I was guilty into writing about this embarrassing incident for the whole school to read.

So Michael — I'm truly sorry, but I promise I'm a nicer person now in high school — just no more pencil shavings in my hair, OK? ♦

# 'Full House' sequel lacks in originality

BY Claire Rhee

That's right, the "Full House" cast is back in the sequel "Fuller House." The new Netflix original series, which was created by Jeff Franklin, debuted on Feb. 26. People everywhere, myself included, tuned in to watch the familiar faces we grew up with reappear in the iconic Tanner family house.

The sequel is set 29 years after the last episode of "Full House." Candace Cameron Bure plays D.J. Fuller (previously D.J. Tanner), a widow who is now juggling three children, a job as a veterinarian and household chores. Jodie Sweetin returns as D.J.'s younger sister Stephanie Tanner, who is now a DJ but lives in her childhood home to help her sister. Andrea Barber also comes back as Kimmy Gibbler (D.J.'s best friend), and moves in with her daughter Ramona, played by Soni Nicole Bringas.

Throughout the season, cast members who were part of the original Tanner family, or were acquainted with them in the original show, made frequent guest appearances.

While it was nice to see the "Full House" cast back together,

the show lacked humor and original content. The only part that really kept me hooked was seeing all the old cast members together in the first episode.

Since the first episode had to connect with the original series somehow, I understood that the plot and some characters' catchphrases had to be the same as they were in "Full House." At times, the random placement of different characters' well-known catchphrases made the plot line choppy and confusing.

According to slashfilm.com, the cast and creator Jeff Franklin purposely referenced "Full House" many times, wanting to bring back some old scenes. Yet, if the scenes in which characters repeat lines from "Full House" were taken out, there would not be much of "Fuller House." It would have been refreshing if they had started creating new content.

For instance, in episode 3, Joey Gladstone (Dave Coulier), a comedian and best friend of Danny Tanner (the father played by Bob Saget), pulls out Mr. Woodchuck, his beloved stuffed animal. This is an iconic part of his character, of course, but I felt that Mr. Woodchuck was not needed in this particu-



The cast of "Fuller House" pretends to eat breakfast for a promotional photo in the Tanner's iconic kitchen.

lar scene or most other scenes he was in.

In fact, the scene that did not include Mr. Woodchuck was one of my favorite scenes. When Joey comes over to watch the children after D.J., Kimmy and Stephanie go out for the night, he and the children have a house fight with green goo and silly string. I liked to see his funny, free-spirited character return without the stuffed animal.

Aside from the overuse of memorable lines and scenes

from the original series, "Fuller House" displays some great new talent. My favorite part, besides seeing the old cast, are the three boys who play as D.J.'s children.

All three of them, even the little baby, are the main source for the little comedy that appears in the sequel. Watching Jackson Fuller (Michael Campion) interact with his younger brother Max Fuller (Elias Hargreaves) is priceless, especially when they bicker or tattle on one another.

Also, the interactions between Ramona and Jackson represent a relatable relationship between a teenage boy and teenage girl. Every time Jackson and Ramona resolve their conflicts, I see the true unity of the family in the Tanner house and feel the warmth of the original show.

Although it was fun to have the cast back, the confusing humor, dependence on the original series and mediocre acting made the show less enjoyable than I hoped it would be. ♦

# New 'X-Files' falls short of original show

BY Angela Lee

My parents have told me that as a 2-year-old, I cried hysterically whenever I heard the eerie opening of the "The X-Files." In third grade, I shielded my eyes and ran to my room whenever my dad started rewatching the show. Tidbits of "The X-Files" were scattered throughout my childhood, but I had never confronted my fear until its revival on Jan. 24.

"The X-Files" revolves around two government agents, Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) and Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson), and their investigation of paranormal crimes.

The show aired from 1993 to 2002 before releasing six new episodes on FOX this year.

After overcoming my fear from watching the original "The X-Files," I eagerly started the newest season.

Although the narrative still featured extraterrestrial mysteries, the time lapse since the original season

and overall mood of "The X-Files" just wasn't the same.

For instance, Scully and Mulder frequently reference past events with phrases like "the truth is still out there," which made me feel like this season only wanted to invoke the glory of past seasons, rather than re-establish the series as a cutting-edge science fiction show.

The first episode of the new season reunited the dynamic duo Mulder and Scully: the former became an Internet-obsessed hermit, the latter a top surgeon.

Like in previous seasons, the two investigated a girl claiming that aliens had experimented on her.

Although the plot line was initially exhilarating, it grew too heavy for the often-satirical tone of the show. Past seasons balanced a mysterious story along with occasional light humor.

By contrast, this season emphasized the plot so much so that I couldn't laugh at its jokes; I was too invested

in what would happen next. The intriguing overtone detracted from the humorous quality of the show and its ability to appeal to a wider audience group.

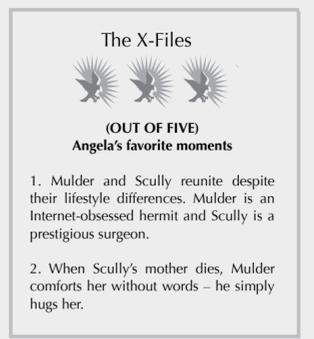
Furthermore, the plot also deviated from the extraterrestrial theme. In episodes like "Babylon," the idea of paranormal crimes was lost among other storylines, like an anecdote about two Muslim terrorists — which was both irrelevant to the overarching alien plot-line and offensive to Muslims.

In spite of these flaws, Mulder and Scully's dynamic chemistry still shined through at times. Although the two do not see each other romantically anymore, signs of their deep friendship appear throughout the season. Subtle moments, like when they held hands, never failed to bring a smile to my face.

Overall, although the new season featured impressive special effects and successfully carried over Mulder and Scully's connection from the past, it failed to maintain a balance between

plot and humor.

This "X-Files" resurrection would be a good watch for X-philes, who are already fans of the show and curious for more, but for new fans — my advice is to just watch the previous seasons. ♦



# Kanye West's new album rejuvenates, excites fans

BY Neehar Thumaty

It has been eight years since Kanye West took control of the hip hop scene with his utterly mesmerizing album "808s and Heartbreak." Since then, West has maintained a consistency in quality throughout his various albums, such as "My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy" and "Yeezus," the latter of which came out in 2013.

But in recent years, my passion for West's music has faded. He has become more of a joke than a respectable member of the hip hop industry, with his extreme ego and occasional tabloid-worthy escapades — that is, until six weeks ago, when I came upon a Hypebeast article that described "The Life of Pablo." West's new album released on Feb. 14. The mere mention of West drew my attention, and I hurriedly skimmed

through the article that described the much awaited and "hush-hush" album.

Instantly, I set a reminder on my calendar so I could hear the album the moment it was dropped. I was back on the West grind.

It was the evening of Valentine's Day when my phone went off, and I checked the alarm I had completely forgot about. I locked myself in my room, put on my headphones and set the album on repeat. Sixty minutes later, I came out a changed man.

The album proved to be nothing short of iconic from the very beginning with its theatrical, gospel-like opening song, "Ultra Light Beam." Featured throughout the album are works from amazing lyricists such as Kid Cudi, Drake and Kendrick Lamar. This only added to the album's appeal.

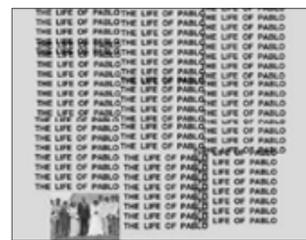
The album also shines light on the

skill of lesser known hip hop artists such as Chance the Rapper and The Dream, both of whom are featured on multiple songs.

While definitely meeting and possibly surpassing the quality of West's past music, the album was not without faults. West's ego and occasional misogynist surfaces in various lyrics, and he targets individuals like Amber Rose and pop singer Taylor Swift, the latter of whom he has had a public feud with.

Nevertheless, West gives listeners a look past his usual bombastic nature and into his vulnerable side. Songs such as "Real Friends" and "No More Parties in L.A." delve into the personal struggles West went through as an emerging artist and later as a major star.

Ultimately, the album reminds listeners that West is still very much relevant as a rapper. His music may not have his



Above is the album cover art for Kanye West's new album, "The Life of Pablo" released on Feb. 14.

once lively "take on the world" attitude, but he develops his experiences and inner thoughts into profound lyrics in "The Life of Pablo." ♦

# Project Benefit: Six heads, one united mission

BY Ami Nachiappan

In early February, senior Nina Harris, one of six members of the Benefit Commission, walked through the doors of Lotus Boutique and onto the lime green floors for a First Date fitting event. Harris and the models, surrounded by steel racks filled with vibrant new styles and trending outfits, were ready for a full day of fittings.

As managers and store clerks suggested clothes for models based on height and skin tone, they also paired accessories to create a variety of First Date outfits. At the end of the fitting, as Harris browsed through the catalogue that showed the clothes and accessories that were going to be worn on the day of the show, she said she felt proud that "all the outfits worked well together" and was "even more excited for the show."

Lotus Boutique is just one of the stores that "welcomed [the models]" and agreed to provide clothes for the Benefit Fashion Show, which took place on Feb. 27 in the Large Gym and featured 200 models and outfits.

"I think the show turned out amazing!" Harris said. "We all were very happy with [the way it ran], and it was a huge success."

From November to January, the six senior commissioners — Harris, Prowse, Sabrina Clark, Darby Williams, Jace Welton and Nellie Jalalian — provided letters describing the purpose of the show to several stores in an effort to persuade them to sponsor and give clothing to the show.

According to Prowse, the girls were

rejected from some corporate businesses because they had to go "so far up the totem pole," a task that most chain stores were not willing or able to do.

Banana Republic, GAP and REI were the only corporate stores that donated clothes, but the girls received many outfits and accessories from local stores in downtown Los Gatos, such as Francesca's and Kitsch Couture.

According to junior Ellicia Chiu, the Winter Wonderland theme head, the models, accompanied by their theme heads, set up fitting appointments with the stores.

"As a theme head, I got the opportunity to sort through outfits, which was really cool," Chiu said. "I loved being able to see models flaunt their outfits."

If the models really like their outfits, they are allowed to purchase them after the show. Activities director Rebeca Marshburn returned the remaining outfits the day after the show.

During first semester, the commissioners focused on getting stores and sponsors to ensure the show would be a success. But, starting in February, the commissioners also designed four floor plans, or certain walks that the models followed. The floor plans were created by the commissioners and were later distributed to theme heads, who in turn taught their models the various styles.

"Even though they had to walk in a certain pattern, we definitely gave the models complete creative rights to make their walks and poses their own," Prowse said.

Each year, the commissioners meet and decide what themes have previous-



The Benefit commissioners pose after the show to celebrate their successful efforts.

ly been successes, and based on the results of participation, they choose what themes to keep.

For instance, Girls' Night Out and Boho have been successes for a couple of years so the girls kept those themes. They also added a cultural theme to showcase traditional outfits from various ethnic groups.

In the few weeks leading up to the event, the commissioners constantly messaged each other through Facebook, figuring out last-minute details, such as the script, T-shirts, seating arrangements and the silent auction.

To plan for the silent auction, the commissioners went to local restaurants and asked them to donate gift cards that

the girls could auction off on show day as part of gift baskets.

For Prowse, who has been involved with Benefit the past three years and was a Boho theme head during her junior year, the fashion show "brings together different grades and people in a fun and relaxed way that ultimately promotes a great cause."

The money raised from the event will go to the Silicon Valley Children's Fund, which helps foster young adults become self-sustaining by sending students to college.

"I think our cause this year was very valuable so the sense that we were doing something meaningful for others was powerful in my eyes," Prowse said. ♦

# BnB just one of many Indian cultural shows

BY David Fan & Neil Rao

Bombay in the Bay, the showcase of the school's Indian culture and dance that takes place every February, has become a performance that students are eager to watch since it is one of the few cultural shows that Saratoga offers. These kinds of cultural shows are also popular at nearby schools, but they often have a different twist.

One difference between Bombay in the Bay and other school's Indian cultural shows is that performers from Bombay in the Bay come only from Saratoga High. By contrast, schools such as Homestead High, Bellarmine College Preparatory and Notre Dame High all invite dance teams from other high schools to perform at their shows. Junior Karan Desai said, "the atmosphere can change a lot depending on how exclusive or inclusive



Narayanan

the program is [of other schools]."

A more inclusive program makes the atmosphere more intense since there are many dance teams trying to prove their worth to the audience, Desai said; on the other hand, a more exclusive program makes the atmosphere more friendly since the audience is full of the performer's friends and family.

This is not to say that Saratoga High dancers perform only at the school. Toga Tamasha, an advanced Indian dance travel team, performs at other schools such as Bellarmine College Preparatory and Monta Vista High School.

Toga Tamasha performer sophomore Ishana Narayanan said that performing for Toga Tamasha focuses on "spreading Saratoga talent

and the Indian culture to other high schools in the Bay Area." By contrast, Narayanan said that performing for Bombay in the Bay focuses more on entertaining parents and students.

Like SHS, other schools like Lynbrook also have clubs to increase cultural awareness. The school has a club called American-Indo Student Association (AISA).

Lynbrook junior Ria Parwal, vice-president of AISA, said that the club prepares for Sillsilay, an annual cultural showcase of different dance teams and singing acts that come from multiple schools to perform for a charitable cause. The charity that the club donates to is named Project Rishi, a rehabilitation center for leprosy patients in Anandwan, India.

In order to prepare for this show, the club invites different dance teams every January to audition and then chooses around 16 of those acts to perform. Like Bom-

bay in the Bay, the club's show also includes a skit that links the different performing acts together. Narayanan said that Toga Tamasha auditioned for Sillsilay last year, but missed the cut; she attributes this outcome to the intense competition since according to her, many teams also did not make it.

Regardless, these shows all promote a sense of Indian culture that encourages non-Indians to embrace that culture. Senior Michael Schillage participated in Bombay in the Bay for his third time to continue expanding his cultural knowledge.

"I like to reach out to all different groups and different cultural activities," Schillage said. "I felt that this was a good way to connect with different friends in these cultures." ♦

# College auditions: First step in a musical journey

BY Elizabeth Lee

Senior Katie McLaughlin walked into the audition room at the San Francisco Music Conservatory in January with her oboe, ready to perform the pieces that she had been preparing for the last eight months. It was her first regional audition, where associate admission officers from universities come to one city to watch and record auditions. This particular audition was for Boston University (BU), and it was an incredibly important in her college application process.

While most seniors finish their college applications during first semester, those who want to major in music aren't done until late February because they must participate in auditions to supplement their applications.

McLaughlin plans to major in oboe performance, which she said could lead to a job as an oboe player in a symphony, a studio executive or a professor at an university.

So far, McLaughlin has auditioned for the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), Northwestern University, University of Michigan (UMich), University of Southern California (USC), BU and New York University (NYU).

She has grown to find them more fun and enjoyable than nerve-wracking. She sees these auditions as an opportunity to receive feedback from audition coordinators and professors.

"My potential teachers gave me embouchure advice, musicality tips and told me [how] to phrase the music better," McLaughlin said.

McLaughlin's experience doing these auditions is uncommon, although not unheard of; each year, roughly three to six students go on to study music in college, according to music director Michael Boitz.

Senior Uday Singh, an alto-saxophone player, is another one of them this year. He has auditioned at UCLA, Northwestern University, UMich and USC. Singh

plans on studying music education in addition to saxophone performance.

After performing in the Santa Clara County Honor Band sophomore year, he said he "was hooked." The next step was persuading his parents to support his career choice.

"First, I had to convince them that I was actually fully dedicated to music, which I did by spending more time practicing and earning some accolades," Singh said. "Then, I had to show them that there were viable career options for saxophone players."

Singh hopes to one day become a saxophone professor at the UMich, which is known for its strong music department. As a professor, Singh said, he would have the best opportunities in both performing and teaching.

Also auditioning this year is senior Michael Fukuda, a tuba player who has decided to major in music education. He said he was inspired by his music teachers and the connections they have with their students.

"My first tuba instructor really inspired me the most," Fukuda said. "During seventh grade, I was really frustrated with how I played and felt like I wasn't making much progress. She kept pushing me and reassured me that I was doing fine."

Fukuda is applying to a variety of music schools including University of Puget Sound, Sonoma State University and University of the Pacific.

Though the whole process has been tedious and difficult, since he had to cram eight years of music knowledge into just a 10 to 15-minute audition, Fukuda said that he has enjoyed the experience of being able to meet different directors and learning about their programs.

"I know it sounds cliché, but you need to practice and practice," Fukuda said. "You need to know your audition material like the back of your hand so that when your nerves kick in it'll still sound great." ♦

# Gifted sophomore designs her first tattoo

BY JULIA MILLER

When she was 11, sophomore Laura Chaland began attending Drawn to Art, an artistic youth summer camp held in Fremont. There, she learned to see the colors within art's shadows and lights.

This was a defining moment in her art career. Learning about shadows and lights in pictures also helped Chaland apply it to her own art. She took the concept and now knows how to make every subject she draws more realistic. Now, as a sophomore, Chaland manages a Facebook page filled with her art pieces, and she credits Drawn to Art for her success in seeing "the most important aspects of drawing."

Ranging from profound pieces to simple doodles, the work on Chaland's Facebook page is like a digital art museum — overflowing with vibrant, neon hues.

Her picturesque canvases feature everything from doodles of eyes to drawings of musical legends. Many of pop culture's greatest performers are drawn with unique colors integrated into their appearances, such as Elvis Presley with deep orange hair and blueberry blue makeup or John Lennon sporting red glasses and matching red lips.

Chaland, now a student in Diane Vanry's Art 3 class, enjoys playing with the spectrum of colors on every drawing, and in doing so, putting a special twist on the norm. She said she has a passion for "the controversy in art, or art with a meaning."

Recently, however, Chaland has taken her art to the next level by dabbling in tattoo design. Last year, her mom asked Chaland to design a tattoo for herself. Chaland turned the offer down because she felt she was too inexperienced.

This year, however, Chaland has succeeded in designing a tattoo for sophomore Kelly McLaughlin's older sister, class of 2004 alumna Jordan Martinsen.

"[Martinsen] had Kelly ask me if I was interested in designing something for her," Chaland said. "She already had an idea in mind: an apple, a peach and some poppies for 'California life.'"

Chaland was able to incorporate those three objects into one tattoo; once she sent in the design to Martinsen, Chaland posted the finished illustration to her art page.

Since then, she has received offers from schoolmates, friends and even relatives of her friends to design tattoos for them as well.



**TOP:** The tattoo sophomore Laura Chaland designed for Jordan Martinsen, class of 2004 alumna, symbolizes important components of Martinsen's life. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** This drawing is named "There's Alexanderson." **BOTTOM LEFT:** Chaland named the above drawing "Dream" because the woman's expression reminded her of someone dreaming.



**Prior to attending a show in San Francisco,** Chaland drew a portrait of the French comedian who was featured in it. He signed a copy for her.

"My uncle is actually a tattoo artist and I think he's inspired me to try it myself," Chaland said. "He's very supportive of my art and encourages me to [pursue it]."

Since then, Chaland has reflected on the significance of designing the tattoo that Martinsen took with her to the tattoo parlor, and how much the

process motivated her to continue to advance in her artistic abilities.

"The experience of designing something that would be on someone forever was definitely exciting but pressuring," Chaland said.

Chaland said that she has no ambitions to become a professional tattoo designer, but she

is definitely "going into the art field."

Until then, Chaland will keep pursuing her passion and creating works that have a hidden meaning behind them.

"Art, for me, is so important," Chaland said. "I love experiencing [all the] different colors, and [playing] with what's normal." ♦

All photos courtesy of LAURA CHALAND

## New wizarding schools not up to Potterheads' standards

### Swish and Flick

Spring Ma & Eileen Toh



"Shut up, Malfoy!" Eileen yelled at Spring in an obnoxious attempt at a British accent, while barely holding in her laughter.

This January, in the dark-pitched alleyways of the Indiana Jones Adventure attraction at Disneyland, we found a mutual love in spewing out our favorite lines from the "Harry Potter" franchise.

As we scared our friends and received worried and judgmental looks from nearby adults, we pranced through Main Street U.S.A., yelling lines like "Wingardium Leviosa," and "Give it here, Malfoy!" Soon, we were singing the repetitive "Harry Potter Puppet Pals" song from YouTube and enlisting our friends as a capella backup voices.

As little kids, and now as high school juniors, we have always been fascinated with the Wizarding World of Harry Potter, where Harry, Ron and Hermione learn various spells and battle with the Death Eaters, the followers of the infamous Lord Voldemort. Minutes after the Pottermore website went public on April 14, 2012, we completed the Sorting Hat quiz — Spring is a reluctant Hufflepuff while Eileen is a proud Gryffindor — then brewed potions and casted charms. As of now, we are currently counting down the days until the Wizarding World of Harry Potter opens at Universal Studios on April 7.

But when author J.K. Rowling announced last month on Pottermore that there are three new wizarding schools that have previously been unknown to both Muggles — people who lack any sort of magical ability — and wizards, everything changed. Aside from the sev-

eral known schools situated in Europe, she introduced Mahoutokoro in Japan, Castelobrujo in Brazil and Ugadou in Uganda.

The new wizarding schools shocked us, as we have only familiarized and associated wizarding schools with Europe. Castelobrujo is located in the Amazon forest and excels in Herbology, the study of magical plants and how to utilize them, and Magizoology, the study of magical creatures. Ugadou students can cast spells with just their fingers and often transform into lions and cheetahs.

Apparently, according to a BuzzFeed quiz, we both belong at Mahoutokoro, not at Hogwarts with the rest of the Harry Potter crew. In Mahoutokoro, young wizards attend school at an extravagant jade palace on a volcanic island and wear magical robes that change color from faint pink to gold according to the levels of academic success.

Having experienced the academic rigor and inevitable stress of junior year at SHS, both of us have serious concerns about the GPA-branding robes. Also, although students are accepted to Mahoutokoro starting age 7, students under 11 cannot stay at the school overnight and must fly back or return to their homes on a daily basis. There is also no Hogsmeade, no Weasley's Wizard Wheezes Emporium and essentially no Harry Potter — leaving us with no motivation to hope for owls to deliver Mahoutokoro-embossed envelopes on our doorstep.

Even though we are avid Potterheads, we must admit that these three new schools have missed the mark for us; they are unnecessary and actually detract from the original magic of the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

In the meantime, however, if you hear a random "Bloody brilliant!" or "Yer a wizard, Harry" echoing through the halls, you can assume it's coming from one of us. ♦

## What are those?

Entertainment technology has greatly transformed due to the development of new software and inventions throughout the years. Today, many children grow up playing with iPhones and iPads instead of Nintendos or Game Boys. I thought it would be interesting to introduce some '90s technology items to my friends' younger siblings to see if they knew what they were. Here's how it went:

**Pager:** a device that receives messages and signals by beeping or vibrating



Brian Li, age 9: "I think it's a phone to call people? I don't know what it's called. Maybe a pocket phone? I'm not sure what the numbers do."



Jessie Zhou, age 12: "Is it a stopwatch? I have no idea what this is, and it is my first time seeing this."

**Tiger Handheld Games:** handheld devices used to play games on

Divya Sarkar, age 11: "They're like little devices you can play games on, but I'm not sure what they're called. I remember getting those in my happy meals when I was little from McDonald's or Burger King."



**Floppy Disks:** a type of disk storage

Prosper Chiu, age 13: "I've seen them before but I don't know what they're called... You like put disks onto the square and then push it into the computer. Is it called a disk drive?"



Timothy Liu, age 3: "It's a book... for people to read!"

**Walkman:** a portable audio cassette player

Kevin Sze, age 13: "Wait, I know! That's a tape recorder and you can put those tapes inside and listen to it. No clue what it's called, but I doubt anyone hardly uses it."

Timothy Liu, age 3: "It's a phone! You use it to listen to music."

GRAPHICS BY MAYA PRASAD

—Reporting by Jenny Qian

## Students display skills in MAP senior project

BY AMI NACHIAPPAN & VIBHA SESHADRI

Seniors Shreya Sheel and Caroline Jens stepped into the control room in the Media Arts building one afternoon in January. The complete stillness of the room enveloped them. They held their breath as a rush of adrenaline overtook them, eagerly waiting for their actor, senior Rotem Shaked, to begin speaking.

They locked their eyes on Shaked; as soon as he began to recite his lines flawlessly, the two girls exhaled. The hours they had spent writing the script for their information video were finally coming to fruition.

This scene was part of their senior project for the Media Arts Program (MAP). It is an open-ended, year-long project where students apply what they have learned in the past three years of MAP. All seniors in the MAP program must complete a senior project.

This project was created after graduating seniors, during a focus group meeting, remarked that they would have liked to have had time to work on a passion project that was free from the strict constraints of their other assigned projects.

After taking the seniors' remarks into consideration, the MAP teachers researched how colleges conducted their senior projects. Most colleges have a 15 to 20-minute constraint on their projects, so teachers decided to give the MAP senior project a 10-minute limit as a way to build up to creating longer media projects.

"People who don't work in the field [may ask], 'Why would you need a whole year to work on something that is 10 minutes?' but I think the thing to understand is that when you're doing media, [to create] 10 quality minutes is actually a time intensive process," Eng-

lish teacher Jason Friend said.

During first semester, MAP seniors must work on multiple other MAP projects, such as a Shark Tank funding project. In general, they use first semester as time to complete their pre-production work. During second semester, they focus on the media production of their senior project.

Additionally, for the first time ever, seniors have to take a Senior Media Arts Lab (MAP Lab) class this year during sixth period. This period is meant to give seniors time to work on their senior projects and any other projects assigned to them by their History or English teachers. The class is blended which means one sixth block period of the week is optional and the other is mandatory. English teacher Jason Friend and media teacher Joel Tarbox run the class period.

One senior project group comprises of seniors Karen Chen, Eleni Spirakis, Stephanie Hayes, Savannah Green, Sheel and Jens. They are creating a humorous informational video on the school's MAP program.

Because the girls think many incoming students have misconceptions about the program, such as the belief that MAP is an easier alternative to regular courses, the group hopes that its video can be used to "break barriers" at introductory nights, such as Electives Night. They also hope that the video can be on the

MAP website to provide an introduction to the program.

"I think [MAP is] so unique that a speech at Electives Night can't describe it," Sheel said. "I don't think [the program's resources] are emphasized enough when people are introduced to it."

The video will feature Shaked reciting facts while animations that support



Seniors Caroline Jens, Savannah Green and Shreya Sheel edit their video on March 11.

what he is saying, hover above him. At times, Shaked will also talk over more meaningful animations.

"We [were] very excited [when we came up with the project] because it was different, but still just as ambitious as a normal documentary or fictional film," Chen said.

The project contains elements of everything students are exposed to in MAP: animation, film, screenwriting and graphic design. Because this senior project is more time-consuming than the average one, their group is slightly larger than others to make sure that it can be completed on time.

Hayes and Chen are working on graphics, Sheel and Jens on screenwriting and Spirakis and Green on animation. Everyone takes part in filming; and as the project nears an end in late March/early April, everyone will contribute to the editing process. The project is due on April 13.

Although each group member knew that she would not be the best at creating all the aspects of the video, Sheel said, "it's become our challenge to learn and make it the best project we can."

To complete the script, Sheel and Jens conducted extensive interviews with ev-

ery MAP teacher to make sure the video accurately portrayed each class.

"It's been nice talking to all the teachers, but it's also been like 'Wow, we have to include all these ideas in a 10-minute film,'" Sheel said. "We also want to make it humorous, so have to find that balance between humor and accuracy."

The group did all its filming at the school using the SHSTV equipment since the SHSTV set worked well and had a green screen they could use.

Because the project was so extensive, the group had to make the most of all their senior MAP lab days, including optional filming days.

Although the group has faced some setbacks while working on the project, Sheel said it has allowed for them all to not only learn new skills and practice teamwork, but also to thoroughly reflect on their experiences in MAP.

Practicing these "soft skills," she said, have been an invaluable part of her four years in MAP.

"The whole mantra of MAP is collaboration and teamwork, and both are so important after high school," Sheel said. "We are going to have to work in teams a lot and things aren't always going to go your way." ♦

## Where do I eat lunch? Check Thumaty's Timely app

BY CAITLYN CHEN & ELIZABETH LEE

As the lunch bell rings, upperclassmen rush out to the parking lot, eager to grab food before their next class.

One of them, senior Michael Guo, scrambles into his car and pulls up the Timely app on his phone. He types in "fast" and selects "40 minutes."

In a few seconds, he is on the way to La Cueva Mexican Grill, four miles away and a nine minute drive from school.

"[Timely is] a really useful and simple app," Guo said. "And what makes it even more awesome is that one of my good friends made it."

Timely, created by senior Aakash Thumaty, allows users to find places to eat at within a certain timeframe. Users can input a search term (i.e., Indian, Mexican, fast) and how much time they have, and the app will then generate a list of restaurants that fit the criteria.

"I was inspired to build the app [after] observing students at our school [during lunch]," Thumaty said. "I figured the app would at least partially make going off campus for lunch a bit easier."

Thumaty spent approximately three weeks working on the app last November and created its functionality by using a combination of Four-Square, a Yelp-like startup that allows users to check in at specific locations, and Google Maps for the application's programming interface.

According to Thumaty, the process of coding the app wasn't difficult for him, since he had previously shipped three other apps to the Apple App Store, including Shape Match in the beginning of 2015 and Yo From and Colors in 2014.

Instead, what Thumaty found most difficult was deciding what information was most essential to users.

Above all, he wanted to minimize the number of features and keep the app simplistic.

"You can have an app with a million features, but people will only find it too complicated," Thumaty said. "People come to an app with a certain purpose, and as app developers, we have to cater to that."

With this in mind, Thumaty created his app with limited features, but the app still has gained approximately 5,000 active users.

Thumaty said it is better to provide an app and try to satisfy a small community of people like his peers than try to make it perfect for everybody.

Out of all the app's features, the biggest addition to the app was the time-dot graph, a visual timeline that maps out the estimated time required by the user to drive to a restaurant, eat and drive back, since it seemed to be the most useful feature for users.

At first, this feature was planned to be placed in the "detail" view of the app, but was moved to the main table view

because of its convenience.

Because Thumaty said he was trying to help people in Saratoga specifically, he wanted input from his fellow peers on every aspect of the app, from design to functionality.

His friends, seniors Helen Chen and Spencer Yen, contributed to the design and optimization of the interface, respectively. Yen, for example, proposed the time-dot graph.

"I suggested where to implement and highlight certain features so that they would be able to provide the most appeal to users," Yen said.

Thumaty also sought more

feedback from the school by contacting principal Paul Robinson, who had mentioned Timely in one of his recent Week at a Glance emails.

Through Robinson's email, Thumaty was able to gather feedback from his peers. Many of the suggestions he received dealt with potential new features like average wait times at destinations.

In the future, Thumaty hopes to receive more feedback from others to help him gather ideas for updates on his old apps, while also offering inspiration for new app ideas.

"Whenever I come across a problem, I want to be able to build something that solves it, and then distribute it to the world," Thumaty said. "I'm happy with the overall result of what I worked to create, and I hope users of the app find it to be useful in their everyday lives." ♦

GRAPHIC BY MAYA PRASAD

# STUDENT VOICE and the PETITION

GRAPHIC BY CHARIN PARK

## Analysis: What we learned from Sadies

BY Kevin Chow & Amith Galivanche

You're an upset student. The administration has made a decision, and you vehemently disagree with it. You feel like they don't know the students' side.

What is the best approach? Lately, it seems that the default method is as easy as a Change.org petition. But evidence suggests other more traditional methods are likely to be more effective.

The process that went into putting the Sadie Hawkins dance back onto the school event calendar is an example of the ideal method of negotiations between students and administration.

It was a tough argument for the dance and Spring Fling commissions to make to the administration that Sadies would be successful if it did happen this year. In the recent past, the dance has failed to attract many students. Last spring, 100 tickets were sold just two days before the actual event to enable it to go forward; the year prior, the event was altogether cancelled due to a lack of ticket sales. So, up until Feb. 29, the Sadie Hawkins dance had not been included on this year's calendar of school events.

Yet after two months of preparation, the case for Sadies was successfully made by head dance commissioner junior Danielle Berkowitz-Sklar and head Spring Fling commissioner junior Eileen Toh.

The result: Sadies is now scheduled to take place on March 26 in the Small Gym.

The success by Berkowitz-Sklar and Toh in bringing Sadies back as a school event was due to multiple efforts. (Refer to page 1 for a more detailed account.)

There was indeed something that resembled a petition created by the team — a written sheet of student signatures and student support — but this was strictly meant to complement face-to-face discussion with the administrators.

Berkowitz-Sklar said they recognized the stigma against petitions, saying she didn't want their effort to be seen as just a petition. "We don't want it to come across in an offensive kind of way," she said.

According to assistant principal Brian Safine, student-made petitions are more likely to work when there's "a discussion" between the petitioners and the petitioned.

That's how the effort to put Sadies back on the calendar succeeded.

Various student groups in the past have made petitions, but their record of success is mixed at best. Accessible and distributable, petitions — online petitions in particular — have become the

go-to vocalizer for high school students with something to say, but they've gathered somewhat of a bad reputation.

Last December, junior Julia Vita created an online petition to add more buses to Winter Formal. More students than expected wanted to purchase tickets for the dance, so there were initially not enough buses booked for transportation.

Vita wanted to immediately bring this to the administration's attention.

Vita said that the petition "had a really great response" and received around 500 signatures.

Yet the effectiveness of that petition remains unclear.

The reason that there were not enough buses booked, according to ASB Board Representative senior Kanaai Shah, is that the original maximum capacity of the venue, as decided by the people in charge of the venue, had already been reached. Activities director Rebeca Marshburn and activities secretary Anna Ybarra had already been communicating with the managers of the venue and trying to book another bus, regardless of the petition.

Vita added that Berkowitz-Sklar told her, when Marshburn eventually heard of the petition "she was a little upset, because [the petition] was targeting administration, and there was nothing else they could do about the situation."

By the time of Winter Formal, another bus had been added.

While petitions can be seen as confrontational, they gauge the level of support ideas hold.

For example, in response to the controversy surrounding next year's bell schedule, junior Max Vo created an online petition in support of the original proposal by the Sadies

Advisory Committee. When word spread that, in light of community concerns, superintendent Bob Mistele instead favored a schedule modeled after Los Gatos High School's, Vo was among those who were outraged.

According to Vo, his petition served as an "outsource for expression" to those who left a signature or a comment. "Sign this petition to let your voice be heard," he wrote.

Located in the cyberspace of Change.org, Vo's petition garnered the attention of many and the support of over 750 online signatures within a week.

While Mistele's decision remains changed, Vo's intention was to create a rallying cry and draw attention to what he and his supporters perceived as an injustice.

"At the time, nobody had publicly spoken against the change in a way that would unite many opinions," Vo said.

Online petitions are a means for amplifying student voices, garnering support from a large student body and often faculty as well. That's evident in Vo's online petition, with its slew of supporters and string of perceptive comments.

Petitions can be successful — that's something both principal Paul Robinson and Safine agree with.

But it's when "petitions come out of the blue, without any context or any face-to-face conversations" that they lack efficacy, Safine said.

Equally important, Robinson said, is an in-person talk with the administration or student leadership — it's always a reliable way to get student opinion across, a point proven by the reinstatement of Sadies.

"Petitions can be misleading," Robinson said, "[But] I really trust face-to-face communication." ♦

**PETITIONS**  
created by shs students & alumni

**2011 CONTEST BAN OF THE SPOON GAME ASSASSINS**  
→ ADDRESSED TO SHS ADMINISTRATION  
CREATED BY: multiples people  
The way the administrators took the spoon showed that the school didn't respect the fun the students had around the campus... we were all frustrated at the administration.  
-2013 alumna Michael Cheung

**2011 ADDING MULTIVARIABLE CALCULUS**  
→ ADDRESSED TO THE SARATOGA HIGH SCHOOL MATH DEPARTMENT  
CREATED BY: alumna Mustafa Rehanjind  
"In a school where math is a way of life, it's ridiculous that the teaching staff do not satisfy this thirst by providing the most difficult and engaging classes."

**2014 REINSTATE HISTORY TEACHER JIM CHIN FOR THE 14-15 SCHOOL YR**  
→ ADDRESSED TO PRINCIPAL PAUL ROBINSON AND THE SCHOOL BOARD  
CREATED BY: seniors Kelly & Tao  
"We, the undersigned, are concerned community members who urge our administrators to act now to restate Mr. Jim Chin to his position as teacher at Saratoga High School."

ALL PETITIONS WERE UNSUCCESSFUL

GRAPHIC BY ERIC SZE

# Want your voice heard? Just holler!

lincredible STUDENTS HAVE A LARGER SAY THAN THEY THINK



Allison Lin

As ASB co-clubs commissioner, I have learned that only a minority of students know the amount of power they have in student-affiliated affairs. While ASB does conduct votes on various events and issues, its votes are based on what it hears from students in the classroom and their experiences as upperclassmen.

The ASB meets every Monday at lunch and bi-weekly at 6 p.m. with the class officers of each grade. At lunch meetings, students, parents and teachers are encouraged to present their ideas, concerns and desires to the ASB. No matter the topic, ASB discusses what was presented as a group and conducts a formal vote to make a decision. If the ASB officers cannot reach a conclusion within the lunch meeting, the ASB secretary places the item on the night agenda so that they can receive further input from the class officers before voting again.

Everyone is welcome to attend the night meetings. These feature multiple open discussions regarding upcoming events, recapping past events and planning schoolwide activities. All important



2015-16 ASB

issues are on the table, and the meetings run for approximately 45 minutes. If people want to give their own input, they simply raise their hands and wait for an ASB officer to call on them.

Throughout first semester, a few students did attend these meetings to tell ASB what they wanted to see happen in the near future.

Junior Nidhi Jain, for example, is passionate about the world of technology and wished to start a Girls Who Code group on campus. However, she did not want to apply to become an official club, since this group would meet after school and receive all funding and resources from a national level organization. Thus, last September, Jain contacted an ASB officer and was instructed to appear at an ASB Monday lunch meeting. There, she presented her idea, and it was approved shortly after with computer science teacher Judi Heher as the adviser.

One student appeared before ASB in November, saying that he wanted to see more murals on the building walls.

ASB has now set up an application system for student artists who wish to paint the murals to present their artistic designs and is currently choosing winners.

Another student wanted dividers be-



Clubs commissioner Meera Rachamalla, secretary Spring Ma and vice president Nihar Agrawal brainstorm ideas for next year's school kickoff activities.

tween the urinals in the boys' bathrooms. ASB officers immediately brought this issue to the attention of school activities director Rebeca Marshburn and principal Paul Robinson, but as it turns out, dividers between public school urinals are prohibited due to a state law.

Back when ASB announced it had over \$280,000 in its account last fall, the officers contemplated for weeks on how to spend the money in the best ways possible.

With students' best interests in mind, the ASB decided to open up the discussion to the attendees of the night meeting.

Many class officers mentioned several clubs on campus that could use small amounts of the money for effective purposes. After careful deliberation, the ASB set up a grant system in which any

group or organization on campus can apply for a grant up to \$500.

The application required the groups to state the reason for a grant and how they plan to spend the money.

So far, grants have been issued to several groups: the journalism program received a new camera, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club for competition preparation material, History Bowl team new buzzers and Robotics an improved PrideBot. At the least, if students are unable or unwilling to attend any of the meetings, they can simply open Facebook to message or email an ASB officer to share an idea or express a concern. Student leadership at the school is also open to anybody who applies and is willing to do the work. And above all, no voice ever goes unheard, so long as it is voiced. ♦

## Admin, students discuss SHS tradition

BY Nidhi Jain & Caitlin Ju

Homecoming, Prom and rallies — these events are what many students consider to be the school's core traditions. But in this past year, administrators and students alike have taken a second look at certain controversial or low-attended events, leading to the difficult question: Who decides when to keep or get rid of certain traditions?

Before deciding which traditions should be maintained, they must first define what tradition is. According to Spanish teacher Arnaldo Rodriguex, who has been teaching at SHS since the 1970s, student interest most significantly determines what makes a tradition.

"Some traditions like Sadies have

lost the zest that they had," Rodriguex said. "Things go up and down. There may be a trend that the [dance attendance] is going back up, and we should bring back those dances that were traditional."

Because schools tend to make their own traditions, different traditions arise and become the norm at different schools. For example, at Los Gatos High School, the Homecoming king and queen are crowned at a coronation dance separate from the football game, while Saratoga has a coronation ceremony during halftime. According to Rodriguex, Saratoga at one point copied many of the activities and events that Los Gatos held, as Saratoga admired the strong school spirit that Los Gatos had cultivated. However, he said, now "we

have our own identity, and some of the things are different here, because we want to make our own difference."

Principal Paul Robinson agreed that the school itself makes traditions but is often influenced by nearby schools. He also said that schools slowly begin to create their own cultures over time.

"There are a lot of things that we do just as a habit that evolves into tradition," Robinson said. "Quad Day performances are not a tradition at every school. It's just something that has evolved over time and is an integral part of what we do."

Robinson also pointed out how events like Speak Up for Change are growing into meaningful traditions that show how "we treat and value each other."

"Traditions become part of a culture,"

he said. "While some people might not understand why they got started, there was a purpose for it, and it was to add something positive to the culture."

That's why Robinson believes that when traditions begin to leave a negative impression, they need to be improved.

This came up when a rally tradition molded into something head rally commissioner Isa Berardo said she was not morally comfortable with.

"We stopped chanting 'Go home freshmen' because it was hurtful," Berardo said. "There is a big class of 14-year-olds coming to a new school and we shun them away."

In response to these negative traditions, student leaders and the adminis-

tration have been working to add a positive vibe to some events. Often times, they can judge how effective the change was based on student response.

Robinson used Sadies as an example of an event that if adjusted would generate more interest.

"When we had to cancel Sadies [last year] because it wouldn't be worth running it, the outcry was minimal," he said. "If you want to create an event and Sadies is not bringing people together, is there something else we can do?"

Tradition does not always need to be preserved when it no longer fits with the changes in society. For example, Robinson said that the original reason behind Sadies was to give girls a chance to ask the guys out, but now there is not a need to set aside a dance for that purpose.

"When it comes to cancelling an event, you change it because times, thoughts and the culture have changed to where it's not a huge thing anymore," Robinson said.

Another example is ASB's replacement of the Kickoff Dance with a Welcome Back Movie night, which resulted in increased attendance. Robinson said that a reason for changing the event was that freshmen had voiced their reservations about coming to the dance, afraid of people "freaking" with them.

Robinson said he regards student voice as important in these decisions and believes students are the ones who know the "heartbeat" of the school better than anyone else and should be the ones driving what should be kept as tradition.

"If there's one thing I know about tradition, what happens on our campus is what we make of it. No matter what was done and what we will do, you've only got four years," Robinson said. "[If] you want to get something done, gather the support, get to the right leaders on campus and make it happen." ♦

### >> historical cases

#### TINKER VS. DES MOINES (1969)

Students were suspended from school for wearing anti-Vietnam war arm bands. The Supreme Court ruled that students do not shed their constitutional rights (of free speech) at the school gate.

#### WESTSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT VS. MERGENS (1990)

Ordered a school to permit students to meet on campus and discuss religion because it does not amount to a "state sponsorship of a religion."

#### VERNONIA SCHOOL DISTRICT (CALIFORNIA) VS. ACTON (1995)

Upheld the constitutionality of the drug testing regimen implemented by public schools. Student athletes were required to submit to drug testing before being allowed to participate in sports. 10 percent of athletes were selected for testing.

#### WEST SIDE COMMUNITY SCHOOL VS. MERGENS (1990)

Over whether saluting the flag in school violated students' First Amendment rights. The Supreme Court ruled that if a school allows clubs to be chartered, they have to allow clubs of all religions and political ideologies, giving more power to a student's freedom of speech.

Reporting done by Shreya Tumu

SOURCES: FIRSTAMENDMENTSCHOOLS.ORG, OYES.ORG, USCOURTS.GOV

# Students find niches in lesser-known schools

BY Claire Rhee & Oksana Trifonova

Class of 2015 alumna Helen Wong walked through the campus of Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass., one chilly day last fall, carrying a paper bag full of bubble-wrapped, museum-grade artifacts for her lab research. She held the bag with immense care, moving briskly in the direction of her dorm room alongside her friends. When one of her friends tripped and almost kicked the precious bag, her heart nearly jumped out of her chest.

This is just one of the many unique experiences Wong has encountered at Brandeis. In high school, Wong was a member of the Falcon staff and worked as an opinion editor during her senior year. She was also the president of the Model United Nations (MUN) club for two years.

After graduating, she found her place at Brandeis, where she is on a pre-law track, double majoring in history and health science and policy. Although Brandeis is not a well known university among Saratoga students, it ranks as No. 34 school in the 2016 edition of Best Colleges from U.S. News and benefits from its smaller size of around 3,729 undergraduate students.

"I knew what kind of college experience I wanted," Wong said. "I wanted to go to a smaller school, where I could network with professors, be able to do independent research and get to know the people in my chosen course of study."

Since the school is one of the best places that allows undergraduates to complete independent research, Wong was able to conduct several projects this past semester and is hoping to gain funding from the university to continue expanding her research on chemical compounds in ancient Mediterranean perfumes this semester.

"I'm very grateful to have found these kinds of opportunities," Wong said. "I'm constantly growing [because] I have the chance to seek out things I want to explore."

Another Class of 2015 alumnus pursuing an unusual college path is Berlin Chen, who is attending Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. At the school, he participates in the Peaslee Debate Society, writes for the Swarthmore Phoenix, the school's newspaper and is a chaser for the Swarthmore Quidditch team.

Chen said that he was actually deciding between attending University of California, Berkeley and Swarthmore College, calling the two schools "polar opposites." Although Berkeley would seem like the natural choice, he eventually decided to go to Swarthmore. While Swarthmore is a small school, it has a large endowment, so the quality of education is high.

"The professors know students by their names and make themselves very much available," Chen said. "Many of them strive to treat a class more as a conversation and less as a lecture."

Chen said that his political science class, which only has five students, is "a



Courtesy of BERLIN CHEN

series of conversations." Every class, the professor actually drives the students to her house, where they discuss the books they were assigned. There are no tests, only reading assignments for discussion.

Even though this class is a very rare case, Chen said that it proves the point that Swarthmore provides opportunities that many large universities do not.

As of now, Harris is leaning toward majoring in either Latin American studies, Women's Studies or English. At Saratoga, Harris serves as a class representative for the class of 2016. She is an avid competitive dancer and is also working closely with a health promoter program in Guatemala created by Stanford's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies.

At Oberlin, a department called Experimental College offers uncommon



Courtesy of HELEN WONG

Left: 2015 alumnus Berlin Chen poses in front of Clothier Hall at Swarthmore. Top: 2015 alumna Helen Wong talks with her friend about a homework project in a library at Brandeis University.

courses taught by Oberlin students, administrators, faculty and even townspeople, such as Taiko drumming and swing dance.

Oberlin's emphasis on experimental learning is exactly what Harris is looking for.

"I really wanted something more out of the box, with more opportunities that still had a dedication to learning," Harris said.

In addition, the school offers a great study abroad program and also has a dance program that Harris would like to join.

Although Oberlin, Brandeis and Swarthmore are not the most well-known colleges in the Eastern United States, they still provide the same enjoyable, exciting environment that an Ivy League or University of California school would have, these students said.

"I may not go to an Ivy, but I still go to a well-ranked school and I make the most of my time here so that my education is really worth it," Wong said. ♦

# sports >>

saratogafalcon.org/sports

## Freshman races with Sugar Bowl Ski Team

BY Caitlyn Chen & Charin Park

After the varsity soccer team qualified for CCS in a tough tied game against Santa Clara on Friday, Feb. 12, freshman Isabella Taylor wished she could have stayed with her team to celebrate. Instead, she hunched over her car seat, scribbling over the remnants of her math homework as she began her weekly four-hour drive to Tahoe.

Eight hours later, Taylor caught a bus at 6 a.m. to get to the Sugar Bowl Ski Resort, prepping for another day of ski racing on the Sugar Bowl Ski Team.

"Driving up every weekend for ski team makes me very sleep deprived, but it's totally worth it because I'd sacrifice anything for something I love to do," Taylor said.

During the November to April ski season, Taylor usually practices with the Sugar Bowl Ski Team from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. every weekend day at the resort, though she also spends some of those days at races at various locations.

While it's been tough to juggle two different sports, Taylor said she brings the same mindset to both endeavors.

Both prior to and during the races, Taylor said she makes sure she is focused because skiing, like soccer, is not just a physical sport but also a mental exercise.

"I mentally prepare [for each race] by picturing the slope in my head," Taylor

said. "I have to make quick decisions depending on the condition of the run and remove all the fear and anxiety I may have of messing up. I have to try to become fearless."

Taylor began skiing at the age of 4 when her parents, both avid skiers, took her on her first ski trip.

"Before I joined the ski team, it was mostly my dad who taught me," Taylor said. "I have only had one ski lesson in my life prior to joining the ski team, which is really rare."

Only six years after she started skiing, Taylor travelled to Winter Park, Colo., for her first competition: the 2011 National Standard Race (NASTAR) Championships.

"The environment at the NASTAR nationals was so supportive and very exciting," Taylor said. "Going down the course itself was so much fun that I knew I wanted to do it again."

After her great experience at NASTAR, Taylor, her 13-year-old brother and father all joined Open League Racing, a recreational racing program.

From 2012 to 2014, Taylor competed in 20 to 30 races with the Open League Racing program.

But after her two years of skiing with the Open League Racing program, Taylor said she didn't feel challenged enough and wanted to get more professional training, so she joined the Sugar Bowl Ski Team.

Currently, she competes in the Slalom, Giant Slalom and Super Giant



Courtesy of ISABELLA TAYLOR

Freshman Isabella Taylor skis in Squaw Valley's Far Western League Race in February.

Slalom events. All three involve skiing through a series of gates, which are marked by pairs of red and blue plastic poles. The events differ mainly by gate length: slalom is the shortest race with the least distance between gates. Both the giant and super giant slaloms have longer, paneled gates.

Taylor plans on continuing to juggle school and skiing throughout high school and even into college.

From her skiing experience, Taylor

said she not only has become a better athlete, but also has learned from her mistakes, building more confidence to face her next challenge, whether joining a college ski team or competing in the Olympics.

But most of all, Taylor said she has learned to trust herself.

"No matter how much advice the coaches will give me, it's really up to me on my ability to push my limits," she said. ♦

### GIRLS' SOCCER: CCS

## Heartbreaking semifinal loss ends stellar season

BY Karissa Dong, Daphne Liu & Ami Nachiappan

The lead came early for the Falcons in their Division II CCS semifinal game against Menlo on March 2, but it didn't last.

Early in the contest, senior co-captain and striker Lauren Plesse made a clean pass to senior Kimberly Chen, who scored into the upper right corner of the net on a shot from the 18-yard box. The

crowd, eagerly watching from the stands of neutral venue Westmont, roared in response.

After a half-time break and several missed shots on goal in the second half, the two teams battled with a surge of energy and excitement as the clock ticked down to the last 15 minutes of the game.

But in the last moments of the match, Menlo striker Cleo King managed to steal the ball, netting an equalizer and leaving the near-victorious Falcons stunned.

Going into overtime, the Falcon girls took the field with intense belief and focus. Just as the game, tied at 1-1, appeared to be going into penalty kicks in the last couple of minutes of the OT, Menlo's Hunter MacDonald scored the game winner off a cross ball. After the Falcons' last-minute corner kick was cleared by the Menlo defense, the girls' hopes of making the CCS finals for the first time since 1984 were dashed.

Menlo went on to win the Division II championship on March 5 against Sacred Heart Prep.

"We all left it on the field and we knew that we didn't deserve to lose that game," senior goalkeeper and co-captain Isa Berardo said. "We played our hearts out and when you have a group of people who are willing to fight until the very end, that's when history is made."

A brilliant season, ending with a devastating last-minute winner from Menlo, witnessed the height of the girls' soccer team in over two decades.

A combination of Berardo's strong goalkeeping, Plesse and Kimberly Chen's striker duo and a brick-wall defense led by senior fullback Kaitlyn

Chen and freshman fullback Sasha Pickard were keys to an unforgettable year for the girls.

"I think the dynamics of the girls off the field is the best it has ever been," Plesse said. "We all respect each other which translates into how we play on the field."

In the earlier stages of CCS, the Falcons played Santa Cruz for a resounding quarterfinal victory of 4-0 on Feb. 27. A brace from Plesse, direct goal from

you create 20 chances to score, but only score two goals," head coach Ben Maxwell said. "On another night we could have won the game by 10 goals, but we had the resilience and fight to push through and win the game. That was the most important thing."

The girls grabbed third place in the upper De Anza league — recording their highest league rank in years and guaranteeing a spot in CCS — just above fierce rival Los Gatos.

On their senior night game on Feb. 17, the girls battled in the heavy downpour against Los Gatos, triumphantly defeating them 2-0 with both goals scored in the first half. Outplaying the Wildcats' defense, Kimberly Chen scored the first, with an assist by Plesse. Kaitlyn Chen, poised just outside of the box during a corner kick from Kimberly Chen, struck the ball into the bottom corner of the net for the team's second goal.

"The senior night game was just awesome," Kimberly Chen said. "It wasn't our best performance, but it was what we needed to get third in the league, something we haven't done in years."

Against Santa Clara away on Feb. 12, the Falcons tied 2-2, with a goal from Pickard in the first half and a penalty from Kaitlyn Chen in the last ten minutes of the second. Earlier, on Feb. 10, the girls lost 1-0 at home to Palo Alto after putting up a good performance; though the opponents were missing their star player due to an injury, the Falcons failed to convert any chances to goal.

Though this season marks the end of high school soccer for eight seniors, the memories and accomplishments of an incredible run in league and CCS will last forever.

"I never felt this close with a team for high school ever," Kaitlyn Chen said. "The chemistry and how close we got as a team made this season really special." ♦

## Does Man need sleep when volunteering calls?

BY Jenny Qian & Vibha Seshadri

Junior Vincent Man was dressed in his taekwon do uniform: a white top with hints of black, black pants and a black belt with his name embroidered on it. With a smile on his face, he welcomed the two white belts who would be entering his class at Hidden Dragon taekwon do that day: Kayden and David. Soon enough, Man was thoroughly engrossed in the lesson, teaching the two 8-year-old-boys three skills so intently that he forgot about the time, until one of the boys pointed out the lesson had gone 30 minutes over the allotted time.

"I was trying to make them black belts within their first hour of experience with taekwon do," Man joked.

When Man was 6, he needed a way to lose weight and lower his high cholesterol. His parents' solution was taekwon do. Today, that decision still rings true as one of the best he has ever made. During the summer and the first half of the fall, Man spends his Monday and Wednesday evenings teaching this martial art form to other children at Hidden Dragon Taekwondo, located in Milpitas. During the second half of fall, he volunteers there on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Man began teaching at Hidden Dragon on after getting his black belt when he turned 13, motivated to give back what he had learned.

For him, teaching there has always been fun because he gets to share his interest with new students who have untapped potential.

But Hidden Dragon is far from the

only organization Man volunteers for. He has been a regular volunteer since seventh grade, with over 660 volunteer hours through coaching middle school volleyball and fundraising and working at the American Cancer Society.

During volleyball season, Man spends up to eight hours each week in the fall coaching a team at Sacred Heart. He coaches on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Sometimes, [I get] so caught up in what to do next that two hours pass by really quickly.



junior Vincent Man

from 3:30 to 5 p.m. during the second half of fall.

"Last year was my first year coaching volleyball for sixth graders from Sacred Heart," said Man. "I was nervous, yet confident that I was capable of training these students to get better."

Under Man, the team achieved its first-ever win. The challenges as well as the fun Man experiences teaching the kids motivates him to be a leader for these younger students.

"I volunteer at these places because they are related to me as an individual," Man said. "I love doing what I do, especially if it means improving someone's skills."

Man also gives back to the community through methods besides teaching.

He works for the Los Gatos Discovery Shop for the American Cancer Society every Sunday from noon to 2 p.m. The shop sells used goods to raise money for the organization.

Man decided to work at the American Cancer Society's discovery shop due to his family's extensive medical history with cancer.

As customers walk through the doors, Man greets everyone with a smiling face, eager to start a conversation with anyone. At the same time, he organizes the shop and sorts through donations.

"The ambience is mainly very hectic but enjoyable," Man said. "Sometimes, [I get] so caught up in what to do next that two hours pass by really quickly."

Despite the large time commitment Man has assigned to volunteering, he always exudes a somewhat cherubic demeanor, making it hard to believe he is a high school junior.

This year, he is taking two AP classes, so Man must balance his commitment to volunteering with his heavy school course load, which he accomplishes through his own extensive planning and

loving support from his family.

"School is a priority, so I try to shift my schedule around for these activities. My family is willing to support me all the way in anything, and I love that," Man said. "They drive me everywhere and love my involvement in the community."

As a majority of his volunteering occurs on weekends or after school, Man says he prioritizes volunteering over hanging out with friends as his little break from school.

He describes volunteering to be similar to a sport or other extracurricular activity.

Despite Man's effort to plan his schedule, he sometimes is left with only three hours to sleep on some nights. Yet, Man says he would never give up his commitment to community service. Man's love for service has inspired him to continue throughout the future.

After high school, he plans on looking for other volunteering opportunities to balance with his schedule in college.

"I don't think I'll ever stop volunteering because it means so much to me," said Man. "Being able to give back to my community is so rewarding, and it definitely defines my character." ♦

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BASKETBALL >>

continued from pg. 1

to a box-and-one defense allowed the girls to contain the Warriors' drives and shots.

"In the second half we were not panicking and made less silly mistakes," said senior guard Nicole Prowse. "We told each other that we're not out of this game and made sure their scoring didn't get into our heads."

The team was led in scoring by junior guard Aryana Goodarzi, who had 15 points, and junior guard Rachel Davey, who notched 13 points, six rebounds, six assists and four steals. Senior post Eleni Spirakis had 12 points, 12 rebounds and six blocked shots, while senior Erin Norris had eight points, six rebounds and four steals.

"We transitioned really well to get the ball down the court," Rachel Davey said. "In addition, Prowse played really great defense on their best player, which shut them down."

Five days later the Falcons hosted their first NorCal playoff game in front of a large, enthusiastic pro-Falcon crowd. The contest proved to be a tough one, ending in a 47-39 loss to a strong Inderkum High School team from the Sacramento area. Because key players Spirakis and Norris fouled out in the beginning of the third and fourth quar-

ter, the girls had trouble scoring. "We played really well, but it just didn't work out," said senior post Savannah Green. "We played our hearts out and kept close with the Tigers the whole time."

Following their loss in NorCals, the girls concluded their season with a CCS Championship trophy and a third-place finish in the difficult De Anza League with an overall record of 18-9.

"There was definitely some tough competition in league, but we did amazing overall," Goodarzi said. "Probably our most memorable game was defeating our long time rival, Palo Alto."

The girls' 52-20 win in the semifinals of CCS against Hillsdale on March 2 marked the first time a Saratoga basketball team advanced to the CCS finals.

The team was able to achieve the blowout victory by minimizing the number of 3-pointers the Knights took and by harassing them with a full-court press. Norris had five steals and six deflections in the game, effectively stifling the Knights' transition game.

"We were very determined to win that game so that we could move on to the finals and play at Santa Clara University," Goodarzi said. "Although we started off a bit slow, we soon got into our rhythm and shut them down."

Earlier, in the CCS quarterfinals on Feb. 27, the team won 47-35 against Notre-Dame San Jose. Having been picked at the No. 1 seed in Division III of CCS, the Falcons were able to receive



Coach Mike Davey bursts out after senior co-captain and post Eleni Spirakis fouls out.

two byes before playing in the quarterfinals of CCS against Notre Dame, allowing the team to mentally prepare for the challenges ahead.

"We had an entire week to prepare for CCS and focus on our skills," Norris said. "The bracket was also set up nicely because we weren't playing the toughest teams, and it allowed us to focus more on each game, which ultimately led us to the finals."

The Falcons' accomplishments were the result of their individual improvement during the games, Coach Davey said.

"You can only control your attitude, effort and focus," he said. "I think focusing on things you can control are the goals rather than we win league, let's win state and other things you can't control."

Players wore their CCS championship medals to school on the Monday after their victory, and they said they'll never forget this championship season.

"I'm so proud of every single one of my teammates this basketball season," Spirakis said. "We grew so much as a team and it is amazing to say that we made history together." ♦

BADMINTON

Falcons suffer early losses, look to improve

BY IsabelleYang & JasonZhao

The Falcons lost their first two games against Cupertino on March 8 and Monta Vista on March 10, both with scores of 20-10.

Returning players hold the top spots on the team. Sophomore Stephen Ding plays at No. 1 boys' singles, junior Josh Li and senior Partha Shah at No. 1 boys' doubles, junior Megan Fung and senior Amanda Rhee at No. 1 girls' doubles and junior Spring Ma and senior Michael Owyang at No. 1 mixed doubles.

Key new additions include freshman Nicholas Zhang, Mark Guidry and Sherrie Shen.

In the game against Monta Vista, the top team in the De Anza league last year, many of the Falcons played close games. Zhang, the No. 2 boys' sin-

gles player, won his first set. In his second set, Zhang tied 20-20 but managed to pull ahead to secure the set 22-20.

Ma and Owyang also won their first set, but their opponents managed to win the second set 20-22 and went on to win the third set.

"We lost our momentum in the second and third set and lost a lot of consecutive points," Owyang said. "After winning the first set, they adjusted to our play style and next time we need to make more adjustments to counter that."

Similarly, there were many close matches throughout the match against Cupertino. Junior Mason Tian, the No. 3 boys' singles player, won his first set but struggled to finish the game as his opponent clawed back and won the next two sets 21-17 and 21-16.

"My opponent broke my mo-

mentum by just clearing all the time and I couldn't set anything up," Tian said. "In the future, I need to work on changing my pace so that I can catch my opponent off guard."

Similarly, Li and Shah faced a tough opponent from Cupertino, losing in two sets. "We need to play more so we can be more fluid on the court," Li said.

Mixed doubles No. 1, mixed doubles No. 2 and boys' singles No. 2 all lost their first sets but managed to come back and win their next two sets.

Assistant coach Chris Do attributed the Falcons' loss partly to the gym's lighting and the higher roof at Cupertino, which caused the players to make mistakes they normally wouldn't have.

"Small mistakes can turn costly and will affect the overall score," Do said. "That's some-



Sophomore No.1 Stephen Ding serves against Monta Vista on March 10.

thing we're going to work on so we can prevent [our loss] from happening."

After these initial losses, the Falcons are looking to learn from their mistakes.

"It's good experience for a lot of the younger players, and

we can switch around our strategies and target the their weaknesses when we play them later," Owyang said.

Due to printing deadlines, the Falcon was unable to cover the March 15 game against Gunn. ♦

GIRLS' LACROSSE

Lacrosse becomes sport No. 1 for talented junior

BY CaitlynChen & VibhaSeshadri

When Julia Vita began playing lacrosse four years ago, she did so because she didn't have a spring sport and wanted to stay active. After being placed on the varsity team as a starter, she discovered her love for the sport and her fellow teammates.

Vita, now a junior, is a co-captain and starting midfielder for the team.

According to Vita, playing good lacrosse is not a result of just strength and speed, but stick and ball handling. To improve her own stick skills, footwork

and agility, Vita often carves out 20 minutes of her day after practice to watch college-level lacrosse at Stanford or even on TV and online, so that she can learn and apply techniques used by college-level players.

"Lacrosse takes a lot of dedication to try and get better and constantly challenge yourself," Vita said.

Additionally, Vita hopes to improve the team's chemistry by working with her fellow captains, seniors Erin Norris, Anne Rollinson and Talia Clement. The girls plan to do more activities outside of practice to help reduce the number of cliques within the team.

"I love working with [Vita] because she is so naturally athletic and talented, but she also works really hard to improve her skills," Rollinson said. "She's very good at leading by example."

This year, the varsity team roster consists of nine seniors, five juniors and seven sophomores. With a relatively small roster and young team, Vita said it could be difficult to make playoffs.

Nonetheless, Vita is looking forward to the upcoming games, bonding with her teammates and finding cohesion in their playing.

"Last year, half the team was sophomores, and since many upperclassmen

didn't come back to play this year, it's like that again. But we have great coaches and a strong starting lineup so I have high hopes," Vita said. "Once we start playing together and getting comfortable with each other I think we'll go far."

Vita hopes to continue playing lacrosse in college and perhaps professionally. She is currently going through the recruiting process to play in college, and her top targets are the University of Colorado, Oregon State and San Diego State.

The girls will be playing rival Los Gatos on their first De Anza league game on March 23. ♦

BOYS' BASKETBALL: CCS

Falcons upset by last-second shot in quarterfinals

BY AmiNachiappan

Small forward senior Tyler Yoshihara scrambled to defend the Aptos sophomore shooting guard Rashuan Wooden in the last few seconds of the CCS Division III playoff game played on the Saratoga High court on Feb. 23. Just as the buzzer went off—or slightly thereafter—Wooden's 3-point shot swished into the basket, leading the Mariners to a 45-42 victory.

The Aptos crowd celebrated, but on the other end, Saratoga fans burst into protest over the controversial game-winning basket. However, there was discrepancy between the two referees. As one referee seemed to call the basket invalid, the other referee said the shot counted; the latter ended up giving the 3-point shot to the Mariners. The two referees never consulted, and the one who made the final call bolted from the gym immediately afterward.

In a video posted on Facebook by junior Gautham Arunkumar, some people say the ball appears to still be in Wooden's hand as the buzzer sounds, mean-

“**Though [the loss] was devastating, we played our best the last three weeks of the season and stuck together.**



senior Gabriel Fong

ing it should not have counted.

"It was pretty obvious that [the basket] was after the buzzer, so it shouldn't have counted," junior small forward Apoorv Kwatra said. "But when we all went to the team room after the game, our coach told us that sports teach us lessons that life isn't always fair and there are things that we can't control."

Because many of the senior boys felt they lost the chance of continuing in CCS, they were emotional in the locker room following the game.

"I felt like we were cheated out on the opportunity to win," senior power forward Jatin Mohanty said. "I felt awful for my teammates, especially the seniors, because the last game of our careers was decided by one referee."

Going into the game, however, the Falcons felt pretty confident that they could pull off a win because of the way they had been playing the few weeks leading up to CCS.

The Falcons were seeded 12th in CCS while the Mariners were seeded 13th, so both teams knew the game would be close.

"We gave it our all, and we didn't give up even when we made mistakes," senior power forward Noah Quanrud said. "Our coach's mentality was 'take the next play' so that really applied to us [for this game] and helped us follow through."

This was the first time the Falcons faced Aptos this season, and according to the Santa Cruz Sentinel's coverage of the game, neither team ever held more than a four-point lead. A few threes by senior shooting guard Gabriel Fong and crucial plays by Mohanty and junior center Joel Schneidmiller contributed to the close game.

"Though it was devastating to end the season [with that last call], as a team, we played our best basketball the last three weeks of the season and stuck together," Fong said.

Though the team is losing six seniors to graduation this year, including Yoshihara, Mohanty, Quanrud, Fong, point guard Joe Eschen and point guard Alex Guo, Kwatra believes that the team has what it takes to make CCS next season.

"We have a strong core of guys and even though we have a young team, with three sophomores currently on [varsity], we will all get more experience to become better players," Kwatra said. "I know that we can take what we have this season and continue it into the next." ♦

GIRLS' TRACK AND FIELD

Star junior sprinter leads Falcons with experience

BY AmiNachiappan

Decked out in lime green spikes and her signature black shin socks during an afternoon practice, junior sprinter Celine Bellegarda ran down the 100m straightaway as head coach Archie Ljepava yelled, "Lips to hips!" from the sidelines, giving her the mental image to help Bellegarda perfect her form.

A week later, Bellegarda, using her skills from practice, ran the same 100m dash at the first home meet on March 10 against Monta Vista, where she placed first with a time of 13.70 seconds; she also placed first in the 200m dash with a time of 28.04 seconds.

Track star senior Kimberly Chen, one of the stars of the varsity soccer team's breakthrough season, placed first in the 400m dash with a time of 1:04 minutes

and second in the 200m dash with a time of 28.93. Sophomore Chloe McGhee placed first in the 300m hurdles with a time of 49.27 seconds.

After taking a year off due to stress fractures, Bellegarda is leading the team as the fastest sprinter. In her freshman year, Bellegarda placed ninth in the 200 meters with a time of 26.87 seconds at the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League (SCVAL) meet.

Prior to joining the track team in freshman year, Bellegarda had a limited knowledge of shin splints, the injury that has followed her for the past three years. As a freshman, Bellegarda developed posterior shin splints in the beginning of the season and was forced to fight through the pain. Eventu-

ally, her shin splints became stress fractures, forcing her decision to take a year off.



Bellegarda

During that year, though, track was always on her mind. She even attended a few home meets last year to cheer on her fellow athletes. As she watched, Bellegarda realized how much she missed the sport.

"I missed everything about sprinting, from the jumpy feeling as I got into the starting blocks to the excitement of passing someone in the final

determined to be cautious in dealing with her injury.

"I know that I have to be careful with over-exerting my shins," she said. "There is nothing more frustrating than not being able to run because a jolt of pain hits you every time you take a step."

As the season progresses, with meets almost every week, the team hopes not only to place well in tough matchups against Wilcox and Cupertino, but also to have runners represent the school at SCVALs and CCS.

"There are so many opportunities to improve with every meet and I really hope everyone on the team tries their best and runs with their heart," Bellegarda said.

Due to printing deadlines, the Falcon was unable to cover the away meet against Cupertino on March 17. ♦

BOYS' TENNIS

Rain shortens Fresno tournament

BY CaitlynChen & VibhaSeshadri

The boys' tennis team has had a strong start to the season, currently undefeated in De Anza League with a record of 3-0.

Despite losing four starting players to graduation last spring, the Falcons have maintained their strength and have started well in league play.

They beat rivals Monta Vista 6-1 on March 2 and won against Gunn 5-2 on March 1. With the victory over Monta Vista, who senior captain and No. 1 singles Karthik Padmanabhan considers the biggest competition in the league, the Falcons have put themselves in an advantageous position.

"The victory against Monta Vista gave us control of the league," Padmanabhan said. "It is on us to win the remainder of the matches to ensure our third consecutive league championship."

After finishing second in the California High School Tennis Classic in Fresno a year ago, the Falcons, were unable to reproduce a similar result on March 3 when the rain ended the match against Bellarmine College Prep for third place.

Despite the disappointing result, senior No. 1 doubles player Naved Krishnamurthy said that annual trip to Fresno was still a memorable one.

"[Though] it was sad to see that half of the trip was cancelled due to rain, I feel that it's as much of a bonding trip as is a tournament," Krishnamurthy said.

With the forecasts of rain for the second day, the California High School Ten-

nis Classic was abbreviated from a two-day tournament into a one-day format. Because the tournament was shortened, different brackets were made.

The team was placed in a bracket with the other top three seeds: Menlo School, Pacific Palisades and Bellarmine College Prep.

The first match was against Menlo School, which has won seven consecutive CCS titles. The Falcons lost 6-1 with the lone victory coming in at No. 2 singles junior Kailas Shekar, who won his match 6-0, 6-2.

"Our team has lost four players out of ten from last year's starting lineup," Padmanabhan said. "As a result, we did not have the depth, especially with our doubles teams, to get the victory."

After the loss, the team faced Bellarmine for third place in the tournament. With the score tied at 2, the rain came and forced the match to be counted as a "did not finish," ending the tournament.

"I have complete confidence that if it had not rained out, we would have won the match," Padmanabhan said. "Although the score was tied, we were in a good position to win all the remaining three matches."

Padmanabhan said that the trip was a reality check against competition and preparation for the CCS playoffs.

"The matches we played were significantly harder than any of the other matches we had so far, and it threw us off," Padmanabhan said. "Now we know what to expect, so we will come in better prepared for an intense battle." ♦

BOYS' TRACK

Sophomore sprints to victory

BY AmithGalvanche & NeilRao

Sprinting down the track, sophomore Jaijit Singh sped past his opponents in the 200m event during the first meet against Monta Vista on March 10 and ended up placing first.

A top sprinter in the 200 and 400 meter events, Singh is looking to lead the team to success despite the setbacks they have faced in the past year, such as injuries and the loss of key runners.

Singh's personal best for the 200 meter race is 24.39 seconds, just two seconds from the school record, and 52.0 seconds for the 400 meter race, just four seconds from the record.

"[The team] was better last year because of the talent," Singh said. "Last year, we had the likes of [class of 2015 graduates] Andrew Harter, Steven Sum and a few others that were the root to our success."

Additionally, Singh and the team are looking to improve the overall unity. But because few people have signed up for track than in previous years, the team has found it hard to manage. The team previously had 150 members and now has 123.

"[The team as a whole] has significantly shrunk in size from last season, which means we have much fewer runners to score points at meets," sophomore hurdler Clifford Yin said. On the distance team, senior Matthew Peter-

son has faced difficulties. Distance running for track requires much more strength and speed in the form of weightlifting sessions.

Peterson, who runs the 800 meter, is the team's No. 1 distance runner with a personal record of 2:01 minutes. He said that the team also struggles with using time at practice effectively.

Peterson said that due to the lack of organization at times, the team "does not get started on [its] workouts fast enough," so this at times results in not having enough time to weight lift.

With previous distance coaches Peter Jordan and Dan Ambrico not coaching this year, the varsity runners have had to adjust to the new distance coach, Scott Bang.

"I think the upperclassmen were used to being more independent under [the old] coaching, but the new coach is making the team get used to each other," sophomore distance runner Amit Nag said.

Despite all the challenges, the team continues to work.

"Above all, I fiercely want to see improvement from everyone, not just physically but also mentally," Yin said. "With hard work and dedication, we can reach these goals and come out on top."

The Cupertino meet that took place on March 17 could not be covered by the Falcon in the print edition due to printing deadlines. ♦

BASEBALL

# Athletes start off season with multiple wins

BY Allison Lin

As the Falcons begin their 2016 league season, they face several challenges, such as the loss of last season's ace pitcher, Joey Medeiros, to graduation. Alongside a fresh crop of newcomers, the veteran players are putting in time at the yard, fine-tuning their defensive teamwork and strengthening their offensive skills.

Under the guidance of head coach Adam Varteressian and the rest of the coaching staff, who all have professional experience, the boys are looking for this season to be the "quest for the ring." The team's ace pitcher, senior Tyler Yoshihara, has committed to play for Pomona College's Division III program next fall. The Falcons kicked off De Anza League games with a series against the Milpitas Trojans on March

9 and 11. The first game of the match-up was held on Trojan territory. With senior outfielder Michael Schillage injured, the Falcons were short of a starting hitter. The score remained at 1-1 for the first six innings.

Junior Jonathan Yun started off the seventh by running out a well-placed bunt for a hit. Varteressian then directed the next two hitters, sophomore Daniel Ryu and senior Ryan Casini, to lay down sacrifice bunts. With speed down the line, Ryu and Casini turned the bunts into hits. Base hits by Yoshihara and Scott, plus a Milpitas error, resulted in the Falcons plating six runs in the inning to go up 7-1.

Slapping each other on the back and bumping fists in the dugout, the entire team cheered the Falcons to a clutch inning. As the Trojans prepared to bat at the bottom of the seventh, the Falcons

focused on getting their three outs as quickly.

However, a series of close calls, an error and a few nerve-racking hits allowed the Trojans to plate four runs. The Falcons felt lucky to escape with a 7-5 win.

Prior to the Milpitas series, the Falcon team played four consecutive non-conference games at home, starting with Campolindo on Feb. 26, Silver Creek on March 1, The King's Academy on March 3 and Piedmont Hills on March 5.

The Falcons crushed Piedmont Hills 10-2 with junior pitcher Brian Tatman throwing strikes and Scott getting four RBIs. Casini was the winning pitcher against the King's Academy, leading the team to a 7-5 victory.

In the third inning of the match-up against the Silver Creek Raiders,

Ramirez hit a grand slam, starting what was to become an 11-run outburst. In the same inning, Ramirez came to bat again with the bases loaded — a very rare occurrence. Ramirez made hard contact with the ball once again, but flew out. The team ended up winning 17-0, and Ramirez had four RBIs.

Campolindo's players are known for their agility, speed and endurance. The Cougars have consistently been a winning team, even claiming the Northern California Section title several years ago. Though the Falcons beat them once in the 2014 season, the current team fell short in their first match-up of the pre-season, losing 9-3.

Due to printing deadlines, the Falcon could not cover the team's series against Cupertino on March 16 and 18, Palo Alto on April 20 and Los Gatos on April 27. ♦

SWIMMING

# Freshman diver trains with team, contributes to higher scores

BY Angela Lee & Charin Park

It was nighttime at the Santa Clara Dive Center. A diving bubbler seethed beneath the toes of freshman Annika Donez, ready to break her fall if she belly-flopped.

Perched at the base of a 3-meter springboard, she waited for her coach to count her off.

"One, two, three, go!" The board wobbled and gave off an audible twang as she leapt, flipped and plunged into the water below.

Two and a half hours a day, six days a week — sometimes using a 17-foot deep pool is routine for Donez.

For the first time in years, Donez has given the school a diver to add to its usu-

al roster of swimmers.

Donez started diving with the Santa Clara Diving Team a little over a year ago.

She mainly dives off the 1- and 1-meter springboards as well as the 5 and 7-meter platforms.

At the 2015 Far Western Championships, Donez placed ninth in the age 14-15 girls 1-meter Junior Olympics (JO) event and third in the girls 3-meter event.

Although Donez now competes in the Junior Olympics, the highest level of competition, she still remembers being anxious on the first day.

"I was so scared because the pool was so deep," Donez said. "I used to close

my eyes and always pray that I knew where I was. Now, a year and a half later, I feel comfortable, and I know where I am in the air."

Last semester, Donez gained independent study physical education credit for her participation in diving last semester, but she doesn't have to this semester as a member of the team.

Swimming coaches Kristen Thomson and Christian Bonner said they were very excited to have Donez on the team.

Because the school's swimming facility is ill-fitted for diving, divers are few and far between, which puts the school team at a disadvantage against other schools.

"Initially, the pool was built to be this

bright new facility for our swimming and diving teams, but the school overlooked that the pool was too shallow for a dive team. Our divers have to practice at a separate facility," Bonner said. "Each diving event can earn your team six points, so if we ended up not having any divers this year, opposing teams who do have dive teams would already have an advantage."

Having a diver has not only improved the team, but has also helped Donez herself.

"Diving has made me more confident in myself. I love seeing how far I've come ever since I first started [the sport], and I am looking forward to meeting divers from other schools and creating good relationships with the dive coaches," Donez said. ♦



Donez

BOYS' GOLF

# Players look to senior for guidance

BY Frederick Kim & Neil Rao

So far the boys' golf team, led by No. 1 player senior Miles Peng, has handled sometimes rainy conditions and managed to achieve a 5-1 record as of March 11.

The Falcons' most recent win came against Santa Clara (206-294) at the Santa Clara Golf & Tennis Club.

Peng shot a 1-over-par 37 for nine holes.

The Falcons started the season with a close 207-211 loss to Wilcox on Feb. 29 at the par-34 Saratoga Country Club.

But, the team rebounded with a 174-193 win against Lynbrook on March 1 at Deep Cliff Golf Course (par 30).

Against Monta Vista on March 7 at Saratoga Country Club, the team won 207-229. The day after, at Summitpointe Golf Club (par 36), they defeated Milpitas 220-260.

So far, the team has had a winning record.

But, despite this winning streak, the loss of experienced players in Class of 2015 graduates Arman Vaziri, Noah

Jung, Lukas Pettersson and Robby Gragnola who had led the team to a 9-2 record last year, has hurt the team.

"The team lost four seniors last year, so it's definitely different because we lost a lot of experience we had before," Peng said. "[To improve as] a whole, [we plan on spending] more time during practice focusing and working on our games."

His twin brother, senior Lucas Peng, and freshman William Liu have also guided the team this season, each winning medalists in multiple matches.

Miles shot a 33 against Lynbrook and a 39 against Monta Vista, while Lucas and Liu both shot 42 against Milpitas.

Head coach Dave Gragnola and assistant coach Micah Hall have emphasized the mental aspect of the sport during practices.

"[The coaches] help the team by encouraging us if we have an off day and keeping us positive on the course if we are struggling," Peng said.

Due to printing deadlines, the match against Monta Vista on March 16 could not be covered in this issue. ♦

BOYS' VOLLEYBALL

# Falcons look to return as champs

BY Jay Kim, Roland Shen & Vivien Zhang

The boys rushed onto the Independence High School court on May 19, piling on top of each other after realizing that they had won the title of 2015 CCS champions following a victory over Aptos High. This historic success now means that rival schools are gearing up for the Falcons and playing their best against them. After winning the CCS Division II playoffs and the El Camino league last year, the Falcons have moved up to the upper De Anza League and hold a 3-2 record as of March 14.

"In the beginning of the season we didn't know what the lineup was going to be and who was going to fill in [for] last year's outside hitter Michael Cole," said junior outside hitter Joe Schneidmiller, the team's star player who currently leads the Falcons in kills. The Falcons prevailed 3-1 against Mountain View on March 11, losing the first set but coming back to win the following three. Schneidmiller had 25 kills, followed behind by senior outside hitter Spencer Yen with 15 kills. Senior opposite hitter Alex Li managed 10 kills, while senior libero Aakash Thumaty saved the team multiple times with four digs.

"It was a rough game, but we all came through at the end led by [Schneidmiller] and [senior co-captain and setter Chester Leung,] whose lead-

ership is monumental and essential to our team's success," Thumaty said.

The difficulty of the De Anza League was apparent early in the season when they lost against Leland on March 7 and Homestead on March 9, both by the score of 3-1.

"We just need to build more confidence and accept that we will be hunted this season because we were CCS [champions]," Leung said. "During the first game against Oak Grove, we were pretty nervous and had trouble finding consistency, but we were still able to pull a win."

After suffering the two consecutive losses, the team was looking to learn from their weaknesses.

"We need to be more resilient in order to compete in the upper league. In the future, we need more energy at the games," Leung said.

The team won its first two games of the season with a 3-0 victory against Oak Grove on March 4 and another 3-1 win over Valley Christian on March 5. Despite losing key players such as Cole to graduation, the Falcons think they will be as strong as ever and hope to repeat last year's success.

"We had some new [players] who didn't know what position they would be playing," Schneidmiller said. "But now, I think we have a solid team."

Due to printing deadlines, the games against Homestead on March 16 and Los Gatos on March 18 could not be covered. ♦



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2400	Justin T.	Milpitas	2015
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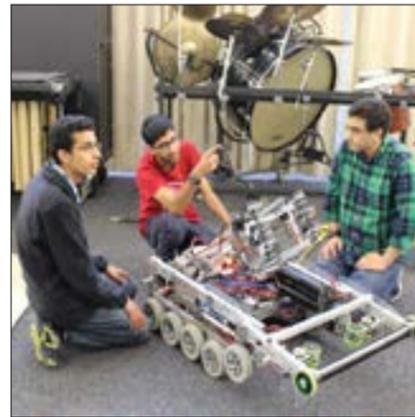
>> snapshots



FALCON // SHAZIA GUPTA



FALCON // SWEEYA RAJ



FALCON // SWEEYA RAJ



FALCON // SWEEYA RAJ

Senior Karthik Padmanabhan prepares to serve the ball in his tennis match against Monta Vista on March 2.

Senior Nicole Prowse faces defenders in the NorCal CIF Playoff game against Inderkum High on March 9. The girls lost 39-47.

Juniors Zach Grob-Lipkis and JT Hulme rehearse for the musical "Guys and Dolls," which will premiere April 22.

Sophomore Rahul Kumar and seniors Kabir Manghani and Navid Mokhesi work on the FRC robot for their first tournament.

**buzzworthy** >> 'Damn Daniel' takes world by storm

BY Amith Galivanche & Neil Rao

Recently, the 11 SHS students named Daniel have been receiving spontaneous compliments from their friends.

This is no coincidence, but is the result of an Internet video that it seems everyone not living under a rock knows about. In late February, a video titled "Damn Daniel" went viral, leading people around the world use the phrase in their own daily lives.

The video shows Riverside High School sophomore Joshua Holz outspokenly admiring Riverside freshman Daniel Lara's fashionable ensembles — especially his white Vans.

Accompanied by Holz, the iconic voice in the video, 14-year-old Lara quickly rose to fame.

In just two days, the video gained millions of views, circulating Facebook,

Twitter and other popular social media platforms. The video was originally a series of Snapchat stories on Holz's account, with videos of Lara over a span of a few days in different outfits.

What started as a joke between friends became a hobby as Holz began to get compliments on how funny the videos were.

Then, out of nowhere, the videos gained popularity on a national level, making both boys celebrities of the moment.

"The video has a really funny tone as [Holz] has a sassy British accent and

[Lara] has great style that is extremely fashionable," sophomore Nathon Chin said.

The video has an unexplainable catchy aspect to it, Chin added.

Sophomore Daniel Ortiz, one of the 11 Daniels on campus, knows first-hand how popular the video's catchphrase is.

"The week it blew up was honestly one of the worst of

my life," Ortiz said. "[The chanting] was constant. Everywhere I went, people would say it to me."

Similar to Lara's case, most of the compliments that Ortiz received resulted from his fashion choices, namely his red pants.



A normal high schooler by day and a celebrity by night, Lara expressed his disbelief at the magnitude of his fame, writing in a Facebook post, "This can't be real! First Ellen Degeneres asks me to be on her show, [and] now Vans asked if I wanted to be in [their] next commercial."

In an unexpected turn of events for Lara, his life suddenly became the envy of teens across the country.

As the video about him gained fame, he was presented with dozens of life-changing opportunities to a point where Lara wrote in a Facebook post, "Words can't explain what I was feeling; still kind [of] shocked about all this." ♦

**"The video has a really funny tone as [Holz] has a sassy British accent and [Lara] has great style."**  
sophomore Nathon Chin

**PSA: My name is Isabelle, not Elizabeth**

THE TRUE TALE ABOUT MY STRUGGLES WITH TWO NAMES

don't leave me yangin'



Isabelle Yang

I have a bucket list with quite a few eclectic items — learning all of Korean pop phenomenon Bangtan Boys' dances, having a walk-in closet with high heels of every color and, finally, hearing my neighbor call me "Isabelle" and not "Elizabeth" just once.

I don't know why I continue to put up with people calling me Elizabeth when my name is most definitely Isabelle.

For some undecipherable reason, people seem strangely unwilling to call me by my real name, Isabelle.

To be fair, Elizabeth and Isabelle may have five letters in common. However, it's pretty clear that they are still two different names.

After all, Elizabeth starts with an E, while Isabelle starts with an I. In addition, Elizabeth has four syllables; Isabelle has three. The two names don't even look remotely like each other when printed on the page.

Furthermore, Isabelle is an extremely

common first name, so it doesn't make sense for people to forget 'Isabelle' and substitute it with another common first name, 'Elizabeth.'

And while I don't want to insult those who haven't learned the difference between Elizabeth and Isabelle, don't expect me to be understanding when people say that the two names sound the same.

I can't help but remember kindergarten, when teachers preached the differ-

**I can't help but remember kindergarten, when teachers preached the differences between "Beth and "Belle" or "Eliza" and "Isa" — were they even listening?**

ences between "Beth" and "Belle" or "Eliza" and "Isa" — were they even listening?

Every time someone calls me Elizabeth, whether it is an acquaintance or a neighbor, my eyes start twitching.

I have the overwhelming urge to curl up in a fetal position and cry while forever proclaiming people who call me

Elizabeth to be my sworn enemy.

If my dramatic mnemonics aren't good enough, maybe some historical information about these two names will help.

Isabelle is derived from the French name Isabel and means "Beauty is abundant" in Latin, while Elizabeth is a Latin name meaning "My God is an oath."

If that's still not easy enough to remember, I've also written a poem: Roses are red, violets are blue, my name is Isabelle and it's really not that hard. Unfortunately, despite my strenuous efforts, some people seem unable to remember my name.

I still cringe inside whenever I wave and smile to my neighbor, who has yet to call me Isabelle in the 15 years that we have lived next to each other.

And I still want to cry whenever one of my teachers, who checks off my name for attendance every morning, refers to me by Elizabeth instead of Isabelle.

I have nothing to say other than this: please stop.

If "Isabelle" is simply too difficult for you to pronounce, please be my saving grace and just refer to me as "Girl 1" or "that Asian girl" — I'll take almost anything but Elizabeth. ♦

>> topten

THINGS SENIORS WAIT FOR

- 10 **Turning 18.** You can finally excuse your own absences.
- 9 **College acceptances.** That letter from Stanford should be coming any day now.
- 8 **Prom.** An unforgettable night of sitting around and doing nothing.
- 7 **Graduation.** It can't come soon enough.
- 6 **Social life.** In between prepping for tons of tests, you can squeeze in a Facebook convo with your friends.
- 5 **Spring break.** Time to tell all those admissions officers what grave mistake they made in rejecting you.
- 4 **A normal sleeping schedule.** Foggy memories of freshman year come to mind
- 3 **April 1.** The wait is over. Time to throw a rejection party.
- 2 **Final grades.** You can stop trying to not get rescinded.
- 1 **A summer of bliss.** Enjoy two months of freedom before four more years of school.

>> Oksana Trifonova and Kelly Xiao