



## In Loving Memory of Mr. Phil Miller

By **Katie Helland, Kit Strong, & Bridget McAnany**  
*News Editors*

As we pay tribute to Mr. Phil Miller who passed away on February 4, 2009, we reflect upon his life as a great mentor, a teacher, and a friend.

Mr. Miller graduated from college with a doctorate in pharmacy, and worked as a pharmacist, enjoying his work. But he was drawn to teaching. Before teaching, Mr. Miller traveled to Africa where he worked for the Peace Corps. After his time with the Peace Corps, he married his wife Christina and had one son, David.

In the fall of 1980, Mr. Miller began his 28-year career here at Archbishop Mitty. When he first joined the science department, he taught biology and chemistry. Later he began to teach chemistry honors.

"Mr. Miller was very formative," said Mr. Targgart, "He started the chemistry AP class and was very influential in forming the science lab."

Mr. Miller was not only a leader in the Science Department, where he acted as chair many times, but also for students outside the classroom as a class moderator "too many times to count."

"He never let us forget that he was the moderator for the class that won three Monarch Madnesses in a row," said Mr. Targgart.

In addition to his fantastic academic career, Mr. Miller was "an avid outdoorsman." He was very active and participated in fly-fishing, skiing, and mountain biking. In earlier years, Mr. Miller would always contribute to Mitty's annual auction by hosting activities for students, such as backpacking and fishing.

"Before the students even knew what he was offering, they made their parents sign them up for a trip with Mr. Miller," said Mr. Targgart.

In tribute to Mr. Miller's life, Mitty students have

created a Phil Miller Appreciation Group on Facebook. The group contains quotes from Mr. Miller and celebrates the unusual humor that was such an integral part of his personality.

"This group is for those who knew Phil Miller during his time at Mitty. Whether you had him for regular Chem, Chem AP, one of the other classes he taught in the past, or just got to witness his smarts and hilarity in the Science Lab," said senior Nick Corgan, who started the group.

Indeed, the 32 Miller quotes and the 57 wall posts (as of February 9) on Facebook not only reflect his "smarts and hilarity," but also convey how much his students loved him.

Mr. Miller's ability to make fun of life was a gift celebrated by many students. Benjamin Lau (class of '04) reflected, "Miller was one of the best teachers I've had in my life...I can't think of another class where

I laughed so hard. He never took himself too seriously, and despite his sarcastic facade, he could never hide his sympathetic look of concern whenever he noticed students struggle. More than anything, Miller struck me as one of the few teachers I've met who genuinely connected with students on an emotional level. He really loved us."

This combination of humor, wisdom, and sincere concern for each student, whether his own or of that of another teacher, made Mr. Miller a talented, caring teacher who enthusiastically shared his knowledge with all.

"If you were having a bad day and walked into Mr. Miller's chemistry class you were guaranteed to completely forget about your problems for at least an hour," says senior Felicia Gonsalves. "Mr. Miller was the kind of teacher that always made a student's day brighter."

See **MR. MILLER**, page 16



## Mitty Alum Receives Purple Heart

By **Katie Helland**  
*News Editor*

When Corporal Kyle Hansen was returning to the main base in Afghanistan after a 22-hour convoy, he didn't expect to run into trouble.

"This was a typical route we traveled on and we previously had no incidents along the way," said Hansen.

The five Marines and an interpreter were going down a small hill into a dried up riverbed when their vehicle ran over a small, improvised explosive device (IED).

The Marines got out of their vehicle to assess the situation, and then decided to continue back to the base.

Corporal Hansen, a Combat engineer, is no stranger to improvised explosive devices. His squad of Combat engineers disables landmines and homemade improvised explosive devices that the Taliban places along the routes between bases.

"The last thing I remember was driving through the village and noticing that there were no villagers outside their homes. Typically they would all come out of their homes and stare at our convey driving by. That was not the case on that day, which usually means something is going to happen."

About five minutes later, they hit a much larger IED. The explosion was right underneath the vehicle's tire.

"It forced my body up out of the seat, even with my harness on," said Corporal Hansen.

Corporal Hansen and the Sergeant sitting behind him lost consciousness. Corporal Hansen was unconscious for 10 to 15 minutes.

"No more than ten minutes after that last IED, we received small arms fire, RPG (rocket propelled grenades), and mortars attacking our convoy. We then continued another 6 hours to our final destination."

While Corporal Hansen returned home well, he brought memories of other comrades that were not so lucky. One of Corporal Hansen's close friends lost his life when he accidentally stepped on a landmine. On a different day, two Marines were searching with metal detectors for landmines and stepped on a mine. One marine lost both legs, while the other lost his left leg.

Corporal Hansen's eight-month deployment to Afghanistan began on April 7, 2008, and introduced him to a very different way of life.

Everything in Afghanistan is based on agriculture. Young boys follow their fathers around herding sheep and buildings are made out of mud. In a country where girls once stayed completely inside, the absence of the Taliban represents a major change in their culture. Driving the Taliban out of Afghanistan has allowed women to go to school, for example.

See **PURPLE HEART**, page 16



Photo Courtesy of Ashley Conner

**Ft. Benning, Georgia: Crosses representing individuals killed by SOA graduates.**

## Students Take a Stance Against Injustice

By **Hannah Moeller and Isabel Sausjord**  
*Staff Writers*

On January 26, Mitty students and staff together with the Global Solidarity Club and other members of the San Jose community participated in an advocacy workshop to campaign for political change. Students from Mitty, Bellarmine, Presentation, and Notre Dame gathered on campus to focus on teaching ordinary people how to campaign for social progress, with an emphasis on closing the School of the Americas (SOA).

The night began with a brief introduction from Mr. Accorsi that outlined the purpose of the workshop. Mr. Accorsi explained that he did "not only want to teach students about the SOA project, but give them the tools to take steps on any issue."

Founded at the beginning of the Cold War, the School of Americas (SOA) in Ft. Benning, Georgia has provided courses in military and police tactics to over sixty thousand students.

School records show that students who attended multiple SOA courses were almost four times as likely to violate human rights as those who attended only one course. Due to this shameful record, the United States closed the SOA temporarily and then reopened it under a new name – the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC).

Advocates for justice and human rights, including Mitty students and staff, go to SOA/WHINSEC every year to protest these atrocities and demand the closing of the school.

Mitty senior Shea Williams, spoke about the atrocities caused by SOA graduates and about what it was like to march in protest with thousands of other people, carrying a white cross that bore the name of a little girl killed in a Salvadoran massacre.

"I went on this trip because I wanted to be a voice for the thousands of voices so brutally silenced. I wanted to make a difference and stand up for what I believed to be right," she said.

See **SOA EVENT**, page 3



# Justice Awareness

## Gaza: No End in Sight AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE RECENT ATTACKS

By **Manosai Eerabathini**  
Staff Writer

“What has my family done to Israel? What have we done to deserve all this pain?”

A Palestinian father cries in agony as he hears news of his family, who has been shot by Israeli soldiers during the attacks on Gaza that started in December. Israeli troops had suspected Hamas troops were hiding in homes in a town in northern Gaza.

Yet, even as the wife and grandmother allegedly came out of their house waving a white flag, two of his children, aged seven and two, were killed.

Fortunately, his other daughter, four-year-old Samar Abed Rabbu, survived. She was found in a hospital in Egypt, playing with an inflated surgical glove. Samar had been shot in the back at close range, damaging her spine. She is unlikely to walk again.

Samar is one of reportedly 421 children killed during the recent 22-day Israeli military offensive. A total of 1,284 Gazans, 894 of which are innocent civilians, have been killed. Many more have suffered inhumane conditions because of this Israeli presence.

The number of innocent Palestinians killed in this recent spur of attacks has drawn global interest and attention to the Israeli government's motives. As the death toll continued to rise, many countries began to become highly critical of the Israeli offensive as it violated so many humanitarian obligations regarding war.

The Israeli government claimed

these attacks were

meant to weaken

**1949:** Jerusalem divided under Israeli and Jordanian rule.

**1967:** The Six-Day War of 1967 granted Israel territorial jurisdiction of Gaza.

**1993:** Oslo Accords called for the Israeli withdrawal of the Gaza Strip.

**1994:** Palestinian self-government in Gaza Strip & Jericho area.

**2006:** Strife with the Israelis intensifies after the 2006 Palestinian democratic elections established the Hamas as the ruling party.

**2007:** Israel declares Gaza "hostile territory" after Hamas' takeover of Gaza Strip.

**2008:** June 19, 2008: a 6-month truce was finally instituted to prevent further violence from breaking out. Hamas then announced that the truce has expired and will not be renewed. Rocket fire from Gaza is stepped up. 600 missiles are estimated to have been fired at Israel.

Hamas resistance originating in the Gaza Strip. But should innocent citizens be brutally murdered under the guise of a campaign intended to nullify Hamas?

A Mitty student of Palestinian ethnicity reasons that “the staggering number of civilian deaths should be the true testament of Israel’s motive. The troops should pull out immediately and instead the government should refocus on negotiating with Hamas to avoid conflict that damages the innocent.”

If it is, in fact, Hamas the Israeli government is targeting, then why have numerous UNRWA refugee camps, mosques, schools, factories, houses, and even orchards been bombed into oblivion?

### A History of Conflict

For years the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has plagued the Middle East as the ongoing dispute continues to create turmoil in Gaza City.

The origins of the heated dissension between Israel and Palestine date back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as many Jewish and Arab national aspirations for the Gaza region were met by conflicting promises.

Following World War I, Palestine became subject to the control of the United Kingdom and tensions for territorial rights between Arab and Jewish groups erupted into forms of physical violence including many riots, revolts, and massacres.

When the British dominion of Palestine ended after World War II, there was the establishment of the Jewish state and Arab state, resulting in the 1948 Palestinian exodus.

Arab governments have refused to recognize Israel as groups such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) have taken an active stance in establishing that Gaza is the indivisible homeland of the Palestinian people.

In 2006, Palestinian democratic elections established Hamas as the ruling party, whose goal was to create an Islamic state that combined Palestinian nationalism with Islamist objectives. Although the group claims itself to be a political and social organization, the United States and the European Union consider it a terrorist organization.

After a series of tit-for-tat attacks following the election of Hamas, a truce was finally instituted on June 19, 2008, to last for six months and prevent further violence from breaking out.

Yet by the end of this truce in December, Hamas requested Israel to lift the Gaza strip blockade, while Israel demanded the immediate halt of rockets fired into its territories. The failure to compromise led to the recent array of attacks.

### A New Wave of Attacks



Starting on Dec. 27, a new Israeli campaign known as Operation Code Lead aimed to effectively end all Hamas rocket attacks.

The Israeli Air Force, comprised of 50 fighter jets and attack helicopters, led the first wave of assaults on targeted police stations, government offices, Hamas headquarters, training camps, bases and underground Kassam launchers.

Hamas continued to retaliate by firing numerous rockets, including home-made ones, at Israel. The firing range of these rockets was significantly increased as many Palestinian factions such as the Fatah, Islamic Jihad, Popular Resistance Councils, and Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) returned fire along with Hamas.

Because one-eighth of Israel’s population is within firing range of these launches, the rising danger to civilians on both sides of the conflict is evident.

### “War to a Bitter End”

Israel’s aggressive assaults on the Gaza Strip were meant to cripple Hamas as the Defense Minister, Ehud Barak, has claimed to wage “war to a bitter end.” But truly how far is the Israeli government willing to go in order to suppress Hamas?

Reports of white phosphorous or WP bombs used by the Israeli Air Force have raised controversy. When WP is exposed to oxygen, it has the ability to burn human skin to the bone and cause internal damage through inhalation.

Israeli officials have not denied the use of this weapon in Gaza, but claim it is not under any violation of international law. Considering a weapon of such harmful properties, deployed in as densely populated area as Gaza, it is no surprise the civilian death count is as high as it is.

In another particularly

controversial event, a United Nations school for Palestinian refugees was bombed by the Israeli Air Force as they suspected militants to be hiding amongst the grounds of the campus.

This appallingly cruel attack killed 40 civilians and when the Israeli Minister of Foreign Affairs, Tzipi Livni, was confronted, she alleged, “Unfortunately, [Hamas fighters] are hiding amongst civilians.”

### International Concern

If the lives of innocent civilians are no longer to be accounted for, Israel’s campaign against Gaza is unacceptable. The leaders argue that they will fight till the very end, but if reaching this includes the death of so many civilians, it is time for the Israeli government to ask itself if the gains of this war are in fact outweighing the rising costs.

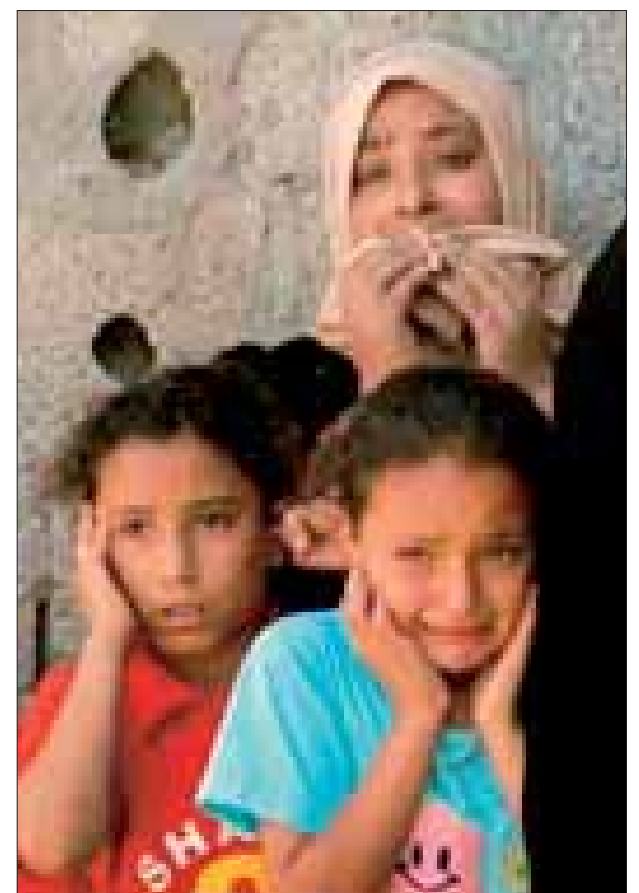
Many countries have expressed their disapproval of Israel’s conduct and have been voicing support and hope for the Palestinians.

A former U.S. resident, Lina Asfoor who now resides in U.A.E., described how “all of us have been conducting protests and actively supporting the Palestinians by holding fundraisers and concerts to raise money. Even countries such as Yemen and Jordan have been leading their own efforts to help the Gaza victims. No one approves of what Israel is doing; it is terrible and a ceasefire should be established.”

As of now, Israel has called for a one-week unilateral truce due to the tremendous international pressure. But the future seems questionable as Hamas has already broken this treaty by firing rockets into Israel once again.

One can only hope for another long-term ceasefire as the rest of the world asks itself whether this ancient conflict can ever be resolved.

*For another student perspective on the situation in Gaza, see **Opinions**, page 7.*



Innocent civilians are caught in the crossfire in Gaza.



# CLOSING DOWN GUANTANAMO

By **Kanishka Khanna**  
Staff Writer

Relations between the United States and the rest of the world have been less than amicable in the last decade. Starting with the September 11th attacks, and the subsequent war in Afghanistan and Iraq, we as a country have often struggled persuading our allies to join us in the “War on Terror.”

President Obama has tried to improve this discrepancy in his earliest days in office, by moving to close down the Guantánamo Bay Naval Base, colloquially named “Gitmo,” as it has “done much to besmirch the reputation of the U.S. around the world.”

From 1898 onwards, the naval base in Cuba was used to house Cuban and Haitian refugees intercepted on the high seas.

The Center was closed down in 1995 after United States District Court Judge Sterling Johnson Jr. declared it unconstitutional, but reopened after defense contractor Halliburton won the billion dollar project to make a state-of-the-art facility around the base.

The closing-down of the Guantánamo Prison has since been requested by several international organizations, such as Amnesty International, the United Nations, and the European Union.

Ever since it opened for business, 775 alleged terrorists have been brought to Cuba and detained without trial, a direct violation of habeas corpus—the means of which detainees can seek relief from unlawful imprisonment. Four hundred and twenty of these “terrorists” have subsequently been released.

What actually makes this center even more controversial is the use of torture and sexual abuse as interrogation techniques.

Water-boarding (simulated drowning) and forced sexual advances on the prisoners include some of the horrible techniques the former Administration approved of as necessary and proper in these times.

These practices do not come without consequences:

On June 10, 2006, the Department of Defense reported that three Guantánamo Bay detainees committed suicide by hanging themselves with nooses made of sheets and clothes. Hundreds more have attempted the same.

Two days after assuming the office of Presidency, Barack Obama began overhauling U.S. treatment of terror suspects, signing orders to close the Guantánamo Bay detention center within one calendar year.

He wants to review military war crimes trials and reinstitute the ban on the harshest interrogation methods, such as the aforementioned.

By doing so, President Obama fulfills one of his campaign promises, and, in his words, “the message that we are

See *Guantanamo*, page 4



With the now-planned closing of Gitmo, the question of the future of detainees remains unanswered.

## SOA *continued from pg. 1*

After Shea’s speech, the students were split up into four stations. In the first station, guest speaker, Father Jon Pedigo, discussed the way violence and other forms of not listening prevent people from understanding, learning from, and respecting the other person.

“It is not important whether we are right in our opinion, but that we speak the truth. And what is just is what is true,” said Father Jon Pedigo.

The second station overviewed the many ways ordinary students can spread awareness about a topic. Senior Ashley Connor spoke about how simple things such as putting YouTube videos about an issue on Facebook, creating a simple webpage about a topic, adding educational links to a blog, and posting hopes for change on Twitter can educate peers about important issues. Ashley explained that it can be as easy as wearing a tee shirt.

The third station taught students key information about writing letters to legislators. An effective letter contains two parts: the cover letter and the talking points. The cover letter should be an overview of the issue the writer is addressing and should discuss why this issue is important. The talking points should be bullet-point facts that are accurate and support writer’s view on the issue.

To learn more about legislative

action, visit [www.soaw.org](http://www.soaw.org) and click on “Take Action.” To find the contact information for state legislators, visit [www.legislatures.ca.gov](http://www.legislatures.ca.gov).

In the final station of the workshop, guest speaker Lucia Cerna spoke of her experience with injustice caused by the SOA. She and her husband Jorge are the only living witnesses of the massacre of Jesuit priests in El Salvador in 1989 during the civil war, a time perpetuated by disorder and strife.

Lucia Cerna and her family needed a place to stay one night and asked a hospitable Jesuit priest. The priest set up Lucia Cerna, Jorge Cerna, and their son in an abandoned church dormitory for the night, which was separate from the rest of the church grounds. In the middle of the night, Lucia Cerna awoke to the loud noises of Salvadoran soldiers and SOA graduates ravaging the church grounds and attacking innocent Jesuits spending the night.

“I heard this huge commotion,” Lucia Cerna said. “The gunshots sounded like a battle between armies. There was yelling and pounding on doors.” The soldiers were attacking the main part of the establishment, a few hundred feet from Lucia and her family’s room. “I heard the priest say to the soldiers, ‘This is an injustice, this is terrible!’” she remembered. “He was screaming this over and over again.”

Finally, a bomb went off. “There was a huge explosion. I can’t even begin to explain how loud it was.” After this, Cerna recalled, “It was so quiet, like nothing ever happened.”

When Cerna shared her story with a Jesuit priest she was told, “What you saw can put your life in danger. You must leave the country,” remembers Cerna.

Cerna and her family left El Salvador for Florida. After they arrived, they were held in custody in a motel for two weeks, by disguised members of the FBI. The US government had funded and supported the Salvadoran soldiers who attacked the Jesuit priests and was seeking to avoid any controversy by silencing the only witnesses, Lucia and Jorge Cerna. For the entire two weeks, the Cerna family was bombarded with endless questioning, and everyday they recounted honestly what they had seen that night. Driven by exhaustion, Lucia Cerna, finally told her captors that she didn’t know anything about that night. Only then was her family released.

Since then, Lucia Cerna continues to tell her story. By doing so, she enlightens others about the atrocities that the SOA graduates caused in her homeland and will continue to speak for justice.

## Profiles in Justice

### GIRLS LEAD NOW!

By **Maya Raman**  
Staff Writer

To inspire independence, confidence, and responsibility in teen girls through education in life-skills and leadership is the mission of the Girls Lead Now program. In the words of junior Katherine Edgcombe, chair of Girls Lead Now, “the objective of our project is to teach teen girls the skills they need to put the power where it belongs—with them.”

Originally inspired by Women’s Economic Power Day, the event was first called Girls’ Economic Power Day (GEPD) and begun in 2004. This year, however, the name of the event has been changed to Girls Lead Now in order to emphasize the empowerment of teenage girls from all over the peninsula.

One of the more popular workshops at the event includes “Victory over Procrastination: Time Management.” This workshop gives real-life advice to high school students for managing their chaotic schedules. Other widely attended workshops include “College Prep: The Inside Scoop” and “Fearless Speaking—Taming the Butterflies.” The College Prep workshop enables girls to match their personality types with the college that best suits them; they also learn firsthand about the application process. The “Fearless Speaking” workshop, on the other hand, teaches girls how to address large audiences with poise.

An additional specialty of the Girls Lead Now program is the clothing exchange that occurs at the conclusion of every event. For this activity, teens bring gently used or new clothes to be organized. At the end of all workshops, girls can then participate in this clothes swap by sorting through the clothes and keeping any they would want to wear. There is even a “fitting room” where they can try on the clothes and get fashion advice from other teens.

As one of the 65 girls who attended GEPD last year, I can truthfully say that this event surely instilled the confidence and inspiration that propelled me to enroll as part of this year’s Leadership Team. Katherine’s words perhaps capture my emotions accurately: “I knew that I *had* to get involved in the process of putting on this life-changing event and help more girls as I was helped.”

Indeed, this year’s Leadership Team is a dedicated group of high school girls with the intent of making a change within the community. The group has been meeting monthly in order to meet fundraising goals for the event as well as to refine the workshops. The Leadership girls conduct these workshops, working beside experienced adult mentors. However, the main appeal of Girls Lead Now is that it is put on by teen girls for teen girls.

For more information about the workshops and the Leadership Team or to register (there are only 100 spots, so register early!) go to [www.girlsleadnow.org](http://www.girlsleadnow.org). Workshops that are offered on March 21, 2009 include “Victory Over Procrastination: Time Management,” “Power Over Plastic,” and “Fearless Speaking—Taming the Butterflies.”



Girls Lead Now workshops are popular among Mitty girls.

BY THE  
NUMBERS

517 detainees  
in Gitmo

65 girls hold  
leadership  
roles in  
GLN

63 years since the SOA  
was established

25,000

flowers Gaza  
will export  
for Valentine’s  
Day—its first  
export in a year



## GUANTANAMO

*Continued from pg. 3*

sending around the world is that the United States intends to prosecute the ongoing struggle against violence and terrorism and we are going to do so vigilantly.”

The closing of this base, however, has not been unanimously approved of in the eyes of the public.

Several families of 9/11 victims called for the Guantánamo prison to remain open and for the military commissions to try the five men accused of perpetrating the attacks.

They doubt that these trials will remain fair on the continental United States.

Also, where will these prisoners go? At this time, the United States is not prepared to host all of the inmates, and has chosen to reach out to European Union allies. EU foreign ministers are reluctant, and currently, Portugal and France have expressed openness to hosting prisoners that can't go home or to the U.S.

Another option: Alcatraz? That's what

Republican Senator Christopher Bond teased California Senator Dianne Feinstein about—referring to the prison in the San Francisco Bay.

While an idea like this is completely implausible in the current situation, it encourages placing some of the prisoners under the jurisdiction of United States Federal Courts.

It is the time for the Guantánamo base to be closed. In a time when the significance

of freedom and democracy is paramount, the country cannot afford to preach policies that it does not itself practice.

Change, however, must be made with caution. Security, foremost, should be the mantra of the administration; closing down the center should not happen without being sure that the nation is completely guarded from future threats.

Only then can we close the door on this sorry part of the nation's history.

# WORLD AFFAIRS

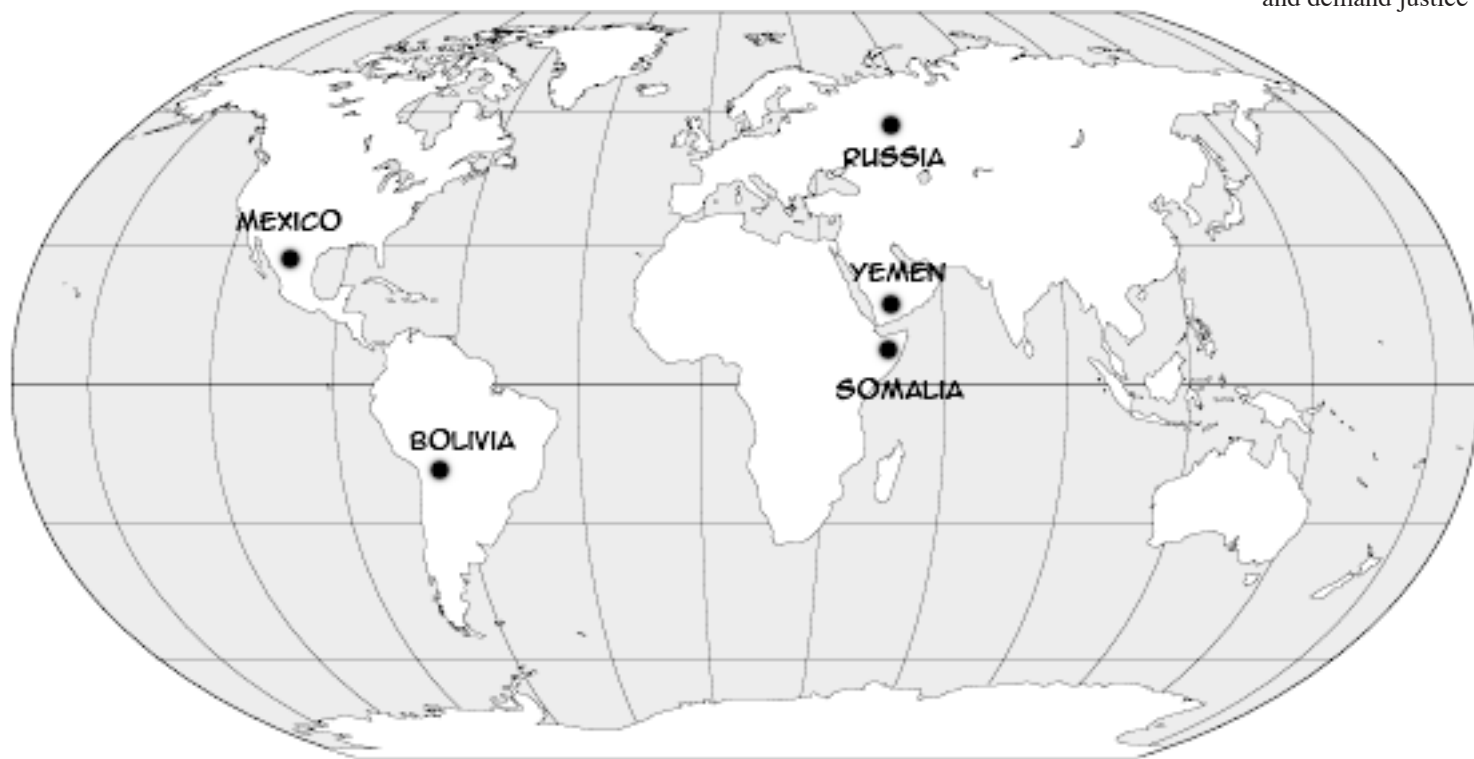
By Michelle Sohnlein  
Staff Writer

## Meth Making a Comeback

After a dramatic decline, the availability of meth—a highly addictive stimulant “cooked” with chemicals from over-the-counter cold medications—has begun to slowly rise since 2008. Over 17,000 meth labs were discovered recently, tucked inside homes, barns, and vehicles. Labs run by Mexican drug traffickers have trickled into California's Central Valley, a mostly rural region that pumps large batches of meth to major cities for distribution. Some larger producers south of the U.S. border have begun to relocate or follow the severe import restrictions announced by Mexico in 2007.

## Masked Man Kills Two

In Moscow, Russian surveillance cameras recorded the killing of a well-known human rights lawyer and a journalist. The gunman killed attorney Stanislav Markelov, 34, in front of an office in central Moscow. Journalist Anastasia Baburova, 25, who worked for the pro-democracy newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*, was also shot and killed when she tried to intervene. Police speculate that the killings are linked to a Chechnya rebel group, but when asked the group denied any involvement to the killings. An estimated 3,000 people rallied in the Chechen capital of Grozny recently to protest and demand justice for the victims.



## U.S. Warns of Possible Attack in Yemen

The U.S. Embassy in Yemen warned Americans there of a possible attack against its compound in Sanaa. The embassy advises Americans “to exercise caution and take prudent security measures in all areas frequented by Westerners” and urges them to avoid crowds and demonstrations. Yemen has a strong Islamic militant presence and is in a strategically important region, bordering Saudi Arabia and Oman on the Arabian peninsula. The United States has criticized the Yemeni government for not doing enough to combat terrorism and has repeatedly warned of violence attributed to Islamic extremists in Yemen.

## Bolivia votes for New Constitution

Bolivians overwhelmingly approved a new constitution that would allow leftist President Evo Morales to run for another term later this year. The new constitution will give a greater voice to the indigenous people who make up most of the country and more power to the central government. Elections for the presidency and other federal posts will be held in December.

## UN Aid Worker Shot in Somalia

Gunmen shot and killed a food monitor for the United Nations' World Food Program on Thursday, the second killing of a WFP humanitarian worker in Somalia in three days. Mohamud Omar Moallim, 49, was shot by an unidentified gunman while distributing food to displaced people in the city of Daynile.

## It's the Economy, Stupid

AN EDITORIAL ON HOW JUSTICE CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED

By Ian Davis  
Staff Writer

Sudan. Burma. Rwanda. El Salvador. Tibet.

All of these countries are plagued by some of the worst human rights abuses of our time, causes truly worthy of the attention of social justice activists. Yet if we truly want to stop the violence we must target the root of the problem—the authoritarian regimes that perpetrate and enable these abuses to occur.

But how? Obviously, invading the country doesn't work. We can look at our recent attempts to overthrow dictators for that. Sadaam Hussein was removed, true, but now we are stuck in this never-ending conflict where the majority of people fighting us are not “death to America”

militant Muslims, but local tribal fighters who are attempting to protect their country from the infidels. They do not see us as liberators, but as invaders; they are simply protecting their homeland.

Helping a substandard coup likewise creates trouble. Throwing our support—either through open military aid or some covert CIA operation—behind a new dictator, simply because he is an American sympathizer, changes nothing; he is still a dictator and he is still in power, and our action will most likely prompt nothing more than a long, drawn out military conflict.

What these countries really need is a strong middle class of citizens that are intellectually strong enough to realize that their rights are being violated and economically strong enough to be financially independent from the government. If we consider the European revolutions, it was not during feudalism (the Middle Ages equivalent of a dictatorship) that the people revolted, because they were dependant on their lords, who were, in turn, dependant on the king. Rather, revolution did not occur until guilds and merchants began to gain economic power and Renaissance thinkers caused a resurgence in education.

Therefore, the best way for us to help foreign nations is to foster educational growth and infrastructure develop-

ment that will elevate the minds and wallets of the people.

However, this must be done through Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). If we were to give aid directly to these dictators, they would simply keep it for themselves—or worse, use it to fund the wrong kind of education, like the militant Islamic schools that teach hatred of the west and all western ideas.

By giving money to NGOs (or by properly funding the Peace Corps), we will ensure a more responsible and effective use of the money. We should invest specifically in green technologies, which will bring the direct benefits of electricity to otherwise isolated villages, and programs like One Laptop Per Child, which seeks to educate by connecting the children of villages to our global community. Any outreach program will work, as long as it seeks to build the economy and education of these people.

As the leader of the free world, it is our social and moral obligation to do everything in our power to help others help themselves. For, without our help, there is little chance of a group emerging with enough intellect and independence to fight for universal freedom instead of personal power. There is little chance for progress and peace.

# OPINIONS

## The Advanced Placement Test: Blessing or Curse?

### FRIEND, NOT FOE

By Manasi Patel  
Staff Writer

The final stretch of the school year before the sigh of relief on the first day of summer break—let's fact it, second semester takes its toll on students. Frustration mounts as workloads increase and as the gap between the school year and summer comes to a close. As students and teachers brace themselves for the challenges that lie ahead, a sense of apprehension lingers in the crowded hallways.

But for all AP students, this semester is about one thing and one thing only: the dreaded AP tests.

Every year, each student is handed a course expectations sheet at the beginning of every class. When looking at an advanced placement course summary, one might notice that it is centered on the end of the year AP test. Teachers create their lesson plans according to the AP test. Every essay, review packet, and rubric you receive will be assigned with the AP test in mind. It is therefore no doubt that most students cringe when they hear the words "advance placement." But let's think. Are AP tests really as terrible as they sound?

Of course when considering the advantages of the AP test, one of the first things that come to mind for any Mitty student is, "No finals!" While the average pessimist might look at this as a small consolation prize for a big, bad, intimidating AP exam, not having to take finals second semester is a huge plus for many students. With the promise of no finals, your grade is based solely on your work throughout the school year. This means that simply by completing homework and assignments, you already guarantee yourself a passing grade.

Not having an end of the year final benefits all the struggling test-takers out there, and lessens some of the end of year pressure to maintain grades. It is far more preferable to not experience a drop in one's grade due to one's score on the final. You'll be grateful for the grade when you see your GPA. Consider even the skilled test-taker, which would even that student prefer: a test on the entire semester that actually affects the grade, or scattered tests on specific material throughout the semester? It seems that, in terms of finals and in turn grades, opting for the AP exam in fact helps students more than it hurts them.

But besides avoiding finals, AP tests have many other long-term advantages as well. The value of an advanced placement course essentially lies in its ability to excuse a student from otherwise required classes in the first few years of college. A passing grade, a three or above, on an AP test will most likely give the student college credits that are taken into consideration during enrollment at most universities. Harvard, for example, allows its students to bypass its language requirements by receiving 600+ on the SAT subject tests or a five on an AP exam related to the subject matter. The same can be said for Princeton, Stanford, and numerous many, many other colleges and universities. Clearly, the AP test can be the answer to a successful and easier college career and is therefore a valuable asset for high school students.

Still, a common issue people have with the AP tests is the standard eighty dollar fee. Is it really worth the money and the effort for a three hour exam? But let's do the math. It costs around twenty thousand dollars per year

to attend a University of California. If there are three quarters a year, each quarter costs around seven thousand dollars for tuition, room, board, and more. Assuming you take approximately four classes in a quarter, a ten week course without books would cost you \$1750. Credit from AP exams can save almost two thousand dollars in tuition and can even count for more than one class. Even if college payments are not the first thing on your mind right now, the difference between eighty dollars and two thousand dollars is important to keep in mind when considering the value of AP exams.

And beyond that, AP credit can free a student up to take extra classes in the major or classes the student is simply interested in taking.

If you're still uneasy about the concept of advanced placement tests, you're not alone. Hardly anyone can be expected to jump for joy at the prospect of a three-hour exam. Still, every AP student should remember that submitting those test scores to colleges is never a requirement, but merely a request. In the long run, AP exams are designed to help you and provide you with benefits as compensation for your hard work over the past school year.

So in midst of those typical second semester hyperventilations and anxiety attacks, the trick is to just breathe. The AP test is your friend, not your foe.

### AN UNNECESSARY EVIL

By Britney Karim  
Opinions Editor

A means of exploring subjects in greater depth and detail. An agent through which students can demonstrate their commitment to academic excellence. A step away from the standard high school curriculum and towards course work at the collegiate level. Advanced Placement tests appear to only benefit the high school student. Yet, what may appear to be a blessing has a more questionable reality lurking beneath the surface.

The first two weeks of May mark the commencement of the struggle brought on by Advanced Placement tests. Thousands of high school students endure painfully long hours in preparing for the examinations in hopes of scoring a passing mark. Certainly, many students will receive a 3 and subsequently pass the test. Some individuals will even achieve a score of 4 or 5, quite an accomplishment considering the rigors of the AP test.

Given a passing mark or higher score, students expect to receive college credits for the course that accompanies the AP test. Indeed, high schools around the nation, as well as the College Board itself, have touted the latter as an incentive to participate in an Advanced Placement course or test. According to the College Board, AP tests provide students with a "head-start on college-level work," thereby allowing individuals to "gain an edge in college preparation."

Yet, in a rush to sign up for the AP courses, the majority of students fail to acknowledge the fact that college credits are never a sure thing. Whether or not students actually receive credits—and how many—is determined not only by their scores on the AP tests, but also on their colleges and their anticipated majors. Indeed, the prospect of gaining college credits serves as a major driving force for those students that are hesitant to enroll in Advanced Placement courses.

For a small investment of \$83 per AP test, it appears to be a fair gamble right? Wrong. However small the payment for each test may be, throwing away money is out of the question for many. While some individuals may qualify for financial aid, a larger number of students and their families are expected to pay for the tests with their own resources whether the student has one test or four tests to take. Furthermore, if the students' colleges do not regard AP credits as transferable (regardless of whether a score was a 3 or a 5), then the students' hard work and money have been for naught. The students will be required to retake the courses come freshman year in college, at a significantly higher cost.

Indeed, this poses a significant problem for students throughout the nation. The solution though, is not far off. Many individuals opt to simply forego the AP exam, and settle for the course credit that will supplement their high school transcripts. By taking the following course of action, students receive reassurance that their applications will bode well in the college admissions process. This appears to be the sole benefit of partaking in the AP program: demonstrating one's commitment to academic excellence to intended colleges and universities.

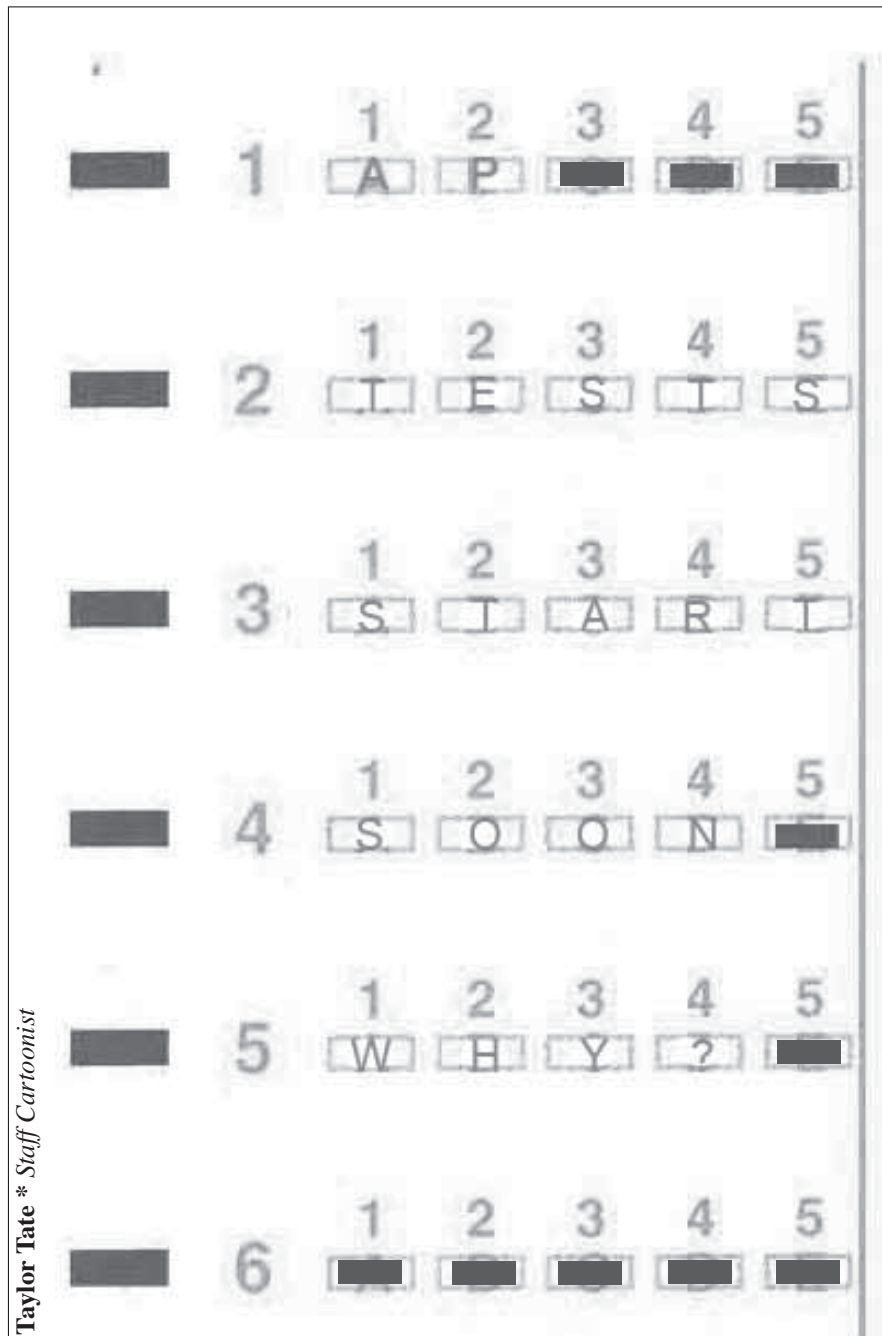
However, much to the chagrin of its students, Mitty does not allow students to opt out of AP tests. Our beloved school requires students enrolled in AP courses to take the AP test that accompanies the class. Yet, our choice to take AP courses is primarily brought on by our desire to hone our transcripts and college applications. It's certainly not in hopes of attaining college credits. In all honesty, the current policy continues to be cause of discontent among the AP students.

Provided that a large number of students stand to receive no college credits from passing AP tests, it doesn't come as a surprise that many are unsatisfied with the policy. As the number of private colleges and universities that accept AP credits continues to grow smaller, so does a student's need to take the AP exam.

According to one Mitty senior, "The AP test is completely unnecessary for most. It seems only Mitty stands to gain from student AP scores." Yes, there is a correlation between the two. A continuous influx of student AP scores lends a helpful boost to the school's overall image as a leading college preparatory institution. Regrettably, it is quite literally at a student's expense.

For many, the AP test has become obsolete. Nevertheless, students will persist in enrolling in Advanced Placement classes in an attempt to polish their transcripts.

Needless to say, AP tests have, for far too many student at Archbishop Mitty, become an unnecessary evil.



Taylor Tate \* Staff Cartoonist



# FORGOTTEN SPORTS OF MITTY

By Ally Lockwood  
Staff Writer

Last spring I headed for our Brother Fien gymnasium in anticipation of a rumored badminton game. Figuring there's nothing better than the opportunity to indulge in some badminton observance to clear your head, I found myself slightly perplexed when, upon my entrance to the gymnasium, I found myself the sole observer (aside from a handful of boys who were quick to clarify they were just waiting to play).

Where were the cheerful fans? Where were the bright and somewhat clumsily made posters declaring our undying admiration for these fierce little birdie-branding warriors? All right, maybe in truth I only wandered into the gym to look for my missing sweatshirt and was not all that shocked by the low attendance, but the conclusion I drew nonetheless resonated in the back of my head. Why was no one here to support these dedicated, if not slightly sweaty individuals? These were Mitty students, the same kids who bump into you in the halls and casually apologize day after day. Did they not deserve the same support and applause we give our other, more recognizable teams on campus?

Similarly, our school's women's basketball team is not just any shabby squad. These women have proved their dedication, determination, and heart, securing two consecutive Northern California and State titles along the way. So why are the bleachers still more empty than they should be?

The women's teams lack of fan base is contrasted to the strong base that continues to support our men's basketball team. Part of the appeal of the men's games is not only the opportunity to watch a fast-paced game, but the lure of the opportunity to show up and socialize and encounter fellow students donning German lederhosen, fake hair of any assortment, and awkwardly form-fitting bottoms. Can you remember the last time someone asked you if you wanted to don a toga and hit up a wrestling match?

Exactly what is it that prompts such high attendance at certain sports over others? Why are only certain sports openly advertised in the hallways and others on announcements? Why does no one ever offer me free pizza when I cheer exuberantly at women's soccer games?

People will always come out to support the main sports like football and basketball during the big games. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't take time out of our absurdly filled schedules to come out and show our support for the water polo, tennis, wrestling, swimming, soccer, softball, track and field meets, and all the other games and teams that have been so forgotten they were left off this list.

All in all, the point is that until we start getting out to support the obscure games and teams that deserve our cheering and encouragement as part of our community they won't get any recognition. So grab a few friends and maybe I'll see you at a badminton game this season... but don't forget your neon hot pants.

# MODERN-DAY PIRATES OR TOMORROW'S TERRORISTS?

By Jacque Scharre  
Staff Writer

Somalia, a country located on the horn of Africa, has in recent years been seriously struggling against the threat of thousands of pirates that operate off its coast. These pirates control most of the waters surrounding Africa stretching to Southern Asia. With its seriously weak government, the Republic of Somalia cannot, itself, fend off the pirates that cause damages estimated to cost over \$1 billion each year to cargo ships, oil tankers, and cruise ships.

Damaging important trade ships, however, is not the only thing these modern-day pirates are after. They have taken more than 350 crewmen hostage this past year from ships they have captured, holding them ransom and getting paid handsomely for their return.

A food crisis has even broken out, causing the United Nations' World Food Program to send military escorts on its ships that carry 32,000 tons of food into Somalia, each month. The crisis is being caused by civil strife and the problems encountered in getting supplies to the coast of Somalia unscathed by greedy pirates. The United States and other nations need to address this area where people are starving unnecessarily and subsequently clear the way for ships that are currently reluctant to trade due to the risks of losing crew and cargo.

The problem being faced in these seas has only been escalating. Now the pirates are forming gangs, bribing corrupt government officials near seaports to allow them docking areas where they may keep captured ships during negotiation processes. What was once a loose network may be turning into a true crime syndicate capable of terrorism.

Navy fleets from countries all over the world should be helping to patrol the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden—an area of well over 1 million square miles—to prevent piracy. Considering the expanse of sea that needs to be covered, the single small fleet from the United States that has been stationed there since June last year has done little good on its own.

Additionally, tracking via satellite all ships around the coast of Africa would be useful as well; it would supply information on pirate mother ships and lead to their neutralization.

The issue of Piracy all around Africa, the Middle East, and even in Southern Asia calls for a joint strategy against piracy. It threatens crucial international trade and the livelihood of countries closest to the action that suffer under the threat of famine and poverty.

Through increased surveillance and national awareness, we need to bring an end to this pirating problem, preventing further international maritime crises.

# GEORGE W. BUSH SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE

By Paul Dougherty  
Opinions Editor

George Walker Bush, forty-third president of the United States of America, is guilty of crimes against humanity. This is not an exaggeration of the errors and the wrongdoings of the past eight years. I am not dwelling on the past instead of moving forward with the "change" and "hope" presented by President Barack Obama. I am making a very relevant call to justice because we cannot let the transgressions of the past march unchallenged into the future.

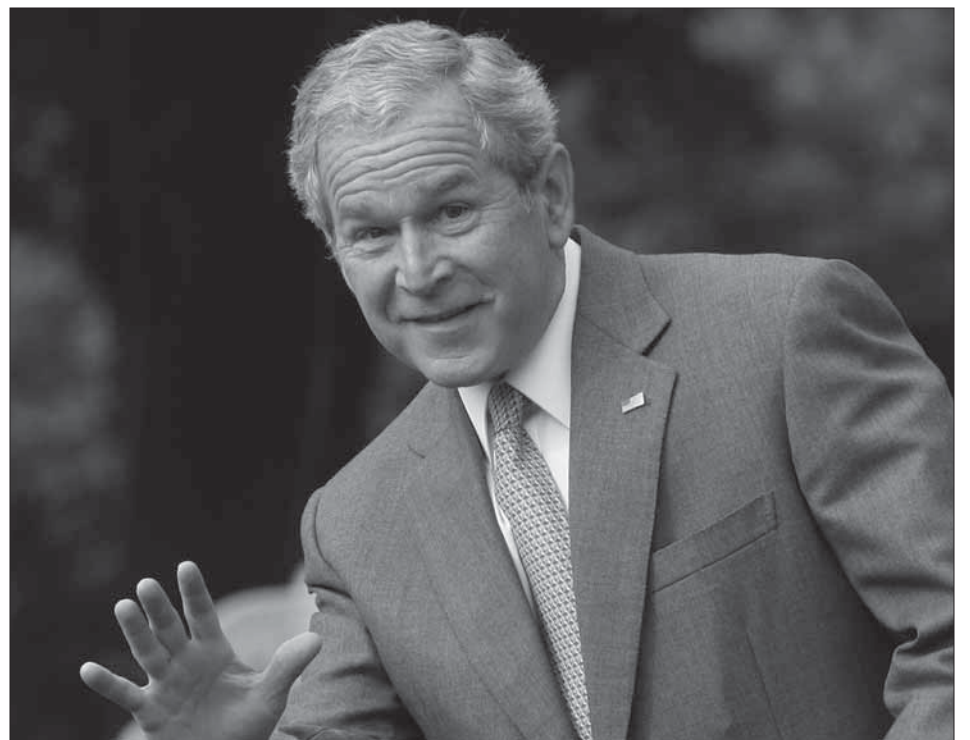
Primarily, George W. Bush did more than simply lead the country to a war based on the false idea of Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction: he boldly lied in order to launch this war. He was aware of the lack of W.M.D.'s in Iraq, but still intended to sacrifice American lives and American money—which could otherwise be used to reinvigorate the economy—for an unjust and immoral war.

Though many point to the July 2002—eight months before Operation Iraqi Freedom began—Downing Street memo as the smoking gun that revealed the true duplicity behind the United States' government's build up to the Iraq War, it is not the most incriminating evidence. That is not to say that it is in no ways incriminating: this memo alleges that George W. Bush and the United States National Security Council were willing and planning to manipulate conjecture and half-truths to create the proper justification for a military invasion of Iraq.

The Manning Memo, leaked in February of 2003 when the drums of war sounded their feverish beat, was a secret letter between George W. Bush and his British counterpart (read: lapdog), Tony Blair. In this memo, George W. Bush expressed his frustration with the slow process of the United Nations in green lighting an invasion of Iraq. To expedite the process, George W. Bush suggests—without irony!—flying a U2 spy plane, painted in United Nations colors, through Iraq with the hope that Saddam Hussein would see it as a threat and shoot it out of the sky. This would prove that Saddam Hussein was a belligerent dictator who was willing to violate a previous United Nations resolution. George W. Bush would then use this as justification for an invasion of Iraq.

The W.M.D.'s were little more than a political ploy designed to create popular support for a war that George W. Bush was going to have no matter what. The evidence gathered by the Central Intelligence Agency, which laid the foundation for the Iraqi W.M.D. rhetoric, largely came from a single Iraqi defector who was seeking to escape prosecution of a crime he committed in Iraq. Six years later, evidence of Iraqi manufacturing of unconventional weapons remains to be found.

George W. Bush willfully lied to start a war, which has now claimed more than 4,000 United States service men and women and 100,000 Iraqi civilians. Because of his hubris, his arrogance, and his treachery, it is tragically appropriate to say that they have died in vain, not protecting the liberties of the United States of America, but advancing the banner of imperialism into a volatile region that cannot sustain America's paternalistic interventions. Iraqi's are now 3.6 times more likely to die than they were under Saddam's regime.



1,600,000 Iraqis have fled the country while fewer than 800 have been granted asylum in the United States. Yet the greatest failure is that there is no end in sight so long as the United States maintains its military occupation of Iraq.

Iraq is the tip of the iceberg, a simple symbol that represents the true depth of the Bush Administration's malevolence. For a president who spent one-third of his presidency on vacation, he was able to squander so much of this country's greatness. Eight people have been tortured to death. Two hundred have been forced to undergo the cruel "extraordinary rendition" process that George W. Bush allowed. He has helped generate more than ten trillion dollars in national debt. He has corrupted our education system, politicized the courts, violated the Constitution, and increased the despair and cynicism in this country. The damage incurred under eight years of George W. Bush's regime may well be irreparable. Through all of this, George W. Bush never lost his smug smirk of scorn and conceit.

On January 20, I was on the Capitol Mall. I was among the several million Americans who had travelled to Washington D.C. to witness Barack Obama's historic inauguration. The most memorable event that occurred that day was not the actual swearing in, but the reaction George W. Bush elicited from the crowd. George W. Bush was not greeted with even polite applause that seems appropriate for an outgoing President. Instead, George W. Bush was greeted with limited derision, few audible boo's, and a dreadfully, overwhelmingly angry silence. Perhaps the crowd soberly realized that American leaders are accountable to the American people.

Unfortunately, we were too complacent during the last eight years to do so, and thus share a portion of George W. Bush's guilt for being too complacent and not angry enough. In this case, anger would have been justified—the patriotic thing to do—because if we were truly devoted to the ideals of this country, we should have stood up in a passionate fervor, instead of sitting in idle inaction, against the hypocrites and profiteers who led us astray. We can save justice from subversion by bringing George Walker Bush to justice.



# IN MEMORY OF MR. PHIL MILLER

By Rachel Downey  
Staff Writer

It is not every day you meet someone who changes your life, and even if you do, you may not even recognize it until he or she is gone.

The first day of AP Chemistry was a terrifying one. With only fourteen students in the class, and a teacher no one had ever met, I did not know what to expect. Had I only known then what I do now, I would have treasured that day and committed every last minute to memory. As it is, I cannot remember anything specific we did in class, but I do remember Mr. Phil Miller.

When he shuffled into the classroom, we all shifted in our seats, wondering what kind of teacher he was going to be. We had all been told that AP Chemistry was one of the hardest classes the school offered, but that Mr. Miller would get us through it, kicking and screaming if necessary. He passed out the standard green sheet outlining class procedure. He then noted off-handedly that this class was going to be one of the most difficult we had ever taken. The class stared, wondering if we had heard him correctly. Was that our teacher trying to scare us?

We got used to it surprisingly quickly; Chemistry was my favorite class within weeks, and it was all due to Mr. Miller. When he talked, the gas laws, acids, pressures, and equations all knit together and made perfect sense. I could tell that he really loved what he was doing, and he was a better teacher for it.

Then came the week that Mr. Miller did not show up at all. Our substitute knew the material, but it wasn't the same. We spent far too long on topics that we had already learned the year before, and barely under-



Mr. Phil Miller, at far right, in his earlier days at Archbishop Mitty.

stood the new concepts; I suddenly realized just how much we needed Mr. Miller. He seemed to intuitively know exactly what we needed extra time on and what he could bypass.

We were not ready for what we were going to see when he came back. He was thinner, and his face was drawn. He moved slowly, rarely getting up out of his chair. No one wanted to ask. A few days later, Mr. Miller mentioned in passing that he had had one of his kidneys removed. He described the gory process in detail, trying to be light-hearted about it, but even that didn't distract us. We made a card, and then let the topic go.

As the year went on, we started noticing other changes in our teacher, though we never said anything. He grew even thinner, and he was spending more and more time sitting down. Eventually, he told us that he had cancer, and that this year at Mitty High School would be his last. No one knew what

to do. Our favorite teacher—this clever, cynical, exceptionally intelligent man—was dying. He had given up a promising, high-paying career in pharmaceuticals to teach Chemistry, and we were the last class who would ever experience it.

We stared heartbreakingly as he struggled in and out of the classroom every day, each of us wondering why he did not just go home. I realized one day that it was all because of us. His Chemistry classes needed him, and he wasn't about to abandon us so close to the end of the year.

Mr. Miller changed my life. The line is cliché, and horribly overused, but it's true. I am pursuing a major in Chemistry and a career in forensics, and it is all because of him. He told us that we had a responsibility: as the students in the top percentages of our class, it was up to us to change our world for the better.

I have always enjoyed science, and

Mr. Miller provided me with not only an understanding of Chemistry, but also a love for it. His passion was evident every day in class, even on his bad days when the radiation confined him to his chair.

I will never forget the sacrifice that Mr. Miller made for us. Despite his complaining, despite his plummeting weight and gaunt appearance, despite the constant fatigue, he sat in a classroom with us for eighty-five minutes at a time for the rest of his final school year. I do not think I will ever feel admiration of that magnitude again.

He was cynical, negative, and held a general belief that he was smarter than most people in the world, but Mr. Miller was one of the most decent human beings I have ever had the privilege to know. I try to take the opportunity to give up my time and help others, especially with schoolwork; if Mr. Miller could give up some of the last months of his life to teach, then I owe him at least this. I have never had a teacher like him, and I do not think I will ever have another teacher like him again.

He has shaped my future more than he knew. Because of him, I have chosen a major that I never would have thought of. Because of him, I have a new outlook on life and treasure every last moment.

There were those who thought that Mr. Miller wouldn't make it to graduation last year, and even he liked to joke about it. He'd tell us that we had better turn in all of our work, because he wasn't going to be around by the end of the semester, and no one was going to want to grade all of our work.

All of his students, though—present and past—knew that Mr. Miller was made of stronger stuff. To us, he was, and still is, invincible.

## ON THE CONFLICT OVER PALESTINE

By Alex Fong  
Staff Writer

1,314. This is roughly the number of casualties resulting from last month's bloody, 22-day conflict between Israel and Hamas.

The numbers are staggeringly disproportionate. In a land of only 360 sq km packed with 1.4 million people (three-quarters of whom are registered with the UN as refugees), 1,314 Palestinians, including around 400 children, lost their lives, while a mere 13 Israelis lost theirs. A scan through pictures of Gaza and its people shows utter devastation, a deteriorating humanitarian crisis, and widespread suffering. Is this what Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert meant when he announced that Hamas had been "badly beaten," even though a mere 48 of its militants had been killed?

Of course not. But although Israel's swift retribution against Gaza was practically a million times more powerful than rocket fire, and despite all the attention this conflict has received, Israel and Hamas are have not negotiated on a permanent cease-fire. Israel and Palestine had been negotiating a return to the 1967 borders. However, the roadblock to this peace plan has been Israel, which has refused to surrender Old Jerusalem, a holy city in Islam. Israeli's right wing, Zionist extremists refuse to accept a two-state solution or concessions of any kind.

Despite the fact that at least 70% of Israelis support a two state solution, the militant Zionists wield a disproportionate influence over Israeli politics. In 1995, an extreme Zionist who opposed any peace treaties with the Arab world assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. For Israelis, as moderate as the majority may be, politics are dominated by groups which seek to further alienate Israel from the region.

This past conflict reinforces Israel's lack of complete innocence in the matter. Israel had funded Hamas in the early 1990's in order to limit the influence of the more moderate Palestinian Liberation Organization, led by the late Yasser Arafat as it gained not only power in the region, but global sympathy. Now Hamas is one of Israel's biggest opponents.

Though Israel removed its illegal settlers out of the Gaza Strip in order to create the appearance of Palestinian self-determination, the Gaza Strip was never free. It was created as a so-called homeland for the Palestinians but lacked true political rights and has absolutely deplorable and gruesome human rights conditions. Apartheid is a well-deserved name for what Israel has done to the Palestinian people. Israel expelled Palestinians from their land and instituted a vicious system truly akin to Apartheid.

White phosphorous is an explosive used as a smokescreen by armies, but can also be used as a weapon as it can burn the respiratory system. The IDF deployed White Phosphorous over civilian areas and caused immense damage. More to this point, Israel knowingly bombed various United Nation institutions and places of education, such as the Islamic



University of Gaza. Israel used DIME bombs which, in addition to incinerating anything in their blast radius, are also weapons of bioterrorism. These explosives were provided to Israel by the United States Air Force.

As a nation committed to spreading democracy and ensuring that basic humanitarian needs are met, what should the United States do about this seemingly endless conflict? The United States has given \$2 billion dollars to Israel each and every year since 1971. This violates the U.S. Arms Export Control Act, which rules that funding for foreign country's defense is illegal if it is not used for internal stability. But can we really expect a country that has not signed universal treaties banning scatter munitions and other cruel tools of 20<sup>th</sup> century warfare to stop funding the Israeli apartheid state?

The answer lies in the hands of President Obama. Can he create true change or will he continue the failed United States' foreign policy that has allowed Israel to violate the international declarations of human rights? Barack Obama has promised to restore America to its pre-Bush greatness. But he must do more than return things to the status quo before Bush; he must raise America up from the arrogant imperialism that has characterized American foreign policy since the end of the Second World War.

Hopefully, Barack Obama may persuade Israel by reenergizing and rejuvenating American foreign policy. The Palestinian people do not deserve to live in squalor and the Israelis do not deserve to live in fear. For peace to prosper, Obama must provide a greater alternative to the reactionary injustice of Zionism and the bitter hatred of Hamas. Leaders are, after all, judged by what they build, not what they destroy.



# Myths About the Universe

By Manisha Eerabathini  
Staff Writer



Largely unknown and incredibly immense, the universe has always intrigued us. The vast expanse outside of our planet houses many phenomena yet to be discovered. So naturally, over the centuries, the sheer magnitude and majesty of the universe has prompted and fostered the growth of countless superstitions and myths.

The most common among these “old wives tales” is the concept of wishing upon a shooting star. Pos-

sibly the most embraced myth by pop-culture and the entertainment industry, this tradition dates back to the Greeks.

Around 127-151 CE, the Greek astronomer Ptolemy believed and wrote about how the ancient Greek gods used to peer down at Earth from their celestial abodes (Ptolemy believed that the Greek gods made their homes in the stars and in outer space). Sometimes, a god would accidentally slip and fall from heaven. Such events were markededly rare, characterized by a star falling from the sky—hence, the term “shooting/falling star” was born. It was believed that, during the fall, the gods would be closer to Earth and therefore more receptive to the hopes and desires of the mortals they presided over. In this way, the tradition of wishing upon a falling star was born, a tradition that, to this day, continues and remains a pop culture favorite.

Another celestial phenomenon that has garnered much enthusiasm and interest is the lunar eclipse. A lunar eclipse occurs when the sun, the moon, and Earth all align, with the Earth in the middle. Hence, a lunar eclipse always occurs on the same day as the full moon (the next lunar eclipse is predicted to occur on December 10, 2010).

The lunar eclipse causes the moon to turn a dark red color, and this event incited much distress and anxiety amidst ancient people, who believed that the lunar eclipse was a bad omen; there were many negative connotations and tragic occurrences that were associated with this event. For one thing, it was advised that pregnant women should not touch their stomachs during a lunar eclipse, for such an action

was believed to cause the baby to be born with a prominent birthmark. Moreover, the ancient Europeans firmly believed that one should never have marital relations during a lunar eclipse, for the resulting child would be born with a demon inside. In some Eastern countries, tradition and superstitions dictate that food cooked right before a lunar eclipse must be thrown out afterward, because it would poison whoever ate it. And lastly, if one holds a knife or ax during a lunar eclipse, it was said that he or she will surely cut himself or herself.

Continuing on the subject of the moon, there are many myths superstitions associated with the full moon. In some parts of India, there is the belief that, after viewing the full moon, one must look into the face of a loved one, for this will lead to a peaceful and prosperous month. On the other hand, if, after viewing the full moon, one looks at the face of an enemy, that person will suffer great tragedy in the next month.

Clearly, there exists an extensive array of superstitions derived from all over the world. Because of the effective and efficient method in which these stories are propagated (word of mouth), these galactic beliefs will continue to be passed along. Though ultimately, it is one’s personal choice on whether to believe them or not.

## horoscopes

By Alyssa Vu  
Focus Editor



Virgo

(Aug 23-Sept 22)

It is time to mend broken relationships and let go of past grudges. You’ll feel better when you can look to the future and stop worrying about the past.

focus on

# OUTER

# SPACE

## The Truth Is Up There

By Lisa Patel  
Staff Writer

When talking about outer space, the topic of aliens is unavoidable. The question of aliens and extraterrestrial life has plagued humankind throughout history. Many theorists believe that aliens came to earth thousands of years ago and influenced the mythologies of early civilizations.

The Mesoamerican god Quetzalcoatl is believed to be one such deity with alien origins. His feathered-serpent figure is said to be an important alien symbol, and several people who have claimed to be abducted by UFOs have reported seeing winged serpents on their abductors’ uniforms.

Ancient cave drawings found near Kimberly Mountain and attributed to the Aborigines of Australia detail the legends of the Wodjina. The Wodjina, sacred beings believed to be gods, greatly resemble the modern theorized descriptions of “Gray” aliens despite being painted more than 10,000 years ago. Perhaps these sacred beings were really extraterrestrials sightseeing on a primitive planet.

Similarly, the ancient Greeks seem to have been inspired by such interstellar encounters. Their gods supposedly dwelled in the heavens and descended occasionally to Earth to interact with the mortals. It is hypothesized that these “gods” were actually extraterrestrials that interbred with humans, performed genetic experiments, and bred mythical creatures like the centaur and Cyclops.

Humanity’s seemingly intrinsic fascination with extraterrestrial life has persisted through modern times. As evident by mainstream pop-culture, aliens continue to hold their places as muses for the human imagination.

Since the 1960s, when couple Betty and Barney Hill claimed to have been abducted by aliens, the plethora of movies that emerged from Hollywood have reflected the public’s growing interest in aliens. Popular movies like *ET* and *Men In Black* convey very different interpretations of aliens and reflect interest in the possibility of extraterrestrial life and the idea that we are not alone in the universe. Shows like *Smallville* and *Roswell* suggest that, while aliens may look like us, they are far superior in physical strength and mental capabilities. Like humans, aliens are also portrayed as morally complex characters.

The many accounts of UFO sightings and inexplicable occurrences accredited to aliens have greatly increased and continue to play a significant role in both the media and our imaginations. Perhaps we Earthlings will be visited again sometime soon, and, hopefully, these extraterrestrials will still be friendly.

## Sci-Fi Books

By Likhita Kommidi  
Focus Editor

The universe has so enthralled writers that there’s an entire genre that is (for the most part) dedicated to outer space: science fiction. From plausibly written alien invasions to problems facing a post-apocalyptic Earth, the ever eclectic science fiction genre has something for everyone.

Listed below is a compilation of popular titles and authors (along with book reviews) in sci-fi:

**Ender’s Game** by Orson Scott Card

There’s a strange alien race that’s poised to wipe out humankind. Child genius Ender Wiggin is the best of the best in the government’s military genius breeding program. But can he be the ruthless killer that he’s been trained to be?

A relatively easy read, *Ender’s Game* transcends its genre. Card’s novel blurs the lines between right and wrong, presents both the darkest and best side of humanity, and ultimately teaches what it really means to be human.

**The Andromeda Strain** by Michael Crichton

A lethal extraterrestrial virus has accidentally come into contact with a small town in Arizona and kills almost everyone. A team of top scientists is sent to quarantine and investigate the microorganism (dubbed

“Andromeda”), but, in true Crichton fashion, the mysterious Andromeda Strain escapes

From the author of *Jurassic Park*, this is the novel that launched Crichton to fame. It’s written in a contemporary fast-paced style that, even forty years later, continues to be compelling and thought-provoking.

**The War of the Worlds** by H.G. Wells

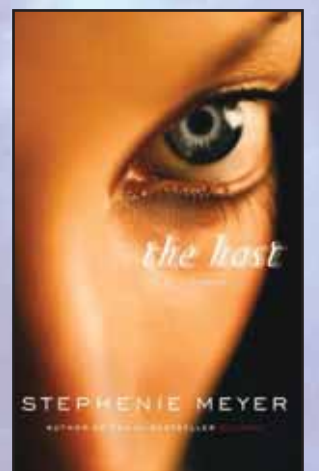
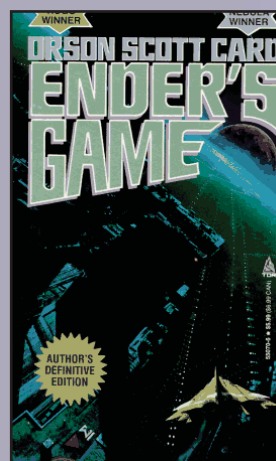
Wells’ 1898 *The War of the Worlds*, is one of the earliest and greatest examples of the classic alien invasion story. A revolutionary work of literature, the appeal of this novel lies not in its plot (which has been overused to the point of no return) but rather in its vivid descriptions and in Well’s commentary about social Darwinism and European colonialism.

**The Host** by Stephenie Meyer

From the author of the bestselling *Twilight* series comes a futuristic, romantic thriller.

Extraterrestrials have taken over Earth and made it into a utopia. There’s no war, no conflicts, and everyone is at peace. However, a small, underground band of humans are fighting to have Earth back the way it was, imperfections and all.

A true romance at its core, *The Host* will continue to delight Meyer’s *Twilight* fan base.





# A Date With the Stars

By Emma Luk  
Focus Editor

Listed below are some upcoming events in the night sky that will be visible from the Bay Area.

## ECLIPSES

According to NASA's Eclipse Page, there will be two solar eclipses and four lunar eclipses this year; unfortunately, only two of these six celestial events will be visible from here in the Bay Area  
—Penumbral Lunar Eclipse, on February 9, 2009  
—Penumbral Lunar Eclipse, on July 7, 2009  
(this eclipse will be almost completely invisible to the naked eye)

## METEOR SHOWERS

**The Lyrids**, on April 21-22, 2009, throughout the night  
**The Eta Aquarids**, on May 5, 2009, all day  
**The Perseids**, on August 12, 2009, in the morning and evening  
**The Orionids**, on October 21, 2009, in the morning  
**The Leonids**, on November 17-18, 2009, in the morning and at night  
**The Geminids**, on December 13-14, 2009, throughout the night

## COMETS

The major comet visible right now is Lulin, which can be seen with an amateur telescope or binoculars until mid-March. Recently discovered in 2007, Lulin sports two tails. In addition to the usual present when the comet's ice vaporizes due to the sun's heat, Lulin also has an "anti-tail," which is small and needle-like. Lulin's "anti-tail" is an optical illusion that is created by the comet because it is traveling around the sun in the opposite direction of the Earth's orbit. On February 24, Lulin will come closest to Earth. It will be 38 million miles away (14.5 times farther away than the moon is).



**Aries**  
(Mar 21-Apr 19)

An old acquaintance will come back into your life. Even though you'll be excited to see them, don't forget about spending time with your current friends too.



**Taurus**  
(Apr 20-May 20)

This month you'll be especially assertive. Use this to your advantage by taking charge of a project, but make sure you don't take control of everything.



**Gemini**  
(May 21-June 21)

With the stars in your favor, now is the perfect time to take some risks. Be spontaneous and step out of your comfort zone.



**Cancer**  
(June 22-July 22)

A conflict with someone close to you could turn into a storm of accusations if you aren't very careful. It may be best to avoid intense discussions entirely.



**Leo**  
(July 23-Aug 22)

Be prepared for some last minute changes this month and try not to object too much when somebody suggests an alternative to your original ideas.



**Libra**  
(Sept 23-Oct 22)

You have an important event coming up. Combat the anxiety by surrounding yourself with friends and family. The best preparation for anything is relaxation.



**Scorpio**  
(Oct 23-Nov 21)

Don't worry if someone snaps at you—they're angry at things other than you. Let them cool off a little then give them the support they need.



**Sagittarius**  
(Nov 22-Dec 21)

Change is coming your way. Your health has been on your mind lately; make good on those New Year's resolutions from last month.



**Capricorn**  
(Dec 22-Jan 19)

Something you're hiding might come to the surface this month. If you keep a positive attitude and show that it's not affecting you, people won't make it a bigger deal.



**Aquarius**  
(Jan 20-Feb 18)

The stars are making you feel extra confident lately. Send out a positive vibe and meet some new people at a concert or basketball game.



**Pisces**  
(Feb 19-Mar 20)

Slow down! You need to try something a bit different if you want to make any progress and rushing through your various projects is sure to set you back.

## Name A Star

By Rebecca Organ  
Staff Writer

Sure it *sounds* nice: having a special place in the sky, a specific star named after you forever. For as little as \$50, over half a dozen companies, such as starregistry.com, are willing to name a star after you or a loved one, provide you with a certificate, a locator chart, and a specific set of coordinates. But really, how genuine are these "official" services?

Well, it turns out they're all fake.

Since as early as the fourth century, BC, people have been gazing into the skies and assigning names to stars. But only the biggest and brightest stars are universally recognized by the International Astronomical Union (IAU). All other stars are simply assigned an ID consisting of two letters and six numbers.

When it comes down to it, star naming companies are not as official as they'd like you to believe. Yet despite this, there is no real harm in these agencies. Though the names aren't real to the official astronomical community, they are real in the eyes of a loved one, and that's what matters. So, if your sole purpose is to make someone feel special, it isn't important whether your gift is officially recognized. "Purchasing" a star in someone's honor is a sweet, sentimental, and unique gift to give.

## A Green Spin on Space

By Jocelyn Tan  
Staff Writer

New planets, searching for life on Mars, and... fossil fuel emissions? How is NASA playing a part in the battle against global warming?

On February 23, NASA will attempt a most ambitious venture: the launching of the Orbiting Carbon Observatory (OCO), the first Earth-orbiting satellite to map carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. The OCO experiment will document 100,000 daily measurements over cities—big and small—all over the world.

NASA hopes that by determining the origins and sinks (or absorptions) of greenhouse gases, they will be able to model carbon dioxide concentrations with greater precision and accurately identify carbon dioxide generated from everyday activities. With the OCO counting down to its launch, NASA is confident the successes in this mission will become the subject of potential discussions between policymakers wanting to consider current greenhouse gas regulation policies around the globe.

To further their effort to combat global warming, NASA is putting alternative jet fuels to the test throughout February. The tests measure the performance and emissions of two synthetic fuels derived from coal and natural gas, instead of the typical petroleum-based jet fuels.

These fuels have drawn attention because they provide the energy necessary for commercial flight. If it is proven that synthetic fuels create fewer particles and other harmful emissions than standard jet fuel, then their use could improve the air quality around airports.

By: Anni H.

Host: Anni  
Welcome to Discovery Channel's "Universal Special Interview". Today we are going to talk to Astronaut Arvin Tajally live from the outer space!

So Arvin, how is it like in the outer space?

Iz aktsuly keenda haad to bweeth hera.

It's actually kinda hard to breathe here.

Come again?

Ei cownd bwiihhe!

Speechless  
um, I think it's a bit late for that...

Outer Space Tip  
#6918 ♥  
Always remember your oxygen helmet :)



# Through the Lens

a close-up look at Mitty's photographers



The multitude of jubilant faces is united by a single repeating symbol: the American flag.

## Nicholas Tran



I've never been in a city so crowded and so bursting with optimistic energy. Even the below-freezing temperatures and inclement weather could not dampen the spirits of the people, and I hope that optimism and goodwill continue to characterize this nation. Being immersed in real, concrete, evidence of our history, and at the same time experiencing the raw energy of hope for our future was awe-inspiring.

—Nick Tran

The view of the Capitol building must have been a lot better for the media, but I wanted to show the building illuminated by floodlights as a beacon in the 4 a.m. darkness.



Shallow depth-of-field emphasizes only a small portion of this piece from the Museum of American Art and prevents the textures from becoming overwhelming.



## Inauguration Special '09



The silhouetted figure in front of this installation in the Museum of American Art provides a scale for the magnitude of the piece, which depicts TV recordings from each of the 50 states.



This is the Washington Monument as seen from the WWII memorial. I framed the monument between the American flags (and, ironically, the Jumbotron screens set up for the Inauguration).



"I was walking downtown near the HP Pavillion and randomly realized the great pictures of architecture I could get."

**Nam Ho**



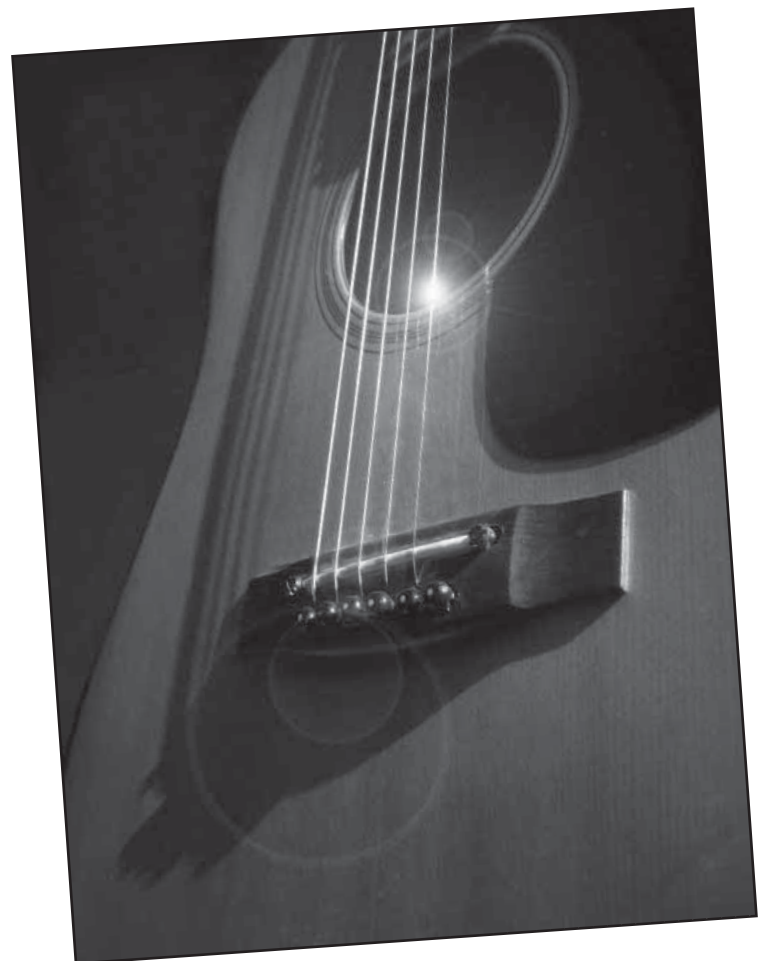
"There is a sense of love and emotion that the colors express. The water-droplets definitely add to it."

**Marissa McPeak**

# Snapshots

"The water level at Tahoe was really low. The sun and clouds were such a beautiful, fiery color that they begged to have their picture taken."

**Ryan Flanigan**



"I took this of my brother's acoustic guitar that my dad gave him from the 70's.

I love this guitar because it has an old rainbow strap and everything!"

**Monique Garrett**

Like what you see?  
If you would like to be a featured photographer in *The Monarch*, send your photographs to [photomonarch@gmail.com](mailto:photomonarch@gmail.com) and your work may be shown in an upcoming issue!



# Arts & Entertainment

## Oscar Spotlight

By Ryan Meyer and Logan Breitbart  
Editor & Staff Writer

Many film pundits criticize the Academy for its predictability in honoring sweeping romantic epics, any and all biopics, and all films concerning the Holocaust and related WWII events. But even they will admit the Academy always seems to pull off one or two shockers each year. Last year, Tilda Swinton came out of nowhere to take home the Supporting Actress prize for *Michael Clayton* over two large favorites. Now we offer our own suggestions for filling out your Oscar contest ballots, as well as whom we think should win, and who has a chance at this year's upset.

*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* looks to be the biggest loser this year. Its chances in the major categories are slim, so to compensate the Academy will pass it a few technical awards, likely Visual Effects, Costume Design, Make-Up, and Art Direction, which would make its final tally 4 wins out of 13 nominations. As far as the other smaller races go, *Waltz with Bashir*, the most acclaimed foreign-language film of the year, should and will win in its category; *Man on Wire* will most likely take home the statuette for Documentary Feature; and *Wall-E* will

dominate the Animated Feature, Sound Editing, and Sound Mixing categories, as its "green Earth" message will appeal to the liberal Academy.

There is no doubt that Heath Ledger's family will be accepting the Supporting Actor award on his behalf on Oscar Night. His performance in *The Dark Knight* is already legendary, and the Academy will not pass up the chance to honor him for both his work in that role and for his remarkable, though too brief, career. Besides this category, the comic book film's other probable win is for Cinematography.

The Supporting Actress category is the most exciting race of this year's Oscars. Kate Winslet has won the category in most of the other awards

ceremonies for her work in *The Reader*, but the Academy chose to nominate that performance in the Best Actress category instead, leaving the race wide open. This is perhaps *Doubt*'s best chance at a trophy, though its two nominated actresses, Viola Davis and Amy Adams, are likely to split votes, hurting their chances. There-

fore, Penelope Cruz from *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* is the most likely candidate to win. She has won basically all of the pre-Oscar awards that Winslet didn't, and has more buzz than Marisa Tomei in *The Wrestler*.

Don't completely count out Taraji P. Hensen of *Benjamin Button*, though—her agents have her making the rounds at talk shows and buzz for her is growing.

The Academy has shown

its unusual affinity for *The Reader*, which came out of nowhere to garner a Best Picture nomination over the heavily expected *The Dark Knight*. Kate Winslet has seen most of her awards season

nominations coming in Leading Actress categories for *Revolutionary Road* and in the Supporting Actress categories for *The Reader*.

Voters ignored these campaigns, however, and instead chose to nominate her in this category for *The Reader*. Because of this, her nomination in a way represents both performances. Considering that

and the fact that the voters love Winslet (the youngest actress to receive 6 nominations), and that she has yet to win, this should be her year. Not even mighty Meryl Streep, who has 15 nominations and 2 wins under her belt, can stop her.

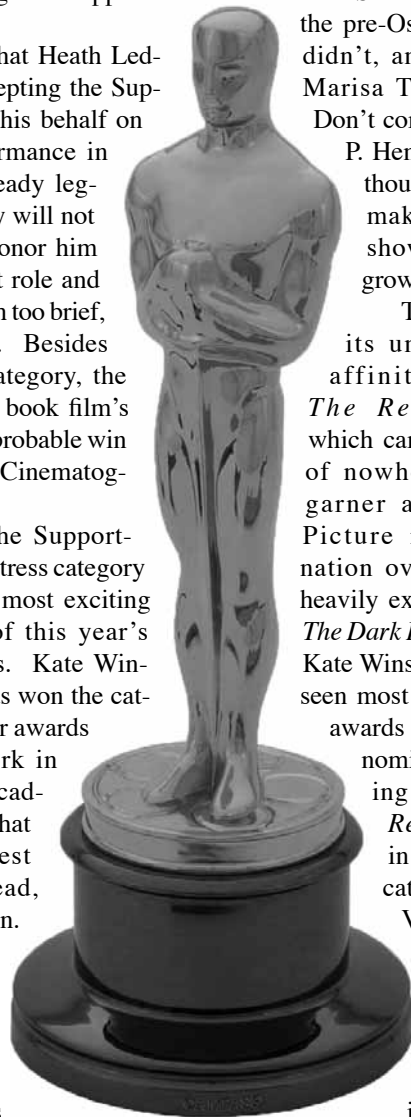
There is a race between Sean Penn of *Milk* and Mickey Rourke of *The Wrestler*, who have been dominating the category in the pre-Oscar ceremonies. We predict a win for Penn, whose performance as the first male openly gay public official, Harvey Milk, has a slight edge due to residual guilt from

the passing of Prop 8—as well, voters who want to give his film something. However, we believe Rourke to be the more deserving, since his emotionally raw por-

trayal of a fading wrestler provided the most heartrending performance all year.

*Slumdog Millionaire* will finish its sweep in Best Picture, after wins in Directing, Editing, Adapted Screenplay, and Original Score.

There is no doubt this award belongs to *Slumdog*, an inspiring fairy tale grounded in the harsh reality of the slums of Mumbai, India. Its closest competitor is most likely *Milk*, which has been gaining steam throughout the season and may prove to be the underdog story of the night.



### Simply a Beauty Contest?

By Grey Traynor  
Staff Writer

Since the Academy Awards first began, great movies have always been ignored. This has been no different in 2009, as evidenced by the lack of recognition for some of the best movies of last year, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, *Frozen River*, and *Synecdoche, New York*, which have only accumulated 3 nominations altogether (*Synecdoche* received none), but all hope may not be lost.

The process for nomination at the Academy Awards increasingly seems to be a "beauty contest," rather than a real consideration of a film's true merit. This year alone, fifty million dollars was spent on Oscar campaigning, for the movies that can afford it. The movies that receive upwards of 10 nominations are those that have the budgets big enough for elaborate advertising.

Without these tactics, a movie might as well take itself out of the running. Consider *Wendy and Lucy*, a film lauded by critics, but whose star performance by Michelle Williams got shoved aside because the producers didn't have enough money for special screenings and other forms of publicity. A great film cannot expect to win awards without the cash.

Think back to 2005, when *Ray*, a pedestrian biopic backed by industry giant Universal Studios, was nominated for Best Picture over *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, an innovative film from indie studio Focus Features that is now considered one of the best of the decade. A couple years later, Warner Bros.' crime drama *The Departed* won the big prize in a year that included the much more imaginative and fresh fantasy *Pan's Labyrinth*. Fantastic smaller movies that won over audiences and critics alike were left behind.

Then at last year's Oscars something unexpected happened: most of the winners were truly the best in their category and won for performances in "little movies that could." When Marion Cotillard won Best Actress for *La Vie En Rose*, audiences won too. Premiere American filmmakers Joel & Ethan Coen got their moment to shine, and the riveting Tilda Swinton won for *Michael Clayton*.

These victories were steps forward for the Academy—moments where true merit won out. Here's to this year continuing last year's new tradition. After all, all that glitters, isn't necessarily gold.

### Gaming Preview: Halo 3 ODST

By Scott Whitman  
Staff Writer

If there is any one game that could be said to have "sold" the XBOX 360, it would most definitely have to be Bungie Studios' *Halo 3*. So for the more than 8.1 million owners of Halo, 2009 will be a wonderful year indeed, with Microsoft set to release a new addition to the Halo series with *Halo 3: ODST*.

Set between the events of *Halo 2* and *3*, *Halo 3: ODST* casts the player as an Orbital Drop Shock Trooper (ODST), separated from his squad mates as they arrive in the city of New Mombassa, Kenya, in the midst of an invasion by the alien conglomerate known as the Covenant. With the help of the city's artificial intelligence, known as the Superintendent, the ODST sets off to find his comrades—and to kill any Covenant that get in his way.

Throughout the course of the adventure, the ODST locates beacons that offer valuable clues to each of his comrade's disappearances. Doing so triggers flashbacks that enable the player to be these missing characters, and eventually discover what happened to them.

Strangely, the Master Chief, the seemingly ubiquitous hero of the earlier *Halo* games, is nowhere to be found in *ODST*. However, the promise of controlling various new characters and experiencing the

horrors that occurred during the invasion are more than sufficient compensation.

Unlike the Master Chief, the ODST is not a seven-foot, thousand-pound armored walking tank, so he's more significantly susceptible to damage. Failing to make proper use of cover will get him killed fairly quickly, and since he's much smaller and slower than Master Chief, enemies will seem bigger and faster.

Although the ODST lacks the Chief's protective energy shielding, he can still recharge health, and carries a silenced submachine gun for stealthily eliminating enemies. He cannot dual wield, but die-hard Halo fans will be happy to know that he can make use of any weapon he finds on the battlefield.

Bungie has repeatedly and emphatically denied rumors that *ODST* will be either a squad-based fighter or a third person shooter, so expect a more or less traditional *Halo* shooter. While the stealth element will not be the sole focus of gameplay, it is clear that a more careful and tactical approach to combat will be emphasized in the final design of the game, so players must be cunning and quick on the trigger if they want to survive.

As an entertaining and challenging game that fills the gap between *Halo 2* and *Halo 3*, *ODST* is sure to satisfy veteran Halo fans.





# MONARCH CRITICS

## The Fray



By Zoya Qureshi  
Staff Writer

Three and a half years after the release of their multi-platinum album *How To Save A Life*, The Fray has come out with a new, self-titled album, featuring the single “You Found Me.”

Their previous album had tracks such as “Over My Head” and “How To Save A Life” that led to a major headlining tour and millions of fans across the country, and even in Australia and Europe.

The new album exhibits similar emotional and deep content to their debut. However, tracks from the new release like “You Found Me,” “Say When,” and “Syndicate,” aren’t as top-ten ready as those from *How to Save A Life*.

The album features a mix of soft mellow music like “Happiness” and “Never Say Never,” and louder, more free flowing songs like “Absolute” and “You Found Me.” Their emotionally rich lyrics capture pain, longing, and heartbreak, and lead singer Isaac Slade provides improved, softer vocals.

It’s unlikely that the songs on *The Fray* will ever live up to the hits the last album produced, but this new album has an emotional depth and quality that makes it worth a listen.



## Notorious



By Jon Lacson  
Staff Writer

The East Coast-West Coast rap rivalry of the ’90s could best be summed up as a bittersweet tragedy; just as the hip-hop music of that era continued to peak, the two senseless slayings of the each side’s undisputed leader—Christopher Wallace & Tupac Shakur—sent the genre into a tailspin that the industry is still yet to truly recover from.

Through with selling drugs after a nine-month incarceration, Christopher Wallace—AKA “The Notorious B.I.G.”—turns to his hidden talent of rapping. Under The Guidance of Sean “Puff Daddy” Combs’ charismatic vision, Biggie propels himself to the top of the hip-hop charts with his gritty storytelling raps and unparalleled flow, single-handedly bringing Bad Boy Records into prominence and becoming the voice of the East Coast.

As is the case with most musical biopics, the best part of this movie is definitely the soundtrack. Each Biggie song, well-covered by Jamal Woolard, epitomizes his character development and serves as a clever transition from each stage of his life to the next.

Despite a lack of memorable moments, and the sense that the story was subdued to increase the movie’s commercial success, did a great job of clearing up many aspects of Biggie’s life, allowing for a better appreciation for his work. Even for non-hip-hop fans, *Notorious* gives you an impression of the extent of Biggie’s influence on the music world, on his city, and on our generation.



## The Uninvited



By Tessa Krey  
Staff Writer

*The Uninvited* is yet another Asian horror remake, this time based on the Korean psychological drama, *A Tale of Two Sisters*.

It tells the story of Anna (Emily Browning) who is returning home to her father and older sister, Alex (Arielle Kebbel) after a stint in a mental hospital following the death of her mother. However, Anna’s happiness is jeopardized when she realizes her father is engaged to his mysterious, cruel girlfriend, Rachel (Elizabeth Banks).

The movie falls short of capturing the intensity and thrill of the original Korean film. If it were a little longer with less cheesy scares and more of the original’s creepy subtlety, *The Uninvited* would have the potential to be a really good horror film.

That being said, without comparing it to *A Tale of Two Sisters*, this movie is actually far from average. It’s still more original than most horror stories, and is one of the better Asian remakes. The acting was strong too, especially from Emily Browning of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, who was very believable as the lead.

The remake manages to follow the overall storyline of the Korean film, while adding in new plot pieces. The twist that had made *A Tale of Two Sisters* so popular with Korean audiences is slightly changed, but that doesn’t harm the plot. Despite having a couple of plot holes and seeming a bit rushed, overall *The Uninvited* was an enjoyable movie.



## The Wrestler



By Diana Avina  
Staff Writer

*The Wrestler*, a film following the story of Randy “the Ram” Robinson (Mickey Rourke), a famous wrestler in the ’80s, delves behind the scenes of a world where steroids, self-tanning, and flashy costumes are the norm.

As his dwindling career in wrestling drags on, his heart begins to fail and he is forced to retire from wrestling. But Robinson still desires the glory associated with being a wrestler and finds adjusting to the real world incredibly difficult.

Faced with the reality of dealing with his heart problem and giving up wrestling, he decides to contact his daughter, Stephanie (Evan Rachel Wood), with the help of his aging stripper friend “Cassidy” (Marisa Tomei), whose story parallels his in the way her age affects her career. After a touching scene in which he reconnects with his daughter, he disappoints her again—just one of the emotional ups and downs that characterize the film.

In the final scene in which he comes out of retirement to fight his most notable opponent at the peak of his wrestling career, he gives an inspirational speech which provides poignant insight into the mind and world of professional wrestlers. As a whole, this movie is definitely one worth watching, because of the roles so aptly played by Rourke and Tomei, the realistic, yet dramatic relationships, and portrayal of the difficulty of facing reality and life’s struggles.



## Bon Iver



By Geraldine Slevin  
Editor

After the critical acclaim and broad exposure Justin Vernon (also known as Bon Iver, an intentional misspelling of “good winter” in French) received for his first album, *For Emma, Forever Ago*, it would be easy to assume that his new, four-track EP *Blood Bank* wouldn’t live up to expectations. But this brief quartet of songs, which didn’t quite fit into the first album, defies that assumption.

*Blood Bank* is beautifully atmospheric and unexpected at times—in “Woods,” Vernon makes an unconventional choice and uses Auto-Tune, along with sweeping crescendos, to create a surprisingly enchanting, hymn-like song. The other standout track, “Blood Bank,” is haunting and delicate, and Vernon momentarily abandons the falsetto that characterized most of *For Emma* for slightly more raw, deeply emotional vocals. The escalating piano on “Babys” and the gentle, mellow harmonies on “Beach Baby” pull the whole album together as a sweetly melancholy vignette of heartache and nostalgia.

*Blood Bank* is not as complete as Bon Iver’s first album, and it doesn’t have the sense of unity and continuity that made *For Emma* such a pleasure to listen to, but it is nonetheless a beautifully unique, memorable collection of songs from an incredibly talented artist.



## Waltz with Bashir



By Nicole Haaser  
Staff Writer

*Waltz with Bashir*, a 2009 Academy Award Nominated best foreign language film, is unquestionably groundbreaking. The film is classified as an “animated documentary,” following the unveiling of memories long since repressed by writer, director, and producer, Ari Folman, a former infantry soldier in the Israel Defense Forces.

Folman is delicate in his pursuit of the truth, careful not to pinpoint damage inflicted by the first Lebanon War of the early eighties on any particular faction. Instead, the focal point is the horror of war in general, particularly since the kind of war portrayed in *Waltz with Bashir* is in the hands of very young men, often unaware of their actions and the consequences—young men forced to fight clumsily in a war that isn’t theirs.

The film itself is done in a combination of traditional animation, which mimics the style of a graphic novel and flash animation.

*Waltz with Bashir* has received widespread critical acclamation, even from rebellious communities in Lebanon, who insisted upon screening the film despite government bans. All of this, in combination with the original score composed by Mike Richter, makes *Waltz with Bashir* an indisputable masterpiece.





# SPORTS

## Women's Basketball: Fighting Their Way to the Top Once Again

By **Mona Patel**  
Staff Writer

The Archbishop Mitty Women's Basketball Team is at it again, doing a phenomenal job on the court. Their record stood at 17-7 overall and 9-3 in league as of February 16. The team is currently ranked second in CCS.

The Monarchs began the season with the LJCD Sweet 16 Tournament in early December. They faced vigorous competition, leaving the tournament with two wins and two losses.

After defeating Deer Valley and St. Francis, the Monarchs lost a hard-fought match against Carondelet by four points. Following a few more wins, the Monarchs participated in the Archbishop Mitty's New Year Classic, beating Los Altos and Monte Vista, but falling to Oak Ridge.

The Monarchs cruised through WCAL play, winning by as much as forty-one points in a game against St. Francis. After accruing five wins, the team then suffered its first league loss against Sacred Heart Cathedral, 47-37, a team that defeated the Monarchs again last weekend 64-51.

The team bounced back from the first Sacred Heart loss, crushing Presentation, St. Ignatius, and St. Francis, but then suffering a surprising loss to Valley Christian, a team they had previously beaten by twelve.

Despite losing four seniors last year, the team still has eight returning players.

Junior center Elizabeth Gordon says, "Losing [those seniors] is always going to be tough, but we are resilient and have not let that affect this year's play. Everyone is coming into their own and showing how they contribute to the team, including the two new additions, [freshmen]



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

**Senior Keilani Ricketts drives past the defender toward the basket.**

Amanda Lovely and Courtney Lisowski."

The players certainly have stepped up to meet the challenge. Sophomore guard Ashley Watson leads the team in scoring, averaging just under 11 points per game. Senior Keilani Ricketts is setting the pace in field goal percentage, and Elizabeth Gordon leads in rebounds.

Other players on the team are getting a chance to show their skills as well, with all players on the bench being

granted game time.

The Mitty team has a lot to live up to, having won the state title twice over the last two years. However, they are not letting the pressure get to them.

Instead, junior forward Courtney Wilson comments, "We are just focusing on pushing ourselves and playing to our personal best."

The players have a definite chemistry on court, working well with each other to execute Coach Sue Phillips game plans.

Gordon further expands on the team mentality, explaining, "We are all very positive and supportive of one another. It's more of a family than it is a team. We try to give one hundred percent one hundred percent of the time and motivate each other to give the best possible."

Over the course of the season, the communication between the team members has improved significantly, enabling them to work cohesively and improve their execution of both offense and defense.

A particular strength of this year's team is the versatility of its players.

Junior guard Classye James reveals, "Our diversity makes us extremely successful. We have great post players who rebound, protect the basket, and hit threes. At the same time, we have quick and athletic guards who can not only relieve pressure and hit open shots, but in some instances they can rebound like post players."

The team has also attracted the attention of scouts, as James has verbally committed to Oregon State University, and Iman Scott to Santa Clara University.

The path towards victory has been paved, and the Monarchs will hopefully continue with the success they have enjoyed so far.

## Women's Soccer: Lady Monarchs Dominate the Field

By **Josh Ferguson**  
Staff Writer

Last year, the Archbishop Mitty women's soccer team was one of the best in Northern California, winning WCAL and coming close to capturing the coveted CCS title.

However, while the prior year's team was stacked with talented seniors, Mitty's current team can boast of only two among its team of twenty-six.

Even so, the Lady Monarchs have set their goals high, hoping to win both WCAL and CCS in the 2008-2009 season.

As Coach Hanley says, "We want to prove that we're not a rebuilding team," as their underclassman-oriented roster may suggest.

Indeed, the younger players have proved themselves worthy of the varsity team. Facing stiff competition, the Monarchs have worked non-stop since the season's beginning, practicing over two hours a day in hopes of returning to a dominant position in league play.

"In the WCAL there are no weak teams. St. Francis is our rival, but we have to come out and play our best every week," explains Coach Hanley.

Their unwavering focus seems to be paying off. As senior Korie Soares explains, "There has been a lot of improvement."

Her teammates agree, including junior

Jenna Olsen, who adds, "It's hard because we all came from different teams... we didn't have experience playing together."

However, while these Monarchs may be young, they are returning to the dominant form that nearly led them to the CCS title last year with the aid of both sophomores and freshmen. Of course, with such high expectations comes heavy pressure.

Sophomore Alana Sooy says, "I feel like I have to play better to fill the shoes of the seniors from last year."

Nonetheless, the women's team has remained tight-knit throughout the season. The consensus within the team is that the closer they become, the better they play with each other.

As one of four talented freshmen, Natalie Ogden, puts it, "We started out a little slow, but as the season progressed we got better and better."

Despite a disappointing loss in their home opener to the Los Gatos Wildcats, they have recovered quickly, moving from seventh place to second in WCAL.

The turning point, explained Korie Soares, was the Monarch's stunning victory against first place St. Ignatius earlier in season play. After remaining tied 0-0 for the majority of the game, Lauren Heer scored two breathtaking goals in the last ten minutes leading to a big win for the Monarchs. The Monarchs then defeated Notre

Dame-Belmont and Valley Christian, but hit a bump in the road with back-to-back losses to Carondelet and St. Francis.

The team rebounded from this skid with a 5-0 rout of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

After a 1-1 draw with St. Ignatius, Mitty triumphed over Presentation, 4-1.

The Monarchs continue to top the rankings with a 2-1 win over Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Goals by Sophomore Michaela Matulich and Junior Kylie Mulcaire kept the team in the lead with assists by Sophomores Brianne Lopiccolo and Matulich. The team lost to



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

**Sophomore Brianne Lopiccolo takes a shot on the open net.**

rival St. Francis in the semifinal, but awaits a CCS bid.



## Player Profile

# Ben Paulides

## Ice Hockey

By Neil Jariwalla  
Staff Writer

**Q: In which areas do you need to improve?**

**A:** I think that I can always be better in all areas of my game. That is why I go into my backyard everyday and shoot a couple hundred pucks and stick handle with a golf ball for ten or fifteen minutes.

**Q: What is your role on the ice/in the locker room?**

**A:** I try to be a leader and role model for the younger and older guys alike. On the ice I am usually expected to get a point a game and quarterback the power play. Also I am expected to clear out the front of the net and play overall solid defense.

**Q: How do you stand out in such a team-oriented sport?**

**A:** It is actually the team that makes me look good. Without them I would be nothing. If they did not pass me the puck at the right time or support me in the right place, I wouldn't look good to the scouts.

**Q: What is your positioning right now (with the NHL Draft)?**

**A:** If I were to get drafted this year, I would be one of the youngest kids. The San Jose Sharks are watching me closely since I am so close to home, and I think it would be a dream come true if I could get drafted by home team (and to my hometown).

**Q: Have you been contacted by other teams?**

**A:** I was already put on the protected list for a WHL team (the Lethbridge Hurricanes) and was asked to come up there and play before the trade deadline; I declined in order to finish senior year. Also, earlier this week a team from the USHL asked me to come and play for them for the playoff push. However, I declined.

**Q: Overall, what are your options?**

**A:** There are two routes that a player like myself could take. I could either take the semi-professional route (WHL) and lose my NCAA college eligibility and then hopefully make it as a professional. Or I could go to one year of junior hockey (USHL) then go to college for at least a year, and then get signed, and play as a professional in the NHL or AHL.

**Q: How are colleges treating you with all the professional attention you have been garnering?**

**A:** I have started to get recruited by colleges who will be wanting me to verbally commit. Currently, I am in the recruiting process with Princeton, Notre Dame, Bowling Green, Mercyhurst, and few others.

# Men's Basketball: Team Staying Strong as Season Ends

By Ayman Ullah &  
Arjun Ravishankar  
Staff Writers

When the year opened, the Archbishop Mitty Men's Basketball team faced adversity and a horde of new challenges as they suffered from the departure of key players that contributed to last year's success.

But with a new coach and the addition of several new players, the Mitty basketball program is on the rise again.

With a 15-9 overall record (9-5 in league play) the Mitty basketball team sits in 4th place in the competitive WCAL.

Led by players such as Brandon Scott, one of the top scorers in the WCAL, Patrick Fletcher, and Dalton Gary, both leaders in scoring and rebounding, the Monarchs have made impressive progress.

The addition of a new coach, Tim Kennedy, due to the resignation of Coach Brian Eagleson, has been seamless.

"He's very demanding yet calm, he makes us work hard every day," says sophomore guard Colin Wan.

Although tough, Coach Kennedy pushes his team, and it seems to have paid off as the Monarchs have come together.

Wan says, "We play hard and have bonded together."

Although the Monarchs may not meet the high-flying standard



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

Junior Stephen Meade heads down the court in a WCAL contest.

of the State finals of the past two years, there is still optimism as new leaders have emerged in the program.

"The younger players are getting a taste of the physical WCAL and the intense preparation it takes to be successful," says Coach Kennedy.

The Monarchs have certainly stepped up their game as they achieved a monumental win against the undefeated St. Francis Men's basketball team.

Despite their previous 64-45 loss to Saint Francis earlier in the season, they came back and proved themselves with a 68-66

win. Mitty continued their winning ways, defeating Riordan, Serra, and Valley Christian convincingly.

"The biggest challenge for us is consistency," says Kennedy, "we show spurts when we are very good, but we have not been able to maintain that high level for four quarters."

This inconsistency is reflected in close games against Bellarmine College Preparatory, both losses within a five and eight point margin. Many of the key matchups have not gone the Monarchs way, but with their new strategy they are coming together at the right time.

"My game plan is what our program is built on: defense, rebounding, and hustle," says Kennedy.

The aspects which Coach Kennedy firmly believes in are the core attributes of a successful program. This hardcore style of play proves useful as the Monarchs hold many teams to a low shooting percentage.

Much of the defensive strength comes from strong play by key big men such as seniors Patrick Fletcher and Dalton Gary and scrappy guard play from seniors Brandon Scott and Stevie Calderon.

The Monarchs look to the WCAL and CCS playoffs with their new leadership and style on the court.

# Men's Soccer: Rounding Out a Successful Season

By Jaslyn Johnson  
Staff Writer

Archbishop Mitty has always been well known for its phenomenal soccer program, and the men's soccer team has certainly upheld this legacy. For five consecutive seasons, the Men's Varsity Soccer Team has competed in the CCS playoffs, and in 2005 and 2006 they were named CCS Division II Champions.

Going into this season, despite multiple pre-season injuries, they had understandably high expectations.

The team unanimously agreed that in order to achieve their goal of winning CCS, they had to stay motivated and continue to work toward building team chemistry on and off the field.

Although being a team with a diverse set of skills is what distinguishes the Monarchs from others, junior Giovanni Pomposo states, "We need to leave individual talents behind and unite."

When asked about the competition they would face in CCS, junior Noel Balce described it as "highly competitive," but the players don't seem to be too worried about it.

Says senior Orlando Villa, "Our team's strength is definitely our skill. We are hands



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

Senior Justin Mogannam dribbles the ball down the field.

down one of the best teams."

The players believe that their solid defense and skilled offense will get them far.

The team's defensive players have only allowed 7 goals to get past them, while the formidable offensive players have racked up 32 goals so far this season.

Notable achievements on the team include the MVP prize awarded to junior Kevin Peach in the De La Salle Tournament, as well as Kevin Atkins' recent commitment to Cal Poly San Luis Obispo on a soccer scholarship. Atkins leads the league in goals, having scored 11 goals in 14 games as of February 16.

The Monarchs have tasted success in the WCAL, earning a 8-3-3 record (10-6-4 overall), and a third-place finish in the hotly-contested league. Despite ending the regular season with losses to Bellarmine and St. Ignatius, both of which finished ahead of Mitty in WCAL, the Monarchs' post-season promises to be one wrought with intensity.

The Monarchs hope for a CCS bid after an unusually early exit in the WCAL Playoffs. After a 1-1 tie with Sacred Heart Cathedral in the quarterfinals, Mitty lost 5-4 in penalty kicks.

"We will compete against some good teams and it will be a challenge for us, but I believe our team is strong enough to do very well," declares Senior Keith Grubisich.



# Close-up Participants Witness History

## Student Reactions to the Inauguration

Maria Palma & Olivia Tran  
Staff Writers

While over 1,000 Mitty students sat in the relative warmth and comfort of their homerooms to view President Obama's inaugural address, sixty other Mitty students waited in 16 degree weather in Washington, D.C. to witness firsthand the making of history.

On Tuesday, January 20, Barack Obama took the oath of office, becoming the 44th president, and the first African-American, to do so.

On the scene were Mitty students participating in a program called Close-Up, which organized an educational and recreational 6-day trip to Washington D.C. for students from across the nation.

Students visited the monuments, memorials, and museums of American antiquity—and, of course, attended the event that marked the start of America's new future.

Even from 3,000 miles away, the impact of the inauguration could be felt in San Jose, but for the students at the epicenter, it was simply incredible.

"It felt like all 1.8 million of us were like one huge family. Even though we had to wake up at 2:15 in the morning and stand in freezing weather for over 10 hours, it was worth it," said senior Rishab Kumar.

Senior Jennifer Campbell, who did not support Obama in the election, agreed with Kumar and said she "found the inauguration to epitomize what Obama has so strongly campaigned for—hope" and "appreciated his honest approach to the struggles ahead."

Many Americans, as well as citizens of other nations, would agree that our country needs change. Most hope that the new President will lead the nation's transformation.



Photo Courtesy of Katherine Edgcombe

For many of the students who participated, the changes experienced were more personal than political.

Senior Annie Nalesnik commented, "It gave me a new perspective of other people from around the United States; in particular, how they react to certain issues."

She remembered that during a gay rights debate that the Close-Up program organized, each individual from every state became involved and readily gave their opinions.

"People really represented their state's stance on the issue we discussed," she said.

For most students, witnessing the inauguration certainly captured their attention; however, some students also felt unsatisfied with Close-Up as a whole.

"I don't necessarily recommend going on Close-Up," says Jennifer Campbell. "You can be treated childishly. Wait till you can go to D.C. with your friends on your own. You'll get more out of it that way."

Annie Nalesnik felt that it was not the program that made the experience special, but more the "experiencing and seeing what [she] had read in history textbooks, like seeing Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*."

As for the workshops that were a daily part of the Close-Up program, many students found the material

had already been covered during Mitty's social science courses.

Still, Close-Up allowed Mitty students to discover and develop a new appreciation for their country and their government. President Barack Obama saw America as "bigger than the sum of our individual ambitions; greater than all the differences of birth or wealth or faction."

In the end, every American, young or old, plays a part in America's future—and every student present at the inauguration was there to see this future put into motion.



Photo Courtesy of Kyle Hansen

Corporal Hansen during active duty in Afghanistan.

## PURPLE HEART *continued from page 1*

"Life in America is not comparable to life in Afghanistan," he said. Some of the starkest differences are "our houses, the resources we have, the opportunities to create our own lives."

"People say our economy sucks—maybe it does, but I'd take what we have here to what they have any day," he said.

Corporal Hansen joined the Marines his sophomore year of college after playing two years of baseball at San Jose City college. He also played football and baseball at Mitty.

"It was a big thing for me being out there without family and friends... it definitely made me go back to my roots," said Hansen.

Mitty instilled values of faith and leadership, values he didn't expect to be using quite so soon, he said.

"The strong community they provided while I was at Mitty also translated into friends and family being extremely supportive sending car packages, letters of encouragement, and their daily thoughts and prayers. The smallest thought goes a long way when you are far from home," said Corporal Hansen.

Corporal Hansen will be honored this month with a purple heart—one of only six in his platoon. He is currently stationed at the Marine Corps Air Station in San Diego and is expecting another deployment soon.

Currently about 3,000 Marines are serving in Afghanistan.

## Mr. MILLER *continued from page 1*

Although Mr. Miller would probably have hated this tribute in his honor, he kept every single note his students gave him before they graduated each summer.

"He would be embarrassed by these sentiments, though his life was marked by an unusual compassion for others and a sense of dedication to his community," said senior Nick Tran, a student in Mr. Miller's AP chemistry class.

Mr. Miller's desire to see hard-working students succeed was only matched by his personal intelligence.

"He was just a very, very smart guy. He knew his stuff very well and he conveyed it just short of telepathically," remembers, Benjamin Lau from the class of 2004.

Senior Ian Davis, who was one of Mr. Miller's AP chemistry students said, "It was probably the hardest class I've ever taken...Most of us were struggling to stay afloat in his class—but then we got to the AP test, and it was a breeze...and most of us got 5's," top scores on the AP test.

Mr. Miller was that teacher in the science lab who could explain everything. When senior Nick Bruno wanted to earn an "A" in chemistry, he went straight to Mr. Miller.

"I don't think he thought I was going to come every day to see

him, but he warmed up to it after a while—I mean, he used to shut his door during lunch, but then he kept it open because he knew I was coming," said Bruno.

With a desk located just inside the science lab now named in his honor, Mr. Miller was always easy to find. He had published hours in the science lab, but his students never really knew what they were, because he made himself constantly available to them.

Even after being diagnosed with terminal cancer in the spring of 2008, Mr. Miller finished his year of teaching at Mitty. With a degree of sarcastic cynicism, he would tell any student that fell asleep in his class that he was dying of cancer, and the least they could do was pay attention.

Senior Ryan Flannigan remembers, "Anytime he was absent for a class, we would ask him where he was, and his response would always be 'Vacationing in the tropics with my trophy wife.'"

Although Mr. Miller didn't return to school as a teacher in the fall of 2008, he never really retired from Mitty, because he had become so much a part of the community.

He returned to the science lab at least five times throughout the school year to talk with colleagues

about students and classes. In the fall, seniors like Rachel Downey and Justin Nguyen wrote their college essays about the influence this man had on their lives. At the senior divisional liturgy, Ian Davis reflected on how Mr. Miller's choice to teach at Mitty impacted the direction his own life was taking.

"He wasn't there because it was a job or it wasn't because he failed in the private sector and this was his back-up plan... this wasn't his hobby during retirement either... He had the option to be a Stanford pharmaceutical doctor and he chose us instead," said Davis.

On Friday January 30, Mr. Phil Miller returned to Mitty to celebrate a Science Department birthday and say good-bye to the students and faculty he loved. Five days before his death, he sat in the science lab with his colleagues discussing the finer points of a student's lab notebook.

On February 4th, 2009, the Archbishop Mitty community lost a member of its family. He was a quietly great man, who cared very deeply for his students and the faculty with whom he had so often collaborated.

Archbishop Mitty is a better school because he spent 28 years here. Thank you, Mr. Miller, for choosing to teach.

## THE MONARCH

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& Mr. Craig Whitt

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*The Monarch* is published for the students, faculty, and parents of Archbishop Mitty High School.