



Behind the Scenes: Black and Gold

Mitty Students, 'Heavy Metal and A Slide Trombone'

Mitty Puts On a Successful Black and Gold 2009

By Olivia Tran and Emily Chu
News Editors

Date: November 14, 2009. Time: 18:00. Location: The Fairmont Hotel. Our mission (and we had chosen to accept it) was to infiltrate Mitty's annual Black and Gold gala, an event notorious for not allowing the attendance of students other than those performing as entertainment for the evening. Dressed stealthily in all black, we were able to slip into the hotel unnoticed through the air ducts. At 18:30, we could hear the melodies of the Jazz Choir emanating from the cocktail lounge. We dropped down from the ceiling vents with perfect composure, quickly assimilating with the crowd and wearing our disguises in the form of cocktail dresses and friendly smiles.

Well, perhaps it wasn't quite that dramatic. Regardless, Black and Gold is still one of Mitty's most important fund raising functions. When it began in 1992, Mr. Brosnan wanted to find a way to "gather the Mitty community for a night of celebration and fun."

Black and Gold always has a theme, and this year's was the School of Rock. "It started with Mr. Kimont and I sitting down together and finding a theme that works with the talent in the Mitty community. This year, we knew we had a few phenomenal guitarists, so we decided to incorporate rock and roll," said Mr. Brosnan. Previous themes have included movie soundtracks and *American Idol*.

Black and Gold's program is split into two portions: the musical portion and the feature act, usually a comedian or celebrity. This year, it was actor, singer, and comedian Martin Short. "It's really evolved," said Mr. Brosnan, "Literally, at first it was Exodus, the jazz choir, or the jazz band playing for ten minutes before the show." Now, the student show has become one of the main features.

Appropriately, the night opened with The Who's *Baba O'Riley* (alternatively and better known as *Teenage Wasteland*). Covering an expansive set list of 20 songs, singers Adrienne Eller, Michelle Martinelli, Ethan Fang, and Matt Hill truly transformed the Fairmont into Mitty's own School of Rock. The singers were accompanied by a combination of Exodus and the Jazz Band.

The genius behind the music was none other than Mr. Kimont, who came up with this year's concept, School of Rock. Mr. Kimont's process in deciding what songs to play and in what order proved difficult. He said, "I can't tell you how many ideas and songs I started with. There were 71 different tracks!" After deciding on a set list, he began writing arrangements for each song, including



Photo Courtesy of Prolmage

Members of Exodus and the Jazz Band provide rockin' evening entertainment at the Fairmont in downtown San Jose.

instruments and vocals. In response to this, Mr. Kimont said, "I've been writing since August. Each minute of a song takes at least an hour to arrange, and the whole show totaled over 40 hours of work."

Interspersed throughout this energetic live performance were hysterical snippets of pre-recorded video. These videos were a relatively recent addition to the Black and Gold experience. Mr. Santana, who has been working on the video feature since its first appearance four years ago, said of the experience, "It's like presenting your child to the world to judge. Mr. Silva and I spend the whole show watching the audience's reaction." Mr. Silva, who worked on the event for the first time this year, added, "We were able to see the jokes that don't work and the jokes that do."

"The whole process in creating the videos was very fluid," said Mr. Silva. A brainstorming session between Mr. Brosnan, Mr. Silva, Mr. Santana, and Mr. Kimont resulted in the decision that a pre-recorded host would add to the audience's experience. "Mr. Brosnan wanted a way to incorporate Mitty alumni," said Mr. Santana. Emmy award-winning television newscaster Ms. Julie Watts worked with Mr. Santana and Mr. Silva to film her

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A Perspective from the Stage: Guitarist Ryan Fernandez and Drummer James Alens

How did you prepare for Black and Gold?

Ryan: We started two weeks before the event. We had to get up really early to practice with the jazz band. It was the easiest Black and Gold that I've participated in, though. It was all rock music, and classic rock is what we all play.

What's it like, being onstage?

Ryan: When you're onstage, it's like an out-of-body experience. Afterwards, you don't remember anything.
James: You get an adrenaline rush—it feels really good.

What was your favorite part of the show?

Ryan: The Guns and Roses song was my favorite. I wasn't in costume for the rest of the show, but for that one, I got to dress up as Slash.

James: I thought the Who set was great as a whole.

Can you tell us about your solos?

Ryan: They were on-the-spot improvisations. I have a general idea of what I want to play, but it's different every time.

Beyond Traditional Turkeys

An Interdenominational Thanksgiving Liturgy

By Payam Mirfendereski and Sumedh Guha
Staff Writers

With busy sports schedules, stressful tests, and looming applications, we often slip into ingratitude and forget about our many blessings. This past Thanksgiving, Mitty was determined to remind students of these many blessings, through an interdenominational approach. On Wednesday, November 25, Campus Ministry organized a new kind of liturgy for Thanksgiving. The aim: recognizing God's gifts not just from a Catholic perspective, but also from a variety of religions.

Mr. Scott, who was in charge of the liturgy, explained, "The liturgy is a time for focusing on our connections in our religion rather than our differences." He

also emphasized, "Every religion connects with God's gifts. We should understand the similarities between all religions."

Campus Ministry together with the liturgy class helped to set up the liturgy and arranged for representatives from different faith traditions to come and speak about how their religion relates to peace and thanksgiving. The speakers included Mitty's Father Jack Russi representing the Catholic faith; Brother Isa for the Muslim faith; Rabbi Melanaie Aron for the Jewish faith; Reverend Mark Pinto for the Shinnyo-en Buddhist faith; and Rebecca Kuiken representing the Presbyterian faith. These speakers recited passages from their religions' sacred texts, relating their religion to the common celebration

of Thanksgiving.

The goal of this liturgy was to expose students to diverse religious traditions and their respective views on God and peace. Mr. Scott concluded, "We are trying to make Mitty students peacemakers throughout their community and the world."



Olivia Tran

OPINIONS

Opposing Viewpoints: The War in Afghanistan

IT IS TIME TO END THE WAR

By **Manosai Eerabathini**
Staff Writer

In 2001 the seemingly overwhelming dangers of terrorism were an imminent issue that demanded prompt response especially after 9/11. The most appropriate action to many Americans may have been to pursue a direct line of retribution by declaring a war on Afghanistan as President Bush did on Oct. 8 of that same year. During this time, the clear goal of the Afghani campaign was a two-part objective: 1) To seek and eliminate Osama bin Laden as a leader and symbol of extremist terrorism and 2) To advance the global war against insurgency by removing the Taliban from that nation.

Yet in the years since then, neither goal has been definitively accomplished, raising the question of why America is still in Afghanistan. As President Obama stepped into the footsteps of his controversial predecessor, one substantial issue was prevalent: would he decrease or increase troops in Afghanistan?

As he announced to the American public at a Dec. 1 address from West Point, Obama ordered 30,000 troops to Afghanistan in the coming months. In essence, this decision prolongs American involvement in Afghanistan for an extended period of time, possibly ten years according to some experts. As we attempt to recover from the fiscal crises of the past year, extending this costly war should not be the highest of American priorities.

Obama recognized this widespread concern about costly expenditures and death tolls as he highly publicized his views for pulling out of Iraq. However, since he assumed the role as the President, his steadfast determination to increase the number of troops in Afghanistan has directly contradicted his international reputation as a beacon of change. Over the past three months, his hesitation over Afghanistan manifested itself in a total of nine meetings with his war-council.

Nevertheless, recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his ability “to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples”, Obama has undeniable pressure to act according to the title as this decision by the Norwegian Nobel Committee may have been a subtle hint for Obama to begin his withdrawal efforts. Ultimately this attempt was in vain, as Obama begins to pick up where Bush left off with the Global War on Terrorism.

Thus far in his presidency, Obama has authorized increasing U.S. troops by 21,000 to Afghanistan, which results in a total of 68,000 U.S. forces by the end of 2009.

But with the war’s growing unpopularity, he made a conscious effort in his public address to convince an increasingly skeptical nation of our responsibility to finish the job we started by “[bringing] the war to a successful conclusion.” Consistent with his characteristic ideals of optimism, Obama intends on winning this nation’s support by reuniting us under an identifiable cause.

However, the transformation of Obama from an internationally conciliatory figure to a wartime president could prove to be fatal as these war efforts could possibly tarnish his administration for the rest of his years

in the White House.

The United States has spent more than \$223 billion in Afghanistan since 2001 with annual costs of around \$65 billion. The estimated cost of the new troop additions is put at one million dollars per additional troop per year.

In addition to this staggering amount, over 900 U.S. soldiers have been killed in Operation Enduring Freedom while thousands have been wounded in battle. According to the San Jose Mercury News, for each soldier deployed to Afghanistan for a one-year assignment, around twenty schools could be built in the same nation. The militaristic efforts to debilitate the Taliban can no longer be viewed as the sole objective of significance. The real task should be to take up diplomacy to put Afghanistan back on its feet with a self-sufficient government.



If the initial goal was to eliminate the Al-Qaeda from the country, this has already been to some degree achieved with the terrorist group retreating to the mountains of Pakistan. The new approach to the continuing war should involve removing the top military officials, Gen. Stanley McChrystal and Gen. David Petraeus, both of whom insist on supplementing already present U.S. troops to ensure a victory.

Considering the power of the Taliban in rural areas, the U.S. should arrange for a negotiation perhaps in the medium of an international Bonn II conference to ensure that a temporary regime can hold Afghanistan’s reins until a more definitely outlined government is established. The final step in this approach would require a scheme that is reminiscent of the Marshall Plan, guaranteeing that the rebuilding efforts of the nation are assisted financially to repair a thoroughly damaged economy.

The bottom line is that the US must begin to take immediate steps to definitively end the war in Afghanistan. As we come to realize that straightforward victory is no longer a viable option, Obama must pave the path for gradual pullout of troops by focusing on efforts to stabilize the Afghani government with a genuine and strong democracy.

Winning over the American support might be a difficult task for Obama but popular disapproval of continuing this war shows that the American people have made up their mind: adding troops only exacerbates an issue already thoroughly damaged by the previous president.

LEAVING NOT AN OPTION

By **Eugene Woo**
Staff Writer

Afghanistan is a human rights mission. The terrorist organization al-Qaeda and the religious extremist Taliban have waged a war against the Western world. The troops of America and its allies in Afghanistan are fighting for the rights of the innocent people in the Western world, who have been killed arbitrarily based on religious fanaticism.

Al-Qaeda, which came onto the international scene with the 1993 World Trade Center bombings, has since been responsible for terrorist attacks on Western interests and people in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. The men and women fighting in Afghanistan fight to protect such murders from occurring in the future.

Not only do they only fight for the

committed by al-Qaeda, and the oppressive regime of the Taliban, cannot be allowed to continue. The world cannot stand for such horrendous acts of terrorism. There is no option to cave in. The Afghanistan government and the Afghani people have thrown in their full effort to stop the Taliban. Is it not only fair that we throw in a reasonable effort as well? This cannot be another Somalia, where we lose heart at a tiny setback, and doom hundreds of thousands of people to preventable destruction.

Since the commencement of Operation Enduring Freedom (a span of eight years), the United States has lost 930 men, and the coalition has lost 1530. But the Afghan people have lost tens of thousands of their brothers, mothers, mayors, teachers, and many others, not even counting the thousands more soldiers and policemen who gave their lives for their country.

Add the millions killed in the three previous decades of violence, civil war, and Taliban regime, and Afghanistan becomes one of the deadliest places to live in the latter end of global history. This raises a disturbing revelation about the Western world. What will cause us to rise for the sake of others? If genocide in Rwanda doesn’t rouse us, but an attack on our own soil does, will America come to the rescue of anyone other than itself?

Furthermore, as the creators of this problem, it is our responsibility to rectify it. In an effort to combat the Soviet threat in the 1980s, and purely out of our own interests, we armed the Taliban with military equipment, the same equipment now used to kill their own people, the same weapons distributed to thousands of fanatics bent on doing violence.

Responding to the increased activity of the Taliban in the past few months, the commander of forces in Afghanistan, Stanley McChrystal, asked for the allocation of more troops to fight the escalating violence. We have committed more troops to the fight with much hesitation. Our complacency bred in the years of superiority has become a surprising obstacle in realizing our idealistic goals. We want a world free of injustice, but we ourselves are unwilling to fight injustice ourselves, at least not when it involves giving up something of our own.

Our military leaders and political advisers have revised their strategies. Learning from previous mistakes, they are now ready to fight an even more successful military campaign, establish a more stable Afghan government and economy, and are poised to pull off a great victory.

This fight determines whether, sixty years later, Afghanistan prospers as a free nation of its own, or the world seethes with anger at another botched American “rescue attempt.” How wronged would I feel if I stood and watched my home burn, but the firemen refused to approach it because the fire was too dangerous!

If our generals believe we need more troops, it is right that we have sent those troops? They are not being sent to their deaths, or for no reason. In this war at least, when a soldier sends a letter back home, he or she can truly say that all has been given in the defense of freedom and in the defense of the country we love.

rights of Western people, but the coalition also fights to liberate millions of oppressed Afghans. For decades, human rights have been suppressed by the Taliban, who also did nothing to solve the major ethnic divisions within the country. The strictly conservative Taliban has brought a new meaning to gender injustice, and a level of religious suppression not seen since the days of the Spanish Inquisition. As the allied troops ousted the Taliban, they exposed the iron-fisted regime the Taliban conducted, holding millions of people starved of basic freedoms, such as the freedoms of speech, religion, and press. Since the downfall of the Taliban, Operation Enduring Freedom has striven to ensure that the Afghani people achieve democracy and freedom.

But the fight is not over for the Afghani people. The Taliban has begun a renewed offensive. But the Taliban also knows well that the Afghani people will not submit without a fight. Instead, they will target the people of the Western world, trying to break their spirit, because the Taliban know that they have no chance of breaking the spirit of the Afghani people. The death toll of allied soldiers has risen, and the military is pushed on multiple fronts. The United Nations has been targeted, just like they were in Iraq.

The most important fact is the recognition that the war in Afghanistan is not, in any sense, the war in Iraq. The majority of the Afghans support us unwaveringly. There is no moral, political, or economic ambiguity. We have the moral and military high ground. The unjustifiable acts of terrorism

BE NOT A BYSTANDER

What We Can Learn from the Richmond Rape Incident

By **Kim Tran**
Staff Writer

Responsibility is a scary thing. Apparently so scary that most of us will defer it at all cost. We humans suffer from what experts call the “bystander effect,” a phenomenon which suggests that “when in a group, people are less likely to help someone in trouble because they pass on the responsibility to someone else.” It’s a feeling of detachment, the idea that I don’t have to help because someone else will. Sound crazy? Alas, it is very common, and should be brought to light, especially following the beating and rape of a 15-year-old outside of her Homecoming Dance in Richmond, CA.

The girl reportedly was intoxicated, beaten, and raped for two hours, as onlookers whipped out their dandy cell phones, took videos, and cheered on the violation of a young girl’s humanity. Since when did

rape become a spectator sport?

We as humans have come a long way from our Cro-Magnon predecessors. We have become experts at controlling our Freudian Ids. We are a civilized race.

That is not what was displayed that night. Police speculate that up to twenty people may have either participated or watched the crime occur without any report. It was not until two hours later, after numerous texts were sent out, that a person who was not even present at the scene had the sense to call for help and the girl was sent to the hospital.

The school, inexplicably, will not accept any responsibility for this tragedy. Marin Trujillo, spokesman for the school district, protested, “Once the child leaves the dance, we don’t take them home,” ignoring the fact that the crime occurred in the school’s courtyard, and was obviously in part due to the lack of security present. School administrators have taken

to blaming parents and the city police who were assigned to ensuring security inside the dance. Parents in the district, for their part, are placing the blame squarely on the school, although the poor security was partly due to a lack of parent volunteers for the dance.

Just as no one in the days leading up to the attack was willing to be responsible for student safety, no one now will accept any blame for what happened. Responsibility currently resides in a sort of purgatory, unable to rest anywhere as fingers continue to point every which way.

Where responsibility truly lies is with the lack of humanity we humans are showing. We should probably look at the deeper problem in this situation. Look to ourselves and realize that we allowed this to occur. As Saundra Young, co-founder of Loved Ones of Homicide Victims says, “I think we have become a country of spectators. The violence many young

people see just doesn’t reach the area of their humanness that says there is a real person being treated that way.”

While four suspects have been arrested and charged, they are not the only guilty ones. Those who stared and cheered and recorded are all to blame as well, even if they did not directly participate in the violence.

We should be ashamed that humanity can even come to this. Where was our “moral progress” for this young girl? This incident highlights a major failing of our society.

Maybe we can learn something from this horrendous act. Maybe we should not simply look with disgust at those who committed the crime, but also at those who allowed it to happen, and realize that we, too, may suffer from the bystander effect. Responsibility is a scary thing, but blame is simply a cowardly way out. Let us take the admirable route.

DON'T TASE ME, BRO!

Has the Use of Stun Guns Increased Police Brutality?

By **Linda Nguyen**
Staff Writer

In 1976, representatives of San Jose minority communities claimed that police officers utilized aggressive language, severe violence, and threats of arrests to intimidate individuals and terrorize people of ethnic minorities. For the next three years, the United States Commission on Civil Rights proceeded to monitor the San Jose Police Department and attempts were made to ease the relations between the community and law enforcement.

With the recent upsurge of cases of police abuse around the country, people thirty years later might still be wondering about police brutality.

The onset of new weapons such as electroshock Tasers combined with the use of batons, chemical sprays, and firearms by the police in many abuse cases show how they have increasingly blurred the line between law enforcement and the infringement of human rights.

As police turn increasingly to Tasers to subdue suspects, this device has sparked a debate over what constitutes reasonable force. Some proponents argue that Taser use is an appropriate tactic to subdue victims. These devices incapacitate dangerous suspects by an electrical current, which allows police to have minimal physical exertion without the dangers associated with guns.

However, police officers who become accustomed to the convenience of the Taser tend to resort to that weapon in cases where less violent means could have been employed. But these high voltage devices are not harmless, and in addition to immediate physical pain can cause dangerous health effects among certain susceptible populations. Therefore without knowing a victim’s medical record, police using these electronic devices are taking unreasonable risk as well as cruelly subjecting victims to a painful shock.

Ironically, Taser International’s mission statement emphasizes how their products “protect life,” even with numerous deaths and injuries resulting from the use of a Taser.

According to a study by *The Associated Press*, there have been more than 180 deaths resulting from the Taser from its creation until 2006. The widespread controversy of this product is manifested through coverage of cardiac arrests, videos and statements from victims describing the pain involved, and court cases concerning these injuries.

Since there are no strict regulations regarding its use,

Taser International has not lost a case yet, effectively dodging any responsibility for the effects of its product.

The most recent controversy is the use of Tasers on minors and schoolchildren. In Ozark, Arizona, a mother called the police to help restrain her noncompliant ten-year-old daughter, who was refusing to take a shower. To the horror of the girl’s father, police used a stun gun on the child’s back and proceeded to handcuff and arrest her. The police officer stated that avoiding the use of a Taser and directly handcuffing her would have resulted in a physical injury.

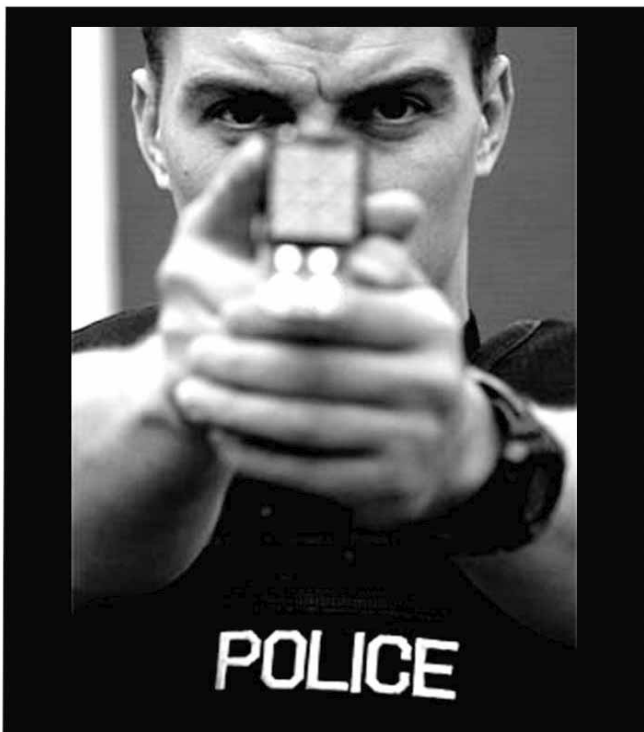
Although Tasers may be justified in cases involving serious risk to others, the use on an innocent minor is completely unethical and abominable. This wrongful display of brutality reveals a flaw in our law enforcement system, and exemplifies the increasingly improper use of the weapon.

In San Jose even, the beating of San Jose State student Phuong Ho has blazoned the press because of the physical mistreatment demonstrated by the officers. A unique aspect of this case is the cell phone video recorded at the scene, allowing detailed examination of the incident.

Ho was enraged over soap on his steak, and was brandishing a knife when several police officers arrived. Blows with a baton were given when he attempted to retrieve his glasses that were knocked down and when he mis-

interpreted the officers’ requests to search his room. The officers also used Tasers on Ho, and hit him with a baton even after he was handcuffed, making the local community wonder why the officers felt it was necessary to use such violence on an unarmed suspect. Ho was at a disadvantage: he had barely any room to move in the narrow hallway, he has a thick accent, and he did not understand routine police procedure. In his own words, they “treated [me] like some other thing. They just hit [me] like an animal or something.”

These recent cases of police brutality convey how we have the right, and in fact the responsibility, as Americans to cast light upon the injustices being perpetrated by law enforcement officials and acts of violence that target minorities and others vulnerable groups. Abuse cases have been heard and protested for decades, but there has not been a significant reform of the regulations involving the use of certain weapons. In order to prevent these cases from occurring, we must strive to demand that our officers adhere to the distinct line between what is acceptable to do in a situation, and what is degrading and excessively violent.



IS RACISM OVER?

In America, Not Yet

By **Sneha Singh**
Staff Writer

In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, two originally segregated churches, once split by the divisive force of racism, recently decided to “de-segregate” themselves, and for the first time in almost two hundred years, worship together in unity. Now, I know what you’re thinking, this should have been done decades ago! But the beauty of this is not simply the fact that the two congregations are now able to interact on those wonderful, not to mention spiritually enlightening Sunday mornings, but also the fact that people are now acknowledging their mistakes and moving a step in the right direction.

Credit for this amalgamation can be attributed to Reverend Mark Kelly-Tyler & Reverend Alfred Day for finally stepping up to the plate and doing something that, in all honesty, should have been done quite a while ago. Now the question is, are there other social institutions that, to this day, are still segregated in some way? The answer is yes, racism is still an issue that is present in our ever-growing society. Discrimination continues, inherently proving that America is really not as advanced as we perceive it to be. For example, President Barack Obama both prior to and since his election has been the target of many racist comments from people such as Glenn Beck, who actually had the gall to state that Obama was racist. Because of his color, many people continue to feel that Obama does not deserve to be president and therefore mar him with racially tinged insults.

Another aspect of this that shows that America is still a prejudiced nation is the fact that people made such a huge deal about an African-American man running for presidency. What would really be a huge leap forward for our country would be any man or woman, regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation or religion, running for office, without having such an uproar made about it. As seen in the case of the two Philadelphian churches, it is never too late to realize that mistakes have been made. As the age-old saying goes, better late than never.

MUSINGS ON INTERESTING PEOPLE

By Ally Lockwood
Staff Writer

Wouldn't the world be a more interesting place if everyone was more, well, interesting? I don't mean to suggest that you are anything less than interesting as you already are, dear reader; Don't get all Glenn Beck I-will-do-bodily-harm-to-you sassy with me. When I say interesting, it's more of an interesting with an asterisk, Barry Bonds kind of thing. I think that everyone is as interesting as they choose to be, because everyone, especially at Mitty, has things they are passionate about. Things they can share with us and allow us to revel in, if they choose to. But then again, that's only if they choose to. So when I say interesting, I indirectly mean other things. I'm talking about being open; real; unafraid to open up sincerely to those around you and allow them to connect with you. Sure, there are plenty of people who meet these requirements and qualify as interesting. But what about the rest of you? The ones who still, after 4 years, remain mostly nameless or unrecognized? It's not because you're not interesting, in the sense that you don't have something to offer. Because I'm sure you do. In fact, you probably just have to put your talents into action outside the theater of my reception. But I still feel that after all these years, we should know more of each other, and we should know each other better.

We don't talk to other people not because we don't care. Well actually, and unfortunately, some of us don't. However, this is not the case for the silent majority of people, with their natural penchant for curiosity; we want to know more about each other but are too scared to ask. And that in itself is a crying shame. But it doesn't have to be.



Retreats are a shining example of what can happen when a group of people decide to put down their walls and be wholly interesting and engaging. It can be quite shocking, really. That's part of the reason I believe the program is so successful in establishing new bonds between people who may have never seen each other on campus before: it gathers them in a safe environment that's still outside their comfort zone and asks them what they want to share about themselves. No one forces you to participate in anything, just like in the real world. The only difference is that on a retreat, even if you're feeling apprehensive, you want to share those things you've been holding back all the rest of the time. Other people are sharing their secrets, their travesties, their struggles, and it's wholly interesting. And when you hear about other people's problems, it makes you realize that you can relate, or you can understand, or whatever. And that's what's so beautiful.

When I suggest that everyone should become more interesting, I don't mean that I think everyone should go out and take up fire-breathing unicycle riding or participate in ritual human sacrifices or run off and join a nudist colony. Sure, all those things are kinda interesting, although mostly concerning, and would indeed, give you a few stories come weekend updates in your Monday trig class. No lately I feel like I've stumbled about the prized secret of our school: everyone is so interesting! Everyone seems to be passionate about something.

It's funny, because if you type "what if everyone was interesting and open?" into Ask Jeeves (not that I would spend my time typing open ended questions into search engines or anything) it asks you if you want to know "what would happen if everyone were the same?" I found that to be slightly intriguing. Interesting, if you will. Blanket conformity is exactly what we get if none of us are willing to open up and share our talents. Or even better, our hopes and fears. That's when things get scary. Still though, if that seems a step too drastic, there are other ways to start yourself down the path of captivating and winning over the hearts of youth worldwide, or at least within our little community. Say hi to new people. Compliment people, but not just on the conspicuous things like their lovely mink coat. And not just kin or the folks you already know from after school group detention, either. Tell people how much you appreciate their laugh, their sincerity, their being! Sure, they might think you a raving lunatic for a second, but so help me God if they don't even crack a suppressed smile. Who doesn't feel better after a loving compliment?

Let's face it. For some of us, we only have a few months left at this school. There's really no excuse not to try to get to know each other a little better. Working off the assumption that no one who lurks the hallways of our campus is a clandestine serial killer, there's no harm done befriending new people. A lot of ardent, deceptively interesting people wake up and make an appearance at 7:50 on this campus. That's fantastic. Assuredly, not all communities we will venture out into when we leave for college will afford us the same opportunity we have while at Mitty. All these passionate, loving people with the potential to teach you so much if you only reach out to them, concentrated in one 24 acre space. That's special.

The way I see it, the universe may be indifferent, but that doesn't mean we have to be. There's nothing wrong with asking someone what their passion is, right off the bat. Maybe they don't know yet, maybe they'll surprise you. The point is that if you spend more time asking people questions with meaning, things that really provoke us to think and incite dialogue, you'll realize how interesting everyone around you truly is.

ONE SIZE FITS FEW The Plight of Standardized Testing

By Kyle Kubo
Staff Writer

Ah, standardized tests. Not since the simultaneous discoveries of Saturday school, double dipping, and spontaneous combustion have there been any two-word phrases whose utterance amongst high school students inspires unbounded horror linked so vividly to these multiple-choice monoliths.

During the week as a test date approaches, one can observe with a surreal acuity as the attitudes of otherwise chipper classmates decline with all the speed and friction of a lead balloon descending into the fiery depths of hell. It can be assumed that the myriad brands of test prep books are uniformly printed as paperbacks for the simple reason that if they were hardcovers they would approach lethal force upon being inevitably jettisoned from second and third story windows in fits of scholastic fury. Can tests like the SAT and ACT really be so unjust and callous as to warrant our moans and groans and whining tones?

Yes. Yes they can.

What makes the standardized test useful by definition is also its most irremovable flaw: the avowed mission statement of having one test that can accurately measure the likelihood of educational success for every student in the United States.

The difficulties of this task are both immediately apparent and anything but trivial in nature: first and foremost being the differences in the experiences that shape each student's wealth of knowledge. The surplus of intelligence imparted through schooling alone is decidedly finite and not at all the totality. Even assuming that schools across the nation teach the same interpretation of

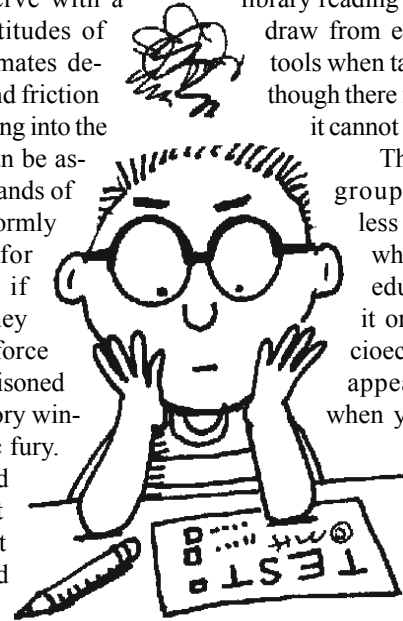
the same curriculum at the same quality (perhaps the most incorrect assumption to ever appear in print), life experience has everything to do with what one can and cannot work out through reasoning.

A teenage girl whose first language is Tagalog and whose youthful free time has been spent primarily wrestling ostriches in her parents' travelling Midwestern circus and a deaf upper middle class boy who spends every spare moment in a Chicago library reading comic books are going to draw from entirely different pools of tools when taking an SAT or ACT. And though there is nothing wrong with that, it cannot help but affect their scores.

These discrepancies between groups may seem decidedly less significant here at Mitty where we are of a "top-flight education whether you like it or not" persuasion; the socioeconomic differences might appear somewhat negligible when you are in a state of constant preparation. It is here that the other factor, that of innate (or perhaps acquired more subtly) affinity for the test as presented, comes into play. Some students

perform better under pressure, some are able to comprehend more quickly, and some may simply know more words from having read profusely or having solved puzzles regularly (it is here that childhood experiences come into play regardless of where you are). Perhaps the latter examples were simply born that way, which is extremely fortunate, but fortune's place in college acceptance should be minimized if possible.

Whether from nature or nurture, what we have ultimately arrived at is a scenario in which one size fits few, and the frustration at fitting poorly means more books thrown out more windows.



BUTTER NAAN AND DOMINO'S PIZZA A Reflection on the India Immersion Trip

By Morgan Heller
Staff Writer

This past July I had the privilege to travel around India with my ECJ class. Needless to say the experience was amazing, just as any immersion trip at Mitty is. However, I am here to give you the honest description that supersedes the brief summary some of you freshmen and sophomores may have heard. For your convenience I have divided my analysis of the trip into several categories:

Accommodations: On this trip, one sleeps in at least four different types of housings ranging from hotel rooms to rain forest cabins to dorm rooms. Now, there isn't always hot water during one's stay and the beds may not be at the peak of comfort. Then again, you didn't come to India to spend time in a hotel room did you? To be frank, you spend most of your time outside with people, and if you spend most of your time in your room, that time is most assuredly wasted.

Food: If you don't like Indian food, don't worry. There are times when you may not want to eat the food in front of you (that's why you pack granola bars). Personally, I didn't find the food in South India to be the most appetizing. North India,

however, served me some of the best food I've ever had. Chicken tikka and butter naan were popular meals for us in New Delhi. So, don't fret about your survival in South India because Mr. Wesmiller supplements occasionally with surprise Domino's pizza.

Transition: The transition from the classroom to the street was surprisingly smooth. I was concerned about the language barrier as well as my ability to relate to people we met. In India, there are 18 national languages and 844 spoken dialects. Clearly, even Indians have trouble communicating. You'd be surprised, however, how much you can learn about someone without speaking. I found that the language barrier is quickly and easily overcome.

As for the relatable nature, I was scared our interactions with our pen pals would be awkward. Then I found that teenagers on the other side of the world are just like us. They shop. They party. They even see *The Hangover*: Essentially, it was distinctly rewarding to see the curriculum come full circle and come alive in the people we met in India.

Thus, I would say that this trip is by far the best Immersion trip Mitty has to offer. Despite the minor inconveniences India poses, such as water temperature, this trip is at the least, life-altering. I'd take a cold shower to see the Taj Mahal any day.

Justice Awareness

The Perils of Closing Gitmo

Is Shutting Down Guantanamo Bay the Right Move?

By Manosai Eerabathini
Staff Writer

Just two days after delivering a notable inaugural address back in January, President Barack Obama, in keeping with his promises of change and hope, fittingly signed executive orders indicating his intent to shut down the military prison in Guantanamo Bay (Gitmo), Cuba. During the Bush administration, this controversial facility had been in the international spotlight for having used torture techniques on detainees. But the decision by Obama conveyed a shift in direction as he aimed to move out all prisoners by “no later than one year from now.”

These executive orders were by no means unanticipated, as this aspect of Obama’s policy had been largely highlighted during his presidential campaign. However, since January numerous legal issues have arisen, ensuring

“There is no innocent person here. So, you should confess to something ...because you will not leave this place innocent.”

that closing Guantanamo will not at all be easy.

Since 2002, the United States has been using Gitmo as a detention facility for the specific purpose of holding any non-citizen who was believed to be involved in international terrorism. As the war in Afghanistan got under way following 9/11, 775 detainees were brought to the prison to be held on no formal charge other than the suspicion of their alleged link to the terrorist group, Al-Qaeda.

A particularly contentious matter was the Bush administration’s assertion that any of the prisoners in Gitmo were not entitled to the protections stipulated under the Geneva

Conventions, a set of treaties that determined the international standard for humanitarian treatment of victims of war.

Using these same Geneva Conventions as a standard, we now know that torture techniques were used against the prisoners under Bush’s supervision. As the convening authority for military commissions, Susan Crawford, acknowledged, “the torture was not of the sadistic comic-book type; it was rather the torture that destroys the soul and the body without leaving any physical marks: countless days and nights of sleep deprivation, freezing or heating naked prisoners, shackling and tying them in stress positions, taking people to the edge of dying by drowning, and sexual abuse.”

To make matters worse, many of the tortures were largely unjustified as innocent prisoners were taken advantage of to supposedly yield “vital intelligence” pertaining to the ongoing war.

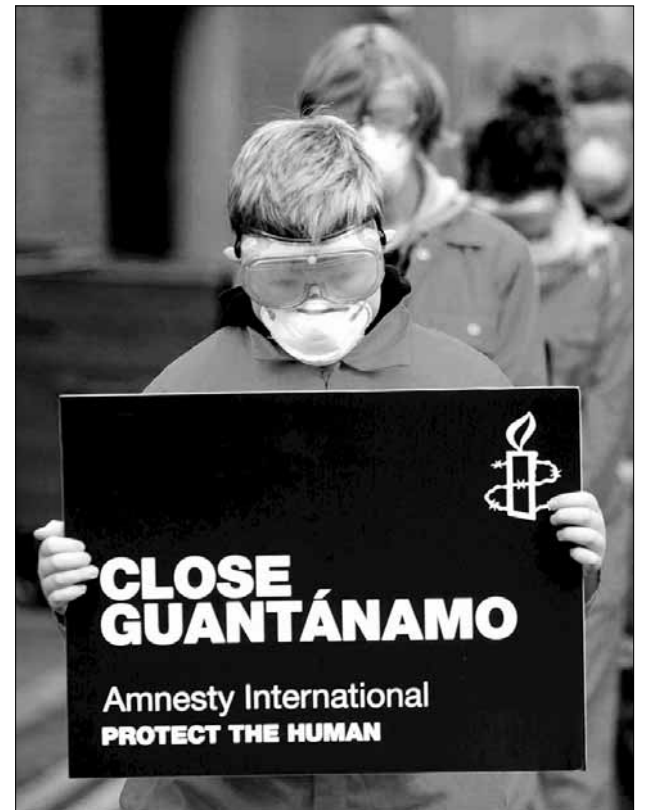
A recent window into the dark halls of Gitmo’s use of torture was the case of Al Rabiah, a Kuwaiti citizen who was held in the facility for seven years based on his suspected ties to the Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. After a thorough trial, Colleen Kollar-Kotelly, judge of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, ruled that the prisoner be immediately released considering that the government could not present credible evidence to support their allegation of Al Rabiah’s link to any Afghani terrorist group.

This case provided a window into the realms of Gitmo as it revealed the true extent of torture techniques within the prison. Al Rabiah had previously confessed to a crime but it was determined that this was the result of extremely aggressive interrogation tactics that definitively violated the prisoner’s rights. Even more shocking was the released transcript in which an American interrogator is noted as saying to the detainee:

“There is nothing against you. But there is no innocent person here. So, you should confess to something so you can be charged and sentenced and serve your sentence and then go back to your family and country, because you will not leave this place innocent.”

There is indisputable proof in numerous cases substantiating that torture has been used against Gitmo prisoners, many of them innocent of any crime other than being identified by Afghan Warlord as someone the United States should detain.

Now begins the trouble of releasing the detainees back into mainstream society or deciding whether they should be



While human rights groups like Amnesty International might take solace that Gitmo prison has been scheduled to be shut down, issues are far from resolved.

put on trial, for the preparations to close down the facility are now underway. Down either path lies formidable obstacles.

One such obstacle was the passage by the U.S. Senate of an amendment that blocked necessary funds for the release of prisoners.

Concern over the release of such prisoners was heightened when the Pentagon leaked a report that claimed 1 out of 7 of the 534 prisoners transferred out of Guantanamo Bay had since engaged in terrorist or militant activities.

The alleged finding became a point of widespread media criticism. This study did not distinguish between prisoners who had previous ties to terrorist organizations and those who became affiliated with them only after their release from Gitmo. The controversy surrounding the accuracy of this unreleased Pentagon report sheds light on the tactics used by Obama’s opponents as they attempt to garner support against closing down Gitmo.

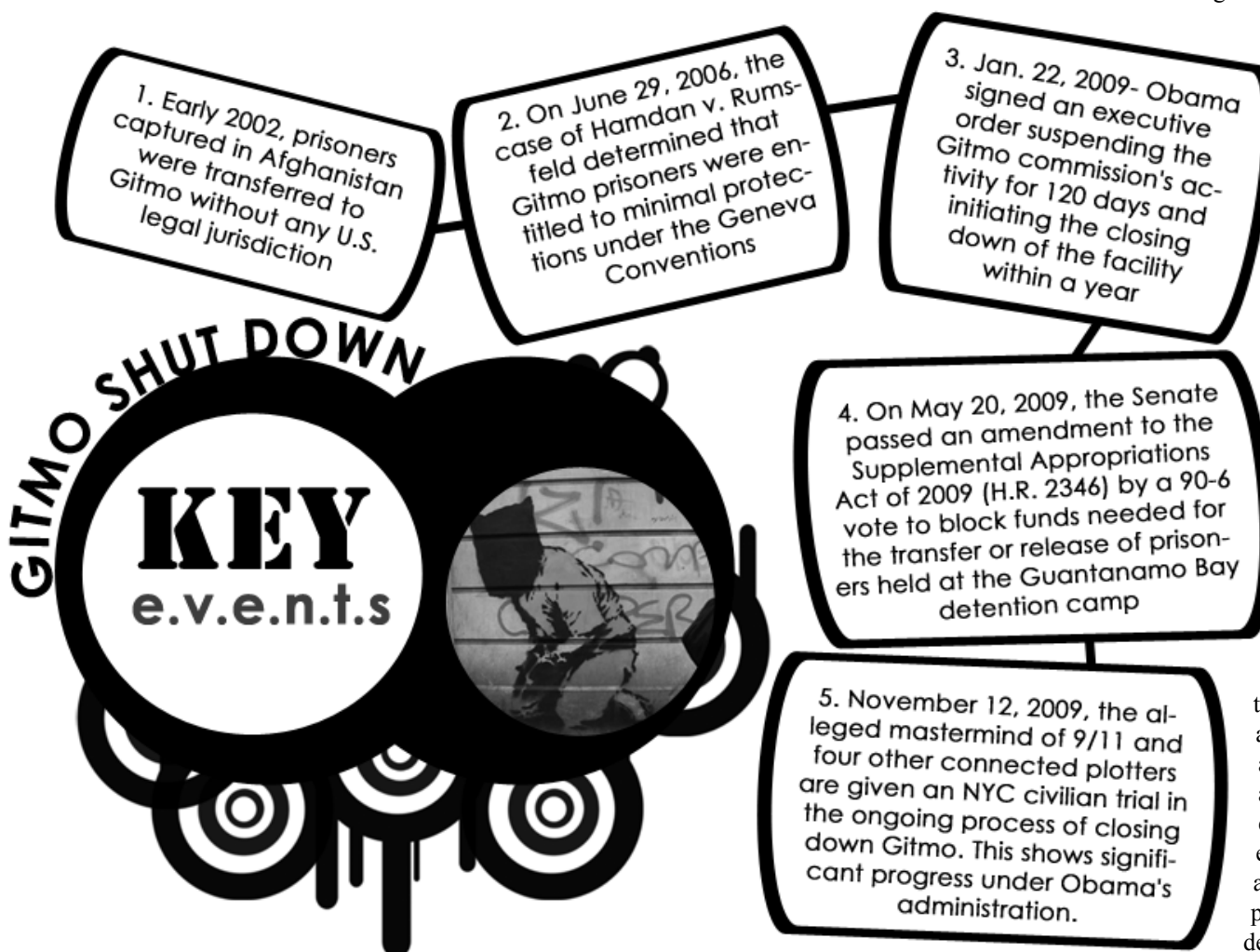
Currently, no reliable and independently verified statistic on the recidivism of former Gitmo detainees exists. Still, there have been instances in which released prisoners have since engaged in terrorism.

One particular case is Ali al-Shihri, who is suspected of playing a part in the deadly bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Sana, Yemen, in September of 2008. Al-Shihri had been transferred from Gitmo to Saudi Arabia in 2007 where he was subjected to undergo a mandatory rehabilitation program in an effort to reintegrate him into mainstream society. Upon completion of this course, al-Shihri simply disappeared with no one being able to track his movement or status.

All in all, a valuable lesson was learned: those nations who received former Gitmo detainees should make a genuine effort to keep a close watch on them.

Although the closing of Gitmo was news heralded by many, the truth may be that Obama’s plans are not that practical in their time-frame.

Obama insists the goal of this move was the unequivocal message: “The United States will not torture.” And certainly the closing of Gitmo represents a major step taken on this path to international penance as the new president corrects the follies of the prior administration. Yet, although the noble intention of ending torture may in itself be achieved, the time-line established by Obama does not make the actual task any easier. Difficulties will arise in dealing with the proper legal procedures to release prisoners and ensure detainees don’t reenter terrorist networks.





By Angela Hodge and Maya Raman
Justice Awareness Editors

EL SALVADOR. Twenty years after the brutal murder of six Jesuit priests and two Salvadoran women in San Salvador, the victims have been commemorated by various Jesuit institutions in the United States, the Salvadoran government, and the U.S. Congress. Fathers Ignacio Ellacuria, Ignacio Martin-Baro, Segundo Montes, Armando Lopez, Juan Ramon Moreno, and Joaquin Lopez y Lopez received the National Order of Jose Matias Delgado, El Salvador's greatest award of honor, from its president Mauricio Funes on November 16. The deaths of these men - theologians, sociologists and philosophers signaled the end of civil war in El Salvador, but many Salvadorans still live in challenging economic and social circumstances.

HAITI. This year, Amnesty International is putting pressure on Haiti to eradicate its use of children as domestic workers. These boys and girls are often physically abused and live in isolation and inhumane conditions. Girls, especially, are often sent to work in other households at a young age where they struggle to escape the cycle of poverty and violence.

IRAQ. On November 16, thirty-nine Iraqi women attended a conference with women from the United States military where they spoke about their struggles in achieving equality in order to inspire their Iraqi sisters. The condition of women in Iraq has steadily deteriorated. The number of widows is between one and three million and growing. Although 25% of Iraq's Parliament and local council positions are allotted by law to females, most women are living in abject poverty. Young women marry in their teens, dropping out of high school and not even considering college. The restructuring of Iraq has put women back on the bottom of the social ladder instead of giving them the equality they deserve.

BY THE NUMBERS

75,000 killed in El Salvador's Civil War (1980-1992)

77% of women in Iraq are illiterate (2000 study)

49.8% of 2008 arrests related to drug abuse involved marijuana

40% of Guantanamo prisoners have been found to have no definitive connection with al Qaeda.

3% of Haiti's population are child slaves.

Ft. Hood Massacre Shocks America

Investigating the Murderer, His Motives, and His Victims

By Esha Joshi
Staff Writer

If I were to ask you why Mr. Nidal Hasan pulled the trigger on a large number of innocent people, what would you say? a) Would you say mental anguish; b) job dissatisfaction; or maybe c) deep connection to culture?

The answer to this question appears to be: d) all of the above. As President Obama said, "We don't know all the answers yet," and therefore, we should not be "jumping to conclusions."

The shooting spree at Fort Hood, Texas on November 5, 2009 will not be forgotten. The gunman, Nidal Hasan, is an accomplished 39-year-old Army psychiatrist, an American-born Muslim of Palestinian descent. Hasan opened fire in a medical center, killing 13 and wounding 30. This sudden attack has overwhelmed all, astonishing Hasan's family and others who saw Hassan as a highly respected individual who positively influenced others.

Various reports claim that Hasan was deeply saddened with the incessant violence and concurrent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Hasan was going to be deployed to Afghanistan on Nov. 28; this may have caused the impulsive Hasan to overreact. As reported in the New York Times, according to Jeff Sadoski, a spokesperson for Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, "Hasan was upset about his deployment."

Additionally, earlier this year, a man who called himself Nidal Hasan posted Internet threats about suicide bombings. FBI officials are ascertaining whether this was written by the real Hasan or another man. Also, ABC News reported that U.S. intelligence officials were aware months before the shooting that Hasan was attempting to make contact with an individual associated with al Qaeda.

Furthermore, Hasan had been investigated by the FBI after intelligence agencies intercepted at least 18 emails

between him and a Yemenese imam, Anwar al-Awlaki, who had been under American surveillance. According to journalist Brian Ross of ABC News, in one of the emails Hasan wrote al-Awlaki: "I can't wait to join you [in the afterlife]." Hasan also asked al-Awlaki when jihad is appropriate, and



Soldiers rush a victim of the Fort Hood shooting to a waiting ambulance.

whether it is permissible if innocents are killed in a suicide attack. In the months before the attacks, Hasan increased his contacts with al-Awlaki to discuss how to transfer funds abroad without coming to the attention of law authorities.

A former classmate of Hasan's professed that Hasan's attitude in Public Health classes in 2007 and 2008 was unusual and unnecessary. This classmate revealed that Hasan was extremely passionate about his culture and role as a Muslim. He regularly commented about how he considered his duty as a Muslim first priority over being an American citizen.

Hasan was often quiet when he sat alone in the front of the class and rarely socialized with students. Hasan only became an active part of the discussion when the class debated about wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Before attending the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences, Hasan attended Virginia Tech University to complete his degree in biochemistry.

Paul M. Holt III, a friend of Hasan's, always regarded Hasan as a "down to earth" person. Holt mentioned that Hasan had very few friends and was extremely diffident to the "point of introversion." Hasan was very attached to the Islamic religion and is reported to have yelled "Allahu Akbar" ("God is Greatest") during the shooting.

At Fort Hood, Hasan killed 13 innocent people and wounded 30 others. Among the victims were a pregnant woman who was returning home to her parents, a man who had quit his previous job to serve his country, a newlywed who had been serving in Iraq, and a woman who wanted to fight for her deceased mother after the September 11, 2001 attacks.

The full list of victims include Francheska Valez, Captain John Gaffaney, Captain Russell Seager, Private Aaron Thomas Nemelka, Private Michael Pearson, Specialist Jason Dean Hunt, Chief Warrant Officer Michael Grant Cahill, Major Libardo Eduardo Caraveo, Army Staff Sergeant Justin DeCrow, Sergeant Amy Kreuger, Specialist Frederick Greene, Private Kham Xiong, and Lieutenant Colonel Juanita Warman.

Through all this turmoil and devastation, two heroes have emerged: Sergeant Kimberley Munley and Sergeant Mark Todd, both police officers.

According to a New York Times report, Sgt. Munley first encountered Hasan and, while shooting at him, was shot

see FT. HOOD, page 7

FORT HOOD

continued from page 6



Sergeant Kimberley Munley in her hospital bed talking to United States Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. Munley is recovering from the injuries she sustained as the result of her heroic actions at Fort Hood on November 5, 2009.

by him. Hasan then turned from Munley and began to reload his pistol. A few seconds later, Sgt. Todd saw Hasan, raised his weapon, and fired several times at Major Hasan, who fell backward and stopped moving.

Initial reports credited Munley alone with shooting Hasan, quickly making her into a national hero.

But now both Munley and Todd are credited with stopping the rampage.

Chuck Medley, the director of emergency services at Ft. Hood said of Sgt. Munley, "She's absolutely a hero. She had the training; she knew what to do. And she had the courage to do it.... she saved countless people's lives."

As for Sgt. Todd, he told the New York Times, "I just relied back on my training. We're trained to shoot until there is no longer a threat. And once he was laying down on his back, his weapon just fell into his hand and I'm, like, 'Okay, now's the time to rush him and secure him.'"

In the end, both Munley and Todd almost certainly saved lives. Still, the memory of this heinous act will long stay with us, an act we hope and pray will never happen again.

The Marijuana Debate Social Justice Issues Surround Legalization

By Jay Wang
Staff Writer

The sun comes up in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, as another day begins for the people in the neighborhood of Diaz Ordaz. Well, for everyone except the dozen of people killed in this village each day.

As the Mexican drug war rages on, more and more Mexicans, particularly teens, are being pressured to join gangs that war with each other to control the burgeoning drug trade, a struggle that causes a considerable loss of human life.

The common destination for these smuggled drugs, sixty percent of which is marijuana, is none other than Mexico's closest neighbor, the United States.

We are thus involved, albeit indirectly, through the black market that provides drug cartels a venue to continue their lucrative trade and their cycle of violence.

The influence of our drug-related policies, however, can carry as much weight beyond our borders as these implicit dealings that occur within our own. This question of what the nation can do to circumvent this problem has gained particular significance recently, where there is an ongoing debate in our state's capital concerning potential legalization of marijuana.

Ever since 1937, marijuana has been deemed illegal and possession or use of it has resulted in imprisonment. In recent years, however, there has been a movement

to decriminalize marijuana.

Those against the legalization of marijuana rest their arguments on three main points. The first is that marijuana smoke affects many others who do not want to get "high" but are negatively affected by the irresponsibility of those around them. This can be seen in a similar light to the secondhand smoking effects of cigarette smoke.

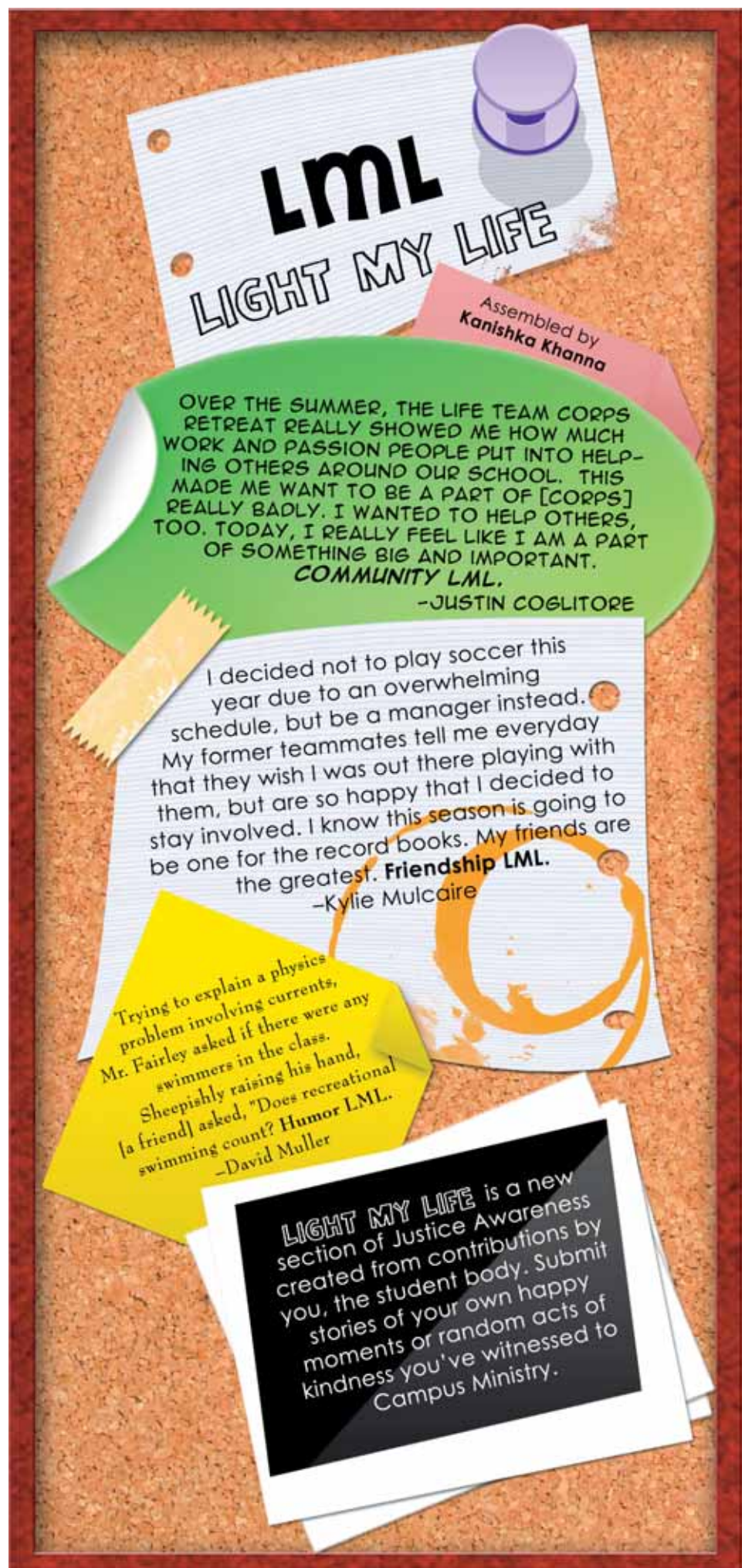
Secondly, if marijuana were to be legalized the number of car accidents and crimes would rise while the level of national productivity would fall.

The president of the California Peace Officers' Association claims that in no way can the legalization of marijuana "protect or promote society," for it hinders educational and worker productivity, increases crime, and jeopardizes traffic safety.

Also, while marijuana may not in and of itself be particularly harmful, it is believed by some to be a gateway drug. Those who believe this argue that the drug leads many users into experimenting with more dangerous substances such as heroin and crystal meth that can entail a lifetime of addiction.

Lastly, while many pro-legislation supporters proclaim that the legalization of marijuana will lead to millions of dollars in revenue to save our foundering economy, more problems would arise as legislators would need to deliberate how much marijuana could be grown and the costs entailed.

As journalist and news anchor Tom



Foreman points out "How would we pay for enforcement? Policing some additional 14 million users of a regulated substance even if it is legal... could take a lot of taxes."

Advocates for marijuana legislation do not deny that drugs can be harmful. The question is whether the government should take responsibility for its people or whether the people should take care of themselves.

Generally, the tacit rule is that the government can only come in and regulate what one does only if one's actions endanger oneself or pose a significant threat to another.

For pro-legislation supporters, marijuana does neither.

Additionally keeping marijuana illegal may increase the power of the drug cartels who then seek to monopolize the drug trade. Ultimately, the policy of keeping marijuana illegal and leaving it to the control of drug cartels is costing the American taxpayer millions, if not billions, of dollars.

The Legislative Analyst's Office states that California could save "several tens of millions of dollars each year" by legalizing marijuana, money that could be spent on more important projects such as the failing education system or the growing deficit.

And in its "Budgetary Implications of Marijuana Legalization" NORML (The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) contends that nearly \$800 million in tax revenue would result from legalization nationally. NORML also argues that over \$14 billion nationally (about \$27,000 per minute) was spent to reduce drug use and availability in 2009.

As for the concern that legalization of marijuana would harm our children, trial Judge Jim Gray of Orange County, California, delivers a powerful affirmation against it when he says, "Today it is easier for our young people to get marijuana than it is alcohol... because of marijuana prohibition. Why? Because the alcohol is regulated and controlled by the government and the illegal drugs are controlled by illegal drug dealers and they don't ask for ID."

Ultimately, according to legalization supporters, it is a gross misconception that supporting marijuana legislation will worsen the drug problem.

According to many of these individuals, the only way to ease the worsening problem is through balanced regulation as opposed to strict prohibition.

THE MOZART EFFECT

By Nhi Nguyen

The Mozart effect revolves around the theory that listening to classical music increases intelligence and provides various health benefits.

Although there is no evidence suggesting that music can *directly* increase a person's intelligence, listening to music tends to elevate a person's mood and leaves them feeling more alert, thus contributing to their improvement in their intellectual performance.

Mrs. Kroenung (from Mitty's English department), who has read articles about how exposure to world music "enhances a child's cognitive development," confirms that she is a true believer. During her first son's, Jonah's, early years, Mrs. Kroenung would play African music, "Mafikizolo," which would comfort him when he cried, as the "strong rhythm of the music and drums" would placate him. Interestingly, Mrs. Kroenung remarks on how "now, at two and a half, Jonah has a remarkable sense of rhythm for somebody his age. He turns everything ... from blocks to maracas... into musical instruments." Jonah may be getting his first drum set this Christmas!

In addition to the Mozart effect's purported impact on brainpower, music has some profound effects on a person's health, emotions, and learning. It has been proven that music lowers blood

pressure, boosts immunity, eases muscle tension, and more. Music can even alleviate stress through its therapeutic nature. Think about the serenity induced by the sounds of oceans waves, rain, and birds chirping. Music can generate a very relaxed atmosphere.

In addition, music can trigger emotions, depending on the type of music and the listener's preferences. Music is a stimulus often used in movies to enhance suspense excitement, joy, or sorrow. Certain types of music heighten your fortitude and strengthen your willpower, while other types can relax your nerves and muscles and relieve tension. Upbeat rhythms and brass sounds have the highest capability of recharging and energizing your body.

At this age, social interaction intensifies, personal character is developed, and decisions are made. In songs, the meanings behind the lyrics influence your perspective and the melody affects your emotions, so the music you listen to may affect how you behave in society. Evidently, music has a bearing on your attitude. For those who



Staff Cartoonist: Anni Huang



work with music on a daily basis as singers, dancers, or musicians, the mind is kept alert and active, eventually helping to sharpen memory.

MU
M
By J

Our fascinating...
instinctual...
deeply integrated...
Starting off with...
just over a decade...
ment at Mitty has...
wide assortment...
Monarchs explore...
cal potential. From...
Pep Band to Conco...
questionably a pre...
of many Monarchs...
come by the idea...
limitless musical...
Take, for instanc...
teemed principal M...
founder and head...
of this group, want...
to incorporate...
music

"Shoplifters of the World Unite" by The Smiths

"My Uncle Used to Love Me But She Died" by Roger Miller

"If You Leave Me, Can I Come Too?" by Mental as Anything

By Rebecca Organ and Lisa Patel

"Our Lawyer Made Us Change the Name of This Song so We Wouldn't Get Sued" by Fall Out Boy

"May the Bird of Paradise Fly Up Your Nose" by Little Jimmy Dickens

"I'm Just a Bug on the Windshield of Life" by Roy Blount Jr.

As teenagers, we are all too familiar with the false perfection we see in magazines, billboards, and runways. Though we know that they are a product of digital imaging software and not nature, these seemingly perfect figures and faces seep into our subconscious and skew our perception of human beauty. A similar phenomenon is occurring in the music world as well, thanks to a relatively new feature known as Autotune. Autotune is a studio

trick that can take poor vocals and nudge them onto the correct pitch. In a sense, it's like Photoshop for the human voice. Though it is now in the seat of controversy, Autotune emerged from fairly humble origins. It was created by Andy Hildebrand, an engineer working for Exxon, with the intention of interpreting seismic data. Soon Hildebrand realized that his technologies' ability to detect, analyze, and modify pitch were applicable in other profitable realms—namely, the entertainment industry. For years, Autotune was used as a spot-correction for funky vocals—pruning a stray note here, smoothing off-key singing there; the corrections were meant to be seamless and imperceptible from the rest of the artist's voice track. Then, with the release of Cher's 1998 single "Believe," the secret was revealed. Hildebrand offers his opinion on why the common usage of his program remained so clandestine: "[Music producers] didn't want to be known to manipulate the pitch of sound." Nonetheless, many artists have come to embrace

ation with music is so in-
that we often forget how
it is in our community.
one band and one choir
ago, the music depart-
grown to encompass a
of opportunities to help
and exercise their musi-
Orchestra to Exodus,
ert Choir, music is un-
valent force in the lives
. But how did Mitty first
of branching off into a
dimension?

ance, Exodus. Our es-
Mr. Brosnan, the
instructor
ed

in our community.

Thus, from his desire for students to
have opportunities to enjoy music as well
as serve through a collaboration of song
and string, Exodus was born.

He comments, “we first started Exodus
with the intent of enhancing liturgies. We
wanted them to be relevant and meaning-
ful experiences.” Even the name of the
group, alluding to the plight of our Jewish
ancestors from the hands of the unmerci-
ful Egyptians, recalls the fateful uplifting
and calling of a people out of a world of
challenges and troubles—a world which is
ultimately similar to ours today.

Music should, in Mr. Bros-
nan’s words, “contribute
to the success of
the student,
aca-

demically, socially, and spiritually.”

Hence, let us all celebrate this
expression of soul we inconspicu-
ously take for granted by getting
involved. Music, at the heart
of a Monarch’s invaluable
freedom, is the fabric
that weaves everyone
together.

focus
on

MUSIC

“You’re the
Reason our Kids
Are So Ugly”
by Kacey Jones

“I’ve Been
Flushed from
the Bathroom of
Your Heart” by
Johnny Cash

Instruments from Around the World

By Ekta Partani

put-
ting their
music through Au-
totune—not only to stealthily
correct their music, but to enhance
it, using it as a sort of “special effect.”

The Black Eyed Peas discussed
their decision to alter their vocals with www.
EW.com. Says leader Will.I.Am, “[Autotune] is
definitely the zeitgeist of music right now. You
can’t ignore it, because then you’re not relevant.”

Still, some people in the music industry remain
firm in their view that Autotune taints the true
talent of the artists and will lead to the homogeni-
zation of contemporary music. One anonymous
Grammy-winning recording engineer expresses
doubt that pop’s fetish for uniform perfect pitch
will fade,” because it is becoming more difficult
to distinguish songs from one another.

In fact, even the Average Joe can now sing
beautifully without possessing an ounce of vo-
cal talent, due to technologies such as Apple’s
iPitch application, which is basically a miniature
version of Autotune. A quick search on Youtube
also reveals hundreds of instances where Autotune
has been applied, from mundane song covers to
remixes like “The Charlie Bit Me Remix”, where the
screams of an obnoxious child have been made
pleasant to the ear.

Regardless of what the industry thinks, the
only thing that consumers ultimately care about
is good music—not so much the means by which
it is attained.

AUTOTUNE: OUT OF TUNE?

By Katrina Vokt, Emma Luk & Ramya Singireddy

Bodhrans: The Bodhran is a tradi-
tional Irish frame drum that consists
of a single head that is tacked onto a
wooden body. The Bodhran is nor-
mally played with a beater called the
tipper and was commonly used by the
Irish as a battle drum during the Irish
Rebellion of 1603 in order to signal
the arrival of enemy forces.

Bloul: The Bloul, also known as
the Armenian flute, was first de-
veloped by Armenian shepherds.
This instrument resembles the
modern-day flute and is known
for producing enchanting and
haunting wind-like sounds.

Bouzouki: This Greek
musical instrument
is quite similar to the
modern-day mandolin.
The bouzouki was a
big part of the ancient
Greek culture because
Greeks believed that
music nurtured a per-
son’s relationship with
the gods. Bouzoukis
were used to provide
musical accompani-
ment for the singing
and dancing meant to
appease the gods.

Doumbek: The Doumbek is a drum-
like instrument from Northern Africa.
Though Doumbeks can be made from
a large variety of materials such as
aluminum, copper, and mother of
pearl, there are two major types: the
Egyptian Doumbek and the Turkish
Doumbek. Because of the depth of its
structure, this instrument is capable of
producing resonating sounds.

Didgeridoo: The Didgeridoo, an
Australian musical instrument, is
considered to be the world’s oldest
wind instrument. This instrument is
part of the culture of the Aboriginal
people of Australia. Thought to have
restorative and healing powers, this
instrument is fashioned from euca-
lyptus wood and has been used in cul-
tural ceremonies of the Aborigines.



Through the Lens



a close-up look at Mitty's photographers



Steven Ha

Steven Ha is a senior here at Mitty. He lives in Santa Clara and enjoys cars and sports, in addition to photography.

What attracted you to photography in the first place?
I was first attracted to photography with my cousin's light painting photos and strobe set up. Hopefully I can get my own strobe set up for myself soon!

What is your favorite thing to photograph?
I really enjoy taking pictures of vehicles (especially panning vehicles), architecture, and people.

What inspires you?
The work of other photographers.

Describe the favorite photo you've taken:
I think my favorite photo of all time is probably the Orange/Black STi taken at Formula D (top left). It's one of my most successful panning shots.

Where do you plan to take this hobby?
It would be cool if one of my vehicle shots were used for a manufacture's magazine ad or something.

How would you describe your photographic style?
Detailed—I prefer to go for the smaller details in my pictures and also try to get shots at different angles.





*"The cafeteria is a huge part of our daily lives here at Mitty, and I think the panoramic shot gives us a new perspective of this familiar place."
—Colton Goularte*

Snapshots



*"I took this shot modeling the photographer Eugene Meatyard. His dark work inspired me to create a new world in the picture."
—Karyne Roy*



*"While every other plant in my backyard was dying because of autumn, this flower bush was thriving and looked absolutely beautiful, as if it were summertime."
—Chandni Jain*



*"It made me realize that at one point in time, a ticket could be priceless to someone, but once finished and used, it is nothing more than a lost memory."
—Ashley Eggleston*

**CONFESS
WINNER**

JANE EDMONDS



Like what you see? Want to enter next issue's photo contest? If you would like to be a featured photographer in *The Monarch*, send your photographs to photomonarch@gmail.com and your work may be shown in an upcoming issue!

Arts & Entertainment

Television Networks Desperate for Ratings

Failing series tap celebrity guest stars to keep themselves afloat

By Zoya Qureshy
A&E Editor

After a rather successful 2008-2009 prime-time television season, this new fall season has not gotten off to a great start on some channels. As always, ABC, FOX, and CBS, because they appeal to a wider audience, are grabbing more viewers compared to networks like the teen-oriented CW. Shows on The CW, although having slightly higher ratings than last year, did not live up to the broadcast rating expectations.

In addition, it has the lowest ratings among all other networks including ABC, CBS, and FOX. The ratings within the shows' demographics have fallen swiftly, and in order to bring them back up and regain their viewers, many shows have incorporated big names in show business to fill the guest roles and recurring roles on many shows.

According to the U.S. Nielson Ratings, *Gossip Girl* finished its first season with approximately 2.6 million viewers, and its

second season with 2.8 million, however, this season shows numbers that are much lower than the previous seasons. A few episodes haven't even scored two million viewers because of the bad ratings. *Gossip Girl*, in order to improve their ratings, has cast celebrity guest stars like Sonic Boom and Lady Gaga to be featured in some episodes.



Hilary Duff: From Disney to The CW.

Other than having musically inspired episodes, *Gossip Girl* has done things a little differently this season by creating sharp twists in plot, such as having Hilary Duff appear in a recurring role as actress Olivia Burke, Dan Humphrey's girlfriend. Talk show host Tyra Banks, as well as fashion designer Tory Burch, have also made cameos on *Gossip Girl*.

It's understandable that with ratings on the decline, many CW series have brought in well-known guest stars in an effort to bring back their audience. The competition they face on shows of other networks also hasn't helped. *Gossip Girl*, although

appealing largely to the 18 to 34-year-old demographic, loses most of its audience to shows like *House* on Fox, and *The Big Bang Theory* and *Two and a Half Men* on CBS.

Other shows have followed *Gossip Girl*'s lead and, feeling the sting of lower ratings, have leaned on gimmicks. *90210*, had a musical performance, inviting rising Irish band The Script. *Melrose Place*, having some of the worst ratings on television this season, is bringing back cast members from the original series. Heather Locklear, Josie Bisset, and Laura Leighton have all been confirmed to return to the series at some point before the end of its run.

Even though the CW by far has the worst ratings given that they appeal to a very narrow demographic, shows on other channels have also suffered this season and to compensate, have been

inviting in well-known actors/actresses as well as musicians.

Fans of the late *Gilmore Girls* are in for a treat when Melissa McCarthy, who played Sookie, appears on ABC's *Private Practice*. *CSI: NY* has also announced that on an episode airing sometime in December, Kim Kardashian and Vanessa Minnillo are to make an appearance as two women who plan and carry out a murder.

Whether or not these attempts at higher ratings will be fruitful is still unknown. *Gossip Girl* aired an episode with Lady Gaga as the glue that held the episode together, and yet the episode had the lowest ratings the show has seen this season.

This suggests that even though the addition of guest stars might provide a slight boost in ratings, the plot and story-line are what make a show worth watching.



Kim Kardashian: Murderess on CSI

Under the Radar Wonder Girls



By Steffie Ko
A&E Editor

Although this five-member group from South Korea has only debuted recently in the U.S., the Wonder Girls, now one of Asia's biggest pop bands, have quickly been making waves on billboard charts and in promotional appearances.

Considered to be the nation's "little sisters" in Korea and having sold nearly 7 million digital singles to date, the Wonder Girls have released incredibly popular songs, which include their No. 1 singles "Tell Me," "So Hot," and "Nobody." However, their recent success in the U.S. can be partially attributed to the fact that the Wonder Girls have just participated in the recent Jonas Brothers tour as an opening act, along with Jordin Sparks and Honor Society, performing the English version of their hit single, "Nobody."

With their latest hit, the Wonder Girls reached #76 on the Top 100 Billboard Chart, making them the first Korean artist in history to ever do so. In a short amount of time, these girls have been featured by *People* magazine, *InStyle* Magazine, *Access Hollywood*, *Billboard.com*, and more. The Wonder Girls participated in Fashion Week, meeting and befriending designers such as Tory Burch. They have also had the opportunity to work with producer Jason Nevins, releasing his remix of "Nobody" on iTunes, and according to Nielsen Soundscan, the quintet have already sold over 32,000 physical and 30,000 digital copies.

With this in mind, the Wonder Girls are set to release a twelve-track album soon and already have plans for their first headlining six-city concert tour in January 2010. In a short six months, the Wonder Girls have quickly risen from obscurity and proven to America that they deserve the attention and love that they have received from Asia. So keep an eye out because the Wonder Girls are prepared to begin their global domination.

Introducing Adrienne Eller

By Ryan Meyer
A&E Editor

A new vocalist for Exodus as well as a prominent actress on the Mitty stage, Adrienne Eller has already made a splash from within the Performing Arts department after transferring this year as a junior from Saratoga High School. We interviewed Adrienne about her performance as Mrs. Lovett in last month's *Sweeney Todd*.

How did you characterize Mrs. Lovett?

I knew she was a "little old woman" right from the start. I wanted her to be sweet and lovable, but with psychotic touches thrown in. Mrs. Lovett lived on her own for several years before the story of the show

starts, so she is desperate and clingy. Her isolation, I think, made her rather quirky. I had to keep her age in mind, and use my body as I feel a jolly older woman would. When singing, I did not always focus on making my voice sound beautiful because I do not think that was in her character. I mostly stuck with the voice I created for her character, which was very high-pitched and varied.

Did you study any of the actresses who had played the role before?

I spent some time watching Helena Bonham Carter, who played Mrs. Lovett in the recent film. I had seen the movie many times before I was cast, so I kept some of her choices in mind. I was more moved however by Angela Lansbury, the original Mrs. Lovett on Broadway. Her choices were my inspiration to create

the ideal characterization. For example, the way she flaps her arms like wings in the song "By the Sea," in which Mrs. Lovett dreams of a seaside retirement with Sweeney. Still, I tried not to pay too much attention to her or any other actress because I did not want to be an imitation

How were you directed by Mr. Santana?

I love working with Mr. Santana because he is so funny himself that he makes me a funnier actress. Specifically, he helps me find comedic bits that emphasize the subtle humor of a scene while adding to my characterization.

How were you vocally coached by Mrs. McCormick?

Not only did Mrs. McCormick work with me on the difficult rhythms and lyrics, but before each vocal rehearsal we discussed the meaning behind each song. She taught me what I was singing about, and what my intentions were.

Which scene was most challenging?

Probably "God That's Good," the opening song of Act Two. It was difficult to remember the many similar lyrics and repetitive rhythms. I also had to sing to different characters with different motives. It was just a handful to change tones so frequently within a song; I was always nervous before I went onstage. I never stopped repeating the lyrics in my head!

Adrienne can next be seen onstage in the winter play, Noises Off, set to open January 14.



MONARCH CRITICS

New Moon



By Shivali Singh
Staff Writer

Definitely an improvement over last year's *Twilight*, *New Moon*, based on the book of the same name by Stephenie Meyer and directed by Chris Weitz, fulfills and surpasses the expectations of the *Twilight* Saga's many fans.

Bella Swan's (Kristen Stewart) affiliation with vampires loads her with new stresses, namely the sudden and traumatizing separation from her vampire boyfriend, Edward Cullen (Robert Pattinson), which allows her to grow closer to her childhood friend Jacob Black (Taylor Lautner) for emotional support. Their bond eventually leads to her discovering the biggest secret of the Jacob's Quileute tribe—a secret affirming that the supernatural has a constant presence in Bella's life. Additionally, she deals with the frightening certainty that she is the object of a hunt: the vampire Victoria (Rachelle Lefevre), whose mate, James, stalked Bella in the previous film, is out for revenge in the form of Bella's blood.

The acting, especially on the part of Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson, is greatly improved, which may be attributed to the new director. The film does not stray too far from the plot of the novel, though the very short appearance of Dakota Fanning as vampire Jane is disappointing—for all the hype about her joining the cast, she has a very minor role in the movie, making an appearance in only one scene. Not a letdown is the greater importance of Jacob, which makes Taylor Lautner's appearances on screen pleasingly frequent.

Without a doubt, *New Moon* is worth seeing in theaters, as it is enjoyable and even surprisingly touching.



Precious



By Logan Breitbart
Staff Writer

Movies come and movies go. However, occasionally a rare gem that elicits an empathy and awareness in the viewer finds an audience and leaves them better filmgoers and human beings. *Precious*: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire, is a poetic and harrowing tale whose tragedy serves to shock and educate audiences.

The film's heroine, Clarice Precious Jones (played by sensational newcomer Gabourey Sidibe), is an illiterate, obese black girl living in Harlem circa 1987. *Precious* is pregnant for the second time by her father, and disallows anyone to permeate her seemingly tough exterior. Sidibe's screen debut is nothing short of astonishing. She brings *Precious* to life by masterfully displaying her perilous journey towards motherhood.

Precious' foil, the villain of the film, is her mother (Mo'Nique), a belligerent, manipulative monster who abuses her daughter physically and emotionally. From her first moment onscreen to her final, emotionally charged monologue, she enraptures the audience in an unpredictable, raw performance for the ages.

Precious could be criticized as relentlessly depressing if it weren't for the remarkable supporting performances by Paula Patton, Mariah Carey and Xosha Roquemore, whose characters provide refuge for *Precious* from the hatred and grief at home. It is a tribute to their performances that the audience feels a sense of relief when we are with these characters as they bring some much needed joy to the bleak darkness in *Precious*.

Lee Daniels directs the film with precision and grace, plunging the audience into *Precious*' harsh reality. The film is a modern masterpiece with a powerful heart, and you should expect to hear its name repeatedly championed as the Oscar season approaches.



Pirate Radio



By Juliana Roy
Staff Writer

Across the airways in 1966, the advent of rock 'n' roll got everybody moving to the beat of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, The Who, and many other bands. But British radio (BBC) only played rock music two hours a week. In *Pirate Radio*, which is based on a true story, a group of disgruntled rock fanatics become "pirate" DJs, broadcasting their choice selection of music 24/7 from ships off the British coast, just beyond the BBC range.

"Radio Rock" hosted a motley crew of characters and fans from all over England who tuned into this station to listen to The Count (Philip Seymour Hoffman), the main DJ, and their favorite tunes. Life of Radio Rock was smooth sailing, complete with love affairs, secrets, and partying. However, the British government disapproved of their mission, and gave an obsessed and increasingly desperate Sir Alistair Dormandy (Kenneth Branagh) the job of shutting down Radio Rock within one year.

The true history of this boat is presented as a collection of smaller, very humorous stories that showcase a gamut of unique and quirky characters. The chemistry of the ensemble and the multiple-storyline structure make for a fantastically entertaining comedy. The film never bores due to its near-perfect pacing and enjoyably unconventional story, and the classic rock music flows very well with the events of the story.

Pirate Radio would appeal to all those who are fans of the highlighted era of music or who enjoy a fresh ensemble comedy.



The Fourth Kind



By Kristen Farabaugh
Staff Writer

The star of *The Fourth Kind* begins the film by walking up to the camera and stating, "I'm actress Milla Jovovich, and I will be portraying Dr. Abigail Tyler. This film is a dramatization of events that occurred in October 2000. Every scene in this movie is supported by archive footage. Some of what you're about to see is extremely disturbing"—and she means exactly what she says.

This movie takes place in Nome, Alaska, where Dr. Abigail Tyler (Milla Jovovich) becomes a witness to many strange happenings. Many of her therapy patients come in with the same complaint: they are all waking up at approximately 3:33 a.m. with a 'white owl' peering at them through their windows. Despite all of their efforts, the patients are unable to get the owl to fly away. In an attempt to learn more, Dr. Tyler decides to hypnotize them.

One of the scariest aspects of the film is the actual audio and video footage mixed in. The overall plot and acting in the movie are very intriguing, and the documented footage that is the basis for this movie adds to its overall atmosphere.

However, the film is disappointing because despite the real footage, the execution and portrayal of the events of the movie seem stogy and unrealistic, with an unsatisfying, though thought-provoking, ending that forces us to evaluate the facts that are presented to us.

As Milla Jovovich states, "We supplied all the facts, and what you interpret is yours to believe."



2012



By Pratyusha Javangula
and Puja Subramaniam
Staff Writers

Adrian Helmsley (Chiwetel Ejiofor), the protagonist of the apocalypse-based *2012*, is a regarded earth scientist who works for the U.S. government and discovers that the progressing displacement of the earth's crust will lead to the end of the world. Thereafter, Helmsley meets Jackson Curtis (John Cusack) during one of his studies. Due to a series of chaotic events following the crust's displacement, these two characters are brought together and rely on each other in their efforts to save the planet.

The high quality special effects provided by eminent director Roland Emmerich make the audience feel like the earth is actually cracking underneath their seats and the tidal waves are about to collapse upon them. The sounds of the whirring planes, crashing ships, and muffled screams emphasize the experience of the world's end.

Unfortunately, the script for the film is very unrealistic. The build up to the climax is extremely slow-paced, which causes the resolution to feel rushed in order to compensate for the time that was spent for the lengthy leading scenes. In addition, the introduction of new characters is choppy and hard to follow. Despite the inconsistency of pace, the actors brought their words to life with very sincere performances.

If this movie were to be rated based solely on special effects, it would deserve five stars given the intensity and emphasis on the natural disasters of the apocalypse. Nevertheless, the dialogue is confusing and redundant. If the world really does come to an end in 2012, hopefully it will not be so chaotic and emotionless as this film.



Weezer



By Eric Pestana
Staff Writer

Since 1994, alternative rock band Weezer has created a vast repertoire of music with a unique, if not groundbreaking, sound. The group's 2009 album *Raditude* takes a step back from the Weezer norm of gritty guitars and switches genres up a bit.

Right off the bat, the leadoff single "(If You're Wondering If I Want You To I Want You To)" is an upbeat two-step tune that seems too animated for its stripped down, acoustic nature; it initially just doesn't seem to fit. Then the boisterous, rock-tinged chorus comes along and ties the loose ends together. Several songs on the album begin slowly and then pick up the pace, and then fade into cohesive catchiness.

The sluggish beginnings are limited, though; danceable songs like "Can't Stop Party-ing" are instantly catchy and don't let up. "Partying" contains a verse by Lil Wayne, a fun addition that doesn't feel out of place due to the album's off-the-wall experimentation. As the album continues, songs like "Trippin' Down the Freeway," are a nostalgic throwback to the sounds of past Weezer albums.

Raditude can occasionally wax infantile; some of the hooks and melodies seem childish in the light of older Weezer songs. One unfortunate example is "Love is the Answer," whose Indian influence is the least fitting to the song's otherwise ballad-like structure. The album's flow staggers as the track list progresses, as the diverse songs conflict.

However, the core of singer Rivers Cuomo's songwriting can still be felt throughout, being the only factor holding the songs together. All things considered, if you're craving an experimental, lighthearted trip, Weezer has your ticket to ride.



SPORTS

Women's Water Polo: Becky Friedenbach

By Jaslyn Johnson
Staff Writer

Q: Why is water polo your sport?

A: I've always been a swimmer and I tried water polo one summer and I liked it a lot.

Q: What is the key to success in playing water polo?

A: You have to be strong mentally and physically because it's a fast game, and it is tiring playing a full game.

Q: How would you describe leadership?

A: A very important factor in keeping everyone spirited and focused about upcoming games.

Q: What distinguishes your team from others?

A: Most teams have only a few good players, but we have a whole team of good players, and we're Mitty, so of course we're better.

Q: What would you consider the highlight of your season?

A: Going undefeated in the Los Altos and Aptos tournaments.

Q: Who have been the most valuable players this season?

A: Jenn Afflerback, our first year goalie, Sarah Slugocki, our best outside shooter, and Haley Smith, our fastest swimmer.

Women's Volleyball Team Completes Perfect Season with State Title

By Neil Jariwalla
Staff Writer

Having already achieved numerous accolades so far, the Archbishop Mitty Women's Volleyball Team is the State Champion once again.

But more than that, when the Monarchs capped a perfect 39-0 season with a straight sets thrashing of Redlands East Valley, the team ensured that it would deservedly be ranked #1 in the entire nation by a host of organizations including ESPN and Maxpreps.

Led by Coach Bret Almazan-Cezar, winner of the 2009 AVCA National High School Coach of the Year by the American Volleyball Coaches Association, the Monarchs fed off last year's tremendous success, in which they finished as WCAL, CCS, and Nor-Cal champions while also capturing the State Title.

The Monarchs dominated again this season, completing what is easily one of the best in Mitty history.

As a testament to their domination, the Monarchs did not even lose ten games total in their 39 matches.

After a stellar 30-0 record through the regular season, the Monarchs went a perfect 9-0 in the playoffs, knocking out Sacred Heart Cathedral and Leland while



Lady Monarchs celebrate perfect season & State Title

Photo Courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

boasting two impressive victories over St. Francis High School.

The Monarchs did not just win, they dominated, highlighting the versatility and superiority of this team.

The Monarchs offense was led by senior hitters Kristina Graven and Rachel Williams, arguably the top hitting pair in the nation, and senior setter Joan Caloiaro.

At press time Williams was 15th in the state with a kill average of 52. Graven was right behind her at 18th with a percentage of 48.6.

Seniors Ryan Shaffer and Kaitlin Connolly with junior Ronni Lewis anchored the defense, while middle blockers Shannon Fleming and Bennett Jones, senior right side hitter and middle blocker Brittany Bozzini, and senior setter Holly

Mueller were key parts of the Monarch's lineup.

Understandably, the praise for one another is evident among teammates.

Williams feels that "everyone who steps on the court is a key player."

They certainly are: In a 3-0 victory over Leland on Saturday, Nov. 14, Mueller had 23 assists while Shaffer had 27 digs.

In a recent 7th straight NorCal victory, a 3-1 win over St. Francis

of Sacramento, Williams, Graven, and Fleming combined for 41 kills, Caloiaro notched 41 assists, and Shaffer recorded 25 digs.

And in the State Championship, Stanford-bound, All-American Williams had 19 kills in winning MVP honors, while All-American Graven had 12 kills, and Caloiaro had 43 assists.

The state championship was the eighth in Mitty's history, equalling the number reached by St. Francis for the most state volleyball championships in CIF history. The Monarchs are 8-4 overall in the state finals and have now appeared in the last seven Division III championship matches.

Just an incredible season for an incredible program.

Field Hockey Heartbreaking Loss Ends Promising Season

By Mona Patel
Staff Writer

To no one's surprise, the Archbishop Mitty Women's Field Hockey team has had yet another stellar season, going as far as the semi-finals of CCS.

The road to the CCS playoffs was paved with successful league games, which earned them an impressive record of 10-3-1 in the BVAL and cemented their position as a dominant team.

However, despite their record and improved play, the Monarchs faced some difficulties along the way.

Senior Natalia Smith admits, "We started out a little rough because we are a young team."

The team consisted of one freshman, four sophomores, seven juniors, and ten seniors, a significant change in roster from last year due to the graduation of eleven seniors.

Senior Kelly Vane remarks, "In the beginning of the season we needed to adjust to each other's style more, but it was our team bond which kept us together."

Indeed, the Monarchs quickly overcame this obstacle, developing a close bond as the season progressed.

Junior Chelsea Palacio comments that "the team is really close. Everyone is like a sister to me."

This connection between the players helped their performance on the field as well.

Senior Jamie Garcia says, "We quickly learned how to play with one another, learning each other's tendencies and style of play."

Coach Williams also reveals that the "weight room has made a significant difference in our team's strength."

These new facilities, as well as the team's motivation

to continuously improve, led to noticeable increases in team stamina and mental fitness.

In addition to communication, there are other aspects of the game that the players worked to improve during practice.

Garcia reveals, "At the beginning of the season our hits, receptions, and communication skills were lacking, but by embedding these skills in certain drills at practice, these three things have become routine and helped us win games."



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez.

Senior Jillian Andersen dribbles down the field.

The season began for the Monarchs with five non-league games, four of which they won, including an impressive defeat of powerhouse Scripps Ranch from San Diego.

The team began league play with slightly less success, tying with Saratoga in its first game and then losing the next two games to Presentation and Los Gatos.

However, the team improved as the season progressed, defeating Saratoga and Presentation in later games.

The Monarch's excellent record in league play, which ended with a victory over St. Francis, earned them the second seed in CCS playoffs.

After overcoming Homestead in the quarterfinal, the team advanced to the semi-finals, where they suffered a loss to Presentation in overtime.

Despite that finish, the Monarchs did well for themselves this year, the players having learned to work well together; every player adds something important to the team.

Assistant Coach Melissa Kelly comments, "It is hard to point out specific players because all [of them] contributed; whether it was Kelly Vane's amazing vocals, or Liz Duxbury's lightning speed. All players were utilized, and each piece was integral."

Senior co-captain Emilie Soares adds to this: "We did a good job at working hard all of the time. The effort of the team was never questioned."

Though the CCS championship evaded the team this year, it is surely only a matter of time before the ambitious, determined, and skilled Monarchs reclaim the title in the future.

Monarch Football

Team Rounds Out A Successful Season

By Cameron Schott, Arjun Ravishankar, Ayman Ullah
Staff Writers

This year the Archbishop Mitty football team came out fighting, and worked their way to the top of the WCAL.

It started as the Monarchs beat Las Lomas 41-7 and then continued by beating Gilroy 45-13 the following week.

The season got more difficult but Mitty only got stronger, defeating Palo Alto, the #4 ranked team in the section by Maxpreps.com, 35-13.

Next the Monarchs shut out the #12 ranked Valley Christian 21-0 on their home field followed by a 47-24 rampage over #13 ranked St. Ignatius.

After beating Sacred Heart Cathedral 49-7 at the Mitty night game, the Monarchs faced their powerhouse rival, Bellarmine in the suspense-filled game of the year.

In the first quarter Mitty had two fumbles and an interception deep in the Bell territory, causing them to fall behind 14-0 at the end of the first half.

Rocky Meszaros said, "At halftime our coach talked to us about how only good teams respond to adversity, and our team took that to heart."

In the fourth quarter, quarterback Kyle Boehm scored on a one yard keeper to make the score 14-7 Bellarmine. On a crucial third down play for Bellarmine late, Greg Ruiz intercepted a ball putting Mitty on Bellarmine's 25 yard line.

Six plays later, Boehm scored a one-yard keeper to tie the game at 14-14. On the last play of the game Brendan Manion got his second sack to send the game into overtime.

The teams exchanged two touchdowns, and on their second, the Monarchs chose to go for two.

"At that point we knew we were not going to be



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

Senior Daniel Ajlouni leads Mitty to victory against Serra.

stopped," said senior Joey Walker. "We put too much hard work into the program to let three yards come between us and a victory." The Monarchs pulled through with a 28-27

win, shocking the Bell and Mitty fans alike.

The next week Mitty had to face another tough opponent: St. Francis.

D.J. Bush said, "Going into the St. Francis game, we were treating it as another Bellarmine game. We knew that it was going to be as big, if not bigger, than our last game and we had to treat it that way."

Mitty came out with a solid lead 28-0 against St. Francis. The Lancers came back though and scored two touchdowns, driving in the fourth quarter for a third with two minutes left, but Daniel Ajlouni made his third interception of the year to ice the game, making the Monarchs 7-0-1.

Joey Walker had 127 yards on 11 carries and two touchdowns and Kyle Boehm had 202 yards on the ground.

Mitty remained undefeated in the Serra game, beating them 20-7. In the final regular season game, Mitty played the 1-8 Riordan Crusaders, beating them 38-14 to make Mitty and Bellarmine WCAL co-champions.

Going into the CCS playoffs ranked No. 1 on *The Mercury News*' Top 15, the Monarchs faced Valley Christian in a game that ended Mitty football's fairy-tale season.

Despite their lead in the first half, the Monarchs fell apart as Valley Christian scored off a return of the second-half kickoff, closing out Mitty's most impressive season in many, many years.

Despite the unfortunate end of the season, the Monarchs clearly outperformed pre-season expectations. Their dedication and leadership on the field has translated to a championship season and revived the Mitty football team to a level of competitiveness that the team will strive to maintain in coming seasons.

Women's Tennis

Team Falls Just Short of CCS Championship

By Steven Nguyen
Staff Writer

Coming into the season, The Archbishop Mitty Women's Tennis team looked once again to claim WCAL, CCS and Nor-Cal crowns.

After last year's incredible undefeated run to the championship, the bar was set high for the current Monarchs, in spite of losing key members of the team, including CCS Player of the Year Tayler Davis and 1st team All-WCAL player Stefanie Ton.

But with returning players, sophomore Samantha Polayes, juniors Stacy Yam and Maggie Yudkevich, and seniors Maya Raman, Tara Vanooteghem and Esther Walker, the team completed another strong season.

The team's perseverance and dedication were two of the factors that paid off this season, as they were ranked #2 for the CCS Team Tournament.

Senior Maya Raman explains, "We're very happy with our season. Although we are disappointed with our performance at Fresno we looked forward to CCS and the CIF Nor-Cal Team Tournament."

This year's phenomenal success could be attributed to the competitive nature and heart of the team.

Coach Scalese explained, "They were extremely competitive. When the match started they were all business. Off court and before a match, they could be quite goofy and relaxed."

Though ambitious, the team felt that they needed to leave a little room for fun. In fact, the Monarchs felt that it is because of this balance that they had done so well in the past.

"Our team was really good because of the talent of so many of our players, our passion and competitive nature, and how we had so much fun," said Vanooteghem.

With only three seniors returning to this year's team,

captains Vanooteghem and Raman's main goals focused on bringing up a young doubles team to prepare for the graduation of three of the top doubles players in WCAL.

The captains led the Monarchs to a perfect 12-0 in WCAL, winning their fourth consecutive title and bringing the team's overall record to better than 50-1 in the past four years.

The team had amazing accomplishments, especially in the WCAL Tournament, where the doubles team of Vanooteghem and Yudkevich won second place, while Polayes and Yam won second and third place in singles.

The Monarchs have showcased an equally impressive performance in their CCS Tournament win against Burlingame in the quarterfinals where the team won 7-0.

The Monarchs eventually fell in the CCS semifinal to Saratoga, 4-3. Still the season was an unequivocal success, capped by another WCAL title.



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

Behind senior Josh Hogan, one of the top runners in **Men's Cross Country** history, the team finished sixth place in the WCAL. Three runners qualified for the CCS finals at Crystal Springs: Hogan, junior Vincent Giglierano and freshman Richard Guzikowski, while the team fell just short of qualifying as a whole. Senior Preston McPeak, starting Varsity runner, says, "The whole season was bittersweet... it could have gone better, but we had an amazing team—good, fun, interactive people. I would do it again."

The Mitty **Varsity Women's Golf** team finished the regular season this year with a 4-8 overall record, while achieving 4-6 in league play. They placed third out of six at WCAL Finals and ninth overall in the CCS Finals.

Coach Matt Garrison believes that the team is "a very unique group that has the ability to listen, to compartmentalize what is most important, and to apply what is being said to their own game and skill set." This team accomplished its season through strong play by seniors Kelli Otis and Kirsten Fernandez, juniors Tabitha Ahearn and Jenny Grich, and freshman Danielle Aiello, who all contributed during the season.

Mitty's **Men's Varsity Water Polo** team concluded their season with an overall record of 10-14.

Led by Seniors Kyle Dzurko, Jack Cohen, Derek Booth, and their coach Mark Hendrickson, the Monarchs were competitive in all of their matches. The highlight moment of their season was winning a close league game against Valley Christian 11-10.

Derek Booth commented, "Our philosophy is to play hard, fight back, and do whatever we can to make the game physical." Coach Mark Hendrickson also stated, "Our goal this year as always was to make the CCS playoffs, which we just missed."



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

The **Women's Varsity Cross Country Team**, with Head Coach Mark Frise, included key contributions from seniors Lauren Ducote, and Katherine Edgecumbe, junior Mary Kriege, and freshmen Molly Haar. A highlight moment from the season was at the first WCAL meet where Varsity and JV teams both took first place. Said Head Coach Mark Frise: "The team has had a very successful season highlighted by first place finishes at the Lynbrook Invitational & the RAM (Westmoor) Invitational."

Highlight REEL

Contributions By Bryce Bajar, Erik Chu,
Patrick Le, Kelsey McClung
Staff Writers

Smells Like Green Spirit: Mitty's Green Revolution

By Ryan Kapur and Omid Mirfendereski
Staff Writers

Currently, Mitty pays \$300,000 annually in energy costs—enough to power over 220 homes, and roughly the equivalent of twenty-five student tuitions!

To counteract this monstrous energy bill—and to help the environment—Mitty is determined to go green. After a recent PG&E energy audit, Mitty has changed maintenance schedules and made other adjustments to reduce its energy consumption.

A newly formed Green Committee is focusing on greener ideas for classroom education, student input and action, ethical issues, and business and facilities. Together the teachers involved in the committee have created a green strategy to reduce energy consumption, to increase recycling through students, and to use more earth friendly supplies.

Steps have already been taken to reduce Mitty's carbon footprint. Among the changes made are the installation of filtered water dispensers around campus, the switch to less toxic cleaning supplies and the use of EcoSmart 25% recyclable fiber coffee cups at staff stations.

Mitty's CFO, Mr. Helmer, said that the buildings themselves have had some changes to be more environmentally friendly as well. They have installed energy-efficient roofs on various wings, replaced old heating and air conditioning units, and implemented energy-efficient CFL lights and other fluorescent products.

Although Mitty wants to help the environment by becoming a paperless campus, Mr. Helmer admitted that a totally paperless campus might be impossible. Electronic textbooks would reduce paper usage, which would be beneficial both to the environment and for students' backpack load. Currently, Mitty is exploring the development of a digital interface that would reduce paper use on campus.

As a step toward a paperless campus, however, the administration has created a website, www.mymitty.com, where students would have access to their assignments instead of receiving handouts.

Although Mitty has been actively going green, Mitty plans to use still more environment-friendly technologies in the near future. Mitty hopes to install a new turf field that will allow for more activity without wearing down the field, and, more importantly, it will reduce water-usage by 20%.

There are also talks with the food service provider to switch from plastic/Styrofoam utensils (which take thousands of years to break down) to more biodegradable starch-based products.

The biggest improvement Mitty hopes to implement is solar panels. Although it would dramatically cut the energy costs, it is unfortunately too costly at the

moment. Nevertheless, Mr. Helmer says that within the next ten years, there will be solar panels on all the roofs, once the cost decreases and efficiency increases.

Mr. Helmer emphasized that protecting the environment, "is something that will define our generation," and further explained that students should ask themselves, "How can [I] get involved?"

Simple changes in your daily routine can improve the environment: using reusable water bottles or canteens, reducing paper usage, composting, recycling as much as you can, and using less fuel through carpooling or driving a fuel-efficient car.

So don't just think about becoming greener, do it! Once you make a strong effort to improve your habits, others will follow your lead. It is our duty as students to keep our school and our environment clean and healthy.

If you have a good idea for Mitty going green, feel free to contact a member of the green committee. Their emails can be found at www.mitty.com/contact.



Olivia Tran

STUDENT CENTE(R)ED

Student Focus: Dominique van den Dries

By Morgan McEnery
Staff Writer

You won't find freshman Dominique van den Dries playing Farmville in her spare time. Even though Dominique has only spent four months at Mitty, she is already making her mark—as a professional cyclist.

As a child, Dominique's only cycling experience was with her father when they took short mountain bike trips together. After a while, her father noticed her great potential and prompted her to ride more seriously by buying her a "real" bike. At age 10, she joined a very small cycling community that, to her, seems more like a family than a group of athletes.

After only one year in this cycling community, Dominique, then 11, became an essential and accomplished member, exceeding everyone's expectations. Soon, she began racing, and has since been to five national competitions in both track and road cycling. Because she competes at a professional level, her medal collection



goes beyond the occasional blue ribbon; she is able to showcase a number of different medals and trophies from local and national competitions.

Besides the medals, being "pro" has its advantages: she gets paid to race and she is sponsored by a company. However, as a minor, she can only be paid for winning a race. As for her sponsor, Dominique races with Twenty12, the organization putting on the 2012 Olympic games.

When asked about a role model in the cycling world, Dominique didn't hesitate to answer: "Coryn Rivera is my biggest influence. She's 17 and already been to the world cups. She has more national titles than her age! My goal is pretty much to be just like her."

Dominique's other goals? "I'm hoping to be a national champion in the next year," she responded confidently. Even though she's just started high school, Dominique hopes to cycle at a collegiate level some day, and wants to develop her skill and passion for cycling as long as she is able to.

With her family as her cheerleaders, chauffeurs, and coaches, Dominique has come to realize that she owes her success to them, especially to her father, for supporting and encouraging her through the years. Because of her experiences past and present, Dominique has learned to either go big or go home—and you can bet that she'll be going big.

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sections in the KPIX news station. Mr. Silva said, "We had her lines up on the teleprompter, and she finished recording in literally ten minutes."

The duo also wanted to expose some of Mitty's more hidden talents. One segment included Mr. Fallis, Mrs. Brunolli, Mrs. Nowell, and Mr. VanValkenburg as members of a fictional 60s pop band called *The Grape Nutz*. Mr. Silva elaborated, "We were very fortunate to be able to draw from the entire community."

The evening's student show closed with a heartwarming rendition of U2's "One," followed by an encore of Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'." Of his choice for the closing track, Mr. Kimont explained, "There hasn't been a band that has personified rock and roll like U2 has throughout the decades." Certainly, the audience agreed, as they responded to the song with a sea of waving candles. The jazz band and Exodus ended the program to roaring applause and cheers.

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