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Band members discuss skills gained from participation.



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# THE saratoga falcon

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## POWER OUTAGE

PG&E SHUTS OFF ELECTRICITY FOR THOUSANDS ACROSS CALIFORNIA, SONOMA COUNTY FIRES WORSEN AIR QUALITY BUT SCHOOL RETAINS POWER AND STAYS OPEN

BY Aaria Thomas & Alekhya Vadlakonda

Last Saturday, the Pacific Gas and Electricity (PG&E) shut down power for about 940,000 people across California due to high winds and high fire danger. The outages affected thousands of Saratoga residents and caused Los Gatos High to cancel school on Monday.

In the meantime, the Kincade Fire tore through huge parts of Sonoma County, fed by winds as high as 93 miles

per hour. The smoke from this fire and other smaller ones made its way south, and the air quality index (AQI) in the Bay Area rose to 105 microns in some places; the healthy AQI range is between 0-50 microns.

PG&E began shutting off power for fear of their power lines possibly snapping due to winds and sparking anything like the wildfires of 2017 and 2018. The first power outages of the fall occurred during the week of Oct. 14-18.

The power started going out at around

5 p.m. on Saturday for thousands, and those in some parts of Saratoga lost electricity throughout the evening. Most residents were without power for approximately 48 hours, and PG&E began turning it back on for some on Monday around 11:30 a.m. To help students whose homes lacked power, the school kept the student center open late for at least Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights, and about 30 students each night were taking advantage of it.

Many students who had their power

shut off had to find other means of doing homework and preparing for tests in addition to preparing meals and other necessities.

"It's just frustrating," assistant principal Kerry Mohnike said. "Not only for all the social reasons that power is important, but because if students are working on projects or trying to communicate with people, it's just hard to do that."

Thousands of residents and businesses

>> **POWER OUTAGE** on pg. 3

GRAPHIC BY CONNIE LIANG AND ANANYA VADLAKONDA

## Turf turnover for baseball field by 2021 spring season

BY Alekhya Vadlakonda & Christine Zhang

Replacement of the baseball field's grass and infield dirt with turf is set to begin after the baseball season ends this spring, said principal Greg Louie.

After this change, the baseball field will be similar to the softball field, which had its grass replaced by turf four years ago.

Along with this replacement, the district is looking into possibly laying down conduits to allow for lighting the baseball field and into renovating the dugouts.

Louie said the district has only approved the design phase of the change so far. His goal is for the design to be finished by the end of this spring's baseball season and construction starting soon after in hopes of completing the new field in time for the 2021 baseball season.

Louie said it will cost the district about \$100,000 to hire an architect to come up with a design and specify the total cost for the construction work. The budget for the project is roughly between \$2 to \$3 million, but the district's Board of Trustees has not yet approved that amount, he said.

Once this project is complete, the school will have no more natural grass playing surfaces for any sports. The football field was

the first to be turfed, followed by the upper field and softball field in the past few years.

The decision to renovate the baseball field was made last year by former principal Paul Robinson, athletic director Tim Lugo and the Measure E committee before Louie was a part of the school's administration.

By changing the field's grass to turf, Louie said other groups such as soccer or P.E. classes could also use the field. Additionally, the all-weather turf would be advantageous for the baseball team if it rained.

"Since baseball is a spring sport, there often tends to be a lot of rain," Louie said. "By having an all-weather turf, the baseball team could probably practice more than they had in the past and possibly even play more games because it takes less time for the water to drain out."

Additionally, field upkeep would lessen dramatically, with no need for cutting grass, fertilizing or battling pests. Junior Philbert Fan, who has played for the school's baseball team since his freshman year, said he likes the idea of the change.

"I'm excited that we're getting a new turf field because the dirt field creates a lot of problems for us," Fan said. "When the rain comes, we have to call off practices.. The turf makes everything a lot easier since it's a better surface to play on." ♦

## Miracle \$30k in 3 days

DONATIONS SAVE FINAL MARCHING BAND COMPETITION

BY Sofia Jones

From Oct. 22-24, members of the marching band frantically tried to raise money as they unexpectedly learned that their final competition in Fresno this weekend was in danger of being canceled as the result of \$30,000 shortfall. In the end, many families came up with asked-for donations and alumni even chipped in with donations.

Because members of the marching band worked on their show "Timeless" for months, they were excited to get the chance to perform in a large stadium for their final competition: the Fresno Sierra Cup at Fresno State University on Nov. 2. This excitement was dampened when the ensemble heard about the potential cancellation on Oct. 22.

At public schools, students and their parents are not mandated to contribute to the marching band funds or any other program; however, their donations pay for members' and volunteers' rides on coach buses, accommodations and meals for an overnight competition.

Music director Michael Boitz said approximately 40 percent of marching band members had not fully paid their encour-

aged share of the funds for the season, meaning that the donations of paying students needed to be larger.

"Most people don't really realize this, but the marching band is a huge financial undertaking," Boitz said. "Just the coach buses we take are at least \$5,000 for three or four buses, every single time."

Additionally, less participation in recent fundraisers has impacted the band's budget. One of the biggest annual fundraising events is the cookie dough sale, but as fewer students participated this year, the substantial funding that usually comes from it was lessened.

Although Boitz and other staff members said they were willing to pay out of pocket to help fix the imminent problem, they felt that this would be putting a Band-Aid on a much larger problem.

Instead, Boitz encouraged parents who had not donated yet to do so and opened up the possibility of students using creative means to fundraise on their own. Sophomore Color guard member Kate DiNucci even created a GoFundMe on Oct. 22 in an effort to be able to attend the competition.

"Everyone has put all of their time and

>> **MARCHING BAND** on pg. 3



DiNucci



## newsbriefs

### Cafeteria raises its prices in an effort to break even

In early October, students found that prices for most items on the cafeteria menu had been marked up by 50 cents to \$1. Cafeteria manager Pam Carlino said that prices were raised because the cafeteria is not breaking even.

"Salaries are going up, benefits are going up, and food costs are going up, so the district office decided to raise prices," she said. Prices were also raised at Los Gatos High.

Pizza and salad, two of the most commonly purchased items, have both been increased by \$1, making a slice of pizza \$3.50 and a large salad bowl \$5. With these price changes, many students, including sophomore Christopher Wu, said they feel less inclined to buy food from the school.

"I'm just going to buy from the cafeteria a lot less," Wu said. "I don't usually bring food from home, but I might start doing that." ♦

— Bill Yuan

### 2018-19 SBAC scores highest in school's history

According to California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP), 75 percent of Saratoga High juniors (current seniors) exceeded ELA standards on the 2018-19 SBAC exam, whereas 22 percent of juniors statewide did so. In addition, 74 percent of SHS juniors exceeded math standards, compared to 20 percent of California students. These scores are the highest the school has seen since students began taking the SBAC in 2015, ranking Saratoga High 10th among public high schools on average across the state. Though the SBAC doesn't affect students' grades or college admissions, the California Department of Education (CDE) encourages teachers to use it to assess how well their teaching methods are working. Based on their students' results, teachers often adjust their methods for future years.

In addition, SBAC scores are partially used to determine a school's ranking. Until 2017, only SBAC scores were used to determine a school's Academic Performance Index, the metric used to rank schools. The CDE is now designing a newer measurement system to replace API that includes graduation rates, AP performance and SBAC scores. ♦

— Viraaj Reddi

### picturethis



FALCON // JUN LEE

Saratoga STEM | Junior Wilson Fung guides Taiwanese delegates, who are observing STEM classes, through a physics lab during fourth period on Oct. 24.

## One-day event combats drug abuse

by NeetiBadve  
& VickyBai

The outreach commission decided to convert last year's Red Ribbon Week, focused on the issue of preventing alcohol and drug usage by students, into Red Ribbon Day to encourage more students to pay attention to its message.

"Not that many people last year participated all week, and not that many people cared by the end," said head commissioner Sally Kim. "So we thought it would be better to have it as one day."

Organizers hoped Red Ribbon Day, which occurred on Oct. 28, would hit home with its message.

"We [hoped] to raise awareness

about the effects of drugs and alcohol, especially juuling because that is the main thing on our campus," said senior Surbhi Bhat, a commission member. "We want kids to be more aware of the consequences."

The anti-drug campaign began with a tailgate in the morning. Teachers were encouraged to share their experiences dealing with drugs and alcohol to their classes, ranging from ways to deal with peer pressure to seeing the problem firsthand. Stickers and ribbons were also passed out during the day in order to inspire more excitement about the theme.

Like last year, lawn signs and posters appeared around school, as well as on social media; howev-

er, Red Ribbon Day still struggled to gain participation.

"I knew when Red Ribbon Day occurred through Facebook, but I didn't understand how to participate. I feel like I paid more attention to the anti-juuling signs in the bathrooms than Red Ribbon Day," said sophomore Selina Chen.

Bhat acknowledged that one day of campaigning did not change many minds, but she remains hopeful of its positive impact.

"We know it [didn't] reduce juuling that much or even deter people from doing it," Bhat said, "but if they understand more of the long-term consequences, hopefully, they'll be more conscious about it." ♦

## Students lead MAP Speaker Series

by AnjaliNuggehalli

Senior Krithi Sankar felt a sense of relief that her hard work had paid off as she listened to the panel of professionals discussing their careers during MAP Speaker Series in the MAP Annex on Oct. 10.

The event was the result of months of work and communication.

Within the MAP Program is a student team responsible for creating events outside of the classroom. They work to further bond the MAP community as well as host speakers from all over the country through a regular Speaker Series panel.

Some of the past speakers for the series include official photographer for the Olympics Jeff Cable, NBC Bay Area News anchor Scott McGrew, and Blue Sky Studios animator and storyboard artist Karen Dishar.

Sankar, along with one other student, is in charge of finding speakers as well as organizing logistics for the event.

"I chose to apply for the head of the speaker series because I was really interested in storytelling," Sankar said. "I love hearing about others' personal experiences, especially coming from a variety of backgrounds."

The October Speaker Series event centered around Women in Film, with three female film industry professionals discussing their journey through the primar-

ily male-dominated field.

The three speakers were multimedia artist Rose Carr, short-form filmmaker Asuka Lin and technical artist and engineer Monika Erande.

"We specifically chose these speakers to get a variety of experiences," Sankar said.

The speakers, although coming from different racial backgrounds and places in their career, all expressed how difficult working in a male-driven field can be and the importance of supporting women.

"These speakers were often the only females in their workplace, so they cherished being able to work with other women," Sankar said.

Sankar was able to bring these women to the school by staying in close communication with parent boosters to discuss funding.

"I wanted to ensure that it was known that the speaker series was open to anyone in the community," Sankar said.

Throughout the entire process, proactively communicating with everyone involved proved to be a challenge for Sankar.

When one of the original speakers dropped out due to schedule conflicts, Sankar had to find a replacement.

She had to work with several students younger than her, who have not been a part of the MAP leadership team for as long as.

Co-leading the speaker series with Sankar was junior Dylan

Westman, who was grateful for Sankar's guidance in his first year as co-head.

"At first I was really nervous to be the head of the speaker series because I didn't know what to do," Westman said. "Krithi helped me through the process by giving me tips, and I feel well-prepared for next year's series."

Sankar expressed the importance of being supportive and encouraging to her co-workers.

"When you're working with someone who may not have as much experience, you have to help them learn," Sankar said. "While it may seem easier to do the work by yourself, being a mentor is really important."

**"I love hearing about others' personal experiences, especially coming from a variety of backgrounds."**

SENIOR Krithi Sankar

This fall's Speaker Series event had a turnout of around 40 people, and two more events will be held in 2020.

"Before becoming the head of the speaker series, I didn't feel like I fit the stereotype of an extroverted leader," Sankar said. "By getting experience working with so many types of people to accomplish my goals, I now feel like I have what it takes to be a leader." ♦

## Fall play cast to perfect rendition of Austen classic

BY EdwinChen  
& AnjaliNuggehalli

With the fall play "Sense and Sensibility" approaching its debut on Nov. 16, student actors are working hard to produce a historically accurate yet unique adaptation of the Austen classic.

Drama teacher Sarah Thermond, the director of the production, has seen progress since rehearsals began earlier this semester.

"We've staged and blocked the entire show, which includes three dance sequences," Thermond said. "Our tech crew is working on the embellishments and paint jobs for the sets, and we're moving forward with every rehearsal, which is the goal."

The cast moved rehearsals into the McAfee Center right after the Music Concert Series concluded on Oct. 18. There, the actors are working on implementing what they'd learned in the drama room and escalating it to fit the large stage.

"A big challenge of performing in the McAfee is scaling up vocal power and facial expressions to accommodate the bigger space," Thermond said. "We want to ensure that the people in the farthest back rows can still understand what's going on."

While scaling up their voices, the actors must also learn British dialect.

"We want to be respectful and not butcher the accents, so we want to make sure we get that right," said senior Ritika Kuppam, who plays Mrs. Dashwood.

**"I'm excited because... this adaptation has a lot more goofiness to it."**



DRAMA TEACHER Sarah Thermond

Another challenge the students face is the large cast of 41 students, many of whom have never done a show before.

"I try to use actors as much as possible in the show, but there's an unprecedented number of students who are involved in other activities," Thermond said. "They're very quickly having to learn self-management and communication, which are valuable life lessons."

The benefit of having a larger cast, how-

more rigorously letting parents know how important donations are.

"We need to start to educate the parents as soon as they come to the high school," Boitz said. "I think they somehow get told that they don't really need to contribute, so they think it's optional and that the money will be found somehow if they don't help out."

Through late October, the band has had a fairly successful season. At its first competition at the Cupertino Tournament of Bands, it placed first in its division. At the second competition at Dublin High School, it placed third out of five bands in its division. At the third competition at Amador Valley High School this past weekend, it placed second to Amador Valley in every category.

Despite the threatened cancellation of the final competition, senior drum major Sean Ryan views this season as his favorite out of all four years he's competed with band in high school.

"It was really nerve-wracking thinking that the season was going to end early," Ryan said. "I'm glad we get to perform it one last time. Even if things hadn't gone well, I'll always have thought of this season as a success." ♦

## MARCHING BAND

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effort into this season, and we've been practicing since before school even started," DiNucci said. "This season was short even before the final competition got cut, so I wanted to do everything in my power to try to make it happen."

The GoFundMe closed after only one day after raising \$915. DiNucci closed it out of worry that the money raised might have potentially conflicted with the SHS guidelines on fundraising, so the money was refunded.

Boitz had sent out an email explaining the dire trip situation to parents who had not fully paid the suggested donation. Many parents ended up paying, and the number of families who had not donated in full dropped from 40 percent to about 10 percent. Many alumni also donated once they heard the news, which also helped reduce the deficit.

Boitz attributes much of the problem this year to a lack of knowledge from the parents as to how crucial the donations are and what they fund.

He plans to combat this next year by

## POWER OUTAGE

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in Los Gatos also lost power over the past weekend.

An email from executive assistant to the superintendent Jane Marashian said that due to the extended time without electricity, Los Gatos High School's battery backup systems were extensively exhausted, and they were unable to power food and fire safety services, leading to Monday's cancellation.

While SHS didn't close down the assumption of many students and teachers was that the school would remain open regardless of whether there was power, unless there were larger issues.

"The determining issue on closing school is whether or not food can be served," Mohnik said. "If students at the school depend on the food service and we can't cook, then we can't open the school. If there is ever some interruption to the water supply or the pumps that provide water, that's another issue."

## CA late start bill approved, creates controversy

BY AnjaliNuggehalli

On Sept. 18, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill into law that forces California public high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m.

The bill, set to go into effect in 2022, was passed in hopes of decreasing teenagers' sleep deprivation.

Partly in response to the bill, the district has formed the Bell Schedule Evaluation Planning Group (BSE) to explore a new bell schedule for next year. Sophomore Sanjana Somayajula supports this new law after witnessing the effect that lack of sleep has on her peers.

"Students are struggling to stay awake

during school because of the huge amount of work given," Somayajula said. "Having a later start would allow high schoolers to catch up on sleep which is super beneficial."

Somayajula thinks this late start law will improve not only students' grades but also their mental health. With additional time to rest, she expects that students will be more attentive in class, boosting test scores, grades and even happiness.

"As of right now, so much focus is put on grades and nothing else, which burns students out," Somayajula said. "It's important to have that extra time for yourself to do what makes you happy."

For his part, senior Robbie Bilic the thinks a later start will be a waste of time.

ever, is utilizing cast members to aid with changing sets during the show.

This adaptation of "Sense and Sensibility" has a challenging 45 different scenes, requiring a large number of sets to be made, each representing a different geographical location in the script.

Thermond has found a way to execute the set changes in an artistic way, by having the "gossips," or narrators of the story, move the sets throughout the play, just as narrators move the story along.

Thermond also chose to build a modular set with a lot of double-sided windows and door sets on casters that can flip and change locations quickly to accommodate for the 45 scenes.

Along with the increased number of set changes this year, "Sense and Sensibility" significantly varies in the storytelling method from last year's fall play, "Julius Caesar."

"Because we did Shakespeare last year, we spent a lot of time focusing on the language and meaning of the story," Thermond said. "This adaption of Austen is rather accessible, so it's much more centered around finding the right style of the show, which will be the most appealing to the audience."

Additionally, this year's fall play rehearsals are only scheduled on Blue Days, which

proves to be more efficient.

Not only does it lessen schedule conflicts, it also makes each rehearsal more focused and thorough.

"At first, we thought it would be a setback since rehearsal time is on fewer days of the week, but it's working out pretty well," Kuppam said. "I think the schedule is more beneficial because we are spending four hours at a time instead of two, so practice is less broken up and we can focus more."

This new rehearsal schedule means that if someone misses a day of rehearsal, they miss a bigger chunk of what they need to know and must work harder on their own to catch up.

In order to ensure that the show reaches its potential, cast members still need to polish all of their dance numbers as well as coordinate sound and light, but all details are coming together for Nov. 16

"I'm excited because I think a lot of people view Austen as very stuffy period dramas and this adaptation has a lot more goofiness to it," Thermond said. "As someone who loves older literature, it's really fun to see students interpreting their roles with a very empathetic understanding of the idea that these characters are real people who have relevant emotions." ♦



TALISMAN // SELINA YANG

Senior trumpet player Rishi Jain plays as the marching band performs "Timeless" with the color guard at their second annual senior night on Oct. 18 on the Benny Pierce field.

Since the school retained power during both Bay Areapower outages, the school administration and teachers took additional steps to provide aid to students who had lost electricity and internet access during these times.

Mohnike said that part-time administrator Matt Torrens, principal Greg Louie and assistant principal Brian Safine kept the student center open until 9 p.m. on Sunday night and around 10 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

"We need power to function," junior An-

jali Satish said. "Our lives are just so much harder without it."

The student center offered students who had lost power a place to work. Many teachers were also flexible with deadlines and adjusted their schedules to accommodate for students who had trouble completing assignments at home.

Power returned for the majority on Monday, but was threatened to be shut off for Tuesday and Wednesday during another wind event. (The Falcon goes to press Tuesday afternoon.) ♦

He pointed to conflicts that are sure to occur more often because of later-starting sports practices and a reduced amount of time for homework

**"It's important to have that extra time for yourself to do what makes you happy."**

SOPHOMORE Sanjana Somayajula

While the main purpose of the bill is to allow students more time to sleep, sopho-

more Nandini Desai does not believe that the late start will solve the problem of sleep deprivation among high schoolers.

"It's not like I would get any extra sleep with the late start," Desai said. "I already have to go to school at 7 a.m. because of my parents' work schedule, and I'm guessing that this is the case for a lot of students."

Though the bill seems beneficial at first glance, it may end up causing more problems than it fixes, Desai said. "This late start is really not going to help students in any way," Desai said. "No one's going to accomplish anything in the extra time, and the bill definitely won't solve the problem of sleep deprivation amongst high schoolers." ♦

## 60 years of The Falcon

From the archives: For its 60th year The Falcon is presenting a series of stories reflecting on some of the most interesting moments of the school's history. This week's story is about the attempted revival of "senior streaking" from the class of 1997:

In the spring of 1997, 22 students ran scantily clad and lathered in body paint across campus in an attempt to uphold the "Senior Streak" tradition. Those who were caught were punished by having their graduation ceremony revoked.

The principal at the time, Kevin Skelly, threatened to take away the senior class's graduation ceremony because the class of 1995 had streaked through Redwood Middle School after streaking through the high school that year. However, nearly two dozen seniors in 1997 defied Skelly's warnings and letters sent home and found themselves facing the consequences following their escapade.

Some seniors argued that they were not well-informed about whether the policy applied to them since it announced for the '95-'96 school year, but was not addressed during the '96-'97 school year. Nonetheless, the punishment for the seniors stood with the school board's support.

Due to protests, then-superintendent Tod Likins later proposed an alternative punishment where seniors regained graduation but lost Senior Beach Day and Senior Ball (Prom) and were required to complete 48 hours of community service. Few seniors took up the superintendent on his offer, instead opting to miss graduation.

Stories regarding this incident originally appeared in an article by Kate Berardo for the April 26, 1997 Falcon issue, as well as in an article by Debbie Sun and Nancy Walker for the May 16, 1997 issue.

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# South Korean educational broadcast features M-Set robotics team for STEM documentary

By Selena Liu

The school's M-SET robotics program will be featured as an example of American education in a South Korean documentary that will air in the near future.

South Korea's Educational Broadcasting Company (EBS) filmed the program and interviewed team members and advisers. The documentary will be broadcast on South Korean national television and focuses on the various high school educational opportunities available in multiple countries.

"They came to Silicon Valley to specifically talk about computer science and AI by filming and interviewing the robotics team," M-SET president senior Mitra Mokhlesi said. "Seeing how we apply tech into our learning is one of the goals of the broadcast."

The company plans to do a feature on the extracurricular opportunities provided by Silicon Valley schools. The film will also cover high schoolers in Japan, Korea and Canada.

The company came by request of junior robotics member Jae Lee, who heard of the documentary team through his Korean volunteer organization, whose advisers had connections with the film team. Lee invited

them to film and interview students on the robotics team.

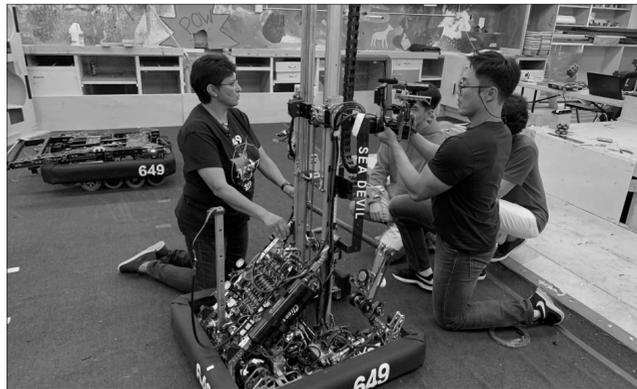
"We talked about how high schools here lead students to learn more about a subject themselves and how compared to other countries, we're free to do student-based learning," Lee said.

This student-based learning is a stark contrast to Korea's strict teacher-based education system, which has often been criticized by many Koreans and Americans alike.

According to Korean-American column writer Se-Woong Koo from The New York Times, "The world may look to South Korea as a model for education — its students rank among the best on international education tests — but the system's dark side casts a long shadow. Dominated by cram schools and highly authoritarian teachers, South Korean education produces ranks of overachieving students who pay a stiff price in health and happiness."

Lee said that since most of the learning in Korea was based solely on teacher instruction, the film team was looking to broaden the country's horizons and introduce new approaches to education into its system by exposing the approaches taken by high schools in different countries.

The film centered around the collaborative process of the FRC (First Robotics Competition) team, the division of M-SET that Lee participates in.



Courtesy of Mitra Mokhlesi

South Korea's Educational Broadcasting Company films Sheeba Garg, the president of M-SET Boosters, explaining the functions of FRC's robot Sea Devil on Sept. 20.

FRC, in contrast to FTC (First Tech Challenge), focuses on developing large robots almost as tall as humans instead of smaller robots. According to Mokhlesi, FRC works in the season from January to April, and FRC is overall a much larger-scale competition, with more complex and completely custom robot development.

"I think they filmed robotics here to discuss and show how students are applying knowledge that they're learning on their own into a competition," Mokhlesi said.

"They also interviewed mostly students who had taken AP Computer Science, and they asked these students what their experience was like collaborating in those classes."

Besides Saratoga High, the filmmakers will also reach out to other high schools in Los Angeles and San Diego before traveling to other countries. "Since it is an educational broadcast, many students and their parents will be seeing this in South Korea," Mokhlesi said. "Overall, I would say that this opportunity is extremely amazing." ♦

## Tough luck in Bronx: Speech and debate on a learning curve

By Edwin Chen  
& Anjali Nugehalli

As the plane lifted from the runway on Thursday, Oct. 17, at 11:45 p.m., five members of the speech and debate team and coach Erick Rector sat in a row — some already asleep, some memorizing scripts for the competition to come. After a five-hour red-eye flight, the team was exhausted in advance of the Bronx competition.

The New York City Invitational Tournament was a three-day speech and de-

bate competition that took place from Oct. 18-20, with competitors from all over the country. Seniors Ashwin Ramakrishna, Siva Sambasivam and Surbhi Bhat, as well as sophomores Harshini Velchamy and Joann Zhang competed.

The public forum debate team, Sambasivam and Ramakrishna, began preliminary rounds on Friday, Oct. 18.

"This is the first tournament with seven-round prelims we've been to this year, and it's generally a lot tougher than six rounds," Ramakrishna said. "It was a lot more stress-

ful for us, since it was a very competitive tournament."

The team won five out of seven of their preliminary rounds. But they lost their sextos round on Sunday, an elimination round where the original 211 teams had been narrowed to 32 teams, and did not advance to octofinals.

"I'd say the tournament was pretty arduous because we traveled so late. If we did better flight scheduling, it would be a lot easier on everyone," Ramakrishna said.

Similarly, speech students Bhat, Vel-

chamy and Zhang did not advance to quarterfinals and dropped after five preliminary rounds.

"Going to a tournament outside of our league provided us with a chance to watch new competitors perform and provide us with a learning experience," Bhat said, noting that the judges' feedback would be vital to improving speeches for future tournaments.

Ramakrishna added, "All in all, though, people enjoyed the trip, and it was a very good experience for everyone." ♦

## Swiss exchange student surprised by Saratoga's diversity

By Kavita Sundaram

Junior Anaik Jeanjaquet boarded her plane nervously in late August. It was her first time flying alone, and while she was surrounded by people going on short vacations, she knew she was going for much longer than that.

She had never spent more than two weeks away from her family and home, Switzerland, so the prospect of leaving for an entire year was frightening. As the plane took off, she found herself thinking, "Why am I doing this?"

Although the 12-hour journey was slightly scary, as soon as she landed and met her host family, she knew everything would be all right.

Jeanjaquet is from Schwyz, a small Swiss village with a population under 17,000. Coming from a place where high school has selective admittance, the main language is French and the temperature in the winter rarely rises above 45 degrees, Saratoga provides a stark contrast for her.

Jeanjaquet became interested in being an exchange student over a year ago when she visited the U.S. for the first time. She had originally planned on doing an exchange program in either England or the U.S., but after visiting both places, she decided she preferred California.

She was recommended to the Northwest Students Exchange Organization by a friend who had come to Notre Dame High School in San Jose the year prior. Jeanjaquet contacted different schools in the San Jose area and, after choosing Saratoga High, was finally connected with her host family. The first exchange student from her school in Switzerland, she now lives with sophomore Linnea Bradley and her family.

According to Registrar Robert Wise, the school receives one or two exchange students annually, usually from Europe or South America. Jeanjaquet was the first to come to Saratoga from Switzerland in three years.

After living in the U.S. for a couple of weeks, the most significant difference Jeanjaquet noticed between Saratoga and Schwyz was not in customs but in the people themselves.

Upon coming to Saratoga High, the first thing that stood out to her was the immense diversity of the student body and staff.

"I definitely didn't have a 'culture shock,' but compared to my school in Switzerland, the amount of people from different countries was a lot more," Jeanjaquet said.

Along with this, Jeanjaquet was surprised by the welcoming and friendly people that she met.

"It's really easy to go up to someone and

start talking to them," she said. "Everyone is friends with each other and by talking to someone new, you don't feel like you are being judged."

Regarding living with a new family, Jeanjaquet did not find it to be difficult, and her host family did not find it hard to adapt to living with someone new.

"Whenever people think about different countries, they have misconceptions regarding the degree of differentiation between people, but really we all have similar affinities, and it's easy to adjust to each other," said Bradley, her host sister.

Another difference that Jeanjaquet noted was the abundance of students who wear sweatpants, something that wasn't common in Switzerland.

She found that a lot of people wear comfy clothes to school every day.

Aside from the people, high school in the U.S. is a completely different experience from high school in Switzerland. Gymnasium, as high school is called in Schwyz, requires the completion of an entrance exam which determines if you get into the school or not.

Jeanjaquet attended a gymnasium called

Kantonsschule Ausserschwyz Pfaffikon, which translates to "school outside Schwyz." With under 300 students in her school, the large student body of over 1,300 kids in Saratoga High was a big change for Jeanjaquet.

Regardless of the drastic changes in schooling, Jeanjaquet found that she was able to assimilate fairly quickly and easily to her new schedule of Introduction to Engineering, Art 3, US History and English 11. However, something that did affect her ability to fall into a daily routine in the United States was the lack of public transport.

"In Switzerland, I always travel by train or bus, but here, parents have to constantly worry about taking their kids to places," she said.

Jeanjaquet overcomes this by biking to school and back.

Although coming to a new country for a year was initially a daunting prospect for Jeanjaquet, the warm culture of her friends and host family made the transition a lot easier.

"It was a little bit difficult to find friends at first, but everyone here is really kind," Jeanjaquet said. "My overall experience has been really positive." ♦



GRAPHIC BY PRESTON FU

# Freshman named chess International Master

By Preston Fu  
& Nicole Lu

The 2016 World Youth Chess Tournament took place in Batumi, Georgia, a coastal town near the Black Sea. Andrew Hong, now a freshman, remembers being nervous as he faced his final opponent while thousands of pairs of eyes watched the chess board in front of him. Only a few pieces remained; Hong pushed his knight forward and breathed a sigh of relief as he called checkmate. A few moments later, Hong found himself sitting proudly on stage in the second place seat.

Hong now stands 24th in the world among chess players under age 16, and was named an International Master (IM) this past year for his prowess. His Fédération Internationale des Échecs (FIDE) Elo rating is 2,427, a score calculated from his performance against other players. Hong has won dozens of chess awards from competitions around the globe in Turkey, South Africa, Canada, Mexico and Austria.

Hong began playing chess when he was 6, after watching his older brother, senior Jason Hong, play a game against his friend. Hong became interested and decided to take up chess himself.

"When I started, I didn't have any knowledge," Andrew said. "I thought the game was interesting because the knight looked cool."

At the start, he mainly played Jason at home, and Jason taught Andrew basic chess techniques. A few weeks later, though, Andrew quickly overtook his brother.

"At first I was annoyed, especially when he started beating me regularly," Jason said, "but I'm definitely proud that he's come so far and accomplished so much at this age."

Andrew soon extended his victories by attending local chess competitions.

"My very first tournament in 2011, was a really nervous experience because it was my first time playing, and I didn't know what to expect," Andrew said.

After the first few tournaments he attended, Andrew found himself winning more than losing, which boosted his confidence. However, as his rating began to rise, his perspective shifted. Andrew suddenly felt the pressure to perform to the expectation of his rating and began focusing more on the end result of the games.

Andrew started to pick up the pace and take chess more seriously as he participated in further competitions in Philadelphia, New York, Dallas, Los Angeles and Charlotte.

"Now I kind of treat chess almost like another school subject," he said. "I have homework for chess, I have tests for chess. I have positions to solve and openings and games to study."

In reality, Andrew treats chess as much



Courtesy of Andrew Hong

Freshman Andrew Hong focuses on his match at Saint Louis Invitational as he thinks about his next move. He started playing chess when he was 6 and practices 14 hours per week.

more than just an eighth period. He said he practices an average of 14 hours a week, a schedule he has kept up for five continuous years, and hopes to maintain for years to come. The strategy and quick thinking involved are what keep him playing chess, and he continues to value these aspects as a part of everyday life.

"I like how there are a bunch of different ways to play games," Andrew said. "There's

not just one fixed way to organize your pieces and try to attack."

After countless tournaments in his seven-year journey, Andrew has experienced both hard-earned victories and painful losses, but he generally enjoys the fruits of his effort.

"It's always a great feeling to win awards because it really shows that my work paid off," Andrew said. ♦

# Despite mystery surrounding college major, graduates pursue promising careers in cog-sci

By Vicky Bai  
& Nicole Lu

2019 alumna Elaine Fan stared at the assignment in front of her, surprised by the results of the experiment her University of Pennsylvania class had done earlier.

The class had been learning about prosopagnosia, a disorder that impairs one's ability to recognize faces, and had matched images of faces from different angles and orientations as part of their simulation. Something about the upside-down faces made it harder for the students to match them with the correct image.

The class is one of many Fan is taking this semester as a cognitive science major. It is a major that seems to be gaining popularity among college undergraduates.

This major blends a variety of concentrations including Cognitive Neuroscience, Computation and Cognition and Language and Mind, as well as the topics of linguistics, psychology, artificial intelligence, philosophy, neuroscience and anthropology.

For those interested in pursuing cognitive science majors, there are a variety of potential jobs ranging from marketing assistants to software engineers.

"Throughout high school, it was always difficult for me to know what I wanted to study," Fan said. "It was intimidating, as the choice seemed to hold so much weight.

There were classmates around me that seemed to know exactly what they wanted to do, and they could line up their extracurriculars and classes to complement their intended area of study, whereas I couldn't even decide which subjects I liked."

It was not until her parents brought up the major over the dinner table during the college application season that she decided to look into the subject.

As she researched further, she was drawn toward how interdisciplinary the major is. Still, Fan was unsure about the major and what she wanted to study, even when submitting her college applications.

"For most of the schools I applied for, I didn't really put cognitive science as my first choice," Fan said. "Even now, whenever classmates ask what I'm majoring in, it feels weird to say 'cognitive science.'"

As of right now, Fan is leaning toward a concentration in Computation and Cognition, a combination of computer science

and cognitive science.

Despite her initial concerns about focusing on a newer major, Fan finds the environment at UPenn and her classes highly rewarding and informative.

As part of Fan's courses in psychology and linguistics, she has participated in a variety of psychology experiments including a study that examined how people make choices for others.

Another drawing communication study paired Fan with a different student for a Pictionary-like activity in which they sent drawings back and forth, developing a set of symbols to convey what they needed.

"So far, the classes have been super interesting, so I'm feeling pretty good about my decision to go into cognitive science," Fan said.

Similarly, Alexandra Li, a 2019 alumna, chose Computation and Cognition, a relatively new major at M.I.T.

"I picked it because I've always loved coding and could see myself doing it for a career, but I also didn't want to sit at a cu-

bicle for the rest of my life and code," Li said. "Instead, I wanted more of something that I could use to help people and actually impact others."

Coming from a family of software engineers, Li remembers her mom telling her that she couldn't see her daughter as a pure CS major just because she felt Li could do more. This influenced Li's desire to pursue more than computer science in college.

During high school, Li did research that was in the intersection of data analysis, machine learning and neuroscience.

"I found it honestly inspiring, the way that I could build something with nothing, and my laptop had the ability to change people's lives," Li said. "I've never excelled in biology, but learning about humans and how things work in the body and the brain is just fascinating and undiscovered."

Li admits that one thing she dislikes about the major is how new it is at M.I.T. Not many people have declared it, so she feels as though she can't really ask for advice or help.

Despite the lack of knowledge surrounding the major, the success stories of those before them assure the three alumnae, who are generally excited for the experience.

"Cognitive Science is so broad, and I've only really experienced a tiny section of it," Fan said, "but I really like what I'm learning so far." ♦

## School finally installs new kiln to replace one damaged in 2017 fire

By Rohan Kumar  
& Cici Xu

Most school fire alarms are merely drills. But that was not the case with the fire alarm that blared on Nov. 30, 2017.

After hours of waiting and eventually being dismissed early, students still didn't know what had happened. It turned out that a fire had flared up in the ceramics room (Room 203), damaging the kiln and the nearby roof.

According to art teacher Diana Vanry, the fire was caused by built-up dust in the exhaust shaft that was ignited when the gas-powered by turning on the kiln was turned on. Also damaged in the fire were power and gas lines and the evacuation led

to a shortened school day. In late September, the damage from the fire was fully repaired when a new kiln was installed. According to district Director of Capital Projects and IT Tony Palma, the repairs cost over \$90,000.

Once repairs to the kiln area were finished in September, a new electric kiln was installed. Although Vanry has been able to fire pieces with an old backup electric kiln, she says that the new kiln is generally more reliable and has features such as the ability to store presets and reach higher temperatures.

"Glaze can be finicky since there can be a lot of imperfections based on the timing of kiln," Vanry said. "So the great thing about the new kiln is that I won't even have to think about it; I'll just be able to push a but-

ton, and it'll go through the process for the right time at the correct temperature."

"The kiln is very important in our product-making process."



SOPHOMORE Tina Hu

Now that Vanry has access to two kilns, she plans to use the new one to fire projects that require higher temperatures as it is more reliable than the backup kiln.

"The kiln is very important in our product-making process. We need to put our raw clay into the Kiln and burn it first before we add any color to it," said Tina Hu, a sophomore who is currently taking Ceramics 2.

The new electric kiln is also safer than the kiln that was damaged in the fire, which was a gas kiln. Gas kilns require a fire safety permit due to their volatile nature.

"We haven't used our new kiln yet, but we will use it a few days later," Hu said. "Vanry is already making preparations for the first bake."

Although Vanry did not have much of a say in the installation of the new kiln, she is still happy with what the district ordered.

"It really is an upgrade from the previous one," Vanry said. ♦

# THE QUESTION OF HONG KONG

Editor's Note: Due to the sensitivity of the issue and the reach of the Chinese government, the writers have requested to remain anonymous.

## Restore unity: Respect the deal

A river of yellow umbrellas trampled and flowed across the concrete streets. Fire and smoke, tear gas and bullets, signs and shoutings, anger and lastly, fear have dominated Hong Kong for months.

Having moved from mainland China to America only two years ago, I have tried my best to stay away from controversial political topics. But the Hong Kong protest is something I cannot ignore.

The Hong Kong government and the protesters have pushed things too far.

The protest has been going on for four months straight in response to a policy by the Hong Kong government that forces Hong Kong criminals who have committed serious crimes to be extradited to China for judgment. 1.7 million people, which is about one-seventh of the Hong Kong population, according to The New York Times, have come out into the streets to protest.

Some Hong Kong media outlets, however, stated that there are only hundreds of thousands of protesters, which in my opinion is already enough to show the rashness of this policy that the government later apologized for and withdrew.

But the protests continue because the Hong Kong government is not meeting the people's five demands: getting rid of the extradition policy completely, retracting the name "rioters," releasing arrested protesters, implementing universal suffrage and establishing an independent commission of inquiry into police conduct.

Former leader of the People's Republic of China Deng Xiaoping once put the relationship between Hong Kong and mainland China at peace by introducing the "One Country, Two Systems" deal. It respected the difference in governance between Hong Kong and China and further united them.

When I was in elementary school in Beijing, I read about the friendship between people from Hong Kong and China. There were portraits of people holding hands and smiling at each other in my fourth-grade textbook. People were proud of earning back Hong Kong from England in 1997. I was proud too.

We felt that the dignity of the Chinese people came from their unity. China was

one of the most prosperous country in the world during the Tang and Song dynasties, about a thousand years ago, and the people were at peace.

But after the Qing dynasty, things started to collapse and become corrupt. Great Britain invaded the country and defeated it during the Opium Wars, which lasted from 1839 to 1860. Hong Kong was bitterly given away to England as a cost of the war. It is a shame in the glorious history of China; it became a scar in the heart of the Chinese. Disunity became everyone's biggest and most fragile fear.

The unity of the people was more powerful than the political differences the governments experienced.

People from mainland China were urgently trying to find a solution to accept and respect differences — that is why the "One Country, Two Systems" deal was introduced.

According to the deal, Hong Kong is a capitalist zone, which can be viewed as democracy from the perspective of western countries. Its government should, as American president Abraham Lincoln once said, be "of the people, by the people, [and] for the people." The extradition policy, however, pushed the people of Hong Kong to the brink and does not represent the people. In other words, the policy went against the primary purpose of the "One Country, Two Systems" deal introduced by Deng.

The August airport kidnapping event, in which protesters began kidnapping people who held different views on the policy, and the violent protests on the National Day of China, carried out by some who think Hong Kong should be an independent country, are also examples of many extreme and irrational actions. Violence was used, but it did not solve any problems.

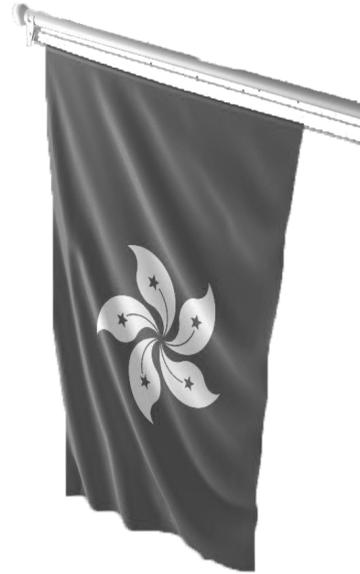
Policemen and protesters are all humans, and their emotions should be respected. However, using violence is not an appropriate behavior that civilized humans should engage in, and is not the most effective way of pursuing democracy or defending the city.

That said, I do not believe Hong Kong will one day be completely independent from mainland China because that confirms the greatest fear of many Chinese: becoming separated and disunited as a country.

Before I moved to America, Hong Kong was a place where my family and I would vacation. Hong Kong, in my memory, is a place filled with delicious cuisines and modern architectures with distinctive western styles. The mix of Chinese and western culture was absolutely fascinating and eye-opening for me as a child because there is nowhere else in China that I could see such blending of cultures.

Hong Kong's society is highly advanced, and the people are welcoming enough that it felt like home. I would say that that is the power the "One Country, Two Systems" deal has brought to citizens living in both mainland China and Hong Kong. It unites people, allowing them to have different political systems and still be able to live under one roof. The deal is the bond.

I cannot speak for the people of Hong Kong. But from the perspective of a mainland, the compromise between both the people from mainland China and Hong Kong should still be the "One Country, Two Systems" deal. The best path to peace is to follow the deal strictly. I hope both the Hong Kong government and its people will peacefully return to the right track if each upholds its side of the deal. ♦



## Freedom is not a commodity

For 22 straight weeks, Hong Kong has faced a political crisis that has permeated global news, U.S. politics and even the public scrutiny of private companies. Dilemmas about addressing the extent of this issue have led to comments about the complexity of Chinese politics.

Perhaps this is true — after all, China's government is nothing like those of the western world, and the news coverage of Hong Kong's situation has often avoided the historical background.

But understanding the conflict is simple— Hong Kongers are finally disillusioned by China's sweet talk.

For 20 years, China has maintained that Hong Kong has unprecedented freedom; in fact, to remedy concerns prior to the 1997 handover, the Hong Kong Basic Law was developed, which stipulated that both the chief executive and the legislative council positions would eventually be elected by universal suffrage through "gradual and orderly progress."

But this has never come to fruition, much to the frustration of Hong Kongers. Instead, China has continually encroached on Hong Kong's right to rule itself.

Currently, the chief executive is nominated through an election committee, a functional constituency comprised of different interest groups dominated by pro-Beijing camps. The Legislative Council is elected, half by geographical constituencies under the proportional-representation system

(universal suffrage), but half by similar interest groups.

As a result, Hong Kong politics, touted under the phrase "one country two systems," are actually dominated by pro-Beijing politicians, and China's policies have been slowly seeping into the backbone of Hong Kong.

In 2014, the city was brought to a standstill as citizens partook in the Occupy Central movement because of proposed election bills. I walked the streets lined with camping tents and signs proclaiming the desire of universal suffrage, captivated by the dedication of the protestors.

These protests, both back in 2014 and today, are the culmination of the decades-long deterioration of Hong Kong's status and of Hong Kongers' conditions, all resulting from Hong Kong's hand-picked politics disguised as democracy.

My parents grew up in Hong Kong's golden age. Once a fishing village and later a manufacturing hub, Hong Kong transformed into a financial hub during the 1970s and 1980s. Widespread police corruption was purged in the 1970s, earning police high reputations. Cantonese entertainment in songs and movies became mainstream in the 1970s, popularizing Cantopop and producing the likes of Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan.

Once contributing to a quarter of China's GDP at the time of the handover, Hong Kong has now seen its contribution dwindle to 2 percent. Hong Kongers have watched as housing policies favoring the influx of mainlanders (totaling around a million people after 1997) have caused scarcity and prices to rise; waiting times at emergency rooms have increased to more than eight hours; and even baby formula has been in shortage as boxes of tin cans have been carried northward.

But what really set the protests into motion was Chief Executive Carrie Lam's extradition bill, proposed in February after the murder of Poon Hiu-wing on a holiday trip to Taiwan. Without jurisdiction, the culprit, Poon's boyfriend, could only be charged with money-laundering, committed after returning to Hong Kong.

On the surface, the extradition bill seems completely just-

ified. But Lam's approach to implementing it was suspicious; the bill was fast-tracked through deliberations, despite the opposition and the fact that Taiwan rejected extraditing the man through the use of this bill.

Having a legalized means of extraditing people, with China's interpretation of crime, would threaten Hong Kong's guaranteed autonomy and as well as the basic human rights everyone should be entitled to.

In response to the bill, 1 million Hong Kongers, showing their solidarity by dressing in white, took to the streets on June 9 — the way 500,000 had in 2003, when their freedom of speech was threatened, and the way they did in 2014, when for 79 days straight they occupied Central, the financial district of Hong Kong, protesting the restrictive reforms imposed on the election system.

When Lam and the government refused to acknowledge the people, a record 2 million people turned up a week later, this time all dressed in black. Three months later Lam announced her plans to withdraw the bill, a motion that was too little and too late.

As Hong Kongers protested, I watched intently, following news development and live broadcasts of the protests. In awe, I watched as hundreds of thousands gathered each weekend, as an elderly woman confronted police in full riot gear face to face, and as children led songs from "Les Misérables." In shock, I witnessed protestors getting cornered and beaten, as police charged into train stations while people tried to leave and as a teenager, the same age as me, was shot in the chest.

For many, it seems that criticizing police for their brutality falls into a "both sides" rhetoric, and supporting Hong Kong seems to be a "complicated issue." But how can there be a "both sides" mentioned when police have been working with triads and local gangs, have beaten both young and elderly citizens in secluded areas and have been caught sending undercover policemen to actively instigate violence?

In fact, China's response to pro-Hong-kongers has only broadcasted the oppression its leaders employ when dealing with adversaries. Businesses that have global ambitions must kowtow to China's policies against threats of economic implications.

During the 1997 handover, many people left Hong Kong for Australia, Britain and Canada. I always thought it was a bit rash — after all, Hong Kong seemingly flourished just the same each time I visited.

But with the recent developments, perhaps their fears were justified after all. Realistically speaking, even before 2047, Hong Kong will be nothing more than another Chinese city.

Still, the fight for freedom must continue. What is essential to our humanity is worth fighting for, and Hong Kongers are showing they will not go quietly into the night. ♦

**"One Country, Two Systems." It unites people. The deal is the bond.**

**A legalized means of extraditing people would threaten Hong Kong's autonomy.**

## The protests in a nutshell

Britain returned sovereignty of Hong Kong to China in 1997. Hong Kong's relationship with China was spelled out under The Basic Law, a "one country, two systems" legislation. This legislation means Hong Kong is semi autonomous — mainland China controls Hong Kong but Hong Kong maintains civil liberties that are unavailable to mainland Chinese people including independent courts, free press and open internet. The Basic Law is set to expire in 2047 which would mean Hong Kong might lose their right to self-govern and will be subjected to full Chinese rule.

Last February, Lam proposed extradition bill that would allow transfers of fugitives between Hong Kong, mainland China and Taiwan. The protesters believe this policy would target not only criminals but also political activists like themselves. The bill was formally withdrawn at the beginning of September, fulfilling one of the protesters' five demands. The other four demands include the inquiry into alleged police brutality, the retraction of the classification of protesters as rioters, amnesty for arrested protesters and dual universal suffrage.

The protests are regarded as "separatist riots backed by foreign powers" by the Chinese government and media.

Currently, protesters are taking to the streets with flammables to target Chinese businesses.

-Krithi Sankar



Pictures on page 6, clockwise from upper left: A Hong Kong policeman spraying tear gas; Matthew Cheung, Hong Kong's Chief Secretary of Administration; Xi Jinping, president of the PRC; Carrie Lam, Chief Executive of Hong Kong; a trio of policemen wielding riot shields and a nonlethal gun.

Pictures on page 7, clockwise from upper left: Student protestor Joshua Wong; A young man holding an umbrella, a symbol of the 2014 Umbrella Movement; A protestor holding a sign describing the injustices of the police and government; An unnamed student distributing protest flyers in an airport; A protestor gesturing upward during a recent protest.

Courtesy of GOOGLE IMAGES

FOURTH PERIOD

STAFF POLICY

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# Gen Z ignores real issues in favor of sensationalism

BY Rohan Kumar

In December 2017, internet personality and YouTube vlogger Logan Paul visited Japan. He published four videos of his trip as the "Tokyo Adventures" series, titling one video "We found a dead body in the Japanese Suicide Forest..." The video, which showed Paul and his friends making jokes around the body of a suicide victim hanging from a tree in Japan's Aokigahara forest, reached top 10 on YouTube's trending list before it was taken down 24 hours later.

Despite his appalling antics, Paul's series received more than 24 million views, which translates to \$90,000 in revenue, according to The Telegraph.

It's crazy to think that Paul earns thousands of dollars simply by acting obnoxious, arrogant and disrespectful. In his other videos, he flaunts his wealth and brags about his success. Still, his YouTube channel has 19.9 million subscribers, and in 2018 alone, he earned around \$14.5 million. Many similar YouTube channels that build themselves off of pranks or wealth have similar levels of support, particularly from young audiences.

The success of these YouTube channels reflects how our generation has become unhealthily attracted to showy, sensationalist content.

The explosion of the social media platform TikTok is yet another example of our shallow preferences. The entire premise of the platform is to watch and post 15-second videos responding to a fragment of a song. Its popularity with younger people attests to teens' desire for high-speed dramatic content, and the emphasis they put on going viral rather

than working up slowly. Although many people use these platforms as a source of plain entertainment, others see them as an opportunity to get quick fame and recognition, a mindset that can be self-destructive.

Ultimately, this uncanny magnetism toward flashy, shallow content can be dangerous. It leads us to believe that the ability to do party tricks, appeal to audiences and obtain wealth is an ideal and easy way to attain fame. It prompts us to focus on our outward image rather than our image of ourselves, which takes away from true achievement that benefits society and puts emphasis on the appearance of achievement.

Worse still, people have started to do crazy things in order to get views and followers. Jake Paul, Logan Paul's brother, accused his neighbors of trying to kill him by damaging his truck in a video titled "My wife is leaving me..." providing no evidence in an apparent publicity stunt.

STORROR, a parkour YouTube channel, posted a video where YouTubeers run across skyscrapers in Hong Kong as sirens blare and police cars surround the buildings, earning them 90 million views for a barely 3-minute video.

The unfortunate result of this Gen Z culture of glorifying wealth, arrogance and appearance is the overlooking of other, more productive goals.

Fixating on sensationalism can be especially harmful considering that there are so many problems in our world today: the hundreds of thousands of people who succumb to cancer in the United States alone, the humanitarian crises in Syria or the skyrocketing extinction rate of animals across the globe.

These are issues that deserve our attention but often go unrecognized in favor of content like that of the Pauls.

It's safe to say, for example, that few teenagers have no idea who Shinya Yamanaka is, even though he won the 2012 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine for discovering induced pluripotent stem cells that can be derived from mature cells, promising to revolutionize the way we produce

replacement organs. In fact, the only scientist most people know about is Albert Einstein, who, although he undoubtedly had a colossal impact on our understanding of physics, has been dead for 60 years.

It is more than likely that the majority of teenagers have never heard of Bana Alabed, an 8-year-old Syrian refugee who revealed the devastating conditions in Aleppo during the 2016 siege, airstrikes and famine through Twitter and later wrote the book "Dear World: A Syrian Girl's Story of War and Plea for Peace."

The teenagers know more about the inconsequential Pewdiepie vs. T-series drama on YouTube than an 8-year-old girl spreading awareness of the horrors in Syria speaks volumes about our misplaced priorities.

Of course, it makes sense that teenagers are attracted to superficial entertainment. Sometimes we

all need low-stimulation content that allows us to take a break from our working lives. But it is important that we recognize those who do the unrecognized but critical jobs in our society.

Nikhil Advani is one of the many World Wildlife Fund experts who strive to protect species adversely affected by climate change. Pediatrician Douglass Gross created the UC Haiti Initiative, a public service partnership between University of California campuses and the State University of Haiti, in response to the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti in 2010.

Featuring these people on sites like YouTube can help give their work more publicity and give people a better idea of how important their work is. Seeing people receive recognition for impactful, important work will teach teenagers to pay viewer-hungry creators like the Pauls less mind. ♦



MEGAN CHEN

allows college athletes to make money from their likeness, which opens the door for them to accept payment for endorsements such as advertisements and shoe deals.

The NCAA isn't currently gaining any money from restricting their athletes' opportunities, and they won't lose any from complying with this new bill. They've even acknowledged changes to their restrictions are necessary.

Given that the NCAA had no financial incentive in keeping their restrictions and has publicly expressed support for change, it's unclear why they even opposed this bill.

In an initial letter to Newsom, the NCAA stated their concerns and urged him to dismiss the bill. However, they failed to provide any valid or straightforward logic in their reasoning.

The NCAA warned that California would "eventually be unable to compete in NCAA competitions," which is an empty threat. As Newsom pointed out,

the NCAA can't afford to let California schools' vast profits and media popularity across the nation slip away.

Furthermore, simply allowing athletes to profit off their likeness doesn't get anywhere close to "[erasing] the critical distinction between college and professional athletics," as the NCAA claims.

College athletes aren't being paid for playing sports; they're profiting off their popularity and prominent voice in the community.

The NCAA is OK with change as long as it follows their agenda, a philosophy they've adhered to for decades. The bill is a rare

win-win for both parties, where the NCAA loses absolutely nothing and the athletes have everything to gain.

But because the NCAA thinks it's their job to provide a moral compass for their athletes, it took months of universal condemnation for them to make even a semblance of promise to change.

California's prodding forced the NCAA to retract its stance, proof that the domineering organization can be knocked off its pedestal. It shouldn't have taken them so long to do so, but hopefully, it's only the beginning in knocking down the NCAA's financial dominance and exploitation. ♦

### Opinion of the Falcon Editorial Board

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The Saratoga Falcon staff voted 31-2 in support of this article.

# On-campus prom: Not the apocalypse

BY Kevin Sze

Last year, I groaned when I heard that winter formal was going to be held on campus. In addition, it would cost the same price as previous formals that were held off campus. To me, having formal on campus made the school seem cheap, and I thought it'd detract from my experience.

I couldn't have been more wrong.

The food tasted better, the Leadership class had more freedom with the decorations and it was a lot more convenient than the confusing frenzy of 500 students trying to figure out what bus they're supposed to be on.

Formal and prom are pretty similar events. The only differences I see are the time of year and the length of the dresses girls wear.

So, here's me explaining why prom on campus is actually better than having prom off campus. (Starting in 2022, proms are slated

to become on-campus events.) One reason is the price. Let's face it: Prom is really expensive. Tickets are usually around \$175.

Now add on the price of renting or buying a tuxedo or a dress, and the price of a boutonniere (whatever those are good for), and you have got yourself a wallet-killing, savings-sapping night.

### But let's be honest, having dances on campus is less stressful.

The guys have it the worst because we're usually expected to buy our date's ticket or else we'll get judged by our date's friends, and nobody wants that problem.

Last year's winter formal on campus was \$10 cheaper on campus than off campus, so you can expect at least a \$10 decrease in

prices for prom tickets — and maybe more without the expense or renting a venue or buses.

Another reason is convenience. For the two off-campus formals and one prom that I attended, some guy always gets on the wrong bus when we're trying to leave for the venue. Then, the buses have to wait so staff can figure out where that person is, and we all lose time to party. It's so much easier to have people show up at school and go straight to moshing.

You also don't lose any of the great prom experiences. You still get to take your basic photos at Communications Hill. You still get to mosh. You still get to slow dance with your crush, if you're lucky. You still get to eat In-N-Out after the dance. Practically the only difference is the floor you're moshing on, which isn't a big deal unless you fall. Don't worry, moshing is against school rules now, so all y'all under five feet won't catch one of my elbows and get knocked out

at the next dance.

It's also easier for the members of the dance commission. They can get more thought-out decorations and better tasting food. They don't have to scavenge for a venue that fits hundreds of people because we have one sitting right on school property.

Sure, you don't get to go to iconic venues in San Francisco but let's be honest, most of the night you spend dancing with your friends and trying to find your date when a slow song comes on. Maybe you don't get the photos you hoped for, but you can still fill your Instagram feed with basic photos from Montalvo. Or maybe just don't post at all. No offense, but the prom spam can get excessive.

It's easy to look at prom on campus and complain how dance commission or school officials aren't doing a good job because they can't find a nice venue. But let's be honest, having dances on campus is less stressful. ♦

# Esports should be considered a sport

BY Justin Guo

In recent years, Esports, a form of competition revolving around video games, have rapidly grown from a relatively untouched niche to an influential billion-dollar industry. Viewership has steadily rose from 134 million viewers in 2012 to 454 million in 2019 and is projected to break over 600 million by 2022.

Marketability and economics aside, should Esports be considered a sport?

The essence of this question lies within the definition of a sport. The long-standing and most common understanding is that a sport requires competition and physical exertion from the athlete.

So, the basketball player in me scoffs at the mere idea that competitive video gaming could ever be considered a sport. And yes, the physical energy exercised by sitting at a desk and operating a keyboard and mouse doesn't even come close to how tiring traditional sports such as basketball or football can be — but no one is arguing that it does.

Proponents of Esports being a sport concede that Esports involves limited physical motion but point to other mind-based activities that were deemed sports long ago —

such as chess and poker — as proof that the definition of sports isn't strictly confined to physical engagement.

And I'd have to agree with them.

It seems silly to me to think of sports only in the physical sense when there is so much that goes on behind the scenes, especially mentally; in fact, I'd argue that how athletes deal with stress and the heavy emotions constantly present in the upper echelons of sports is just as important as how well they can handle the physical side of things.

Furthermore, at the higher and more competitive Esports levels, players sign with teams that usually hire physical trainers to help their players stay in shape by engaging in daily exercise regimens and making sure that they're eating well. This practice is common in chess and poker too, where professionals have to constantly put in physical work to ensure that they can function optimally during long, physically and mentally draining matches.

The meaning of a sport should not be strictly determined by whether or not its participants sweat. I mean, if we're going to call golf, where the skill comes in the form of hand-eye coordination, a sport, then why not Esports? ♦

# Stop trick-or-treating shaming

BY Sofia Jones

For as long as I can remember, I have gone trick-or-treating. After all, Halloween is the best holiday of the year; the combination of spooky decorations, endless costume possibilities and free candy is unbeatable.

Nothing will ever match the feeling of walking from door to door, always curious as to what new and exciting candy I can get at the next house.

Last year as a junior was the first Halloween that I spent at home instead of trick-or-treating. I didn't initially see anything wrong with going in high school, but my sophomore year, I knocked on one crabby lady's door. She swung it open just to look at me in disgust and said, "Aren't you a little old to be trick-or-treating? I think I should save most of my candy for the real kids."

Her statement made me feel a strong sense of shame, and the rest of my night was tainted as I worried I was now being judged by everyone passing by me. Even my candy didn't taste as sweet.

There's an unspoken assumption that kids will stop trick-or-treating at a certain point, but why? Is there some instant change that renders a child un-

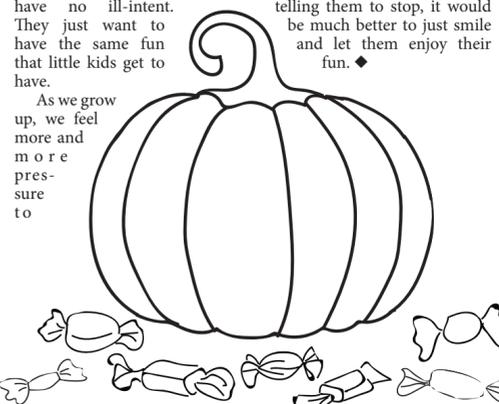
able to enjoy free candy and a fun costume anymore at age 15 or 16? If there is, I suppose I missed the memo.

Just because I've entered high school doesn't mean I've outgrown childhood. My taste buds will never reject the sweetness of Halloween candy, nor will I ever reject an opportunity to dress up with a friend in a creative costume.

Some people view teens as a loud and obnoxious nuisance, but the majority of high schoolers trying to trick-or-treat have no ill-intent. They just want to have the same fun that little kids get to have.

As we grow up, we feel more and more pressure to

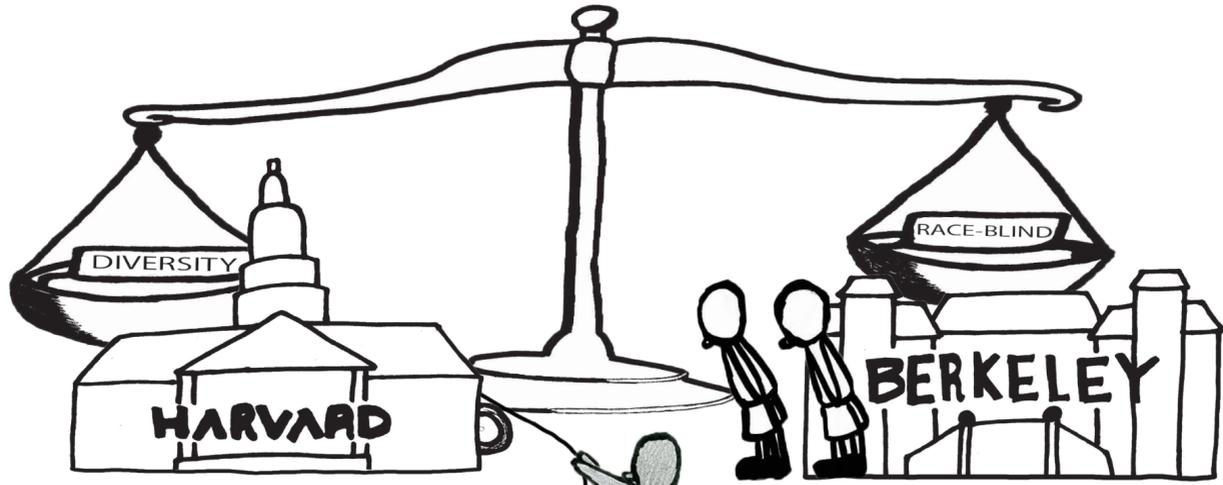
be much better to just smile and let them enjoy their fun. ♦



GRAPHIC BY AMANDA ZHU

# DIVERSITY OR DISCRIMINATION?

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION UPLIFTS THE UNDERREPRESENTED, BUT CRITICS ARGUE THAT OBLIGATORY RACIAL DIVERSITY UNDERCUTS EDUCATIONAL IDEALS



## Racial diversity enriches education

By SelenaLiu

As students here, we've often heard that we live inside the "Saratoga bubble," a metaphor for the academically rigorous but also highly sheltered environment of our high school and community.

This term, however, extends to other aspects of the school as well, most notably the racial and economic diversity.

Colleges are a prime example of why diversity in a student body is important.

Many universities have widely acknowledged the positive social effects of both racial and economic diversity, which is why many aim to admit students with various backgrounds.

The composition of SHS, while having many minorities, doesn't reflect the diversity that exists in other communities and the state at large.

According to our school profile, 60 percent of the school is Asian American and 25 percent is Caucasian, and less than 1 percent of students require financial aid.

These limitations in diversity translate to students with limited cultural and economic perspectives, which is detrimental because studies show that students who study in more diverse classrooms reap more benefits both on campus and in the workforce.

"Diversity magnifies the power of a general education by helping to liberate you from the tunnel vision of an ethnocentric and egocentric viewpoint," said Aaron Thompson, professor of sociology at Eastern Kentucky University in an interview with U.S. News.

"By moving beyond yourself, you gain a panoramic perspective of the world around you and a more complete view of your place in it."

In addition, according to the American Psychological Association, first-year college students exposed to diverse educational settings demonstrated greater gains in leadership skills, psychological well-being, intellectual engagement and intercultural effectiveness in the workplace.

If Saratoga High better reflected different cultural and economic

perspectives in our student body, we would be liberated from such a tunnel vision.

For example, if our school had more African-American or Latino students, English classrooms could have a greater variety of unique cultural perspectives during reading discussions.

Other students, in turn, could gain a greater degree of worldliness and connect across multiple racial groups within the student body.

Additionally, right now, many current friend groups at Saratoga High are largely based on ethnic divisions.

Perhaps we would see more racially diverse friend groups around campus if the school had even more diversity to campus.

**"Diversity magnifies the power of a general education by helping to liberate you from the tunnel vision of an ethnocentric and egocentric viewpoint."**

This translates back to the benefits that Smith and Thompson mentioned — less prejudices within the student body and greater success in the workforce.

Of course, some can argue that students reap no actual benefit from talking to members of a racially diverse student body.

But multiple studies from the National Center for Biotechnology Institution demonstrate that higher levels of racial diversity make students feel less vulnerable on campus.

In addition, students perceive teacher treatment toward students as fairer when there is high racial diversity in classrooms.

Increasing diversity on campus will better prepare students for college and their future workplaces.

There, they will have to work in a community of people from all kinds of backgrounds. ♦

## Affirmative action has fair share of faults

By JonathanLi

The now-famous Harvard admissions lawsuit, originally filed in 2014, brought various college admissions processes under heavy scrutiny when conservative activist Edward Blum accused Harvard University of holding Asian Americans to a higher standard than other ethnicities in order to promote racial diversity on campus. While Judge Allison Burroughs recently ruled in favor of Harvard, I hope this decision is overturned on appeal; the trumpeted values of diversity don't balance out against the harms caused by affirmative action.

The act of favoring racial minorities in admissions is hardly new. Colleges have adopted affirmative action policies as far back as 1964, when the Civil Rights Act was first passed. Instead of rewarding good work ethic, affirmative action favors racial minorities.

Blum noted that, if Harvard valued academics as its primary admission factor, more than 40 percent of Harvard's student body would be Asian American as opposed to its current 20 percent while all other groups would decrease. However, if Harvard prioritized demographics as its primary admission factor, its student body would be nearly identical to its current demographics.

The ideal world we should strive for is one that weighs individuals by merit rather than color — a nation where being born a certain race should be neither disadvantageous or beneficial. With the current affirmative action policies in place, being born Asian American places a disadvantage in the college admissions process at some competitive schools.

Pursuing a racially diverse community as the primary objective in admissions is detrimental. Global primary and secondary education system performance have shown that more rigorous courses and a multi-talented population can benefit the individual better than a racially balanced community. For example, there are plenty of ethnically homogeneous countries that perform better than America's primary and secondary education system,

some of which include Japan and China. These countries rely upon their rigorous courses to improve student performance rather than racial diversity alone. This trend is present locally as well.

In California, it's not racially diverse schools that perform the best, but rather, the best funded and most rigorous. Nearly 20 percent of California's top schools are located in the Silicon Valley, with Monta Vista at 13th, Lynbrook at 14th, Gunn at 21st and Saratoga at 24th.

With how well these schools are performing, there's no reason to incorporate a more racially diverse community to improve academic performance, especially since both Monta Vista and Lynbrook have a less diverse student population than Saratoga's, yet rank 10 places higher.

By weighting racial minorities who perform significantly worse on average, work ethic, which should be rewarded, is suppressed. Asian American students are often no longer motivated enough to perform in school, or are unhealthily stressed as they force themselves to make up for the deficit at which they're valued during the application process.

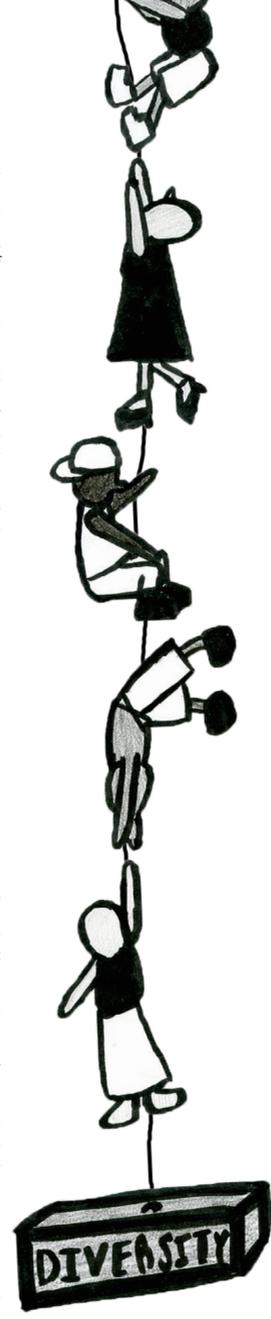
There is no benefit to creating a diverse community at the detriment of other, more qualified individuals. It's simply unproductive.

Maintaining a diverse community often leads to less qualified individuals earning a position over a more qualified individual simply because they're part of a minority. This not only benefits neither the school nor the individual, but is also completely contradictory to the ideals of the Civil Rights Movement, which, ironically, is often used to defend the action of weighing individuals by race.

Creating a racially balanced community is impossible; advocating for such a community leads to new acts of unfairness.

Colleges, in their attempt to create more diverse campuses, have only succeeded in pulling us further from the ideal world without color.

So while people advocate for racially diverse schools, decisions like Harvard's build a country where color does matter. ♦



GRAPHIC BY ANNISSA MU AND KRITHI SANKAR

## Pumpkin spice: a fall essential or unnecessary?

AS FALL KICKS INTO FULL SWING, A REPORTER FEELS OVERWHELMED WITH MANY PUMPKIN SPICE PRODUCTS



jo ama-zhang  
Joann Zhang

As leaves lay sprawled across sidewalks in a crunchy, toasted golden blanket, my nose tingles and I sense the approach of a familiar, fanaticism-driven season: the season of pumpkin spice.

Pumpkin spice — a traditional blend of cinnamon, nutmeg and clove — has long been an integral element of fall, along with fuzzy socks and apple cider. But is it really worth the hype? I tried several pumpkin-spice flavored foods and items to find out.

### Pumpkin Spice Latte:

Would a pumpkin spice story be complete without the classic Starbucks Pumpkin Spice Latte? The last time I tried this stereotypically "basic" beverage, dubbed "PSL," was several years ago, and it seems to have improved since.

I ordered the PSL with soy milk (lactose intolerance gang), and to my pleasant surprise, the flavor of pumpkin spice was subdued enough to be enjoyable with the coffee but definitely distinct. I could almost detect a hint of actual pumpkin, but that may have been an imagined taste.

Most importantly, the taste of the PSL gave me the aching nostalgia for cozy blankets, horror movies and the longing for weather below 80 degrees. With this in mind, I'd say that the PSL is, as stated by many, an autumn must. Rating: 8/10

### Dreyer's PSL Ice Cream:

On the other hand, the pumpkin spice latte flavored Dreyer's ice cream, purchased from Target, was a complete and utter disappointment. Pumpkin spice ice cream in

theory should be a compromise between the remnants of summer — ice cream — and the cinnamon craving of fall — pumpkin spice.

This particular treat, however, proved to be about as unique and exciting as vanilla bean. The flavor of coffee was virtually nonexistent, and the flavor of pumpkin spice reminded me of cheap, nauseating candles (keep reading to find out more about gross candles.) It did not evoke happy fall memories nor did it live up to the name of pumpkin spice, and I would not recommend it. Rating: 3/10

### Pumpkin Spice Candle:

As for pumpkin spice candles, they vary in quality and enjoyability. The Wax Oils Pumpkin Candle, which I originally purchased because of its cute orange wax color, was sickeningly overpowering. Just by opening its lid, the candle drenched my room with the stifling smell of very artificial pumpkin spice I was stunned and horrified by the sheer potency of the candle, and I subsequently decided not to light it to salvage any remaining brain cells that had survived the pumpkin fumes. Rating: 0/10

Because the Wax Oils candle was so atrocious, I bought another candle — Starlume's Hello, Pumpkin Candle. Compared to the Wax Oils monster of a candle, this candle smelled quite mild and was cheap at a college-savings-friendly \$3. Bonus: the candle sat in a cute, dusty orange ceramic jar! Unfortunately, the scent was a cheap, unpleasantly sharp cocktail of unidentifiable spices and was a better decorative item than a candle. Rating: 3/10

After sampling three pumpkin spice items, I concluded that pumpkin spice serves more as a nostalgic element of fall and marketing ploy than an actual enjoyable flavor. While some items puff off the taste of pumpkin spice with finesse, most items missed the mark with this beloved yet elusive flavor. ♦

**Starbucks' Pumpkin Spice Latte**  
Price: \$4.95 for a Grande

**Dreyer's PSL Ice Cream**  
Price: \$5.00 for 1.5 quarts

**Wax Oils's Pumpkin Candle**  
Price: \$14

Courtesy of STARBUCKS.COM, DREYERS.COM AND AMAZON.COM

## Ordering complex Starbucks drinks is not worth the wait

HAVING A CONVOLUTED ORDER DOESN'T NECESSARILY EQUATE TO A BETTER QUALITY DRINK



sel-liu-lar data  
Selena Liu

Every now and then, we all stand behind a customer at Starbucks whose order is longer than your grocery list.

These people spend five minutes in front of the cashier emphasizing that their latte has to be nonfat, light ice, with a small drizzle of vanilla and caramel and made with half-soy milk and every other alternate liquid substance in the Starbucks universe or else they won't take it.

As you can probably tell, I don't understand the logic behind requiring such a specific drink. Is it really more delicious or healthy that way? It seems unlikely, since Starbucks drinks can really only deviate from simple orders so much before they all begin to taste the same.

So, one morning, I decided to settle this question once and for all: Do complex Starbucks orders really make a better drink?

I decided to conduct an experiment. I would search for the most complex Starbucks order I could find on Google and then compare it to my basic caramel frappuccino to see if I could taste the difference.

I found a couple of variants for the company's regular coffee drinks and their juices, but nothing was as interesting as the many different ways you could order a frap-

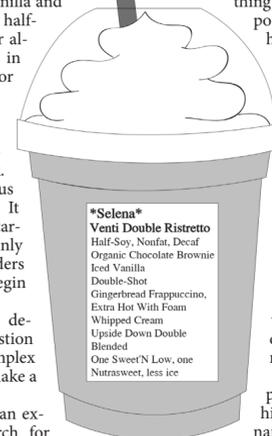
puccino. Apparently, the longest possible frappuccino order you can give your barista before the register stops comprehending more add-ons is the Double Ristretto Venti Half-Soy Nonfat Decaf Organic Chocolate Brownie Iced Vanilla Double-Shot Gingerbread Frappuccino, Extra Hot With Foam Whipped Cream Upside Down Double Blended, plus one Sweet'N Low, one Nutrasweet and less ice.

And that's exactly what I did. I printed that entire spiel on a piece of paper and gave it to my local Starbucks barista, whose face soon turned to something approaching horror. The poor barista, who told me he was a new employee, stared at me in disbelief as I listed out each ingredient that I wanted in my frappuccino. He didn't even seem to know how to comprehend the order. While I got my basic caramel frappuccino within minutes, I had to wait more than 10 to get that beautiful monstrosity of a drink.

It was time for the verdict: Did it taste any different from my caramel frappuccino? Hardly.

Even though the complex drink had greater hints of chocolate and cinnamon, both frappuccinos started tasting like the same sug-could find on Google and then compare it to my basic caramel frappuccino to see if I could taste the difference.

My conclusion: Unless you're a vegan or have some other special dietary need, it's better to just get your basic one-line order and not hold up the entire Starbucks line to settle on an alternate milk or sweetener. After all, the drink will taste the same. ♦



GRAPHIC BY SOFIA JONES

## Incorporating the food I despise into my cooking

REPORTER FINDS COOKING WITH GINGER IMPOSSIBLE



elfwin  
Edwin Chen

The other day, I tried cooking with a food that I absolutely despise: ginger. If you didn't know, ginger is a spice that emits a strong unique odor. When you smell ginger, you instantly recognize it. I wanted to see if ginger could be used to make something that wasn't awful: stir fry beef.

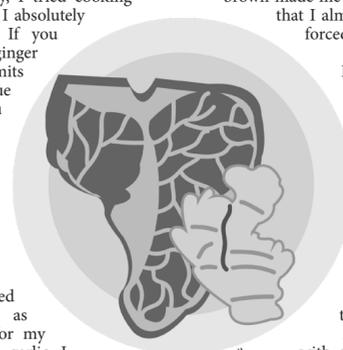
The way I used the ginger was as a replacement for my usual ingredient: garlic. I didn't realize that this would turn a once delicious dish into a barely-edible monstrosity. I started my cooking adventure by heat-

ing up a pan with vegetable oil. I then took beef and cut out the bad parts such as fat and tender. I put three large pieces of ginger into the pan to let the flavor seep into the oil, and then added some barbecue sauce into the pan in an attempt to counter the pungent ginger.

I then added the raw beef and stirred it around the pan to cook. Watching the meat brown made me so hungry for the beef

that I almost forgot I was being forced to taint it with ginger. Once I plated the beef, I took a huge bite and instantly regretted it. The beef's flavor was completely overpowered by ginger. I thought mixing it with the barbecue sauce would somehow salvage it, but instead, it created a combination not fit for human consumption.

After trying to cook with ginger, I can now officially confirm that you should not try to cook with it. It is a bad idea unless you want to create food that is not edible. ♦



GRAPHIC BY EILEEN BUI

# I may be partially deaf

sand-  
HUH?



Sandhya Sundaram

"Does that make sense, Sandhya? I just want you to ..." someone tells me.  
"What?"  
"I'm saying that you should probably..."  
"HUH?"  
"You know what, just make sure you ... I'm counting on you, Sandhya."  
"Sure, you got it!"

In actuality, I have no idea what just came out of their mouth. People frequently assume that I am a forgetful person. However, most of the time, I probably just didn't hear you. Rather than making the situation more awkward by repeating "What?" five times, I usually accept defeat on the third "Huh?"  
Yes, I might be mildly hard of hearing, but it doesn't help that people mumble so much these days. Sure, we talk to each other a lot more via text and Snapchat, but we shouldn't be forgetting how to enunciate. If I tell you to be louder, I don't mean to be rude, I just really am struggling. So help me out and SPEAK UP. ♦



# Ignorance is bliss, except when it comes to my name

KUH-  
vee-thuh



Kavita Sundaram

After living in the U.S. for over eight years, I've noticed that some things will never change, especially the way many people pronounce my name. During that time, I've attended the same public schools with virtually the same peers, and somehow people

still don't understand how to say my name.  
Whether its teachers or students, I'm always greeted with the same butchered pronunciations: Caw-vee-taw, Cuh-vee-tuh, Kaaa-vi-tuh or even Kavya — which is a completely different name. At this point, I've given up telling people how its pronounced, and honestly, it's scary to think that my best friends or perhaps even my future family will NEVER know how to pronounce my name.  
Signed,  
KUH-vee-thuh ♦

# First World



# Limp handshakes are the bane of my existence



e-sze  
money



Kevin Sze

Golf is a "gentlemen's game," which means that after we play 18 holes, we take our hats off, shake each other's hands, and say some awkward pre-

thought out statement like "nice playing with you" or "great match."  
I guess some people never got the memo on how to shake hands, because when I grip their hand and give it a shake, their hand remains as motionless and floppy as a dead fish.  
Please firmly shake my hand when I shake yours. It's disrespectful that I have to do all the work. I should not be the only one doing the shaking. ♦

# Wide lines have ruled for far too long

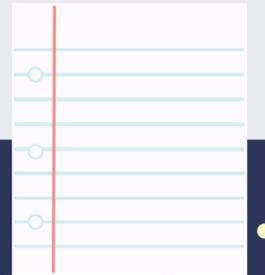
hear yee  
hear yee



Samantha Yee

Too often have the school supplies aisles of Staples and Office Depot boasted "five for \$3.50" wide-ruled notebook packages.  
To all the stationery mega-corporations out there: What is the point of mass-manufacturing a 150-page notebook in which I can practically fit

three lines of writing between every line?  
Most second-graders using wide-ruled paper don't need a five-centimeter-tall stack of paper to get a gold star on a book report. Don't waste paper on a demographic of people who write letters that are under one inch tall. ♦



# Problems

# Hot coffee is never the perfect temperature

hot cup of  
jo(n)e(s)



Sofia Jones

Nothing brings me more joy than heating up a steaming mug of coffee and smelling the strong scent fill the air. Sadly, hot coffee is too high-maintenance for me to truly enjoy.  
At first, it's boiling hot, and I would prefer not to scald my tongue by drink-

ing it immediately. Once it cools down a bit, it's the perfect temperature and reaches peak deliciousness — for a fleeting couple of minutes. If I make the mistake of waiting too long, it cools to room temperature, which just isn't very nice.  
I wish there were some solution to my problem, but the closest alternative is drinking iced coffee, which usually stays at its intended temperature for longer. But nothing will ever beat a cup of hot black coffee, so alas, I'll just continue to suffer with this almost always imperfect drink. ♦



# Seeing without glasses; not really

i be zhu'min



Amanda Zhu

I don't have perfect eyesight. Considering the extensive technology we have today, this might not seem like a big problem. But when you're someone who hates glasses and is practically nocturnal, wearing glasses is a constant nuisance.  
Around seventh grade, when I first realized that my eyesight was no longer perfect, I was prescribed a pair of

glasses to wear only during class. Each year, however, my eyesight got worse, and each year, my hatred for glasses progressively intensified.  
Finally, the summer after my sophomore year, I made the decision to wear night contacts. At first, it worked perfectly, but once school started, it was another story.  
It's recommended to wear night contacts for at least six hours for them to work for the next day. The thing is, I haven't gotten six hours of sleep in one night for a long time. Consequently, I often find myself unconsciously squinting in class to read the board and scooting my desk forward to be closer to the projector.  
That being said, no, I didn't see you when you waved at me in the halls yesterday and didn't wave back, but yes, I can see how many fingers you're holding up. I keep telling myself I'll start wearing glasses when I have my driver's license. ♦





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# If you listen to \_\_\_\_\_, you'll love \_\_\_\_\_

**Billie Eilish**



**Willow Smith**



## WILLOW SMITH OFFERS A BOLD, INSIGHTFUL VOICE

BY Kavita Sundaram

These days, music can be anything with a beat, lyrics and some ghost of a melody, making it hard to find songs that stick to a less conventional style.

Willow Smith, the 18-year-old daughter of actors Jada and Will Smith, encompasses the opposite, focusing on vocals, instrumentals and meaningful lyrics rather than mere catchiness.

Willow's alternative R&B/pop-rock songs combine aspects from artists like Lorde and Billie Eilish to create music that

rediscovers a depth of emotion and soul that music once had. Willow refrains from the abundance of autotune that many modern artists use, creating a more organic feel to her music.

Her diverse styles and lyrics make each one of her songs an entire new universe. Whether it's the multiple vocal lines and harmonies of the song "Female Energy Part 2," or the iconic operatic-rock tone of the song "Like a Bird," Willow never fails to come through with something distinctive. Her fearless and confident yet mellow style makes her music truly one of a kind. ♦

**Halsey**



**Oh Wonder**



## OH WONDER CREATES CHARMING MELODIES

BY Joann Zhang

From jazzy tunes like "Lose It" to night-drive bops like "Drive," alternative-pop duo Oh Wonder produces a variety of woefully underrated songs featuring simple yet alluring melodies.

Comprised of British singer-songwriters Josephine Vander Gucht and Anthony West, Oh Wonder released their debut album in 2015 and their second album "Ultralife" in 2017.

Songs like "Technicolor Beat" are enchanting, soothing and, above all, unique

in their instrumentals.

Oh Wonder's lyrics are vivid and inspired. Lines like "count stacks of the routine lies" from "Drive" and "I feel safe in the 5:00 a.m. light, you carry my fears as the heavens set fire" from "Technicolor Beat" are among the duo's most poetic work and set the duo's songwriting skills above those of more popular artists.

Considering their emotional, eloquent lyrics and catchy, smooth instrumentals, I hope people soon see Oh Wonder as the (OH so) wonderful musical talents they truly are. ♦

**Troye Sivan**



**Maggie Rogers**



## MAGGIE ROGERS'S POP MUSIC HAS AN INDIE STYLE

BY Cici Xu

"I was walking through icy streams that took my breath away. Moving slowly through westward water over glacial plains," pop singer Maggie Rogers sings in her song "Alaska."

Rogers came out with her first album, "Heard It In A Past Life," in January, yet many people still do not know much about her work. Rogers's dreamy, slow pop music, which is similar to the style of pop singer Troye Sivan, focuses on nature, and she

films her music videos in forests.

Her voice touched American rapper Pharrell Williams's heart during his visit to New York University, where Rogers, a master student at NYU, played her music "Alaska" for him and left him in awe. He then strongly encouraged her to start her singing career.

Rogers says she is an optimist, a feminist and an environmentalist.

"I feel a lot, maybe too much, but in a song, it always seems to be just enough," Rogers wrote on her website. ♦

**The Chainsmokers**



**Robotaki**



## ROBOTAKI IS A SURPRISING EDM DISCOVERY

BY Anniisa Mu

I was exploring my SoundCloud feed when I noticed that there was a song called "Butterscotch" that my favorite artists ye-loasis and E.view kept reposting.

So, I gave it a listen. The moment that beat dropped, it was instant love.

The song was produced by Canadian producer Anthony Chin who goes by the pen name of "Robotaki." Robotaki's music is best categorized as electronic dance music, but it's ridiculously versatile. "Butter-

scotch" — the first song I heard from him and also my favorite — is slow and sensual, full of groove and blues appeal. Another one of my favorite songs, "Together We're Screwed," is more true to the EDM style but still has a unique lightness and flutteriness to it.

I usually don't enjoy electronic music, but Robotaki delivers on the genre's defining beat drop without being overbearing or noisy. All of his songs are free to listen on SoundCloud and Spotify. I highly recommend giving Robotaki a listen. ♦

GRAPHICS BY LIHI SHOSHANI, KAVITA SUNDARAM, SANDHYA SUNDARAM, SAMANTHA YEE, BILL YUAN AND JEANETTE ZHOU

# Politicians need social media presence to boost votes

BY Michael Wong

In a dramatic moment during the first Democratic Presidential debate, Senator Kamala Harris attacked front-runner former Vice President Joe Biden on the issue of race.

"I do not believe you are a racist," Harris said to Biden, "but it was hurtful to hear you talk about the reputations of two United States senators who built their reputations and career on segregation ... And it was not only that, but you also worked with them to oppose busing."

Busing, she said, took her to school every day as a part of the second African American class being integrated into public schools in Oakland in the late 1960s.

In a matter of hours, Harris's 4-minute interaction with Biden dominated social media and news headlines, many declaring her as the outright winner of the debate.

"Kamala Harris won the first Democratic debate, and it wasn't even close" declared an op-ed by Phillip Klein of Washington Examiner the same night.

"Kamala Harris Seizes the Moment. Again," another article from that night read, penned by Russell Berman of The Atlantic.

As a result, Harris's support shot up from

7.9 percent of likely voters to 16.6 percent. Meanwhile, Biden's dropped from 41.5 percent to 35.4 percent.

But a closer inspection into their stances on busing reveals that both candidates have similar opinions. Harris's contention was that Biden did not support busing back in the '70s, while Biden claims that he supported voluntary or court-mandated busing. However, neither one of them supports federally mandated busing anymore.

In other words, Harris garnered support by focusing on a 1970s issue in 2019, an issue both of them seem to agree on today. Evidently, the media's portrayal of candidates has a far-reaching effect for long-shot candidates.

## Evidently, the media's portrayal of candidates has a far-reaching effect for long-shot candidates.

Businessman Andrew Yang exploded onto the scene after his interview on comedian Joe Rogan's podcast, "The Joe Rogan

Experience," which has amassed more than 4 million views. Over the nearly two-hour episode, he introduced his campaign, discussed his flagship "Freedom Dividend" plan and appealed to Democratic voters who had never heard of him.

"Everything is up and to the right since the Joe Rogan podcast," Yang's campaign manager Zach Graumann said in an interview with Daily Beast. "That was the key. That was the moment."

Politicians in general have recognized the power of social media in generating viral moments.

In 2007, former-president and then-senator Barack Obama became the first leader globally to use Twitter. He now has 109.8 million followers, the most on the entire platform, and his widespread usage has transformed the way politicians can directly communicate with their constituents.

In fact, by the end of his first term, 78 percent of global leaders were on Twitter. By 2018, 97 percent had accounts.

With 66.1 million followers, President Trump has Twitter as his chief political weapon. His frequent usage has gained him public ire and ridicule. For instance, an earlier clash between establishment Democrats and four of the younger progressive

Congresswomen dubbed "The Squad" was quelled by a tweet from Trump calling for the four progressives to be sent back to where they came from, a tweet Democrats united behind, deriding its racial overtones.

For most politicians, these tweets are severely damaging to their aspirations. Especially with the limited words and characters available, ideas can be easily misconstrued. Candidate Pete Buttigieg's recent endorsement of former-Justice Anthony Kennedy for his bipartisanship received fierce backlash as others lamented conservative decisions in other important cases.

Despite the potential risks, having a social media presence is invaluable to expanding a voter base. In the case of Trump's potential impeachment, six of the current candidates who are current senators will be removed from the campaign trail as they participate in the proceedings, so they must engage online to remain relevant.

Still, the effects of social media are nonetheless fleeting, and candidates cannot depend on a singular moment. After failing to create any more spectacular moments in the last three debates, Harris has fallen out of the spotlight and regressed back to around 5 percent support, according to the most recent Quinnipiac poll on Oct. 24. ♦

# Guidance counseling: an impossible task?

COUNSELORS HAVE TO CATER TO HUNDREDS OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT THE SYSTEM

BY Jonathan Li & Viraj Reddi

Guidance counselor Monique Young doesn't limit her job to writing reference letters, administering schedule changes or assigning classes. She wants to be a friend and a reliable ear to her students while guiding them through high school.

Many of her students consider her a friendly face to visit for both academic and personal concerns. But at the same time, other students rarely meet with their counselors, finding their advice restrictive and opting mostly for hired counselors instead.

Throughout her 14 years at the school, Young has dealt with various student worries, from relationship breakups to mundane schedule requests. She's not alone in this regard; guidance counselor Frances Saiki notes that she assists her students with a large spread of academic and personal concerns.

"It could be questions about classes or meeting graduation requirements," Saiki said. "But it could also be personal concerns, such as feeling anxious or having a conflict with a teacher or a parent."

But their help only extends to students who actively seek them out. Some do from the first month of freshman year, but many only begin to ask advice as juniors or seniors in dire need of help.

"I always want students to visit because sometimes students wait until there's an absolute crisis," Young said. "I hope that kids know that in this part of the office, it's a nice, comfy place to just talk."

Junior Isaac Chang has found the guidance counselors to be open and inviting. He felt comfortable discussing his classes, requesting schedule changes or coming in to just talk. Chang felt that his interactions with Young allowed her to gauge his abilities.

Chang described how Young made all options clear and trusted him to make the best decision for himself. "I'm taking four AP classes and Ms. Young told me that two science classes was a bit scary," Chang said. "But she didn't discourage me from doing so because she knows I'm used to advanced classes."

Chang takes all advice from Young seriously, feeling that her experience and professionalism qualifies her to guide students through their high school years.

"Counselors are there for a reason," he said. "She's a professional at bringing the best out of students and knowing how to balance their needs based on capabilities."

By contrast, some students expressed frustration with the school's guidance coun-

selors, choosing to hire private counselors instead.

Especially regarding course selections, several students said they feel that counselors underestimate their capabilities. Among them is sophomore Etienne Casanova, who noted that counselors were hesitant in letting him register for multiple honors and AP courses.

"Counselors often underestimate your abilities, and sometimes, I just don't want to take their advice," Casanova said. Instead, Casanova plans to use a hired consultant throughout high school.

He noted their ability to individualize student needs, help edit college essays, plan extracurriculars, summer programs and assist their students outside of school.

"I think college counselors are better suited for an individual," Casanova said. "They provide personalized guidance, which is better than the more general advice that guidance counselors can give."

Young acknowledged that many students share these thoughts but that she prefers stu-

dents to take on a manageable course load over risking future mental health issues.

"With our courses and the demands of our students, both in school and out of school, we have a good sense of the stress that comes with your schedule," Young said. "Every year, we see students who end up choosing too many [difficult courses], resulting in increased anxiety, depression and all the negative effects of overdoing it. We always want to help students make healthy, balanced choices."

Saiki understands the appeal of a hired counselor — with over 1,300 students delegated to four counselors, administering personalized attention is difficult.

"College counselors keep you in line, since you pay them," Saiki said. "Sometimes it's nice to take that stress of managing out of a family."

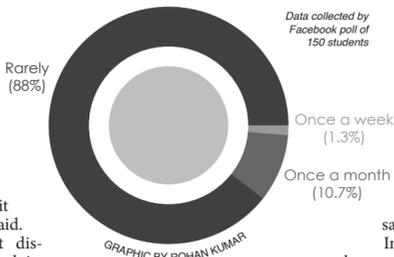
At the same time, Saiki noted that school counselors essentially provide the same service as a hired counselor.

"Though we don't meet with you as often, I think all the guidance counselors do essentially the same thing as a college counselor," Saiki said.

In the meantime, the guidance team of Frances Saiki, Monique Young, Eileen Allen, and Alinna Satake will continue aiding the incoming wave of juniors and seniors. Still, they hope to build a connection with every one of their students.

"We love to see your faces, and three years from now, you might need something," Young said. "I'd encourage all students to come talk to their counselors for anything." ♦

## How often do you interact with your guidance counselor?



# Brotzman continues love for drama at McAfee Center

BY Lih Shoshani

Technical director and McAfee Center coordinator Benjamin Brotzman's love for theater was evident after spending years acting and directing plays during his younger years.

Now, after studying technical directing at Midwestern State University, Brotzman has come to work with Saratoga High's drama department to coordinate lights and sounds in the theater.

He maintains the McAfee Center as well, where he can pursue his passion and pass stories along to younger generations.

"I am most passionate about plays and musicals that tell stories. Whether they be important or fun stories meant to entertain people, they're needed for human existence," Brotzman said. "People are generally happier when they have entertainment like storytelling in their lives. I like to be a part of that."

Before coming to Saratoga in 2017, Brotzman was an adjunct professor teaching Introduction to Theater at Tarrant County Col-

lege in Fort Worth, Texas. During that time, he directed his favorite production, "Hank Williams: Lost Highway."

Prior to moving to Texas, he worked at California Theatre Center in 2014 when he met drama teacher Sarah Thermond and started helping out around Saratoga High.

"For quite a long time, I've come and helped with the drama department; I've built sets, done lights and sounds for a few years, so I was very familiar with the school and McAfee center," Brotzman said. "Being offered the position was exciting because I really enjoy being here."

In 2014 when the school play, "Les Misérables," lost their sound and design director, Thermond went through the company to hire Brotzman to come in to train the students and to set up lights and sound. This later led to him being hired during 2017.

"He was able to step in seamlessly to figure everything out," Thermond said. "We knew we would communicate well with each other no matter how much

time passed that we were working in different places."

Once transitioning into the school, Brotzman began to interact more with students.

"When he commits to something, he'll put in the time and effort to get it done. He's a really hard working person; I think he models that behavior for the students really well," Thermond said.

While working at California Theatre Center, Brotzman did not work with youth during theater productions often enough to develop deep connections with them.

"It's nice to be able to work with students longer. You build kinships and friendships — you're not coming in fresh and not knowing anybody," Brotzman said.

In the drama department, he directly interacts with students when building sets and designing lights, overseeing those in charge of tech jobs such as operating the light board, moving scenery for the show or operating the spotlight.

Junior Francesca Fernandes worked with Brotzman during last year's fall play "Julius Caesar," when he taught the cast how to realistically fight with swords and fixed the mics and positioning of the actors so they could be properly seen on stage.

"He genuinely wants to help everyone because he's a very nice person and especially helpful for the more technical aspects of theater," Fernandes said.

Aside from the drama department, Brotzman can usually be found in the McAfee Center, booking and filling out paperwork for outside group rentals and working with clients to turn their artistic visions into realities.

"I am a big believer in art, and



McAfee coordinator and technical director Ben Brotzman creates set pieces for the fall play "Sense and Sensibility."

I want to help make it come to life as best as we can," Brotzman said.

Brotzman also handles technical elements for all concerts and school events like the Benefit Fashion Show and Jazz Cabaret. Currently, he is doing the lighting design for Los Gatos High's theater production "Ax of Murder."

He didn't always dream of being a technical director; acting was his first passion, and he started focusing on directing plays and musicals before quitting drama for years.

After majoring in business for two years, he transferred to technical theater. Although Brotzman misses directing plays, he has the opportunity to do theater all the time now.

"I've been designing shows for

20 years, never looked back, and I don't really want to do anything else," Brotzman said.

He mainly enjoys creating lighting because he believes that "something so subtle can really change the mood of the scene and change people's perception."

After moving to California to reconnect with family, Brotzman found it difficult to adjust to the new district at first — he hadn't worked in a school district before and had to navigate the school system to understand how it differed from professional theater — but has now smoothly transitioned to Saratoga High.

"Anything having to do with working inside a theater is exciting and is the place that I like to be," Brotzman said. ♦

# MARCHING MADNESS

MEMBERS REFLECT ON SKILLS AND QUALITIES THEY GAINED FROM PARTICIPATING IN MARCHING BAND

BY Sofia Jones & Selena Liu

The air filled with tension as the four marching band drum majors — seniors Joshua Yoon, Alex Mah, Sean Ryan and junior Isaac Sun — walked onto the Cupertino High football field on Oct. 12 and lined up side by side. They waited for the emcee to announce the winning band after nearly eight hours of watching bands competing for the top prize.

The verdict came: Saratoga snagged first place at their first competition of the year, getting 92.14 points and just barely beating Homestead. The crowd erupted into cheers.

This result did not come without dozens of hours of hard work by both the drum majors and the 135 members of band and 30 members of the color guard.

Since August, the marching band has practiced after school every Blue Day, with the exception of permanent Thursday practices from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. and no practice on Fridays.

In addition to weekdays, the band also practices on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. In total, weekly time commitments range from 13-20 hours. With the start of competition season in October, band members have dedicated even more time over the weekends, often returning home late at night.

For freshman saxophone player Ojas Somani, the high school band's practice commitment has forced him to improve his time management.

"I like band camp and retreats where we go to places like Saratoga Springs," Somani said. "The competitions are also a lot of fun, but it's a lot of time commitment, and the hours I invest into practices and competitions have definitely forced me to put aside other activities until the marching band season ends."

For drum majors Yoon, Mah, Ryan and Sun, it's an even bigger time commitment. On a normal band practice day, the four drum

majors arrive 45 minutes before practice begins, making sure that all the instruments are dragged out onto the football field and that the drum major stands are set up before the rest of the band arrives.

"It's an entirely different type of commitment," Yoon said. "In freshman year, I could show up on time and that was fine, but now as drum major, instead of just showing up on time, I have to be ready on time."

This year, the marching band is conveying how music changes through time with their four-movement show, "Timeless."

The show, which is 8 minutes and 30 seconds long, begins with a piece featuring a string quartet in its first two movements to convey the early popularity of string orchestra and classical music in the 1800s. The quartet includes orchestra members juniors Panithi Kachinthorn, Nikhil Nair and Avyay Koorapaty and sophomore Maddie Jin.

In its third movement, the show highlights the vibrant era of jazz music in the 1920s, transitioning to a jazz piece featuring a saxophone quartet comprised of seniors Matthew Hsieh, Alex Hsieh and drum major Mah and junior Anthony Qin.

Finally, in its fourth movement, the show moves on to a minimalist rock piece, demonstrating the rock age of the 1960s. Through the progression of the four movements and their connection to changing music style, the show demonstrates how music has changed through the centuries.

Although the marching band competed in the Oct. 12 Cupertino competition with only three out of four movements completed, the band won second for overall music, first for visual performance and tied for first with Homestead for overall general effect.

But since Homestead had an overtime penalty, SHS won first place overall.

"Even though we've only finished three parts in the show



Seniors Alex Hsieh, Matthew Hsieh and Alex Mah and junior Anthony Qin, members of the band's saxophone quartet, play a jazz piece from the 1920s during the third movement of the four-movement show "Timeless."

(at that point) in preparation for this competition, we tried to make the beginning parts as good as possible," Yoon said.

Outside of practices, drum majors and others have put in even more time into their practice schedules.

Qin, one of the four members of the saxophone quartet in this year's show, has put special emphasis on his musical endeavors.

So far, Qin has joined many musical organizations at school, such as jazz band, and has joined multiple honor bands outside of school such as the County Honor Band and all-state band. During school, Qin makes saxophone audition recordings three hours a day, two times a week under the guidance of band director Jason Shuan. Qin then sends these recordings as audition tapes to honor bands.

"Setting up and doing the recordings takes a lot of time, and I also need to work with Mr. Shuan to make sure they're good enough," Qin said.

For Qin and many

others dedicated to band, musical endeavors can impose a huge time constraint on summer activities. For example, Ryan attended a summer drum major camp at Texas A&M, where he learned how to conduct better and improve his leadership.

"I got to meet people with similar interests as me and similar goals. They taught me how to be a better leader for band," Ryan said. "Every drum major has to go to drum major camp, which is a one-week camp in the middle of summer."

Band poses an even bigger time constraint on school activities. Both Qin and Yoon note how big of an impact band has on when they do homework. On a typical school day, Yoon finds that he often runs short on time when it comes to practicing.

"When I come home, I do a quick evaluation of what I need to do. If another activity takes too much time, I may decide that I don't have any time to practice, because I usually try and sleep

before 2 a.m.," Yoon said. "Sleeping earlier allows me to pay more attention in class, and that takes a lot of studying out of the way, so I have more time to practice."

The need for meticulous time-management is true for Qin, who practices every day during tutorial, as well.

"After school, I just focus on homework, and on weekends, if I get all my homework done at midnight, then I'd continue to practice until 3 a.m. It messes with my schedule on the weekends, but on the other hand, I want to fit in some time to practice," Qin said. "It all just piles up, though, and even when I'm on top of it, I often have to sacrifice sleep."

Despite their crazy schedules, both Qin and Yoon said they find that they thrive amid the non-stop work.

"If I have a lot of free time, I tend to waste a lot of it anyway," Yoon said. "Being so involved in band has not only improved my musical skills but my time management skills as well." ♦

### CONCERT BAND

Band during a school period where students play while sitting

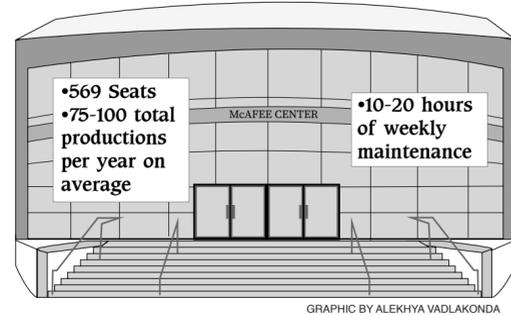
**Symphonic Band:** No cuts  
**Symphonic Wind Ensemble:** Audition required

### MARCHING BAND

**Band Camp:** Two weeks before school, 8-12 hours every day except Sunday  
**Practices:** Practice after blue days, Thursdays 6-9 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
**Football Games:** Play music during halftime  
**Competition Season:** All-day competitions every Saturday during October

### OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL

Students can audition for the County Honor Band and All-State Band, which, although they don't have many meetings, are prestigious and require a lot of practice.



# A vicious cycle: living with an eating disorder

GIRL EXPLAINS HOW BODY IMAGE STRUGGLES HAVE LED TO UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD AND WEIGHT

BY Anjali **Nuggehalli**

*Editor's note: Rebecca is a pseudonym to protect the source's identity.*

It began in seventh grade. After years of listening to her parents telling her to lose weight, Rebecca began to agree.

Looking in the mirror, she saw a 12-year-old girl who was "too fat" staring back at her. In that moment, she knew she was willing to do anything to be skinny.

Now, three years later, she is dealing with body dysmorphia but so far has not sought help for it.

According to Mayo Clinic, body dysmorphic disorder occurs when people obsess over flaws in their appearance, which results in shame and anxiety. People who have body dysmorphia often search for temporary measures to rid themselves of discontent over their appearance but are hardly ever satisfied with the results.

What started as a year of dieting to lose weight for Rebecca morphed into going days without eating at all. During the summer before her freshman year, without the routine of school to keep her occupied, Rebecca found that she regressed into even worse eating habits, including not eating for days.

Still, she was not ready to accept there was a problem. Rebecca was charting a path toward anorexia nervosa, which according to Mayo Clinic is an eating disorder in which patients severely restrict their own food in order to lose weight.

"I didn't admit to myself that I had an eating disorder for a long time," Rebecca said. "I told myself that I was just dieting and being overdramatic."

Initially, by skipping meals, taking diet pills and following workout videos, Rebecca lost 10 pounds quickly. Rebecca's friends at school were shocked to notice her weight loss and lack of eating.

While they encouraged Rebecca to eat more, they tiptoed around the phrase "eating disorder," and according to Rebecca, they felt too awkward to ever bring it up. Besides initially voicing their support, her friends haven't brought it up since they found out about her issues.

Over time, Rebecca began to feel the effects of poor nutrition and weight loss. Her me-

tabolism eventually slowed, and she began to feel unwell much of the time.

Despite this, Rebecca has yet to seek medical care, and continues to struggle.

"I experience a lot of hair loss and dizziness," Rebecca said. "I'm always tired and find it really hard to find the energy to concentrate throughout the school day."

She remembers barely making it through many of her sports practices, unable to endure the physical strain of the activity due to not eating all day.

**"I'd tell my past self that starving isn't worth it. It's scary — you either recover or suffer for the rest of your life."**

Rebecca

Meanwhile, Rebecca's parents are not aware of their daughter's eating disorder. While they know Rebecca is cutting down her portion sizes the way they'd suggested, they have not seen the downside of her new habits.

"I feel like if I told my parents about my eating disorder they'd be more angry than supportive," Rebecca said. "They'd accuse me of hurting my body."

### Professional advice

Asked about the problems with eating disorders generally (and not Rebecca's problems specifically), CASSY therapist Sarah Lauterbach stressed the importance of having a supportive family, especially when a child suffers from an eating disorder.

"The family should not freak out and instead should validate and empathize with the fact that their child needs extra support," Lauterbach said.

"They should look to an eating disorder specialist and consider family therapy or an in-patient recovery center."

So far Rebecca has remained resistant to seeking traditional help.

At some point, she said she may discuss with her parents the option of taking something called selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), a form of antidepressant. She had done some research, and thinks that increasing her sero-

tonin levels might help her block out negative thoughts about her body, and similarly, increases in serotonin would make her feel happier.

While SSRIs have not been scientifically proven as an effective treatment for curing eating disorders, according to a scientific journal by Current Clinical Pharmacology, many clinicians use these medications in combination with nutritional support and psychotherapy.

Still, she's not optimistic about her chances of receiving the treatment.

"As much as I want to consider taking SSRIs, my parents wouldn't understand," Rebecca said. "They think these pills are only taken for depression, and if I take it, then I'm depressed."

Rebecca has tried self-care activities such as using face masks, taking baths and going on walks, but she always relapses back into her negative thoughts, which holds her back from recovery.

CASSY counselor Lauterbach compared eating disorders to what those who have addiction issues go through.

"It's a tremendous loss when you give up that way of life that you've been engaging in," she said. "There's going to be a grieving process, but you have to make the choice to live."

**"I've already invested so much into losing weight. If I don't follow through, then I feel it would all have been for nothing."**

Rebecca

Rebecca feels that so much of her energy and time has been put into becoming skinny.

"I've wanted to be thin for so long, and I've already invested so much into losing weight," Rebecca said. "If I don't follow through and get to my goal weight, then I feel it would have all been for nothing."

She suspects, however, that she

won't be content with the way she looks, even if she reaches her goal weight.

"The problem with suffering from body dysmorphia is that I'm always hyper-aware of my body," Rebecca said. "I can feel when my thighs are touching, and I can literally feel the fat on my body."

This feeling of guilt and discomfort is only heightened when the feeling of hunger becomes too much and Rebecca finds herself binge eating to compensate for starving herself. The binge typically lasts for 10 minutes before Rebecca goes back to dieting due to shame.

According to Mayo Clinic, binge-eating disorder is characterized by uncontrollable excessive eating. Those who binge eat cannot control the urge to eat, and they end up consuming much more than they normally do.

Rebecca wishes she could warn her past self about how quickly eating disorders can consume someone.

"I'd tell my past self that starv-

ing isn't worth it," Rebecca said. "Eating disorders are scary — you either recover completely or suffer for the rest of your life. It's just not worth it."

While Rebecca is still struggling with her eating disorder, she says she'll consider seeking treatment when she's ready. ♦

*If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, call these hotlines:*

**National Eating Disorders Association Helpline:**  
1-800-931-2237

**Something Fishy:**  
1-866-418-1207

**Hopeline Network:**  
1-800-442-4673

**National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders:**  
1-630-577-1330

Statistics from anad.org

### BY THE NUMBERS

62 minutes

How frequently someone in the U.S. dies from an eating disorder



0.9

Percent of U.S. women who will suffer from anorexia in their lifetime



2.8

Percent of U.S. adults who will suffer from binge eating disorder in their lifetime



30 million

People who currently suffer from an eating disorder in the U.S.

ALL GRAPHICS BY NEETI BADVE AND CHRISTINE ZHANG



EVEN THOUGH MIGRAINES IMPACT MANY, THOSE AFFECTED SELDOM RECEIVE PROPER TREATMENT

BY Bill **Yuan** & Jeanette **Zhou**

One in seven people worldwide suffer from migraine headaches, according to an advocacy group called The Migraine Trust.

This year, there are just over 1,400 students and teachers at Saratoga High, meaning that statistically, it's likely that at least 200 of those regularly suffer from migraines.

Currently the third most prevalent illness in the world, behind iron-deficiency anaemia and mild hearing loss, migraines are headaches of varying intensity that are often accompanied by light or sound sensitivity and nausea. These headaches are especially common in women, with 28 million out of the 39 million migraine sufferers in the U.S. being women.

According to Los Gatos-Saratoga Joint Union High School District nurse Lois Schultz-Grant, migraines are linked to genetics.

"There are some medical conditions that are genetic that can actually cause the migraines," Schultz-Grant said. "There is a condition where the blood vessels in your brain get all jumbled up, and that is hereditary. When those get irritated, they can cause migraines."

While most people tend to think that migraines in children are uncommon, according to the American Migraine Foundation, one in every 11 children suffers from migraines. Among teens, 8 percent of boys and 23 percent of girls have experienced a migraine before.

Junior Katie Dimock is a teen who battles the condition. She has had migraines since she was young, and they started to become more frequent throughout middle school.

"Sometimes they're pretty mild, and I just have discomfort in my temples, brows and behind my eyes," Dimock said. "When they're moderate, it's really hard to look into bright lights, and it's often in my neck and the base of my skull too. At the most severe level, there's really nothing else to do but lie down in the dark and not move — they can be totally incapacitating."

For Dimock, blue light from phones and computers and dehydration often worsen her migraines. For other sufferers there are many other triggers, including changes in weather and changes in sleep patterns.

"One trigger can be a really stressful day," Schultz-Grant said. "Kids and adolescents, in particular, are under a tremendous amount of strain; it's hard being an adolescent, if nobody's told you that."

Academic pressure, of course, is a major factor in stress at many high-performing Bay Area schools.

This is true for Mikaela Brennan, a senior at Notre Dame High School in San Jose, who says that the stifling focus on school work creates a very stressed environment for her.

"I think school stress absolutely impacts my migraines," Brennan said. "I noticed that once I lessened my course load, it got a lot better, but college applications aren't helping my stress levels."

According to the American Migraine Foundation, the brain needs consistency and is especially vulnerable to changes in stress and sleep; this results in 70 percent of migraine sufferers naming stress as a trigger.

**"Sometimes there's nothing else to do but lie down in the dark. Migraines can be totally incapacitating."**

JUNIOR Katie Dimock

While Dimock acknowledges the impact of academic stress on triggering her migraines, she feels that her workloads do not give her enough time to relax as a larger impact on her migraines.

"School stress can be the source, but I think the main problem is that sometimes I feel like I can't relax or lie down to make them go away," Dimock said. "I'll stay at school with a migraine because I know I'll just create more stress for myself by missing class or not getting things done."

When dealing specifically with stress as a trigger, Schultz-Grant recommends mindfulness therapies to help relax.

Although many people point to certain foods as a trigger, such as caffeine, chocolate or MSG, according to a New York Times article, there has yet to be any evidence to support this claim. The article states that the idea of certain foods as triggers may have come from sugar cravings that

often occur before migraines. Schultz-Grant said that when students come to the office with a migraine, they are placed in a quiet, dark room, and their parents are called.

"It's really important that they get their medication; if you can't treat it here in 20 minutes by relaxing in a dark, cool room, go home and sleep," Schultz-Grant said.

"Sleep is a great healer, and high school kids don't get enough of it."

Treatments for this illness are mostly limited to taking medications such as ibuprofen, sumatriptan, rizatriptan, Excedrin or even forms homeopathic medicine to treat the symptoms; however, for women, birth control pills can be taken and be effective if their migraines stem from hormonal changes.

Brennan is one of many females who suffer from monthly migraines that stem from hormone imbalances. In fact, according to the National Migraine Foundation, 60 percent of women who suffer from migraines have these kinds of migraines.

Besides abortives, or medications used during pregnancies, there are some preventatives that can be taken to lessen migraine frequency and severity.

Preventatives can include medication to control high blood pressure, like propranolol or verapamil, or antidepressants, like amitriptyline or nortriptyline.

While many of these medications are necessary to combat the pain of a migraine, they also come with many side effects.

"I recently had to swap out preventatives and one of the side effects made it really difficult to think," Brennan said.

The drug in question, Topamax, has been proven to be effective against migraines and epilepsy attacks, but its side effect of mental confusion has earned it the nickname "Dopamax."

"I don't know how to explain it," Brennan said.

nan said. "It's like being high except it isn't enjoyable because you're aware of what's happening to you."

However, a senior boy, who asked to remain anonymous, said he experiences migraines but does not opt for any standard treatments. Interestingly, because of many allergies, he uses an alternative medicine in the form of an ethyl alcohol extract. This treatment is not scientifically backed but has been the only thing that has worked for him. The treatment is meant to balance out the energy in your body, similar to many ancient Chinese medicines, he said.

**"If you can't treat it here by relaxing in a dark, cool room, go home and relax."**

NURSE Lois Schultz-Grant

Despite the obvious downsides to migraines, there may be some benefits to having them. According to an article published by Harvard Medical School, a 10-year study of almost 75,000 women

showed that female migraine sufferers were 20 to 30 percent less likely to develop Type 2 diabetes. The article also mentioned how migraine sufferers are unlikely to develop alcoholism, since alcohol can often be a trigger for migraines.

A nationwide study on migraines, posted on WebMD, showed that one-third of the 18,714 adolescent subjects met the criteria for taking preventative medicine, but the majority of those adolescents were not receiving medication.

That's something Dimock said should change.

"Don't wait until they're full blown migraines to take medication," Dimock said. "Prevention is usually more effective than trying to get rid of a severe migraine." ♦



### MIGRAINE MEMOS



**MORE THAN 4 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE U.S. HAVE CHRONIC DAILY MIGRAINES.**

**NEARLY 1 IN 4 U.S. HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDES SOMEONE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC MIGRAINES.**



**10% OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN EXPERIENCE MIGRAINES.**

**MORE THAN 50% OF ALL MIGRAINE SUFFERERS ARE NEVER DIAGNOSED.**



**MIGRAINES ARE THE 3RD MOST PREVALENT ILLNESS IN THE WORLD.**



Statistics from migraineresearchfoundation.org

ALL GRAPHICS BY NEETI BADVE AND CHRISTINE ZHANG

## Growing analytics field intrigues high school students

BY Preston Fu  
& Christine Zhang

Junior Proby Shandilya was proud to showcase his summer research on investigating the value of NBA players based on their impacts to their teams at the University of Connecticut Sports Analytics Symposium on Oct. 5. College professors and over 100 high school and college students from across the nation arrived to check out each other's work.

"I met a lot of really cool people in the industry," Shandilya said. "It took me a long time to come up with the project, but it was a really great experience working with hands-on sports team data."

Sports analytics is the practice of applying mathematical and statistical principles to sports. According to Forbes, it emerged as a field in 2003 when financial journalist and author Michael Lewis published his book "Moneyball". Recent advances have made the field more popular, and many professional sports teams now use sports analysts to improve their rosters.

Shandilya has not only done individual research on sports analytics but has also brought its increasing popularity to the school. In his sophomore year, Shandilya founded the Sports Analytics club on campus.

"Sports analytics really seemed like a fun way to combine skills in technology and engineering to my passion with sports," Shandilya said.

Shandilya has always loved sports. He started a sports statistics blog as a third grader, and in his freshman year, he wrote a self-published book. In it, he analyzed how an NBA player's performance is determined by how his teammates complement his playing style.

Shandilya eventually narrowed his interest to sports analytics. He is taking AP Sta-

tistics to add to his ability to analyze quantitative data.

"I think it's more important to learn the statistical and advanced computational techniques [before going into sports analytics]," Shandilya said. "The passion for sports will always be there, so you can always apply your skills to sports data."

As for his Sports Analytics club this year, Shandilya plans to teach data science techniques and hopes to work with some of the school's sports teams and increase student interest.

Shandilya said sports analytics do not make much of an impact for the players themselves but rather more for the coaches.

"I think it helps way more in strategy than actually playing," he said. "When you're seeing which players you want for your team, looking at the analytics and seeing which players really make an impact on winning can help strategize."

The use of analytics for sports managers was first introduced through baseball. Oakland Athletics' General Manager (GM) Billy Beane created a team consisting of players with high on-base percentages, and the A's immediately improved. Modern GMs now meet with their large staff late at night, scanning over raw spreadsheet data and old videos.

Recently, sports analytics has also come to impact other sports such as basketball. According to Forbes, NBA teams now use "Player Tracking" technology to evaluate the efficiency of a team by analyzing player movement.

Senior Bryan Chu has been interested in statistics since his freshman year. This past summer, he went to the University of Pennsylvania to participate in the Wharton Moneyball Academy, a program that focuses on statistics in sports.

Chu said the program introduced him to sports analytics by teaching basic statistics



Courtesy of Proby Shandilya

Junior Proby Shandilya explains his research to interested students at the University of Connecticut in October, the continuation of a new, developing passion for sport analytics.

topics using sports data. Through the program, he also met guests who worked in the NBA and NFL.

"They talked to us about how statistics is changing the game," Chu said. "Ten years ago, there would only be a couple people on the analytics department of a sports team, but now, there are 10 or 20 in each department."

He feels that sports themselves have always been popular, but the rise in interest in sports analytics has grown due to today's emphasis on technology.

The rise in sports analytics has also spread to the high school level. Special education teacher Danny Wallace, who coaches the varsity girls' basketball team, uses the sports analysis program Hudl to determine the ideal player combinations and a player's best position. This way, he can create plays to maximize the number of points the team can score.

"If we look at the game film, we can only see so much," Wallace said, "but the stats don't lie. They allow us to see so much more, and it really does help a lot."

At the same time, Wallace does recognize the shortcomings of programs like Hudl. Coaching must also be based on other important aspects, such as team bonding and health.

"It may have worked well for the Oakland A's, but baseball is essentially an individual sport," Wallace said. "There's only one person up to bat at a time. The same thing won't work so well for basketball."

For his part, Chu plans on going into statistics or another mathematical field, while Shandilya said he is interested in sports technology and sports analytics as a career.

"I think we're in a golden age where we can really use technology to change, innovate and revolutionize sports," Shandilya said. ♦

## I believe in the Warriors

E-Sze  
Money



Kevin Sze

I almost cried when Golden State Warriors' star shooting guard Klay Thompson tore his ACL in the third quarter of Game 6 of the 2019 NBA Finals against the Toronto Raptors.

Key word: almost.

The Warriors were hit with a string of injuries throughout the playoffs. In the Finals, star forward Kevin Durant suffered a crushing Achilles injury in Game 5, center Kevon Looney fractured his collarbone, forward Andre Iguodala was suffering a mild hamstring injury and point guard Stephen Curry was nursing a finger injury.

The Warriors bench was shallower than a kiddie pool, and then in Game 6, Thompson, who had 28 points and was "popping off" as teenagers like to say, lay on the ground helplessly clutching his knee in agony.

Thompson's injury was the last straw, as the Warriors relied solely on Curry and forward Draymond Green. In the end, it was too much to handle. The Warriors ended up losing Game 6 on a heartbreakingly close 3-point attempt from Curry.

In the offseason, Durant headed to Brooklyn as a free agent, center Demarcus Cousins left for Los Angeles and every "expert" claimed the Warriors dynasty was over. But I'm here to tell you why the Warriors will be holding the Larry O'Brien trophy by the end of the 2019-2020 NBA season.

First, free agency was kind to the Warriors, especially with All-Star guard D'Angelo Russell, who arrived in Oakland in a sign and trade for Durant.

Second, the Warriors' underdog mentality is back. Along with new faces hungry for

a ring, Curry, Thompson and Green, the core of the 73-9 team in 2016, are back as underdogs for the first time since 2014.

Admittedly, the Warriors will have to cope with the loss of Durant, but statistics show that Curry was the best player for the Warriors as a team.

According to Forbes, since the start of the 2016-2017 season, Golden State has been plus 1.3 points per 48 minutes with only Durant on the floor. It's plus 12.1 points per 48 minutes with only Curry on the floor. Both samples are well over 2,000 minutes.

With Durant gone, the Warriors have more room to move the ball. They don't feel the need to feed him the ball repeatedly.

I'm certain the team can make the playoffs with around 50 wins, where their biggest concerns lie with the Lakers and Clippers, early favorites to win it all in 2020.

However, putting talent ahead of experience, Curry, Green and Thompson have reached the Finals five times in a row.

An aging LeBron James and inexperienced Anthony Davis have talent but not as much potential as everyone thinks.

The Clippers' two stars are Paul George and Kawhi Leonard, now dubbed the second best player in the NBA.

But let's be honest, he's overhyped. Leonard beat a completely depleted Warriors team with the miraculously strong shooting of guards Fred Vanvleet and Kyle Lowry.

Don't get me wrong: He's phenomenal but not as great as everyone believes. George, like Anthony Davis, is also inexperienced.

Both teams have a legitimate shot at beating the Warriors, but I believe the Warriors' grit and experience will lead them to glory.

It is a new chapter for the Warriors, with the new Chase Center Experience in San Francisco. The old dynasty may be dead, but out of its ashes, another will be born. The Warriors is a team poised for a story for the ages. ♦

### REPEATED INJURIES: CHEERLEADING

Sophomore Emily Eckerman noticed a sharp pain flaring up in her left ankle after executing a complex tumbling routine during a cheer practice in the spring of 2018.

As a part of a high level competitive cheer team, Nor Cal Elite Zeus, Eckerman tried to push through the pain, not wanting to let her team down.

Soon after, however, the pain in her ankle had progressed to the point of nearly complete immobilization, and Eckerman knew that it was time to get some professional help.

"I was really frustrated because I knew that I wasn't as good as I could have been without my injury," Emily said. "I felt so defeated to be held back by something that wasn't even my fault!"

Eckerman's pain was quickly identified as a condition called "tarsal coalition," where an abnormal connection forms between bones on the foot. Her tarsal coalition became symptomatic due to the constant pressure of landing during tumbling.

In June of 2018, Eckerman headed into surgery to get the extra bones removed from her ankle. While the surgery went smoothly, Eckerman was told to sit out practice for six months to fully recover. However, after only three months, Eckerman was back at cheer practice. Before long, the pain returned, this time on the other ankle.

Eckerman wishes she had taken more time to rest after her surgery so she could have competed at full strength rather than be in pain for the entire season.

While Eckerman hopes to cheer for as long as she can through high school, she understands that if the pain worsens, she may not be able to continue this competitive sport.

"Right now, I'm just trying to focus on doing my best this season," Eckerman said. "My love for cheer along with the friendships I've made makes me keep going despite my injuries, and it's hard to imagine what I would do without it." ♦

-Anjali Nugeghalli

GRAPHIC BY LIHI SHOSHANI

## Freshman ice dancer competes at national level

MARY CAMPBELL TRAINS AT 5 A.M. DAILY, BUT SEARCHING FOR A MALE DANCE PARTNER PROVES CHALLENGING

BY Joann Zhang

As the first notes of freshman Mary Campbell's long program rang out across the cavernous San Jose ice rink, she relaxed from her pose in the center of the ice and twirled into a series of intricate footwork and patterns on the ice.

Ice dancing, a type of ice skating, is similar to figure skating but involves more dancing elements and footwork than ice skating jumps. In singles ice dancing, jumps are completely omitted, but singles ice dancers like Campbell execute spins and twizzles in their routines, the latter referring to upright spins that move the dancer forward.

Despite ice dancing's relative obscurity compared to figure skating, which was the most popular Winter Olympic sport in North America, Campbell says that it's just as difficult as figure skating. She began ice dancing three years ago, when her mother took her out to skate for fun and she "fell in love with it." Campbell trains every day at Sharks Ice rink, also known as the SolarAmerica rink, in San Jose from 5:30 a.m.-7:30 a.m.

"I'm really competitive because I really love ice dancing. I hope I can do well," Campbell said. "I always try my best to get a result."

The training and dedication has paid off for Campbell. Each year, the top six ice dancers from each of eight levels in every

U.S. region qualify for the national competition held by the United States Figure Skating Association (USFSA). Campbell, at the novice level, has made it to nationals every year since she began skating and most recently placed second in the 2019 regional qualifiers.

**"Ice skating has had a huge impact on my life. Honestly, I don't know what I would do without it."**

FRESHMAN Mary Campbell

In addition, at the 2019 nationals in Utah, she placed fourth in her level in solo ice dancing, an accomplishment she was "super proud" of.

Success in solo ice dancing, however, is not Campbell's main goal. Campbell intends to participate in partner ice dancing in the future since solo dancing is not an Olympic event.

"The goal is to find a partner and make it that far," she said, noting Canadian pair Tessa Virtue and Scott Moir as her idols. "Pairs ice skating is very popular, so I'm hoping to make it there."

However, finding a partner has proved

difficult; according to Campbell, male skaters are so few in number compared to the number of female skaters that she has traveled across the country in hopes of finding one, but she has not yet succeeded in forming a partnership.

"I've gone to Colorado to try to find a partner there, but that didn't work out well. I also tried with a guy in Florida, but the flying over would be too complicated," Campbell said. "Hopefully, I can find someone who's willing to fly out here to skate or someone who's in the area."

Other challenges include maintaining confidence and effort throughout the season and battling nerves, as well as accepting and learning from her mistakes. Additionally, like many other skaters, she grapples with the occasional injury. She tries to stay as safe as possible off the ice to avoid injuries that affect her skating.

"I've had some back injuries. Those are really not fun, since they can affect your entire life," Campbell said. "I have some knee injuries as well, last season I had major knee issues."

Despite these challenges, Campbell loves ice dancing wholeheartedly.

"Ice skating has had a huge impact on my life. It makes me happy. It's what I love. It's made me a better person and really represents me," Campbell said. "Honestly, I don't know what I'd do without it. It's just really amazing." ♦



Courtesy of Mary Campbell

Freshman Mary Campbell competes for the 2019 National Solo Dance Final in Provo, Utah, on Sept. 3 after placing second in regional qualifiers.

## Concerns with health of lightweight rowers leads USRowing to consider banning division

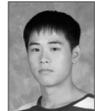
BY Jeanette Zhou

In 80-degree heat, a rower wearing two pairs of pants and three jackets runs laps around the boats and trailers. After each lap, she steps on a scale and checks her weight; she'll continue to run until she's under 130 pounds.

This seemingly nonsensical practice is known as a "sweat run" in the realm of rowing, and it has become a common occurrence at many rowing competitions where rowers are desperately trying to weigh under the limit for their races. Some rowers perform these sweat runs late at night, while others run in the morning before their weigh-in time.

Although these sweat runs are condemned by USRowing, the official governing body for rowing in the United States, their continued presence, along with other concerns for the health of lightweight rowers, led to USRowing's announcement this summer that it was considering the removal of junior lightweight rowing as a racing category.

**"Lightweight rowing gives more people a chance to compete."**



SENIOR Jewoo Im

**Reactions to possible ban**

This announcement outraged many rowers, and within days, one petition to save lightweight rowing reached over 16,000 signatures.

First introduced as an Olympic category in 1996, lightweight rowing is a category in rowing where men have to weigh under 150 pounds and women have to weigh under 130 pounds; it was created for smaller rowers to have a fairer chance to compete, since heavier and taller rowers tend to dominate the sport.

Saratoga senior Jewoo Im, an openweight

rower at the Los Gatos Rowing Club (LGRC), who recently got recruited for MIT's lightweight men's rowing team, is one of many rowers who feel lightweight rowing shouldn't be removed. When he heard USRowing's announcement, he wrote an email to voice his grievance.

"I wrote to USRowing of how the lightweight rowing category gave me hope to start crew because I didn't see myself being successful in the heavyweight category against, you know, six foot seven rowers," Im said. "I think it gives so many people who didn't win the genetic lottery a chance to compete."

While this category was created for natural lightweights, there are hundreds of stories of athletes making unhealthy dietary cuts in order to make it under the weight limit.

Junior Anna Nugent, a former rower, says she is on the fence about whether the lightweight rowing category should exist. Although she believes that the category gives lighter rowers a chance to compete, she recognizes how the pressure of staying under weight can cause rowers to have an unhealthy mindset and to develop eating disorders.

"I remember girls at rowing talking about tips they would use to eat as little as they could, which is a problem, because rowers need at least 2,200 calories," Nugent said. "Even when I was competing, it was rare that I would eat enough calories, and I wasn't lightweight. I can't imagine how unhealthy it would be for lightweight rowers."

An article published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, "Promotion of Healthy Weight-Control Practices in Young Athletes," describes the many dangers of weight-based sports for teens. The article states that many young athletes are also prone to dehydration and hypohydration, in order to change their weight.

However, the article does also mention that athletes could achieve gradual weight loss healthily. Los Gatos junior Kayra Cetin, for example, started rowing as an openweight in eighth grade, but after a long period of cautious cutting, she naturally brought her weight down enough for her to race lightweight.



Courtesy of Row2k.com

Bellarmine College Preparatory School alumnus Pablo Matan and senior Jewoo Im compete in the USRowing Youth Nationals on June 9, at Nathan Benderson Park in Florida. The duo placed first in the Mens Youth 2 division, making them national champions.

"For a solid period of time, I cut down on all carbs and ate pure protein," Cetin said. "That substantially brought my weight down, so now I don't have a problem making weight."

The potential health risks involved with cutting weight are not a problem for natural lightweight rowers, such as Leland senior Alicia Lebars, a lightweight varsity rower at LGRC. With 16 hours of practice per week, Lebars says that she usually keeps a bit of a margin from the 130-pound limit. For her, the lightweight category improves her racing odds.

"I started rowing five years ago as an open-weight," Lebars said. "I definitely prefer lightweight because it gives me a better chance in my races and more options."

While Lebars began rowing with a positive opinion of the lightweight rowing category, Los Gatos junior Melisa Kyliid, another LGRC varsity rower, had a slightly different start to lightweight rowing. During her novice year, the varsity coaches were forcing rowers who were many pounds over the limit to lose the extra weight with extreme and unhealthy diet changes. Because of this, her club stopped racing lightweight for a while.

"My novice coaches didn't like it because of the health risks, and they didn't mention it to us," Kyliid said. "It didn't seem like an option for me until last year, when we had enough natural lightweights to race."

The Miami Herald estimates that around 40 percent of the 75,000 competitive rowers in the United States are lightweights, and forcing those rowers to gain an extra 30-40 pounds to stay competitive can result in the same dangers rowers face as cutting weight.

USRowing has also attempted to deal with health hazards by putting regulations in place. Another recent regulation USRowing announced for lightweight rowers is minimums for body fat percentage; male rowers need at least 7 percent body fat and females at least 16 percent.

**USRowing responds to backlash**

On Oct. 21, the USRowing board tentatively announced its decision to keep junior lightweight rowing for the 2020 spring and summer season with a set of new regulations.

These regulations include the need for a physician's consent form at the beginning of the season to verify the rower's status as a natural lightweight.

While lightweight rowing will continue for this year, the future for junior lightweight rowers depends on rowers' compliance with the new regulations.

"It gets hard to always have to watch what you eat and your weight," Kyliid said. "However, lightweight rowing gives people with lower weights a better chance to be competitive with other people on the same level as them." ♦

## FOOTBALL

## Falcons whip Los Altos, take on Vikings tonight

By KevinSze  
& AlexWang

After suffering a devastating 35-21 home loss to the Gunn Vikings on Oct. 11, the Falcons' hopes of staying undefeated in league play ended.

"After the loss, our team had to recuperate and look back to focusing on the details during practice," senior wide receiver George Bian said.

However, coming off their bye week, the team was able to grab a commanding 48-14 victory against Los Altos on Oct. 25.

With this win, the Falcons are tied for first place in the El Camino League with Gunn and Homestead with a league record of 3-1. The Falcons are confident that they will beat the 1-7 Lynbrook Vikings for their senior night game tonight and the 3-5 Cupertino Pioneers on the road next Friday. "I think we have a great shot to win our last two games based on the league rankings, and if we win out, we are probably going to make it to CCS playoffs," Bian said.

To kick off the game at Foothill College against the Los Altos Eagles for the Eagles' senior night game, junior wide receiver Ryan Gilligan caught a touchdown pass from senior quarterback Payton Stokes, but junior kicker Fabian Alvarado missed the point-after kick. Los Altos was able to answer and took an 8-6 lead after punching in a two-point conversion. That was the only lead the Eagles had all night. The Falcons controlled the rest of the game.

To close out the first quarter, junior run-

ning back Tyler Chaffin ran in a 2-yard touchdown to put the Falcons up 13-8 after a successful extra-point kick by Alvarado. From there on out, the Falcons kept running up the score.

During the second quarter, Stokes tossed two long passing touchdowns. One went for 45 yards to senior wide receiver Tyler Prowse, and the other went for 37 yards to Bian. By halftime, the Falcons led 27-8.

More Falcons were able to get in on the action during the second half. Senior running back Hayden Cranz rushed for a one-yard touchdown and junior wide receiver Kelly Huesby caught a 14-yard touchdown pass from Stokes, bringing the score to 41-8.

While the Eagles were able to score again in the fourth quarter, they failed on their two-point conversion attempt, making the score 41-14. Stokes closed out the game with a 15-yard touchdown pass to Huesby, ending the rout of the Eagles 48-14.

Stokes ended the night with 356 yards passing and five touchdowns paired with 62 yards on the ground.

Senior defensive lineman Tyler Ouchida said the Falcon need to play solid on offense and defense in the remaining league games.

"Overall, we are solid on both sides of the ball," Ouchida said. "We just need to be diligent during practice and fix our little mistakes."

If they do qualify, the team expects to face much tougher matchups in CCS.

"We are preparing by looking to get a little bit better each and every week until the end," Bian said. ♦

By KavitaSundaram  
& SerenaLi

After a bittersweet season of wins, losses, injuries and recoveries, the girls' volleyball team is optimistic about the end of the season.

The team faced difficulties when senior libero Lauren Hansen and sophomore defensive specialist Jordyn Sin suffered back and hamstring injuries, respectively, which contributed to the Falcons falling 3-0 to Wilcox on Oct. 10 and 3-0 to Lynbrook on Oct. 15.

"We've worked hard this year, especially on our defense."



SENIOR Risa Carter

With the help of their coaches and the players' gradual recoveries, the team was able to rally and beat Santa Clara 2-0 on Oct. 17. While the players haven't completely recovered, their teammates filled in the positions as needed.

"Seeing that we missed three of our starters for the league, we worked well through it by playing different positions that we weren't used to," Sin said.

## GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

## Team finishes season well despite injuries

On Oct. 24, the team beat Cupertino 3-2 for the first time in two years, giving the team an overall record of 6-5 and placing them in CCS.

"I think that we've definitely developed quite a lot since the beginning of the season," junior outside hitter and opposite Danielle Moon said. "I think we're definitely prepared in our technique for CCS, but of course a majority of it is leaning on the team's overall mentality."

Senior outside hitter Risa Carter explained that the team's technique has improved greatly throughout the season.

"We've worked hard this year, especially on our defense, and it really shows during our games," Carter said.

Looking back at the beginning of the season, the girls reflect on the goals they set for themselves this year. The team wanted to have fun and develop strong relationships with each other both on and off-court.

"We became really close with each other and we all know our strengths and weaknesses," Carter said. "We're all really compatible on the court."

The team's connection allowed the girls to perform well during games, and the team is thrilled to be able to play in CCS.

"We're looking forward to CCS to see how far we can get based on how we have improved through the season," Sin said.

*Due to printing deadlines, the Falcon was unable to cover the match against Fremont High School on Oct. 29.* ♦

## BOYS' CROSS COUNTRY

## Dance takes home first at Mt. Sac competition

By NicoleLu  
& CiciXu

Sophomore Harrison Dance sprinted through the finish line, leaving dust behind, running a personal record of 15:50.9 at the Mt. SAC invitational in Walnut, Calif., last Friday. This was almost a 1 minute and 22 seconds faster his time last year, 17:12.3, where he had claimed 26th.

This year, Dance placed first in the Boys' D3 Varsity division, while senior team captain Shivam Verma followed in 10th place with a time of 16:34.0. Senior captain Kole Tippetts came in 31st with a 17:27.9 time. There were 177 runners in his heat.

Mt. Sac is the world's largest cross country competition, hosting over 20,000 runners to run its 3-mile course located at Mt. San Antonio College.

"[Mt. Sac is] probably the hilliest course that the cross country team runs," Tippetts said.

Among the other Saratoga competitors were senior Jonathan Zhao, juniors Niyanth Rao and Bryan Young and sophomore Sina Salehi.

Dance said he was confident going into the meet.

"I think I knew I would have a chance at winning, so I came confident and prepared to win," Dance said. "I didn't go out too fast, and competitors behind me were pushing me pretty well, but I still managed to get out a good time."

Compared to last year's invitational, Dance noted that the track season last spring and the ensuing summer training played a role in his success this fall at Mt. Sac.

Verma had a similar experience. Despite the challenging course and weather, he saw a huge improvement in his times from last year, where he placed 55th.

"I believe there was good competition in our heat," Verma said. "The heat was kind of difficult, but we managed to still perform

well under the circumstances."

For Tippetts, the race at Mt. Sac was especially promising considering the tibia injury that kept him from training to his full potential during the summer.

Tippetts found a change in mindset beneficial in shaving off seconds from his time. "Most of my success came from my dad," said Tippetts, whose father is coach Ian Tippetts. "Hill training and running a lot does help, and what also helped me a lot was focusing on stride length and stride speed rather than the hill or the race."

Looking forward to CCS and states, Coach Tippetts stressed first doing well at league finals.

"Every race we've done this year is for the next two races, for leagues and CCS," said Coach Tippetts. "You can win every single meet, but if you lose at league finals, you're in second place. But if you can lose at every meet and then finish first at league finals, you're the champions." ♦



Courtesy of Harrison Dance

Sophomore Harrison Dance and senior Kole Tippetts pose after the Mt. Sac invitational.

## GIRLS' CROSS COUNTRY

## First Baylands meet increases team's confidence

By NicoleLu  
& CiciXu

With girls' cross country approaching their last 20 percent of the season, team spirit and unity is stronger than ever. The girls finished strong with 16 runners on their last Baylands meet on Nov. 22, with 16 runners—about one third of the team—renewing their personal records.

"The records speak for itself," said Danny Moon, the coach for the girls' cross country team. "Everybody has good improvements on that."

Beside the records, there are new faces in the upper varsity team with sophomore Tif-

fany Wang and junior Charlotte Shewchuk now competing into the top ten ranks.

"The first Baylands people ran was really a good overview for the athletes, so the second time, it's not so much of a shock to run five kilometers," said Moon.

Girls' cross country is not attending Mt. Sac like last year, which is a big meet in Southern California with 1000 people running each year.

Moon noted that the intense scheduling of meets at the end of the season and the lack of recovery time poses potential health issues for the runners.

"I'm always concerned about recovery [the runners]. Because if you don't re-

cover, you don't run very well. You get tired and fatigued," said Moon.

"The records speak for themselves. Everybody has good improvements."

HEAD COACH Danny Moon

The abrupt rising of temperature later in the season has posed unexpected challenges on the girls, but with the increasing difficulty of practices and core workouts, runners

have adapted and weather does not appear to affect their performances as much as it did before.

"A lot of the changes I've seen is with the athletes themselves, how they intermix with everybody and the camaraderie," Moon said. "And of course, everybody is improving as they come along."

With two more league meets at Lynbrook and Crystal Springs coming in the near future, the team is feeling much more confident in the last stretch of the season than they were before. Moon also claimed he is "extremely confident" in the girls, since they have already experienced the hard parts of the course. ♦

## BOYS' WATER POLO

## Broken boilers force Falcons to practice at West Valley

By JonathanLi

With a winning season coming to a close, the boys' water polo team is looking to win the El Camino League and move on to CCS, though they're having to overcome unexpected obstacles.

The boys beat Cupertino 14-9 on Oct. 15, Fremont 12-8 on Oct. 22 and Santa Clara 13-12 on Oct. 24. They lost to Harker 10-9 on Oct. 17. With a 12-2 record in the regular season, they are seeded first in their league going into the league playoffs starting on Oct. 28.

In preparation for the postseason, the boys are focusing on improving their individual game and team plays so that they'll be ready for the more competitive teams in CCS rounds. However, after the pool-heating boilers broke down

on Oct. 13, the boys were unable to practice or play at their home pool for the rest of the season.

"It's definitely a hindrance to our season," sophomore attacker Marcus Kuo said. "We couldn't play in our pool for two home games, but we were fortunate enough to secure a practice time at West Valley College."

The boys held their senior night at Monta Vista High School, where they played against Santa Clara on Oct. 24. Though the boys were behind for most of the game until the last quarter, they managed to pull ahead for a 13-12 win.

"Our overall team chemistry is improving and with each practice we are patching up individual mistakes that previously cost games," sophomore point Chris Wu said. "I know we can [finish first] and

go to CCS."

Senior co-captain Eng Kwa is less confident.

"We can't get comfortable where we're at right now," Kwa said. "I think we have a good chance of making it to CCS, but we will face some of our toughest competition at leagues as other teams will be fighting for that top spot."

Kwa sees the league playoffs as a good time to show the team's growth throughout the season. "We are definitely prepared to take what we learned and take our game to the next level," Kwa said.

Since the season opened in early August, coach Jerome Chung has been vigorously conditioning and preparing the team for upper-level, more physical play, implementing fundamental movements



Courtesy of Tony Kuo

Sophomore Marcus Kuo passes the ball during a game against Santa Clara on Oct. 24. The Falcons defeated the Bruins 13-12.

early on and slowly adding complexity throughout the season.

"I'm excited to finish out the

season strong and am looking forward to next year's team," Kuo

said. ♦

## GIRLS' TENNIS

## Falcons swing through rough season but still make to CCS

By AndrewLee

With the return of No. 1 singles player senior Monica Stratakos, who was sidelined with an ankle injury for 18 days, the team was able to eke out a 4-3 home victory on Oct. 23 over longtime rival Monta Vista, currently the first-place team in the league.

It was a welcome win for the team. The eventual triumph against a strong rival helped re-energize the Falcons with a satisfying match to close out what has been a hard year.

"The whole team was there, and we were a lot more motivated to stay focused throughout the whole match," No. 3 doubles player senior Sanya Kwatra said. "It was a great way to finish off this season."

The team lost its final regular season match to Homestead 4-3 on Oct. 21 but scraped past Los Gatos in a close 4-3 match

on Oct. 17.

The team also fell to Mountain View 5-2 on Oct. 15. The Falcons' final season record was 7-6.

Having been ranked second to last in the league just a couple weeks earlier, the Falcons were able to work their way back up to fourth in the league.

Although this standing is not as strong as previous years when the team consistently placed second, it was enough to get the team a spot in CCS.

"I think we are just really happy that we made CCS," No. 1 doubles player senior Vivian Lin said. "Things didn't really work out in our favor this season, but we all worked hard and are still optimistic about making a statement in the competition."

The Falcons look forward to competing in CCS, which is slated to kick off on Nov. 11. The location and bracket of the tourna-

ment is yet to be announced.

"Going into CCS I'm not sure what to expect because to be honest, we didn't think we were going to make it," No. 2 doubles player junior Aindri Patra said. "We were a bit worried initially, but now we have our full lineup back again so it should be better."

Reflecting on their league performance, the girls say that there are things the team needs to learn before entering CCS, such as honing their doubles skills.

Keeping their fingers crossed for no more injuries, illnesses and bad days, the team remains serious, hoping for increased focus in future critical matches.

"All of our matches have been way too close for any of us to really be happy with the win, knowing that we could've done better," Patra said. "We've tried to help this through better practices; we'll be continuing the same until CCS." ♦



FALCON // ANGELINA CHEN

Senior Vivian Lin swings during a game against the Palo Alto Vikings on Oct. 8.

## GIRLS' WATER POLO

## Despite going 1-10, team points toward improvements

By JonathanLi

By KavitaSundaram  
& SerenaLi

As the season has come to an end, the varsity girls' water polo team has gained a triumphant sense of growth and learning from the year.

The team ended the season by falling 10-4 to Palo Alto on Oct. 18, beating Homestead 13-10 on Oct. 25 and losing 14-2 to Los Altos on Oct. 25.

While the losses are certainly disappointing, and the team will not be playing at CCS, Coach Melissa Hesselgrave sees this as a great learning opportunity for the girls.

"Being in an upper league for the first time this year has definitely shown the girls how much harder they have to work to compete," Hesselgrave said. "[They know] how much higher their expectations for themselves and for their team needs to be."

So far, they have used this season to help them improve their technical skills, strength and endurance.

"Overall this season we haven't done so well, but I think we're playing well for our team and our standards. I think we've improved a lot from the beginning of the season," said senior set defender and point offensive Thaila Morganstern.

Aside from building fundamentals and technical skills, the team has been able to identify each player's individual strengths

and weaknesses, creating a team with more specialized players for next year's roster.

Moreover, the girls have learned to replace the roles the graduated seniors left behind, which they struggled with early on in the season.

"I think we've improved a lot from the beginning of the season."

SENIOR Thaila Morganstern

"The girls are now realizing that they have to step into the roles of being performers on offense, and that's been the case in the past couple of games," Hesselgrave said. "We've had a wider spread of athletes scoring more goals."

Apart from performance and skill, the team's culture has been a key contributing aspect to their success and enthusiasm for the sport.

"Playing the sport is really fun, I love water polo, but the reason I come to practice everyday is because of the people I play with," Morganstern said. "We've kept a really good connection throughout the season and I think that's been our greatest strength as a team." ♦

## FIELD HOCKEY

## 6-1-1 record leads team to first CCS appearance in three years

By JeanetteZhou

On Oct. 24, the field hockey team geared up to play Palo Alto in a home game that would determine whether they earned a place at CCS. Although Palo Alto served the team their only loss earlier in the season, the Falcons knew they could outplay their opponents.

Their confidence was not in vain. After a tense 90-minute game, a wave of excitement and relief flooded over the team as junior Viveca Ganti scored the goal that, for the first time in three years, secured the team a spot at CCS with a 1-0 win.

"We had been working so hard to get that win, and the payoff was tremendous," senior captain Ella Parr said. "The last 15 minutes of the game, we had so much possession that I could feel a win. Watching the clock go to zero felt so good. I couldn't believe that our team made it."

As of Oct. 24, the field hockey team ranks first in the El Camino division with a 6-1-1 record, with the most recent wins being 2-1 against Lynbrook, 5-0 against Monta Vista and 1-0 against Palo Alto.

"We're starting to beat teams that we would've lost to last year," Parr said. "What makes this year different is that the underclassmen are really stepping up, so it's not top heavy; sophomores used to be on varsity because of a lack of numbers, but now, sophomores are on varsity because they're

really good."

While most local teams have around 20 players, the varsity team always plays shorthanded, having only 13 field players. However, coach Nandu Sidhu's focus on physical fitness has helped the team stay competitive with their opponents.

"It's a little more difficult to play with less subs than the teams we play against, because it's a very physically taxing sport," sophomore Lauren Vandevort said. "But most of us are in pretty good shape from our training, and we have been keeping up." Although the team still has two more games left in their season, one on Oct. 29 against Homestead and one on Oct. 31 against Presentation, players are looking forward to their first CCS game, which is on Nov. 4. Sophomore Olivia Kinoshita is one player who has high hopes for this year's team at CCS. (The team's final two games could not be covered in the print edition because of printing deadlines.)

"This year, I'm really excited for CCS, and I think we can go all the way and win," Kinoshita said.

While all of the players are happy to see their season's hard work pay off, the seniors are especially excited about making it to CCS in their last year.

"There is no better sound than a field hockey ball hitting the back of the net," said Parr. "As a senior that never wants to stop, winning that game meant so much." ♦

# snapshots



TALISMAN // CALLIA YUAN



FALCON // ANDREW LEE



FALCON // CONNIE LIANG



Courtesy of Joann Zhang

Senior Sanya Kwatra prepares to rally the ball back to the opponent during the game against Mountain View on Oct. 15.

Campus supervisor Helen Jarrett patrols the area in front of the cafeteria during lunch on Oct. 29, rearranging backpacks to minimize the tripping hazard.

Speech team members sophomores Harshini Velchamy, Joann Zhang and senior Surbhi Bhat visit Times Square while at the Oct. 18-20 NYC Invitational.

Junior Eva Ji works late into the evening in the Student Center on Oct. 28 due to PG&E's massive power outages.

## ISSUE

# Highlights

"It serves more as a nostalgic element of fall and marketing ploy than an actual enjoyable flavor."  
– reporter Joann Zhang on pumpkin spice (pg. 11)

Freshman Andrew Hong started playing chess when he was 6 and now ranks **24th** in the world among chess players under age 16. (pg. 5)

"The 'One Country, Two Systems' deal unites citizens living in both mainland China and Hong Kong, allowing them to have different political systems and still be able to live under one roof." (pg. 6)

## Construction disrupts lunchtime adventures

TODAY, LOS TRES AMIGOS WILL BE TAKING YOU ON A JOURNEY. BUCKLE UP, BECAUSE THE ROAD DOESN'T WORK AHEAD

Alex, why u so lee-sze



Andrew Lee, Kevin Sze & Alex Wang

Vroom vroom. Just kidding. Kevin's Volvo doesn't even make that sound because we are not moving. The traffic on De Anza Boulevard has become unbearably slow with all the road work.

During our lunchtime adventures, we try to hit our favorite restaurants to buy some affordable and delicious food. Key word: affordable. We're looking at you Saratoga High School hot lunch. \$3.50 is way too expensive for a thin slice of pizza dripping in oil.

For example, one time we decided we wanted to eat some Chipotle. We went to the Chipotle on De Anza Boulevard because it's less crowded than the one near Westgate. We always order ahead, so we can make it there and back without breaking the law in about 30 minutes with a standard deviation of about 3.89 minutes. Pretty solid if you ask us.

So we're driving along, and all of a sud-

den we see this big orange sign that reads "Road Work Ahead." Ironically, the road ahead did not work. We inch along in traffic as we yell cuss words and threaten to "skippy pop pop" some people if we don't make it back to class on time ("Call of Duty: Mobile" has really been influencing our daily lives.)

We waited in line like good fellas, and we expect all of you other people going off campus for lunch to do the same. Don't try and pull unethical shenanigans by merging at the very last second. If you do, expect us to cut you off. Also, expect Andy to make a hand gun and shoot it at you when we pass you. Insert angry face emoji.

We were getting pretty worried, since we had AP Government/Economics after lunch. Now, all students know that this is the easiest AP class you'll ever take in your life. Mr. Abe is one of the greatest teachers of all time if you ask us. Except he always tells us to join wrestling. Nobody wants to join wrestling.

Although he pesters people to join wrestling, the biggest problem with his class is that he hates when you bring food into class and you're also late. If you're on time, you can eat your food in class. If you're late, he confiscates it and gives you a big lecture about how you should be tak-

ing care of your body with nutrients and not eating junk food blah blah blah.

Anyway, in order to make it back to campus on time, we had to take measures into our own hands. We swerved through some cones, much to the construction workers' frustration, sped just a tiny bit and made it back to campus just on time to sprint to Mr. Abe's class. Perfect. Now we could eat our Chipotle and then take a nap while the rest of the class was doing notes.

To the construction workers: we appreciate your hard work, but please tell your bosses to schedule it for some time later in the day or earlier in the morning, and then reopen all lanes on De Anza during lunch time. There's enough bad traffic as it is.

To the downright disrespectful fools merging at the last second, you best believe that if we're the ones in the car when you try to cut us off, you're either not merging into our lane or we're crashing. We have nothing to lose. Kevin's Volvo is older than dirt. Using a supply and demand graph, Sir Kirkland Abe would probably tell us that Kevin's Volvo is worth three pennies and a half-eaten Dorito.

Sincerely,  
Los tres amigos ♦

## topten

THINGS TO DO DURING A POWER OUTAGE

- 10 **Stock up on dry shampoo.** Apologize in advance to classmates who have to witness that greasy mess.
- 9 **Go solar.** PG&E's not going to fix this anytime soon.
- 8 **Eat everything in your fridge.** It's not indulgent, just sensible at this point.
- 7 **Test our all your fun flashlight gadgets.** The strobe function is always painful to look at.
- 6 **Watch Los Gatos kids enjoy their day off.** The only time the Cats triumph >:(
- 5 **Visit Mr. Torrens at the student center.** Listen to him skrrt skrrt ya dig?
- 4 **Use big brain energy to turn on the lights.** Self-explanatory.
- 3 **Walk into a ghost town.** It's actually sick if you've never tried it before.
- 2 **Go take a shower in the pitch black darkness.** Drown away all your sorrows in fashion.
- 1 **Curse PG&E.** Break up their monopoly and free our people of this nonsense.

>> Edwin Chen and Michael Wong