



New parking lot and entrance to school boosts visual appeal and efficiency



Freshman Rohan Kumar refines sketches to create artwork in spare time.



JV football team welcomes first female player.



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Saratoga High School >> Saratoga, CA

saratogafalcon.org

Friday >> September 8, 2017

An Independent School Publication

Vol. 57, No. 1

NEW SCHOOL YEAR, NEW CHANGES



POLICIES

FALCON // AMITH GALIVANCHE



WELLNESS CENTER

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MUSIC BUILDING

FALCON // AMITH GALIVANCHE

Rule changes target students, parents

BY Siva Sambasivam & Sophia Zivanic

Starting this year, the administration has established new rules in an attempt to maintain organization and increase safety. These rules include preventing students from going to the parking lot during tutorial, assigning lockers to all students and prohibiting student drop-off and pick up by parents in the back parking lot.

The back parking lot is now off limits as part of the administration's attempt to make drop-off and pick-up process, safer and more efficient — and also to give teachers and other staff members a clear and safe parking area. For years, teachers complained about the numerous difficulties they were faced with, navigating an area clogged with cars as they

>> ADMIN CRACKDOWN on pg. 3

Planning underway for old 800 wing

BY Kaylene Morrison & Katherine Zhou

Students have grown used to constant construction around campus in recent years. But even more construction is coming soon in the form of the remodeling of the 800 wing, located above the quad steps in the center of campus.

The building, which in recent years has been used for the music program, drama storage, the Media Arts Program and the technology department, will be remodeled to create a "wellness center," a spot catering to the students' well-being, assistant principal Brian Thompson said.

The space will include rooms for teacher collaboration, CASSY counseling services and a new addition to campus: a student center that will double

>> STUDENT CENTER on pg. 4

New facility opens to chorus of praise

BY Michelle Lee & Mathew Luo

In 2016-17, students, teachers and parents were inconvenienced as they were fenced out of the usual front entrance to the school as construction took place on a new music building. That inconvenience is now over, and members of the music department are enjoying the results.

The 23,000 square foot, two-story music building now towers next to the McAfee Center and provides space for the school's 600 music students to practice, rehearse and store their instruments. The new building, complete with a set of glass windows built to resemble a musical staff, is comprised of three separate rooms for orchestra, band and percussion, and eight individual practice rooms.

The building took just over two years and around \$12 million to construct, and the primary construction team behind the building faced unfavorable weather and material delays; however, through overtime work, the music building was completed in time for the new school year, as promised by the builders.

The construction team of Aedis Architecture, Kramer Project Management, Swenson Construction and district officials all "worked incredibly hard to bring the building in on time and on budget," principal Paul Robinson said. "When delays hit, they found ways to work on weekends to catch up. It was real-

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Coverage of the new additions and renovations to campus. pg. 4-5

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A moral conundrum

A discussion of morality of "Unite the Right" rallies and hate groups' claims to free speech. pg. 7

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Fall previews

Reporters give an inside scoop for the fall sports seasons. pg. 14-15



news >> **briefs**

School shifts to Google accounts for new year

Since January, the district has created new districtwide Google Suite accounts for all students. Though some students had problems logging into their accounts, Julie Grenier, the manager of information services, said there has been mostly positive feedback. Grenier said that having these accounts improves communication between students and teachers. She said teachers find it preferable to communicate with students over district accounts. These accounts, comprised of Google services, Canvas and Aeries, serve as tools for students to develop skills they can carry on past high school. "We also hope it will give student experience using email and collaborating on digital projects for professional purposes, before they go off to college and eventually the workforce," Grenier said. The district's plans include adding other accounts to the system and giving all students a single sign-on web page where they can access all of these accounts.

— Rahul Vadlakonda and Alex Wang

Leadership students learn sensitivity in workshop

Members of the Leadership class delved into questions of race — both inside and outside of Saratoga — during a training in the library on Aug. 22. In response to the two racist prom-asking incidents at Los Gatos High School last spring, district administrators had decided to have student leaders from each school undergo the training. Students were led by Epic, a company that specializes in equity training. In addition to learning about issues affecting minorities, the students were prompted to examine how unique the racial demographic of Saratoga is. "I do have a better understanding of other minorities' lives now. I can be more empathetic and see what situation they're coming from," said senior Nathon Chin, the ASB president. "It gives me a greater appreciation for different people and it makes me a more knowledgeable person."

— Lina Kim

Outreach commission helps Harvey victims

In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, which has left 65 dead and thousands displaced in the Southeast, Saratoga students have joined together to help victims and their families. The outreach commission started a GoFundMe for the hurricane's victims, raising \$510 of its \$10,000 goal in one week. Senior Sahana Sarin, head of outreach commission, said her passion to help came from the idea that Northern California could be affected by similar disasters. "Empathizing [with] and helping [those] affected by such a disaster is a primary goal," Sarin said. "I hope we can come together as a school and help them as best as we can."

— Kevin Sze

>> **picturethis**



LOOK AWAY! >> Seniors Chengzi Guo and Eleanor Goh watch the eclipse on Aug. 21 from Hyde Park using a pair of special sunglasses provided by the science department.

SCIENCE

Students and staff observe once-in-a-century solar eclipse

by SherrieShen & ElaineSun

"Don't look directly at the sun!" The warning rang across the quad as students viewed the total solar eclipse that occurred on Aug. 21, the first in 99 years to span the United States from coast to coast. A solar eclipse occurs when the Earth, moon and sun line up, and the moon fully obscures the sun. Although Saratoga was outside the path of totality, defined as areas where it is possible to see the moon completely covering the sun's corona, for the Aug. 21 eclipse, the high school was still able to view a partial eclipse. The eclipse began at 9:01 a.m. and reached its peak at 10:15 a.m., obscuring a total of 79 percent of the sun. The Environmental and Science Clubs hosted a viewing session in Hyde Park. Club officers

brought special glasses, as well as homemade viewing devices such as aluminum-covered cereal boxes and chip containers to view the eclipse.

"It looked like either a sunset or a sunrise depending on your view on life."

TEACHER Kirk Davis

In addition, the science department provided glasses to dozens of students in the quad, and the Leadership class provided index cards with pinholes. Projections of the eclipse were also visible in the shadows cast by trees. The tiny gaps in between leaves acted as pinhole lenses, projecting crescent shaped images of the eclipsed sun onto the world below. Some students and faculty members also traveled off campus to watch the solar eclipse. Senior Nate Wire, who viewed the totality from Madras, Ore., called it the "beautiful, eerie and even spiritual." According to Wire, it was well worth the 20 hour drive. Physics teacher Kirk Davis also traveled back to his hometown of Casper, Wyo., to watch the eclipse with his family. They were able to view the eclipse in full totality for approximately 2 minutes. "It was like a 360-degree sunset, so it looked like either sunset or sunrise depending on your view of life," Davis said. The next total solar eclipse visible from North America is scheduled to occur April 8, 2024, about three years after the current freshman class graduates. ♦

SCHOOL DANCES

Students say 'Aloha' at BTS dance

by AnnaNovoselov & PhoebeWang

Relishing in the distraction from school, approximately 300 students gathered in the quad in the evening of Friday, Aug. 18, for the annual Back to School Dance. They swayed to music and sang along with the lyrics of popular songs while catching up with their friends. Others snacked on food, jumped in the bouncy house or took photos with the gold balloons, which spelled out "BTS.D." Students and adults dressed up in flower shirts, hula outfits and flower leis to fit the Hawaiian theme. The decorations mimicked a tropical luau, with tiki torches and flowers set up around the quad. "The decorations and lights created a cool atmosphere," junior Mira Park said, "especially since the dance was outside in the quad." There were games by the office, such as limbo, free food on the lawn, a bouncy house and

dancing. Additionally, class officers from each grade sold food in front of the cafeteria to raise funds for the upcoming year. Freshmen sold ice cream sandwiches; sophomores, fries; juniors, candy; and seniors, otter pops. Unlike winter formal and prom, the Back to School Dance is casual. As a result, it is much more relaxed in terms of preparation, according to Park. "It's important to have a balance of casual and formal dances so students don't feel pressure to dress up, make elaborate plans for dances or find dates," Park said. Nicole Wong, a sophomore on the dance commission, thought that the dance was an overall success. She said that the parent donations of food, drinks, ice and decorations played an integral part in the event's outcome. The dance commission started planning the event over the summer. They met to discuss the theme, food options, decorations,

the DJ, activities and promotion. "The Back to School dance was more organized this year because the dance commission spent the whole summer planning it," head dance commissioner senior Marissa Leong said. On the day of the dance, the leadership class, the dance commission and other students tirelessly transformed the school before the start of the dance at 8 p.m. They bought food, put up decorations and prepared for the flood of excited attendees. Attendance for the dance was high and, even though the commission ran into difficulties such as a mix up with the DJ, they were able to resolve them quickly. "We were happy with the outcome," Wong said. "The dance ended at 10:30 and students left reluctantly, but were content with the night. "I loved seeing everyone dancing and enjoying everything," Wong said. ♦

ADMIN

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tried to park and make their way to class; some even had to avoid being hit by cars as they walked between the cars in the morning traffic jam in the back lot. In addition, with many cars lined up to pick up students after school, teachers found it difficult to get to their cars when trying to leave campus. Another problem was that students made a habit of jaywalking and running in front of moving cars in order to

get to their class on time, risking both their safety and the safety of others, while also leading to liability issues for the school. Teachers are finding this change very helpful. "I'd get stuck in the line of parents trying to drop off their kids in the morning. It's been an annoyance and a safety concern," said media arts teacher Alex Hemmerich. According to assistant principal Brian Safine, the rule prohibiting students from going to the parking lot during tutorial was implemented because of the necessity to fulfill the required instructional minutes laid out by the State of California's Department

of Education. Some upperclassmen, such as senior Robert Scott, feel that these some of these new restrictions are excessive. "There's a little bit more responsibility that high schoolers should be able to have, and that includes going into the parking lot during tutorial," Scott said. The decision to keep students from going to their cars during tutorial has also led the administration to assign lockers to all students, with the hopes that upperclassmen will now use their lockers instead of their cars to store their school supplies.

Perhaps the decision that has caused the most controversy is the one to prohibit dropoff in the back parking lot, the spot where most teachers and staff members park. Although the administration has not enforced strict rules to this extent in the recent past, other students seem to understand the administration's intentions in implementing the new rules. "It seems like it's a lot more smooth and there is a lot less traffic on Herriman. It's just more efficient for everyone," senior ASB president Nathon Chin said. ♦



GRAPHICS BY OLIVIA LU

Preparation for Homecoming is in full swing

by JayKim, SandhyaSundaram, AmyTang & JayneZhou

2021: Officers struggle to raise interest

Although freshman class officers were elected last spring at Redwood Middle School and had an earlier start than previous freshman class officers, they are still facing usual freshman troubles as they team up to tackle the Homecoming theme of "Footloose." Because Homecoming is a new concept to the freshman class, Class treasurer Emily Choi estimates that there are 25 people involved as of late August. Because the class of 2021 is not using Facebook at the same rate as their predecessors, class officers are coming up with new ways to promote Homecoming. "We were thinking about sending out emails and also posting on Instagram and Snapchat. That's easier because most people have Instagram and Snapchat," president Lauren Tan said. Because of the current lack of participation, they are behind in their planning, but have received advice and guidance from ASB.

In addition, the class officers have delegated specific duties to each member. Tan handles communications-related work,

such as talking to activities director Matt Torrens; secretary, Arnav Mangal documents the process, and Choi, as treasurer, plans fundraisers.

2020: Spirit, participation improve

Assigned the theme "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," the sophomores have seen a spike in participation compared to last year in planning for their Homecoming festivities for the end of September. For example, last year, just over 80 students participated in the quad day dances. This year, more than 70 students will be participating in the girls' dance alone. Since not many freshmen knew what Homecoming was last year, only some showed an interest in participating. This year, there are "a ton of people who want to do it," sophomore class treasurer George Bian said. Sophomore class office also held a movie night showing "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" on Aug. 26, since many people had not seen the movie before. But with more students involved than last year, and an earlier start, sophomore class vice president Emma Hsu said she is feeling optimistic. "Our quad day is going to be really good," she said. "The other classes better watch out."

2019: Juniors focus on organization

The Class of 2019's primary goals, according to junior class president Ashley Feng, center around organization and participation. Class officers started coordinating with choreographers this past summer and set deadlines for the choreography and script to be finished at the beginning of the school year. But with junior year's notorious stress, encouraging students to participate has been difficult. The number of people signed up for the dances, approximately 100 people, is roughly the same as last year's attendance. Nonetheless, members of the Class of 2019 remain hopeful, as the theme "Back to the Future" has "given the class a lot of creative freedom when it comes to the skit and decorations," according to class representative Usman Khan. By keeping the members of the class updated with progress of the Homecoming preparations, Feng hopes to increase participation and build up excitement for homecoming. "In the past, our class hasn't been as hyped for Homecoming as other classes, and this year's class office is really looking to change that. We hope we'll have a majority of our class participating in at least one area of our homecoming experience," she said.

2018: Seniors gear up for final quad day

Immediately following the release of this year's senior Homecoming theme of "Grease" at the food truck fest Aug. 10, the senior class officers began planning for their final quad day. "There weren't a lot of decorations we could do until themes were announced at the food truck fest," class president Robert Scott said. According to Scott, the senior class will be adhering to a plan similar to last year's. To ensure that the final quad day runs as smoothly as possible, choreographers were chosen before school started. According to class vice president Colina Guan, who is choreographing the all-girls and hip-hop dances, there are around 130 dancers in 10 dances and 15 actors for the skit. Organizers are in the process of putting the skit together. Senior Clifford Yin is coordinating the stunt and hip-hop dances, a leadership role he enjoys because he can implement ideas and moves that he has thought of before, but never had the chance to apply to a dance. "I look forward to experimenting with moves and seeing if we can perform them at actual quad day well," Yin said. "Since this is our last quad day, I want to put in extra work and effort to make it memorable." ♦

>> **falconfigures**

Hurricane Harvey Aid
Outreach Commission: Saratoga's Involvement

FOOD DRIVE
Plan: Collect food that is canned or does not spoil
Target audience: Students

GOFUNDME
Goal: \$10,000
Progress: \$510 in the first week
Target audience: Parents and teachers

COIN DRIVE
Plan: Partner up with Red Cross Club and distribute jars to every history classroom

— Elicia Ye

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DESTRUCTION INTO CONSTRUCTION

GRAPHIC BY ELAINE SUN

STUDENT CENTER

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as the Leadership class' classroom. The 800 wing will still include the copy room and also have a staff lounge and data room in the rear of the building.

According to principal Paul Robinson, construction on the center, which is estimated to cost between \$2.5 to \$3 million is projected to begin within the next few months as the school gains final approval for plans.

Because the 800 wing's basic structure is already built, the completion date of the refurbished facility is estimated to be sometime around February or spring break, Robinson said.

The outside of the building is going to stay mostly the same, but the remodeling will also bring it up to code and modernized.

"On the inside, we will be busting down just about every wall in there and reconfiguring things to create some really nice spaces for students."

The idea for a wellness center started about five years ago, when voters approved the Measure E Bond, allocating \$44 million to Saratoga High and \$55 million to the larger Los Gatos High School. After considering different options such as using the

space for the tutoring center, the administration settled on this plan.

"We had done some research on wellness centers in San Francisco and really liked the ideas that they had about putting it in the center of the campus, so students have a lot more open access to it," Robinson said. "We're going to follow that model."

The main goal of the change is to create a student area at the center of the campus where students can come in to relax and get away from academic stress.

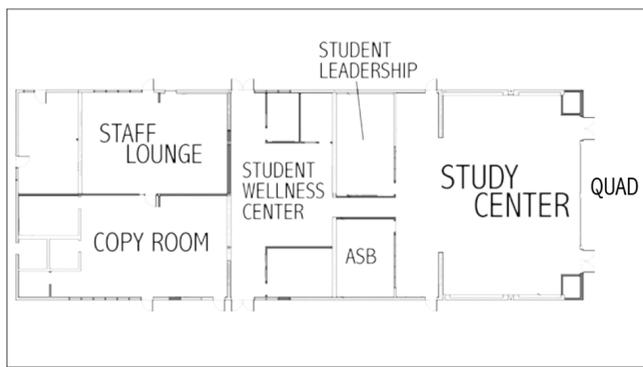
The administration hopes that the wellness center will also be a place where students can receive help from CASSY counselors or simply spend time together in a non-academic setting.

Because the building is in the center of campus, administrators hope it will be accessible enough to encourage students to come there often.

"I think we've done a lot of work to reduce student stress in our community," Thompson said. "We want our students to feel that we're planning on calling this area the 'wellness center': to continue to promote social and emotional wellness for our students."

Thompson also hopes that centralizing CASSY will help destigmatize assumptions that sometimes come with receiving help for mental health.

"We have hundreds of students that re-



Courtesy of PAUL ROBINSON, GRAPHIC BY ELAINE FAN

Wellness Center: Above is a proposed building plan for the new facility. The plan is a draft and has not been approved yet. Some walls and structures will vary in the actual building.

ceive these services every year, and there isn't any reason why it shouldn't be in the center of our campus," Thompson said.

Just in front of CASSY's room will be the new student center, and the entire front wall will be made mostly of glass and have "doors that open so wide that it'll be a free flow between the quad and the center," according to Thompson. The goal is to have the lounge area feel like an extension of the quad.

Robinson mentioned that there is a possibility of having a cafe of some kind in the student center that would serve coffee and other beverages.

Robinson thinks students will respond to this project positively.

"Students are going to be the ones that will control most of what really happens there," Robinson said. "I think we'll see it morph into something really cool!"

MUSIC BUILDING

continued from pg. 1

ly incredible to see. They're the best team I've ever worked with."

The old music rehearsal rooms in the music wing are being refurbished for the Media Arts Program, and the building has now been renamed the MAP Annex. There will be a large collaboration room, a multimedia room for digital photography and animated graphics and an editing and collaboration suites for student projects (see story on page 5).

In addition, the old instrument storage

corner of campus to another for concerts in the McAfee Center. Students who played bigger instruments, such as senior Adriane Tran, often found the trek "exhausting."

"When it's time for concerts, it will be just more convenient and of course, it's nice to have a larger space since the music program is so big," Tran said.

Students are also grateful for the greater calmness and ease in practice, director Michael Boitz said. Not only were the original facilities older, unrefurbished and cramped, but the separation of storage and practice areas also forced students to move instruments from separate buildings across hallways to practice, leading to an environment of "mass chaos" and inefficiency.

"The music building is so much more convenient to use because of the wide spaces and the echoing acoustics," junior Carolyn Ma said. "It is a little farther from everything and (choir director Andrew) Ford keeps telling the choir that he can't hear any of our mistakes in the new building, but it's fine."

Though construction for the music building just finished, the administration already has plans for new projects in the near future.

"We have a lot to be thankful for," Robinson said. "Our community and families have supported us through the Measure E bond, and we're continuing to make changes that support our students, staff and school." ◆

"Not that our old facilities were terrible, but the music program simply outgrew it."



SENIOR Austin Shi

space, Room 901, is being renovated and has become English Department staff collaboration space.

With construction of the new music building over, Robinson said that the main office staff no longer have to endure the sounds of "jack hammers tearing up the Earth and can instead feel the rhythm of the building next door."

The new building has also been received positively by music students.

"It was kind of surreal," senior marching band drum major Austin Shi said. "Not that our old facilities were in any shape or form terrible, but the music program simply outgrew it."

With the old music building, students often had to carry their instruments from one

>> bigIDEA

New Music Building

How long did construction take, and how much did it cost?
It took just over two years and cost about \$12 million.

What is the old music building going to be used for?
MAP has refurbished the building, which will include a large collaboration room, a multimedia room and collaboration suites.

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Score	Grade	School Location
1. 36	12 th	Saratoga, CA
2. 36	11 th	Saratoga, CA
3. 35	12 th	Santa Clara, CA
4. 35	11 th	Saratoga, CA
5. 35	11 th	Cupertino, CA
6. 34	10 th	Cupertino, CA
7. 34	10 th	Cupertino, CA
8. 34	10 th	Mountain View, CA
9. 34	10 th	Saratoga, CA
10. 34	10 th	San Ramon, CA
11. 34	10 th	Stockton, CA
12. 34	11 th	San Ramon, CA
13. 34	11 th	San Francisco, CA
14. 34	11 th	Saratoga, CA

Director, Math/Science Teacher / Marie Eim

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- U.C. Berkeley, Mathematics of Financial Eng.
- SFSU, MBA
- Yonsei Univ / POSTECH, Chemical Eng. BA
- Carnegie Univ-Biology, Berkeley City College- Calculus Professor
- SAT/ACT 15 years Teaching
- Thesis, People, Inc. College Prep. Consultant
- Former EPA, Chief Scientist

College Counselor / Sue Kim

- Poas Univ., French Literature, PhD
- U.C. Davis, Graphic Design Program
- Central National Univ., Mathematics, MS
- Global Students, guided program Math coach for 15 years
- Education Design Consulting Founder
- MAEJ Studio College Counselor
- MUSE Ensemble Founder

English, History Teacher / Michael D.

- 20+ Years of Teaching English, SAT, ACT
- U.C. Berkeley-BA of Philosophy
- Stanford Univ.-MA of History
- State of California, Credential English Teacher
- Professor of Beijing University, English Literature

Teacher / Sean Park

- Seoul National Univ., Mathematics, PhD
- U.C. Berkeley, Mathematics, MS
- Global Students, guided program Math coach for 15 years
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Former music building converted to MAP 'Annex'

By Ashley Feng & Krithi Sankar

The old music building looks starkly different from the hive of activity that it had been over the years. It is now stripped bare of the furniture, musical instruments and music stands that had marked it as the home of the school's award-winning music program. But it won't stay empty for long.

With the construction of the new music building next to the McAfee Center, many of the old music classrooms — including the orchestra pit, choir room, and practice rooms — are being repurposed for the Media Arts Program.

MAP is second in membership only to marching band among the school's programs. Larger and combined classes will likely take place in the former orchestra pit, while other classes, such as animated graphics, digital photography and SHSTV, will be taught in the former choir room.

"We have great plans for it, and we think it will benefit the students in the program a whole lot."

TEACHER Joel Tarbox

Teacher Joel Tarbox, who also serves as technology director for MAP, hopes that within a few weeks, all the renovations will be completed the classes will be able to fully move into the building.

"It's been repainted and it's in really

nice shape," Tarbox said. "But there's none of the equipment — we need to get the desks, computers and the whiteboards."

The renovated building will provide the space necessary for bigger collaborative projects than when MAP only had a room in the 800 wing and the Media Building, where computers and other electronic equipment take up most of the space. Students in the program also see the benefits of added space of the new MAP annex.

"I totally think that the opportunity for more space is going to benefit the program," junior Maddie Stuart said. "It'll also give us the space to gather for massive projects rather than having to meet in a more compact computer lab."

Repurposing the former practice rooms create a sound-controlled environment for student editing bays will require more intensive renovations in the future.

New computer work station tables donated by Moving Solutions Inc., which provided the school with new desks, will be placed in the editing bays. The desks will help reduce renovation costs, according to assistant principal Brian Thompson.

As for the old choir room, the digital arts classes will use the space for lessons and collaborative work. Refurbishing the room will require minor renovations, which will be similar to the changes to the orchestra pit and the practice rooms.

Although remodeling will require financial support, the MAP program's funding model allows it to seek support from many sources, including grants.

"We are really excited for the new space," Tarbox said. "We have great plans for it, and we think it will benefit the students in the program a whole lot." ◆

Tutoring center expands, acquires new resources

By Elaine Toh & Ananya Vadlakonda

After a successful debut last year, the tutoring center has obtained a larger room within the library this year and now occupies one half of the research center.

The 30 computers that filled the research center room last year have been reduced to 11 on one wall. By minimizing the number of computers, the newly vacated space is furnished with vibrant red and gray couches alongside various types of desks — providing more space for tutoring to occur.

Throughout last year, the tutoring center rapidly outgrew the small glass-in conference center in the library that housed it.

"We were really trying to figure out if we should make the tutoring center part of the old 800 building," principal Paul Robinson said. "The best place for a tutoring center is always somehow attached to a library. That's where we've seen them in different schools and they always work really well there."

The library has a research center that contained two media labs, but most classes only ever used one. Because Chromebook carts have proliferated across campus — there are 20 now, compared to just a handful five years ago — the use of the media lab's computers has declined significantly.

As a result, librarian Kevin Heyman along with Robinson, decided that the best use of the school's resources was to convert a media lab into the tutoring center.

With this new expansion, Robinson is happy to see the abstract concept for the tutoring center turn into a successful reality.

"For many years, we've had a number of parent requests that said, 'You know, we're paying tutors for this and that, is there any way the school can help us out with tutor-

ing for free,'" Robinson said. "So we decided we'll open it up and let's see what happens."

Before the tutoring center, which is open from 9:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. each day, started to gain momentum, a feeling of uncertainty accompanied this idea of a tutoring center, Robinson said. Yet, to his relief, it averaged around 100 students a week last year.

"We have been very encouraged by the number of students that want to come in and get some assistance, so we thought we would grow it into something bigger," Robinson said.

However, as the expansion occurred, engineering and physics teacher Matt Welander, last year's tutoring center supervisor, decided to step down from his supervising position due to scheduling restraints.

In turn, science teacher Kristofer Orre stepped in to help with "connecting the dots and connecting different parties" who each require different services. Orre now helps manage the tutoring center alongside parent Sunita Bal, who helped significantly with the creation and implementation of the tutoring center.

Orre is optimistic that the tutoring center, complete now with more space and more resources, will be able to give students more personalized attention.

"I think it's exciting because students can find a setting that matches their learning style. We are still getting furniture that's going to be delivered," Orre said. "It's all about matching what a student needs with how they learn, and giving them better academic support."

Along with the new equipment, there is a chance that a few adults will soon begin to assist in offering free tutoring just as student tutors have been doing for more than a year now. ◆

togatalks

What are your opinions on the new music building?

"The new music building is really beautiful and spacious and has several rooms with plenty of space for all of our growing ensembles."



junior Mira Park

"I like that the new building condenses the music rooms into one area near the McAfee, which is convenient for concert season."



senior Miranda Song

"From what I've seen, the new music building is spectacular and I'm in MAP so I love that we get the old building."



junior Isaiah Vivero

New entrance by front parking lot brings praise

By Connie Liang & Anissa Mu

As returning students pulled up in the reorganized parking lot when classes began last month, many of them noticed the school's striking new entrance.

It features stately red letters reading Saratoga High School standing out amidst a modern steel-gray framework. In addition, various benches, a new flag pole and shrubbery dotted with violet flowers surround the refurbished right wing parking lot.

Flanked by the new music building and leading directly to the main office, the new entrance and parking lot has garnered enthusiastic praise from students and staff alike.

The construction project, which was scheduled to be done on Aug. 17, came in ahead of deadline, finishing by Aug. 2 and surpassing expectations.

"When I first saw it, I thought the school was going to look so much more modern than it actually did," freshman Sam Titherington said. "It gave off a sophisticated yet serious sort of vibe."

Aside from boosting the school's visual appeal, the new entrance and parking lot improvements have many practical uses as well.

Sophomore Riya Kalra noted that park-

ing lot changes disperse traffic and have made the drop-off of students faster. Many students in the music program have also taken advantage of the direct path from the parking lot.

Instead of having to lug heavy instruments through the main front entrance

The new entrance features stately red letters, reading Saratoga High School, amidst a modern steel-gray framework.

and the quad, they now walk a short route to the new music building.

"The new entrance allows a much more efficient way for me to get to my first-period choir class," sophomore Caroline Lee said.

Assistant principal Brian Thompson expressed his appreciation for the changes as well.

"It's a total positive," Thompson said, concerning the new entrance. "It's beautiful, gorgeous and has made safety the best it's ever been since I've been here." ◆

Music department storage becomes new English office

By Elaine Fan & Anishi Patel

In years past, members of the English department could be seen grading papers or collaborating in the English Palace, located across the hall from the English wing.

Named in honor of former department chair Genevieve Palace, the mysterious room, sometimes occupied only by a lonesome bottle of Sriracha sauce on a red checkered tablecloth, held a status of mystery and legend on campus.

Now, roughly two decades after its founding, the English Palace has been relocated.

The new English Palace sits one floor above the old Palace, replacing room 901 — often called the "Pound" — where music students originally stored their instruments.

According to English teacher Cathy Head, the new Palace is a big improvement over the original room, which did not match the needs of the school's largest educational department.

"With its thick, wifi-muffling cinderblock walls, its lack of a phone, sink, windows, air, heat, or any other amenities, it was anything but palatial," she said. "The irony-loving English teachers dubbed it with that self-mocking title," English teacher Amy Keys said.

Complete with improved ventilation, running water and a view, the new location

is highly anticipated in the English department, especially Head.

"I'm looking forward to having windows that open," she said. "I can get in some exercise, with the office being on the top floor!"

The move resulted from a new student center in the 800 wing, where the old drama storage room was located. This set off a chain of relocations, transferring the English Palace to the Pound.

So far, the new Palace holds only two large tables pushed together, shelves full of the teachers' many books, and several stacks of cardboard boxes, but the English department has plans to finish the move soon.

As the new Palace continues to take shape, it will resume its role as a place for lunch, collaboration and storage of files, books, movies, and other curricular materials. Scoring and norming of writing assessments also takes place in the Palace in the fall and spring.

The Palace not only serves practical purposes, but also plays a key role in the dynamic among members of the English department, according to Keys.

"Whether we are planning new classes, norming essay grades or comparing reactions to the latest 'Game of Thrones' episode, the Palace is the hub of our interactions, both planned and impromptu," Keys said. ◆



Keys

THIRD PERIOD STAFF POLICY

The Saratoga Falcon is published 12 times per year by the Advanced Journalism classes of Saratoga High School, 20300 Herriman Ave., Saratoga, CA 95070.

MISSION STATEMENT

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Saratoga Falcon welcomes all signed letters of opinion, which are subject to editing for length, accuracy and grammar. Please send them to austin.wang@saratogafalcon.org.

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Students need a voice in deciding Homecoming themes for each class

While the students attending the food truck event last month flocked into the McAfee Center, excited for the revealing of this year's Homecoming themes, many walked out disappointed over what they saw as the unrelatable movies chosen for this year.

The overall Homecoming theme "Get Schooled" features four '80 movies: freshmen have "Footloose," sophomores have "Ferris Bueller's Day Off," juniors have "Back to the Future" and seniors have "Grease." One main issue is that few students have seen movies as old as "Footloose" or "Grease," and as a result, many classes are holding movie nights at school in an attempt to familiarize students with the obscure themes.

However, because of the disappointment over this year's themes, students are left questioning why they don't get a say in picking their own themes.

There's always a strong motivation to participate in Homecoming quad days, whether it's to prove how creative your class can be, show off your dance skills (or lack thereof) or just have fun. But for those who don't normally partake in this event, this year seems to offer less incentive than ever, given the complaints about Homecoming themes. In particular, many seniors are unhappy with "Grease" because unlike the

themes previous seniors worked with, such as "Pirates of the Caribbean," "Toy Story" or "Star Wars," there is no easily identifiable symbol, character or even a meme associated with the movie. Even the juniors' theme, "Back to the Future," has those three elements.

On top of that, national interest in "Back to the Future" spiked when we all realized back in 2015 that we didn't invent flying cars nor self-tying shoes like Marty McFly once predicted. The theme selection process hasn't changed much since Homecoming's inception, with other schools such as Lynbrook also going through a very similar process. The Homecoming commission comes up with an overarching theme with subcategories for each class and announces to students in the days before school starts. Because Homecoming ultimately is for the entire student body, the commission should allow classes to vote for the theme they prefer the most.

The commission would still provide the school with the four subcategories, but instead of making the decision for each class, the commission should instead give the classes an opportunity to choose which sub-theme they want. Seniors would get first pick, juniors second and so on, leaving the last one for the freshmen. If seniors think "Back to the Future" would be a better theme than "Grease,"



VIVIAN ZHANG

then they can pick it, and the juniors would then have to take another theme instead.

Themes would be finalized after a day of voting online, and classes would be assigned the one with majority votes. In addition, theme hierarchy will still exist with this approach — historically speaking, seniors have always gotten the "best" sub-theme, and freshmen have gotten the "worst" one. However, now, instead of being assigned the least-relatable theme, the freshman class would have the last pick in choosing their theme.

This approach, while more time-consuming for both commission and class, prevents negative feedback from classes surrounding Homecoming theme decisions. After all, students can't be angry or disappointed over a choice they made themselves. If the Homecoming commission were to be a little more hands-off by transferring the decision-making power of themes over to the classes, the week would be a little less hectic, and the months leading up to quad day might be more enjoyable.

Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board

Editors-in-chief: Claire Rhee, Kyle Wang; Opinion Editor: Austin Wang; Reporters: Victor Liu, Vivien Zhang

The Saratoga Falcon staff voted 34-2 in support of the editorial.

Media program deserves its newfound space

By Ashley Feng

Last year, the old music building near the science wing was the subject of some debate, specifically over who should occupy the vacated space. The final decision of having the Media Arts Program (MAP) move into the building generated several clashing opinions, since many other programs such as Robotics also need workspace and resources. In this specific case, however, the best choice was to give the old music building to MAP.

Prior to all of the new construction on campus, MAP's facilities included the Multimedia Center, room 802 and various classrooms. With the remodeling of the 800 wing, the collaborative space that MAP commonly used in room 802 for large scale presentations and activities will become a part of the new student

center instead. This means the most logical step was to move MAP into the newly vacated music building, converting the former orchestra pit into a larger classroom to use for presentations and class activities.

Some people argue that because MAP already has a state-of-the-art multimedia lab to hold classes in, it neither deserves nor needs a space as large as the former orchestra pit. However, because the program is also losing space to the future student wellness center that will soon occupy the 800 wing, MAP's space for interclass collaborative work would have been drastically reduced. A program of at least 50 students per grade would surely not be able to fit into a regular classroom.

Additionally, an academic program such as MAP would take priority over clubs and activities like Robotics, no matter

how large their program. There is a common misconception that certain programs on campus are repeatedly and unfairly granted new facilities and resources in favor of other groups. That is completely false.

In reality, the administration works extremely hard to ensure that every proposal is equally considered. Factors such as the size of each program, the resource needs of each program and the financial backing behind each option all filter into the decision-making process. Then again, although they certainly might need additional space, some programs such as Robotics already have a dedicated workplace on campus, which is virtually unheard of for a high school club.

Furthermore, as an academic program with actual classes, MAP should get some priority over after school clubs and activities.

Programs like speech and debate can use various classrooms after school and do not need their own rooms.

MAP's extra space can also help other students and programs as the various practice rooms in the interior of the building will be converted into quiet rooms that non-MAP students can also use for project collaboration and media production.

Although the old music building was given to the MAP, there will still be vacancies in other areas of campus, such as room 304 where SHSTV and digital photography have been held.

The scramble for classroom space is a given, but all factors of each program's situation are carefully deliberated before a final decision is reached. In this case, the decision to move MAP into the old music building was an appropriate choice.

togatalks

How should the school choose which programs get extra space?

"It should be based on which clubs have the most members and the least amount of space."



sophomore Nandini Thakur

"The school should conduct a poll to see how average students would be affected."



senior Brian Chen



GRAPHIC BY COLLEEN FENG

By Katherine Zhou

Ask almost any American and they'll proudly recite that America is "the land of the free and the home of the brave." Of all of the first-world countries on the globe, Americans protect their First Amendment rights — most notably freedom of speech — most dearly. Even the often ignorant contestants on Jimmy Kimmel's street interview segments know that.

But when, if ever, is it OK to censor freedom of speech in such a proud democratic country?

This question was recently brought to light after a "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Va., from Aug. 11-12 erupted in violence. Right-wing groups were there to protest the removal of a Robert E. Lee statue in the city's Emancipation Park, but it was clear that the crowd of white supremacists, white nationalists,

neo-Confederates, neo-Nazis and various militias were also pushing a white supremacy agenda.

But unlike other groups that held homophobic and hateful protests, such as the Westboro Baptist Church, the "Unite the Right" rally was notable because of violence it incited and the extremity of the hate speech.

Along with chanting racist and anti-semitic slogans, the protesters proudly wore swastikas; they waved Confederate battle flags, anti-Muslim and anti-Semitic banners and (not shockingly) Trump/Pence signs. To add fuel to the fire, some right-wing protesters carried semi-automatic weapons into the protest. These protesters could've easily fired on the crowd, but didn't.

One alt-right protester did, of course, kill one person and injure 19 by driving through the counter-protest.

These Neo-Nazis deserve

freedom of speech, yes, but not the freedom to speak unconditionally. There is a very clear distinction between speaking freely and espousing hatred.

Hate speech is not simply having one position on abortion,

We don't want history to repeat itself... so we cannot take this kind of speech lightly

for example, but rather being blatantly, flagrantly racist — being an actual Nazi who advocates for ethnic cleansing and violence against those who oppose your opinion.

People who are hateful, in essence, pose a threat to domestic tranquility. The rhetoric that this protest is propagating has already

led to violence and hateful action. We cannot protect freedom of speech if it directly harms human life.

And there's ample legal precedent for limitations: Although hate speech is protected by the First Amendment, according to the Supreme Court, speech likely to incite violence, lawless action or danger to the nation's security is not protected. The hate speech from the last "Unite the Right" rally has already resulted violence.

And a Nazi uprising, however far-fetched its rhetoric might seem, poses a direct threat to the security of American lives.

It is also worth noting that the violence from the other side, such as Antifa, while largely instigated by the right-wing protesters is also condemnable, such as in the Aug. 27 Berkeley protest.

Many oppose stopping these hateful protests and opposing

hateful rhetoric in general because it will be hard to distinguish what can be classified as "hate."

However, I believe there are standards for what can be considered hateful. In this country, we have laws against hate crimes, so there are legal precedents for what can be considered hate.

In other countries, such as Germany, there are already limitations on freedom of speech, such as preventing Holocaust denial.

America arrived late to the game in stopping Nazis before. We don't want history to repeat itself, even on a smaller scale, so we cannot take this kind of speech lightly.

Anyone with the power to stop these so-called "protests" needs to stop future protests. The government needs to consider becoming much stricter on stopping violent hate speech before it gets any worse.

Until then, we can only hope for peace. ♦

City should issue permits for legal marijuana cultivation

By Lina Kim

During the 2016 election, Proposition 64 was approved by California voters.

As a result, recreational marijuana use will be legal starting next January, permitting citizens to grow up to six plants in their homes but also giving municipalities the right to control use and planting within city limits. In other words, in spite of Prop 64, individual cities can still choose to ban marijuana cultivation.

Some cities have already begun to do this: Cupertino, Campbell, Palo Alto, Foster City, Hayward, Martinez, Santa Rosa and Saratoga have all banned the cultivation of the drug. This is a mistake. Instead of banning the cultivation of marijuana altogether, cities should allow responsible citizens to apply for permits to grow it. Saratoga officials have voted to formally ban the cultivation of marijuana permanently. According to the San Jose Mercury News, city officials believe that growing marijuana will lead to risks such as "public safety, health and welfare associated with commercial and outdoor cannabis cultivation ... crimes within the city, increased youth exposure to and use of cannabis, increased risks of car accidents and potential odor."

While cultivating of marijuana can lead to some risks, most of the risks outlined by Saratoga officials are easily solvable or have negligible impact. To begin with, Saratoga's city government has incorrectly posited that marijuana cultivation will lead to an increase in crime. Contradicting this idea, a study conducted by researchers at University of Texas at Dallas indicates that higher levels of marijuana usage are associated with lower rates of violent crime, including homicide. Marijuana-related crimes typically arise when users attempt to obtain marijuana where it is illegal. Making marijuana easier to obtain by legalizing some degree of cultivation would only serve to shrink the marijuana black market and actually lower crime rates. Furthermore, individuals

the U.S. it is legal for individuals to both grow tobacco and purchase alcohol and tobacco without a limit, despite the fact that, according to Center for Disease Control and Prevention, tobacco kills 480,000 people each year while alcohol kills 29,000 U.S. citizens as well.

Still, in order to further minimize risk, the city can create special marijuana cultivation licenses issued only to responsible and educated adults who have passed a series of background checks.

Similar regulations have been set in place for the private fermentation of alcohol to prevent dangerous bootleg alcohol from being publicly distributed. Proper handling of marijuana would eliminate the dangers of marijuana falling into the hands of children and marijuana causing odor problems. Further legalizing some private cultivation of marijuana detracts from the stigma of marijuana usage and promotes better education, awareness, and understanding of the drug. Instead of being social taboo, marijuana can instead be a substance that everyone, including teens, is aware of and educated on its risks and benefits.

City officials must not forget that marijuana is not only a drug but a medicine that can improve human lives.

Marijuana has been used to treat many mental and physical illnesses, including arthritis, cancer and depression. It is time society stops viewing marijuana as an entirely harmful substance — Saratoga can and should take steps toward the progressive normalization of marijuana usage by allowing permit-based marijuana cultivation. ♦



GRAPHIC BY COLLEEN FENG

Saratoga bubble not as safe as it may seem

By Amy Tang

As I walked toward my car, happily sipping a passionfruit green tea with lychee jelly from 85 Degree Bakery, my thoughts drifted to the assignments I had to complete over the weekend. Disoriented, I opened the door to my car and put my drink in the cupholder. As the door closed, I heard a shattering noise and watched as the remaining pieces of glass on my broken car window fell to the floor.

Shocked that I hadn't noticed it earlier, I ran back inside the bakery and told my friends that someone had smashed one of my car windows. As we scrambled outside to examine, my friends ran toward their respective cars.

Students, in particular, are often far more susceptible to robbery as they tend to be less cautious

A moment later I heard another scream: the side mirror to my friend's Prius had been broken as well. Soon enough, a senior from Lynbrook who had parked his car in the same lot walked by and told us that he'd also experienced a break-in.

Despite constant warnings from the Saratoga county sheriff and the Saratoga city newspaper to keep belongings out of sight, many residents still leave their doors unlocked and fail to take sufficient precautions against robberies. Students, in particular, are often

far more susceptible to robbery as they tend to be less cautious with their possessions. When my car was broken into, although the door was locked, a purse lay in sight on the floor of the backseat. That night, all three of the cars that were robbed belonged to high school students because each of us had something of value in sight.

Students should take extra precautions when leaving their cars to make sure that any valuables, including backpacks, are out of sight. By putting belongings out of plain sight, students will be able to prevent break-ins and other forms of robberies from occurring.

Saratoga is often called a bubble, where it is believed that violence or danger of any kind are practically nonexistent. However, it wasn't just the car incident that surprised me. Recently, two of my friend's houses were broken into, one's packages were stolen, and a whole street had their mailboxes robbed.

Saratoga's crime rate is 12.5 percent of the national percentage, yet people still face burglaries quite often, disproving the common misconception that "nothing ever happens in Saratoga."

In general, houses are not robbed more than once, since people usually invest in alarm systems after a scare.

Families should consider getting security systems for their houses before a potential robbery occurs. Common alarm systems allow the user to arm or disarm the house, and also sends notifications when doors or windows have been opened.

By actively taking measures to prevent more crimes, Saratoga residents can help Saratoga truly live up to its reputation as an extremely safe community. ♦



Printed by Folger Graphics in Hayward, Calif.

FRESHMAN 15

THE FALCON PROFILES 15 DIFFERENT FRESHMEN ON CAMPUS

Things we wish we had known

Freshman Akshar Sarvesh, who had attended the private school BASIS Independent Silicon Valley for the past three years, decided to transition back to Saratoga, the district where he had gone to elementary school.

"I chose to move to SHS because here it won't be as difficult to stand out," Sarvesh said. "At BASIS, everybody takes 10 APs, but here eight APs is exceptional."

Sarvesh especially excels in biology and computer science. He also skipped two years of math and is now taking Precalculus Honors.

In his free time, Sarvesh likes playing with Rubik's cubes, including 3x3x3's and 4x4x4's. His record for the 3x3x3 is 11.501 seconds.

— by Howard Tang

STEM STUDENT

Liheng Wen came to the U.S. from Shenzhen, China, in eighth grade, experiencing both culture shock and language difficulties. "The first time someone came up to me at school, I couldn't understand him and I felt really embarrassed," Wen said. "I told myself that I would go home and practice my English."

A year later, he says he feels like he's grown more accustomed to the environment here. "I'm glad my family moved here because I have more independence than I did in China," he said. He is on the JV football team and enjoys playing video games like Overwatch and Battlefield One in his free time.

— by Alex Wang

FROM CHINA

For freshman Michelle Lim, high school is actually a little easier than she expected. Her initial nerves surrounded the demanding workload and even though it is manageable now, she knows the year, and her four years of high school, have only just started. Lim is excited for this new beginning and she looks forward to "meeting new people and being in a new school environment." She uses the rolling block schedule to its full advantage and manages her time well, since she plays competitive soccer at a national level, a time-consuming commitment that requires her to be on top of her work.

— by Sanjana Melkote

COMPETITIVE SOCCER

Some might expect freshman Taesu Yim, son of math teacher PJ Yim to have a somewhat sheltered school life. Although he has a parent on campus with him at all times, it does not affect his school life much.

"Like everyone else, I use my own locker instead of using my dad's classroom," Taesu said. "But I do leave some stuff in my dad's car."

For Taesu, high school feels little different from middle school. He swims competitively with DACA at the Senior Elite level, the level right below Nationals, and he plans to join the school's swim team in the spring.

— by Howard Tang

PARENT ON CAMPUS

There were many things that Grace Stuart did not expect about her freshman year. Besides expecting a larger homework load, Stuart was also nervous that social situations would shift.

"I thought maybe staying close to my friends could get harder," she said. "You always see in the movies how people start drifting apart." As it turns out, she had nothing to worry about.

Stuart signed up for the two water sports, water polo and swimming, and is known by her water polo teammates as "little Stuart," since her older sister, junior Madeline Stuart, is also on the team.

Stuart is anticipating the upcoming Homecoming activities, and is especially excited for the dances.

"I'll probably sign up for the girls' dance because it's fun getting to roast the other grades," Stuart said.

— by Kaylene Morrison

GET INVOLVED

"My favorite part about high school is that it doesn't actually feel like I'm going to school as an obligation because of academic knowledge. Instead, it feels like a place where everyone is gathered together to learn and, more importantly, spend time together," said freshman Fiona Lee. She appreciates the freedoms that being a high school student comes with, from her course selections to her friend groups. "I'm hoping this year goes by slower so I get a chance to make friends with more people, now that there are hundreds of new faces I want to meet," she said.

— by Sanjana Melkote

NEW FOUND FREEDOM

When I first entered high school as a freshman, I was anxious and genuinely didn't know what to expect. More stress? Meaner teachers? Or endless days of adventure? Looking back now, high school was a confusing mix of emotions, but I'm sad it's almost coming to an end.

I can tell you right now that the short four years you'll be at Saratoga High won't always be full of fun experiences.

As a freshman, you'll underestimate how large the jump from middle school to high school is and fall behind on work. As a sophomore, you'll be stressing about your first-ever AP classes and studying for your SATs. As a junior, you'll be frantically researching colleges and worrying about making good impressions for recommendation letters.

And somewhere in the middle, you'll experience a mental breakdown, but that's when you need to pick yourself up and remember that there's no reason to give up now.

High school shouldn't only be a burden weighing you down and preventing you from doing the things you find fun. Being a freshman is exciting. You have more time and leisure to explore clubs and activities, try out for sports and dress up wildly for spirit days. High school is the time to make memories because it's a once in a lifetime experience.

In the end, if you don't enjoy yourself in high school, you'll never get another chance to interact with new people, participate in Homecoming dances and skits, find new passions and running around in the journalism room editing and writing stories because you're lazy and forgot about the deadlines :) What matters the most is: what do you want out of high school? Don't worry about others; you do you.

— Vivien Zhang

TRUMPET PLAYER

— by Alex Wang

Endless hours of music and choreography combined with complicated material has defined high school for Raymond Yan.

"High school is definitely more strenuous than middle school," Yan said. "Teachers gave homework on the first day here, while we did not have homework for the first week in middle school. The material I'm learning in my classes is also different and more difficult."

Yan plays trumpet in the band and says it has been an entertaining experience. He has met cool people in band and is learning to incorporate choreography and dance movements to their show.

"While practices are fun, they are also more intense and the music is more difficult," he said.

BASKETBALL

— by Amy Tang

Isha Garlapati welcomed the transition from middle school to high school, and her first few weeks have been a great experience. One difference that she likes is the abundance of activities and clubs to explore.

She plans on playing basketball, field hockey and joining Bombay in the Bay.

"Basketball is my favorite sport, and it was fun having practice over the summer because I got an early introduction to the campus," she said.

"I'm also grateful for my older sister who showed me my classes, and I'm also more aware of what I should expect in high school because of her."

THREE-SPORT ATHLETE

Ameer Attawar, a budding soccer player and food fanatic, said that so far high school has been really different from middle school.

"There are so many more people here," he said. "I'm not really sure how everything works yet, but hopefully I'll join a few clubs and the soccer team."

Currently, Attawar admits that he liked middle school better, "but that [opinion] will probably change once I get used to tutorials and longer periods. I also really like to eat food and the high school cafeteria food is a lot better than Redwood's."

— by Amy Tang

FOOD FANATIC

Golf and band have been an essential part of John Kim's life for several years. He hopes he can further these interests in high school. "I like playing golf and have been playing for the past five years," Kim said. "I practice every other day and intend to try out for the school golf team." He also plays clarinet in the band. "The music department here is a lot more advanced than in middle school because everyone here is more talented and truly likes music," he said. "The practices are a lot more difficult, but I also enjoy it way more."

— by Alex Wang

GOLFER

Though the transition from Redwood Middle School to Saratoga High can be stressful, Grace Green has found the change enjoyable.

"I like that at Saratoga High, you're freer to make your own decisions," Green said.

One downside for her, however, is having to remember separate assignments for different days. Green's schedule will be packed with activities like year. She plans to participate in school activities like Homecoming and three sports — water polo in the fall, soccer in the winter and swimming in the spring.

— by Kaylene Morrison

WATER POLO PLAYER

Freshman Anirudh Balapur recognizes that in middle school he was able to pursue many more of his interests because there was less stress on academics. He participated in Redwood's musicals as a result of his passion for singing and acting, played the trumpet in concert and marching band, while playing basketball on school and organized teams. But participating in musicals in high school clashes with the marching band and basketball seasons so he ended up choosing the latter, but still continues to learn Indian Classical Music in his free time. "I love high school because it allows me to dedicate more time to explore my passions more seriously," he said.

— by Sanjana Melkote

MUSIC LOVER

LITTLE SISTER

Isabelle Lee has been enjoying the freedom and independence of high school.

"Here, the teachers trust you more than they did back in middle school. The block schedule is really different, but I like how we have tutorial to socialize, relax and do homework," she said.

Lee is excited to participate in Homecoming and perform at rallies and football games with the dance team. She also appreciates her older sister Angela, a senior who "has really helped me transition to high school. I feel like her input gave me a lot more confidence when I came to the SHS campus for the first time."

— by Amy Tang

Thermond embraces 'artistic storytelling' in English 10

BY Sanjana Melkote

"If we are talking about anything that surrounds artistic storytelling, I'm on it," SHS teacher Sarah Thermond said. Although she predominantly teaches drama, she has also taught Creative Writing and English 10 in her past six years at SHS.

Thermond's major in comparative literature allows her to teach English-based classes, from electives to core-curriculum, as her area of expertise lies in the analysis and critical theory of literature and artistic forms like film, poetry and theater.

This year, Thermond is teaching four sections of drama and one section of English 10.

According to Thermond, her switch from Creative Writing to English 10 was due to a lack of enrollment in the elective as well as a large sophomore class, which

requires "all hands on deck in terms of experienced English 10 teachers."

Thermond hopes to offer Creative Writing every other year, allowing demand for the class to grow during the off

"If something starts to feel stale, I'll teach it differently next class."

TEACHER Sarah Thermond



I've done one lesson too many times, I know that I will be teaching something new in my next class," she said.

Teaching two different subjects also keeps Thermond on her feet as she is constantly moving between the drama room — an open, less conventional classroom setting — to her more traditional English classroom.

Additionally, Thermond's various teaching experiences across different courses have helped her adapt to new classes, as many of her lessons are interchangeable between subjects.

"I invented a creative writing exercise to help students review the different parts of story structure, and when I gave it to my English 10 class, they seemed to be really entertained while understanding the concept," Thermond said. "It's nice knowing that something I concocted for an elective

class can easily clarify things for any English class."

Former drama student and current English 10 student Jayati Reddy praises Thermond's alternative style of teaching.

"She's a very confident teacher and creates an environment where more quiet kids are eager to talk," Reddy said. "She gives us so many ideas so that when we come to class, we have a lot of material to work with; she doesn't expect you to come up with everything on your own."

While drama has always been part of her schedule, Thermond is grateful for the opportunity to teach English.

"I really like teaching English 10 because it's where we're able to dig deep into analyzing literature and how to create compelling arguments about a work of fiction through non-fiction writing," Thermond said. ♦



GRAPHIC BY COLLEEN FENG

Former student teacher returns to school and impresses colleagues

BY Elaine Toh & Katherine Zhou

On Aug. 21, new World History teacher Colleen Duffy laughed softly as she listened to her students debate, smiling as they yelled over the question of whether their classroom government should be a democracy, oligarchy or dictatorship.

Throughout her students' discussion, she could hear voices saying that they wanted a government based on "Lord of the Flies" or "The Giver." As she walked around trying to calm down her exuberant students, she couldn't help but smile at their passionate ideas.

Duffy began teaching at the school last year. She is in the process of earning credits toward her teaching credential degree from San Jose State University, but her skills and knowledge so impressed the administration so much last year that they hired her before she fully completed her credential.

"For any college to allow a person in its credential program to actually teach classes on their own as an internship means that they really trust that person and shown that he or she can teach," said veteran history teacher Kim Anzalone. "And that's exactly what Duffy has done."

Like many other teachers here, Duffy grew up in the Bay Area, graduating from Westmont High School in Campbell in 1996. Knowing the area well factored into her decision to teach at Saratoga.

Duffy discovered her passion for history as a freshman in high school.

After reading "All the President's Men," a nonfiction book about Washington Post jour-

nalists Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward's investigation of the Watergate break-in in 1972, Duffy realized how much she enjoyed learning about history.

She found Watergate incredibly intriguing because of the scandal's sheer scale: It involved people at all levels of government.

Duffy's interest in history grew further while hearing references to the Vietnam War in pop culture during her childhood.

"She has a fantastic sense of humor, she's a hard worker, and is a natural presenter."

TEACHER Kim Anzalone

"People talked about the Vietnam War like we were expected to know what it was about, and I didn't know," Duffy said. "I wanted to know why it was so important, why it affected my generation, even though I wasn't alive when it was fought."

Staying true to her passion, Duffy completed both bachelor's degree and a master's degree in history at University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB). Afterward, she started pursuing her Ph.D. She never finished, though, as she soon discovered her love for teaching while conducting a seminar as a part of the program.

Duffy went on to become a long-term substitute teacher for U.S. History teacher, Margarita Morelle in the first semester of last year, and was a student-teacher for Anzalone during second semester.

Impressed by her perfor-

mance, the administration hired her for the 2017-18 school year to teach three classes of world history.

According to Anzalone, Duffy came in with the skills of a much more experienced teacher, like knowing how to summarize the important information in APUSH, a class which covers more material in more depth than college-preparatory U.S. History. After experiencing Duffy's skill firsthand, Anzalone has only positive things to say about her colleague, who she describes as a "natural teacher."

"Duffy was able to take these huge concepts and put them into terms that the students could understand," Anzalone said. "She has a fantastic sense of humor, she's a hard worker, really likes and cares about her students and is a natural at presenting the material."

On the flip side, Duffy has also enjoyed working here.

"I love Saratoga," Duffy said. "The community here and the support for the teachers and the students is just great and pretty unique to Saratoga. I know the students are really driven. I've had more fun teaching here than at UCSB."

Duffy has high hopes for the upcoming school year and is excited to be able to create her own curriculum and explore new topics she hasn't taught before in detail.

Duffy's fellow history teachers are also rooting for her. "I've been here for 35 years," Anzalone said. "I've seen a lot of different styles of teaching, and I know that she is going to be a huge success and the students are going to love her. It's rare for me to be so confident in a first-time teacher — she's really good." ♦

Math teacher adjusts to different culture

BY Anna Novoselov & Ananya Vadlakonda

On the first few days of school, Algebra 1 and Algebra 2 Honors teacher Andrew Shoemaker handed out a survey to each student asking them questions ranging from their favorite activities to their goals for the year.

Immediately after he handed out the survey, his students began jotting down their goals and expectations. Later, when he read the responses, Shoemaker was both impressed and overwhelmed to find that the majority of his students wrote that their overall goals include receiving straight A's and A pluses this year.

Most Saratoga High teachers have grown accustomed to that kind of mindset from students. However, new teachers are often surprised by the academic intensity so ingrained in Saratoga High's culture. Shoemaker immediately noticed the difference in rigor compared to his previous jobs at Waimea High in Waimea, Hawaii, and San Lorenzo Valley High in Felton, Calif.

Shoemaker's goal is to meet the math department's expectations and for them to feel happy that they hired him, as well as make good connections and become more "ingrained into the school community."

Shoemaker said that he already feels comfortable in the new environment and that the rest of the math department has been kind, helpful and understanding of what it is like to be a new teacher here.

Although Shoemaker admits that following the pace of the other teacher has been difficult, other math teachers, including Geometry and Pre-Calculus Honors teacher PJ Yim, have



FALCON // MUTHU PALIANAPPAN

New math teacher Andrew Shoemaker poses for the camera.

helped guide Shoemaker and answer his questions.

"We explain something one time to him and he just figures out the rest," Yim said. "He's really sharp."

Shoemaker finds it difficult to work around a generally "negative attitude towards mathematics and school."

This anti-math stigma has been one of the greatest challenges he has faced as a teacher.

As a result, Shoemaker has tried his best to make his classroom a community, where students offer each other constant encouragement.

He focuses on creating a supportive learning environment, with a class philosophy revolving around classroom comfort. Overall, Shoemaker remains upbeat and positive about his experiences here thus far. "Succeeding and doing well is really ingrained in the culture and that is a little different from schools in my experience," Shoemaker said. "It's one of the things that brought me here." ♦



GRAPHIC BY ELAINE FAN

Sophomore finds new interests in California

BY David Koh

In the summer of 2016, then-freshman Rosa Golchin sprinted across a field in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, grabbing an incoming frisbee out of the air in a game of ultimate frisbee.

One year later, Golchin was positioned in a canoe behind an instructor as she took a break from a long row along the densely forested sides of the Lexington Reservoir at the Los Gatos Rowing Association.

After moving to Saratoga in early July, Golchin has been busy finding new hobbies, pursuing old ones and getting used to her new surroundings. "I haven't really had a problem transitioning to Saratoga," Golchin said. "It's not all that different from North Carolina in terms of academic rigor."

Golchin misses the friends she made during her freshman year and ultimate frisbee league teammates. Although Golchin loved playing ultimate frisbee in North Carolina, she does not plan to continue pursuing it in California.

However, Golchin has continued to pursue other passions in the humanities, specifically history and art. After mov-

ing to California, Golchin signed up for classes such as AP European History.

Golchin also heard about rowing from her brother and fell in love with the calming experience of rowing at a local club. Golchin looks forward to meet-

"I think I'll be able to find new passions and continue my old ones."

SOPHOMORE Rosa Golchin



Changing environments:

FRESHMAN FROM INDIA ADJUSTS TO LOCAL CULTURE

BY Anishi Patel

During the first few days of school, freshman Medha Nair was convinced she had a broken locker. After three days of attempting and failing to open her locker door, Nair even told the office about it.

As she tried opening her locker one last time, another student noticed her struggling and took pity. Without a word, the stranger lifted the handle and pulled the completely functional locker door open.

"I was so embarrassed; I couldn't even go back to the office to apologize," Nair said with a laugh.

Nair had never had a locker before while attending school in Bangalore, India.

After her father bought a company in the U.S., Nair's family decided they needed to move to California to spend more time together. And, locker mishaps aside, Nair has found much to love about her new country.

"People are so welcoming," Nair said. "I was a little worried coming here, especially after seeing all these movies like 'Mean Girls.' I thought I'd be bullied because I'm a new student. But instead, people were so nice and it was easier to make friends here than in India."

Nair also likes that SHS offers a multitude of classes, especially in music. Back in Bangalore, she did not have the option of taking a music class at school, so she sang and played the guitar on her own. But here, Nair is a soprano in the choir.

But music options are not the only difference she has encountered. Nair also finds American culture extremely different from the typical Bangalorean way of life.

"Here, neighbors wave at you every time you see them," Nair said. "When you walk in public, people smile at you. I thought that was really nice. You don't do that in India."

Additionally, a small city like Saratoga has its perks. Compared to the usually crowded and loud city of Bangalore, which has 8.4 million people, Saratoga offers a more peaceful environment.

At times, of course, Nair does miss her home in Bangalore, with its authentic Indian foods and familiar surroundings.

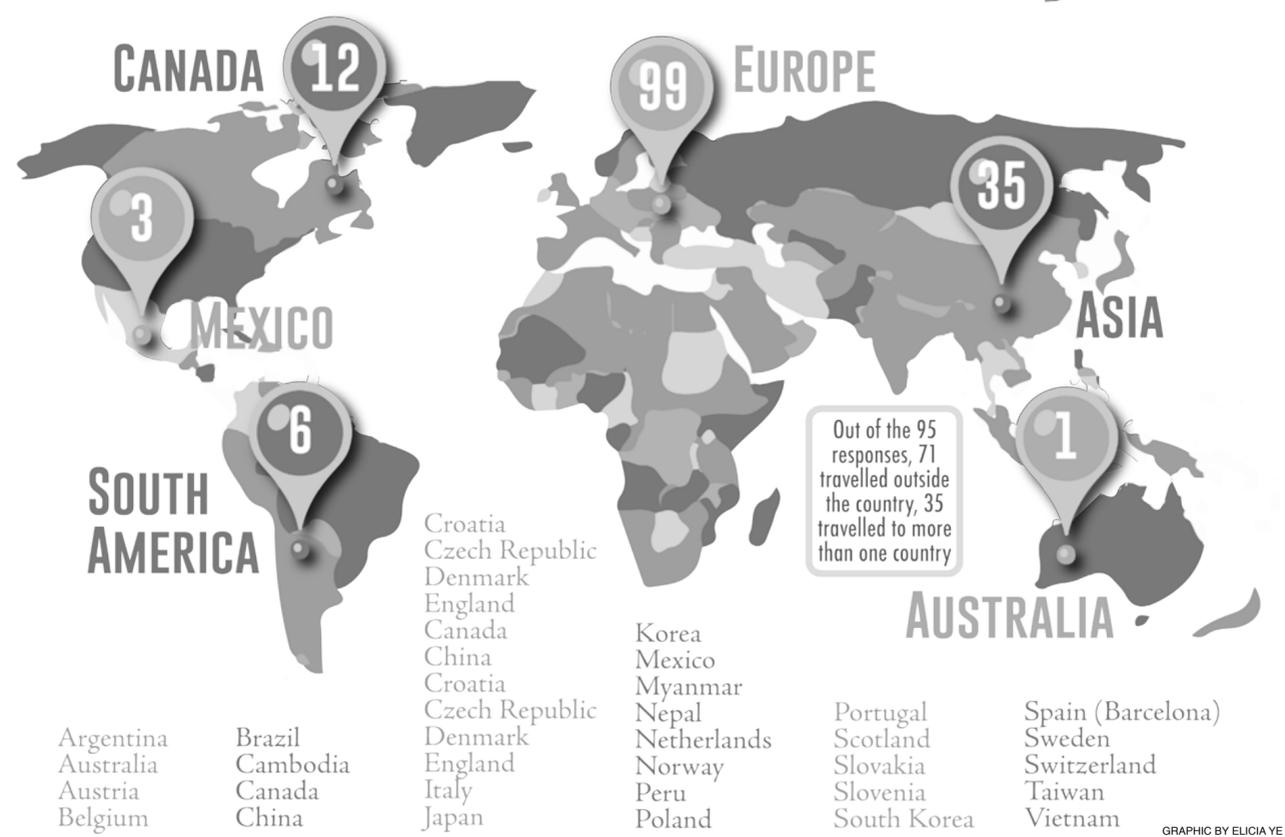
"I remember the day I was leaving," Nair said. "I was sitting there in the empty house and thinking about all the times I've had with my friends. That day I did feel like I didn't want to go, but after actually coming here, I haven't regretted it once." ♦



Nair

Around the World

Where did students travel to this summer?



GRAPHIC BY ELUCIA YE

JV Football team welcomes female player

BY Alex Wang & Elicia Ye

After her experiences in cheerleading for Pop Warner during her middle school years, a youth football and cheer and dance program, freshman Nora Sherman decided to cross the sidelines and put on a helmet and pads.

Sherman was inspired to follow in the footsteps of both her grandfather, who played football for the Oregon Ducks, and her brother, sophomore offensive lineman Jack Sherman for Varsity. She is playing football for the first time this year as a member of the JV team.

"My brother played last year and had a lot of positive experiences, so he was the one who got me interested in playing competitive football for the first time," Nora said. "It's great for us to finally be on the same team together."

With her tall stature and muscular physique, Nora feels no different being on the team as a female player.

While Jack played football for two years in Pop Warner, Nora cheered on the sideline as a flyer for a year. However, Nora had a terrifying experience when her stunt group threw her in the air and didn't manage to catch her, leaving her to fall to the rubber track.

To make matters worse, she was reprimanded for being late to do the next

cheer. The experience left her feeling unhappy about cheerleading in general.

Not only is Nora on the JV team, but she has earned a starting role as the team's center — the player who snaps the ball to the quarterback and blocks the opposing team's linemen.

With her tall stature and muscular physique, Nora feels no different being on the team as a female player. Despite not having gone through extensive football training in the past, Nora said she didn't find tryouts and practices too demanding and was able to adapt well to being on the team.

"During games, I do my best to focus on the play we're doing because there's always a lot going on," Nora said. "I just need to make sure I do my job well so everyone else can do theirs."

Knowing that Nora was Jack's sister, players said they were excited to meet her at the football team meeting in the beginning of the year, and they have welcomed her ever since.

"We don't treat her any differently because she's part of the team and our whole team is family," sophomore George Bian said. "We don't look down on her just because she's a girl. She's strong and independent and able to start on the offense."

Bian said Nora fits into the role perfectly at offensive line, a position the team where the team lacks depth.

According to coaches, the team dynamic hasn't changed with the addition of Nora to the program. With the hard-work and determination she brings to the team, Nora just wants to be treated like the rest of the players.

"We love the mentality and energy she brings every day to the field, and we enjoy watching her grow as one of our center



FALCON // SOPHIA ZIVANIC
Freshman center Nora Sherman (third from left) practices with the offensive line during a recent JV practice.

pieces on this team," JV head coach Stephen Matos said. "But I tell all my players, once you're on this team you are a falcon and that's it."

After two games and a scrimmage, Nora has grown accustomed to games and opponents' reactions. During the scrimmage against San Mateo last month, she took off her helmet and let her hair out of the braids. Players on the opposing team were initially surprised but remained respectful throughout the game.

"I don't usually like getting attention, but most of it has been positive," Sherman said. "I haven't gotten any negative attention, which I really appreciate because I know people get backlash when they do things differently."

The coaches hope that with what Nora has overcome, she can open her eyes to football or any sport and prove that she can do anything no matter what.

"She is a huge motivation for me to work harder just watching her overcome the odds. Nora is the definition of Red Pride, and we are so grateful to have her at Saratoga as well as having her as a great teammate," Matos said.

Nora hopes her example will encourage others to achieve their aspirations.

"Do whatever you want to do, whether other people think it's something you should or shouldn't do," Nora said. "You should go ahead and have fun, work hard and succeed." ♦



TACKLING THE NEXT CHALLENGE

FOOTBALL PLAYER SEEKS COLLEGIATE RUGBY OFFERS

GRAPHIC BY KYLE WANG
BY Neil Rao

Muscling his way out of a pile of sweaty athletes, senior Ryan (Hakim) Caviani sprinted to the opposing touchline, diving as he grounded the ball in a practice during the start of his team's season in January.

Caviani was recognized for his ability while playing for a local Silicon Valley rugby team, later joining the NorCal All-Stars team for high schoolers just after his first season in the sport.

As part of the team, he has played in many major tournaments such as a recent international competition in Oregon against teams from New Zealand, England and Ireland.

But rugby became a part of Caviani's life when a friend introduced it to him only a year ago.

"At first when playing, I didn't think much of rugby," he admitted. "I thought it was fun and all but just played it on the side."

He was mainly using rugby to improve his football skills in the offseason, but instead, his football background allowed him to excel at this new sport.

His athleticism is easy to see: He is a key player on the school's football team, playing running back and linebacker on varsity starting as a sophomore. Because rugby is a similarly physical sport to football, Caviani has been able to translate his football

experience to the rugby field. "Caviani is a physical force on the field, and seeing him make these big plays fires up us as well," senior safety Pranay Bettadapur said. "His rugby helps him with his tackling and aggression."

Nonetheless, because Caviani's rugby team combines the best players in the region, practices are extremely intense with lots of conditioning.

Coaches grade players and, when players underperform, players are cut them from the team.

He practices two to three times a week at Treasure Island in San Francisco, meaning

"I never thought I'd be able to say this, but rugby is my main sport now."



SENIOR Ryan (Hakim) Caviani

that Caviani, like many of his teammates, travels for hours just to attend practices — adding to the physical toll on his body. Additionally, because his rugby season begins in January and lasts through summer,



Courtesy of RYAN CAVIANI
Senior Ryan Caviani carries the ball in a game for the NorCal All-Stars. Having started playing rugby one year ago at a friend's recommendation, Caviani now hopes to continue in college. "Rugby has become my main sport and I'm looking forward to playing in the future," Caviani said.

at times Caviani had to play both rugby and football on the same day.

His high school rugby league consists of many older players, helping him improve and feel at home, said Caviani.

Caviani is looking to improve and get stronger in the coming months, hoping

to get recruited for rugby from big-name colleges such as the University of Oregon, Clemson or Arizona.

"I never really thought I'd be able to say it but rugby has become my main sport now over football and I'm looking forward to having a future playing it," Caviani said. ♦

Low enrollment leads to Dance Fitness-Intermediate PE merger

BY Lina Kim & Ananya Vadlakonda

The 60 students enrolled in fifth-period PE this year are finding themselves in the weight room lifting weights and doing various CrossFit workouts one day, followed by exuberant Zumba dancing in the Small Gym another day.

This mix of experiences is a result of the Intermediate PE class and Dance Fitness merge.

At the beginning of the year, only 18 students had enrolled in Dance Fitness taught by AP US History teacher Kim Anzalone, leaving the PE department with the option of either discontinuing the class or merging the class with an already crowded Intermediate PE period with PE teacher Yuko Aoki.

Soon after, the department decided to combine the two classes then split the

students into groups.

"It would just make a lot of sense to combine our two classes and then split them down the middle," Anzalone said. "So that's what we did and I think it's turned out to be really cool."

With the two classes combined, the large group was divided into two smaller groups of roughly 30 people, allowing them to alternate between Dance Fitness and Intermediate PE every class period.

"You don't do all weightlifting and fitness and you don't do all dance," Anzalone said. "You break it up, and I think it keeps people more engaged since they rotate."

Last year was the first time Dance Fitness had been introduced as a class. But once the PE department decided to offer it as solely an enrichment class instead of

a PE replacement for underclassmen and juniors, the enrollment dropped and led to the department making the decision to combine the Dance Fitness class with a period of Intermediate PE.

That decision disappointed at least some students who had originally enrolled in either Dance Fitness or Intermediate PE, because they were now taking a class they hadn't signed up for.

"I originally signed up for Dance Fitness, so that's what I wanted to take," senior Laasya Giri said. "But now I have to do PE again and it feels like I'm back in freshman year. I'll just get through it, but it's really annoying and I'd rather not be there."

Others, however, were more enthusiastic about the change. "I personally don't like PE a lot, so I

think I like it better," sophomore Surbhi Bhat said. "But some people who don't necessarily like to dance or are not able to dance might prefer doing PE."

With the combination of the two classes, students have been able to experience a wider variety of fitness as both dance and the CrossFit based curriculum in Intermediate PE are given equal importance, making the class "healthier physically for [the students]," according to Anzalone.

Additionally, Aoki is glad that the merger allows students to experience different kinds of physical activity.

The PE department remains undecided on the long-term fate of the Dance Fitness class, but is looking to expand its offerings.

"We want to have more enrichment added for the next year," Aoki said, "so that's the department goal which we are working on." ♦



Anzalone

Schools begin early recruiting of junior volleyball standout

BY Elaine Sun

Recently, junior standout volleyball player Katie Hulme has had to get used to playing not only in front of friends and family members but also in front of a tougher audience: college coaches.

At 6 feet tall, Hulme plays middle and outside on the court. Her height ability to run many offensive plays and powerful hits all contribute to her important role on the court and her potential to play at the college level.

She has already been recruited by several schools, including Carnegie Mellon and Columbia. She has played volleyball for more than two years, both for the school's varsity team as well as the Red Rock Volleyball Club in Redwood City.

"The whole recruiting process is stressful because you want to find the right school for you," Hulme said. "If you find it, you have to make sure the coach wants you just as much as you want them."

According to Hulme, the process for contacting coaches for D1 colleges is complicated. Coaches are not allowed to respond to players until Sept. 1 of junior year, with the exception of sending generic emails for invitations to summer camps which can help a recruit's prospects. Hulme has been contacting the coaches indirectly through her club coach, so she doesn't "know exactly what they're thinking all the time."

On the other hand, the processes for D2 and D3 colleges are much simpler since she can contact those coaches directly.

"My school coaches are not a super big part of the recruiting process, but they

"You have to make sure the coach wants you just as much as you want them."

JUNIOR Katie Hulme



definitely helped me refine my skills," Hulme said. "My club coaches are really the ones helping me communicate with college coaches." ♦

During club season, Hulme frequently sends emails to schools in an effort to make sure they send recruiters to watch her play during club tournaments. She also includes video highlights of her playing and periodic updates on her transcript.

The recruiting process mostly happens during club season, which typically occurs during the winter, fall or summer since college volleyball occurs at the same time as high school volleyball.

Hulme has received support from her parents through the entire process, but affirmed that she is mostly the one in charge of her recruitment process.

"It's challenging, but having the chance to hopefully play volleyball in college is definitely going to be worth it," Hulme concluded. ♦

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2017 FALL

GIRLS' WATER POLO: DIFFICULT SEASON IN HIGHER DIVISION PREDICTED

Head coach: Jerome Chung
2016-2017 record: Overall 13-8, League 4-2

2016-2017 recap: The girls finished second in their league, losing 5-4 to Homestead in the El Camino League Championships.

Key additions: Junior Ashley Feng, junior Elaine Sun, junior Phoebe Wang, senior Audrey Dang

Key matchups: After losing a close game in the league championships, the girls are seeking redemption and hope to prove themselves by defeating Homestead this season. Los Gatos will also be a key matchup.

Star players: Junior field player Madeline Stuart, junior field player Sarah Daoudi and senior goalie Aileen Zhang

Key losses: Sophie Sellers, Jessie Liu, Kailyn Koerber, and Kanika Vora

League: De Anza League

Prognosis: After a successful season in the El Camino League, the girls have moved up to the more challenging De Anza League.

Although the girls ended last season

with strong play, the team expects an uphill battle this season after the loss of seven seniors, leaving them with only 10 field players, compared to last year's 14.

In addition to having few players, JV coach Katja DeRoos wasn't able to return, a position the school hasn't be able to fill yet.

The decrease in number of mentors has greatly affected the girls' practice conditions, forcing previous varsity coach Jerome Chung to train both the JV and varsity teams at the same time.

Chung has been working hard to compensate for the lack of a JV coach, creating strict schedules and detailed day by day practices for both teams.

With constant training of a classic offensive umbrella play, drop defensive plays and six on five setup for both defense and offense, the drills have become almost instinctual.

"In terms of game experience, the team is a little young," Chung said. "But they're a very hard working group of kids."

With the season beginning, the hard work has clearly begun to pay off.

On Aug. 24, the girls played their first



FALCON // SOPHIA ZIVANIC
Junior Madeleine Stuart shoots on JV goalie Sanan Mohkber during practice on Aug. 31.

non-league game against Half Moon Bay, winning 6-2.

Junior Madeline Stuart was the leading scorer, forcing four out of the six goals from around the pool.

"It was good to knock the rust off in our first game," Chung said. "They played hard so I was very happy for both teams."

He has confidence that the rest of the season's games can go as smoothly as the one against Half Moon Bay.

"If we practice hard and give 100 percent, it will be a successful season," Chung said. ♦

— Kaylene Morrison and Vivien Zhang

FIELD HOCKEY: TEAM HOPES TO LIVE UP TO LAST YEAR'S SUCCESS

Head coaches: Nanu Sidhu and Lifon Huynh

2016-2017 record: 10-2

2016-2017 recap: The team was able to work together to make it to the CCS semifinals and lost only to Saint Francis and major rival, Los Gatos.

Team captains: Seniors Kate Bossi and Valerie Yang

Key additions: sophomore Hannah Beine (center back) and junior Autumn Zulieg (left back)

Key matchups: Los Gatos, Monta Vista

Star players: Seniors Kate Bossi (center midfielder), Valerie Yang (right back) and Siobhan Burgos (left midfielder)

Key losses: Tina Miller, Hannah Leonard, Rachel Davey, Emily Chen

League: De Anza Division

Prognosis: Following last season's unexpected success, the team is hoping to make this year just as strong despite the graduation of seven players.

"Going into this season the loss of our starters had a huge impact on our team," senior center midfielder Kate Bossi said. "We only have three returning varsity field players, meaning a lot of sophomores will have to step up into the varsity spot."

With these losses and the fact that the varsity team currently has no substitutes, the prospect of an equally successful season looks challenging, senior right back Valerie Yang said.

Despite this, the team has been working

together well in the pre-season.

The team suffered a 4-0 loss against St. Ignatius on Aug. 26, despite the efforts of Bossi in the midfield and those of sophomore defenders Hannah Beine and midfielder Ella Parr on defense.

The Falcons, however, began the season with a strong 1-0 home win against Christopher High on Aug. 18, with the lone goal coming from a slight deflection from sophomore midfielder Ella Parr.

Because the team consists of completely new players playing together, the team's goal this season is to develop a strong chemistry, said Yang.

The team is also working to tactically improve during practices.

"This year, we're focusing a lot more on smarter, quicker thinking when we're on the field so we try to incorporate that kind of thinking by practicing different strategies to pass the ball and we practice deceptive plays," Yang said.

The team also has strong support from experienced coach Nanu Sidhu.

"Nanu is a really important part of our team. Not only does he works us hard in drills and conditioning to push us to our best playing ability, but he also is the type of coach I hope everyone has once in their life," Bossi said. "His passion for the game inspires every player to play their hardest creating a motivation for our team to succeed this season [despite the setbacks]."

— Ashley Feng and Neil Rao



Bossi

"I just hope that we can get to the same place we were last year in leagues. If we can get even better than last year, we may be able to make CCS."

SENIOR Ryan Ahrari

— Rahul Vadlakonda and Phoebe Wang

FOOTBALL: TEAM STRUGGLES WITH LOSSES EARLY IN PRESEASON

Head coach: Tim Lugo
2016-2017 record: 5-6

2016-2017 recap: The Falcons managed to qualify for the CCS playoffs after a solid regular season performance, but lost in the first round to Palma.

Key losses: quarterback Will Liddle, receiver Kian Ghelichkani, defensive lineman Aaron Vogel, running back Nolan Chao, lineman Jesse Chung

Key players: Seniors quarterback Niko Rositano, receiver Harrison Fong, lineman Allie Liddle

Key additions: Juniors receiver Ryan Huseby, running back Jonathan (JJ) Wang

Key matchups: Los Gatos on Nov. 3,

Palo Alto on Oct. 27

League: De Anza Division

Prognosis: Coming off a CCS qualifying season last year, the Falcons hope to replicate and build on their success to reach their ultimate goal of a CCS title.

The Falcons lost the bulk of their offensive and defensive line to graduation, along with quarterback Will Liddle, and star receiver Kian Ghelichkani, who finished his senior year with a total of 1,446 all-purpose yards, fourth for wide receivers in CCS.

Senior captain Robert Scott believes that their shoes can be filled by the team's returning and newly added skill players.

"Kian's loss is really tough on our team, but at the same time we have three or four players that can make up for it," Scott said.

New quarterback Niko Rositano looks forward to having several veterans to throw to, including seniors Harrison Fong and Will Turpin, both of whom played an integral role in the team's offensive success last year.

"Harry and Will are two amazing receivers, and I am looking to connect with them a lot this year," Rositano said.

In the team's Sept. 1 home game against Silver Creek, the team suffered a tough 43-41 loss despite leading throughout the game.

The Falcons however could not hold Silver Creek back as their opponents pushed on the offensive to grab a last minute win.

The team additionally dropped their home opener with a 63-7 loss against Half Moon Bay on Aug. 25.

This was primarily due to problems with the team's lines failing to stop Half Moon Bay's runs and failing to protect the quarterback, Rositano.

According to Scott, Half Moon Bay also had a variety of defensive and offensive schemes that the Falcons hadn't planned for. ♦

— Siva Sambasivam

SPORTS



GRAPHIC BY ASHLEY FENG

CROSS COUNTRY: RUNNERS ADAPT TO NEW COACH AND PRACTICES

Boys' head coach: Ian Tippets
2016-17 recap: Junior Amit Nag qualified for the state meet and placed 107th; the team placed 8th at CCS and 6th in SCVAL finals but did not qualify for states

Key opponents: Los Gatos, Palo Alto

League: De Anza Division

Star Athletes: Sophomore Kole Tippets and Sahaj Rastogi, juniors David Berkowitz-Sklar and Nirav Adunuthula, seniors Amit Nag and Anirudh Rao

Key Losses: Nick Sum, Jinghao Wang

Key Additions: None

Prognosis: Practices this year have become stricter and tougher under new coach Ian Tippets, who believes that commitment and mileage are the two policies for success.

These practices now include stringent attendance policies, longer runs, supple-

mentary core exercises and additional weekend practices.

"The team needs pushing," said sophomore Kole Tippets, the coach's son. "We have a lot of talent, but other teams just run more miles and are more committed to cross country than we are."

The team is 20 runners smaller this year; many runners either dropped or did not show up.

"Last year, some runners cut runs and hung out in Starbucks until it was time to head back," Kole said. "Many of them dropped this year." The result: Those who remain are committed to the team.

Coach Tippets believes these tougher practices will greatly improve chances for a better result for the team this season.

Girls' head coach: Danny Moon
Last season recap: Sophomore Julia Hoff-

man made states, and the team placed 10th in CCS.

Key additions: Junior Elizabeth Kardach

Key matchups: Lynbrook and Monta Vista

Key athletes: Sophomore Julia Hoffman, juniors Isabella Tan and Siena Parsons

Key losses: Sydnie Vo

League: De Anza Division

Prognosis: The team hopes to follow in the sophomore Julia Hoffman's footsteps and advance to states this year. Coach Moon hopes to do more speed work as well as run more with the team this year.

"It's going to take some work," Moon said. "One of the main goals is to make sure that there's always a team effort involved at meets and at all the workouts."

The team plans to continue with workouts that target specific areas of running.

The team is 20 runners smaller this year; many runners dropped or did not show up. Those who remain are committed to the team.

Many of the runners have set additional personal goals. Junior Isabella Tan plans to get her mile time under 6 minutes and PR in the meet courses, as well as improve on running hills.

"I'm really optimistic about this season," Tan said. ♦

— Mathew Luo and Elaine Sun

GIRLS' TENNIS: PLAYERS PREPARE FOR ANOTHER WINNING SEASON WITH 4 NEW PLAYERS

Head coach: Florin Marica
Assistant coach: Jonathon Chui
2016 - 2017 record: 15-2

2016-2017 recap: The team finished the season at the semi-finals of CCS in an upset loss to Saint Francis.

Key additions: Freshman Alyssa Pinai, sophomore Vivian Lin

Star players: No. 2 player senior Stephanie Ren, No. 1 player sophomore Monica Stratakos

Key losses: Caitlin Ju, Neeka Nikfar, Shreya Ingle

League: De Anza Division

Prognosis: With six seniors, including No. 1 singles player Caitlin Ju, leaving

for college, the team had to rebuild their lineup by bringing in four new members to continue last year's strong season.

"There were a lot of seniors that left last year so there's more new teams members than usual this year," Ren said. "The new members are working really hard on improving their doubles since most of the whole singles team line up is still here."

Ren said the team has just begun to mesh, and that they're putting more effort to schedule team bondings.

"My main goal is getting to the finals of CCS, because last year we lost in the semifinals against Saint Francis which was a big surprise," Ren said.

She added that Los Gatos will continue to be their main rival this season.

"They have many top players and it has always been hard to beat them," Ren said. "There is always more tension when we play them."

Despite this, she emphasized the importance of not underestimating other opponents and sticking to their game plan.

"It's going to be tough," Ren said, "but I think we have a good shot of winning in our league, and hopefully we can repeat success the team has had in recently." ♦

— Annissa Mu and Jay Kim



Courtesy of PHOEBE WANG

Sophomore Varsha Horantur swings at a tennis ball during a home game against Menlo Park High School.

GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL: FALCONS TO BE TESTED IN HIGHER LEAGUE

Head Coach: Steve Chiou
2016-2017 record: 20-8 overall record, 10-2 league record

2016-2017 recap: The team excelled in the lower league last season, winning the league championship and qualifying for CCS.

Key Additions: Junior libero Michelle Vu, sophomore libero Lauren Hansen

Key Matchups: Los Gatos (Oct. 31/3 and Oct. 24/10/24), Palo Alto (Sept. 21/9/21 and Oct. 12/10/12), Homestead (Sept. 28/9/28 and Oct. 19/10/19)

Star Players: Junior outside hitter Katie Hulme, senior outside hitter Riley Carter, senior setter Dasha Gousseva

Key Losses: Julia Vita

League: De Anza Division
Prognosis: After a 10-2 record in the

lower El Camino League, volleyball players hope that they can adjust to tougher competition in the more competitive De Anza League this year. With a new coach and new players, players are working on improving their skills in order to execute plays against harder teams.

Senior outside hitter Riley Carter hopes to build on last season's successes, even though this year will not be as easy.

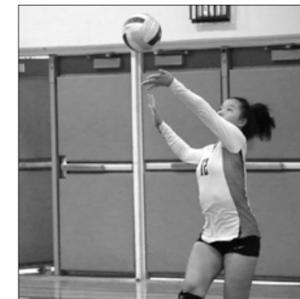
"The harder league will help prepare us better for CCS," Carter said.

Junior outside hitter Katie Hulme said that the team's goal is to make it to CCS again and go as far as possible. "We need to focus on connecting as a team," she said. ♦

— Sandhya Sundaram



Courtesy of FREDERICK KIM
Left: Volleyball player is spiking a ball during a home game against King's Academy. Right: Freshman Danielle Moon serves the ball in the volleyball team's Aug. 30th game.



GIRLS' GOLF: ANTICIPATING GOOD SEASON WITH STRONG TEAM MEMBERS

Head coach: David Gragnola
Last season's record: 6-1-4

Last season recap: The team finished fifth in its division for SCVAL, but did not qualify as a team for CCS. Senior Sarah Lo qualified for CCS individually, placing 54th out of 99 players.

Key additions: Freshman Iris Lee and Jane Luo

Key losses: No. 3 player Cynthia Yang, No. 5 player Raina Kolluri, No. 6 player Anya Herne

Key matchups: Los Gatos on Sept. 11, Lynbrook on Oct. 9

Star players: No. 1 player junior Janelle Jin, No. 2 player senior Sarah Lo and No. 3 player sophomore Sally Kim

League: Santa Clara Valley Athletics

League, De Anza Division

Prognosis: After losing four graduating seniors, the girls emerged from tryouts on Aug. 17 with scores in the mid 50s and lower, placing four new freshmen on the team.

Last year, the girls experienced early setbacks, but followed a promising trend as they approached leagues. The Falcons were ultimately unable to win their final match against Lynbrook, in part due to playing on a muddy course that was longer than they were accustomed to.

"Last season went by really fast and it was fun as the last year for last year's seniors," No. 2 player senior Sarah Lo said, "but it was also pretty time consuming and stressful with close results of the

League, De Anza Division

"It would be exciting to finally make CCS as a team because we haven't yet in the past three years I have been on the team."

JUNIOR Janelle Jin

matches."

Lo and the team anticipate a good season, and hope that they can win more matches with the new additions to the team. In addition, Lo believes that prac-

ting on the courses for away matches beforehand will boost their performance.

With minimal changes to their lineup, the traveling team now includes freshmen Iris Lee and Jane Luo, as well as junior Kristin Murakami, who jumped to No. 4, showing major improvement from the 2016 season.

"It would be so exciting to finally make CCS as a team," Jin said, "because we haven't yet in the past three years that I have been on the team."

The Falcons' first match of the season will take place on Sept. 11, at Saratoga County Club, against Los Gatos High School. ♦

— Elaine Fan and Lina Kim

>> snapshots



FALCON // PHOEBE WANG



FALCON // SOPHIA ZIVANIC



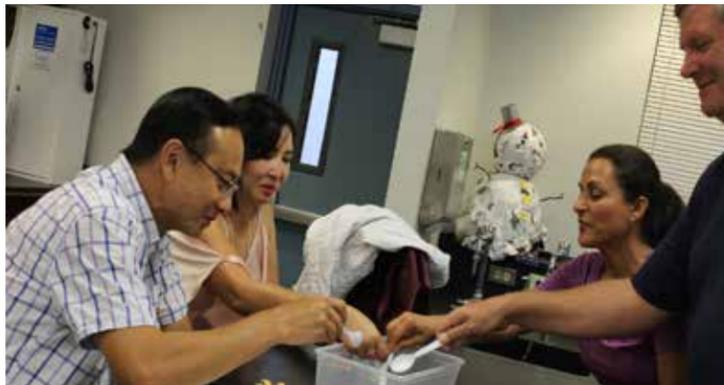
FALCON // FREDERICK KIM



FALCON // PHOEBE WANG



FALCON // FREDERICK KIM



FALCON // PHOEBE WANG



TALISMAN // ALLYSON CHANG

(Above): Senior Riley Carter prepares to serve on the match against King's Academy on Aug. 30. Falcons won 3-0.

(Clockwise from top left): Senior Brandon Mo adds vegetables on his hamburger during the All-school barbecue hosted by PTSO on Aug. 25.

During the Back to School Dance on Aug. 18, seniors form a mosh pit, where seniors threw their hands up and danced to "Closer" by The Chainsmokers.

The dance team holds a bake sale fundraiser during the football game on Aug. 25 against Half Moon Bay, selling cookies and other baked goods.

On Aug. 21, parents come into Kristen Thomson's classroom for the Back to School Night. Parents were informed of how the class would be structured and what students would be expected to do.

The juniors perform their closing cheer at the Sept. 1 Back to School rally. This year, the rally commission implemented a new point system in which the winning class has the honor to hold the trophy at the next rally.

Freshman Samuel Wang participates in a Link Crew game session during Freshman Orientation on Aug. 16 to break the ice within the Link group.

topten

THINGS THAT HAPPENED IN SCHOOL AFTER BREAK

- 10 "Start" those college apps, seniors. Find a way to eloquently talk about your goldfish that died when you were 6 years old.
- 9 Catch a bout of unseasonal senioritis. Summer vacation is a state of mind, freshmen.
- 8 "Enjoy" a nice school lunch.ng schedule. Only America's best high school could offer such "authentic" ethnic cuisine at such an "affordable" price.
- 7 Sleep at the same time. Just wake up six hours earlier.
- 6 Give up on that summer body that you never worked on. Playing NBA 2K17 doesn't actually burn calories.
- 5 Hang out by your (assigned) locker at tutorial. Who needs to go to the parking lot anyway?
- 4 Join a new club. That's another line for your college application extracurriculars.
- 3 Practice for Homecoming. Or don't. Nothing's funnier than watching someone forget the dance.
- 2 Finish the Netflix shows you were binge-watching over summer. Sleep is healthy, but so is closure.
- 1 Join cross country. What could be better than running sessions through the streets of Saratoga in 100-plus degree weather?

>> David Koh and Austin Wang

Steering carts at Costco: worse than driving

KZ, more like Jay-Z



Katherine Zhou

It was a typical Saturday, and I decided to take a break from the stress of senior year and college applications by going to my favorite place, Costco. With my mom in tow, I cautiously drove to the Sunnyvale Costco, cruising along Lawrence Expressway.

When we pulled into the Costco parking lot, my mom panicked when she saw almost every spot filled. We had to drive around for 20 minutes to finally find a spot. With one car waiting in the long line for Costco gas, another backing out, and yet another waiting behind me ready to take my spot, the pressure was on. My mom held her breath as I perfectly avoided the other cars, signaled and turned into the

spot. I parked in the center of the spot — better than many adults around me I might add —and I was relieved that nothing had happened.

As we walked into the busy Costco, my real challenge arrived: maneuvering the cart around the crowded store. I went to an aisle to go look for a label maker my mom needed, but was stopped in "cart traffic." Shockingly, the traffic lasted longer than any I had experienced on the road. People

As we walked into the busy Costco, my real challenge arrived

were also a lot more aggressive, casually bumping others to get ahead, and they seemed a lot more hurried and stressed out than I've seen on the highway.

I also noticed that people followed

certain "rules of the road." All of the carts going into the store went on the right side of the aisle, and all of the carts leaving went on the left. When I went around a cart to get to the cheese aisle, I was side-eyed heavily by the lady who was maneuvering it.

The worst part was going around to the busiest areas near the dairy and vegetable sections. So many carts were "parked" on the sides of the aisle, and I had to turn my increasingly heavy cart in small spaces, tight turns and in dense "traffic."

Although I had to slide through a bunch of people with carts to quickly grab my black bean burgers from the frozen aisle, I was proud of how smoothly I maneuvered my cart. After we checked out our items and got back to our car, I told my mom to drive on the way back home — I had enough "driving" for the day. ♦

