



Mitty Students Advocate for Justice

By **Sruthi Ramaswami**
News Editor

Briefcases, suits, notes, and Congressional offices—not the usual items that come to mind when thinking of Mitty’s immersion trips. Not so, however, for the November Washington D.C. trip wherein Mitty students embarked on a journey to make a difference in their communities. Students who participated in the trip spent months researching and preparing to present to their Congressional representatives problems that affect their communities both locally and nationally.

For the past several months, Mitty’s Advocacy Project (MAP), a student group whose goal is to increase student political advocacy, worked on and researched four key issues: Oversight and investigation into the WHINSEC program; the DREAM Act; renewal of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA); and immigration. (See *Justice Awareness* p.12 for more information).

Their preparation was extensive, as junior Vince Kelsey explains, “We researched the specific pieces of legislation that we were supporting, senators and representatives that we were meeting with, and their aids in order to find out their past voting record and opinions on bills.”

Their efforts were taken to the next level when Campus Ministry and teachers **Mr. Michael Accorsi** and **Mrs. Megan Walker** organized the trip to Washington, D.C.

Ten students—seniors **Cory Quinn, Jonathan Reyes, Jaleesa Atangan, Kirsten Klaas, and Devin Conley**, and juniors **Alisha Dua, Vince Kelsey, Megan Linney, Amanda Dillon, Amanda Guilardi, and Marguerite Metzger**—travelled to the nation’s capital and returned with new insight and experience in political action.

“Participating in this trip was a great way to immerse myself in the political world and a rare opportunity to see it firsthand at such a young age,” Jonathan Reyes remarked.

The Ignatian Solidarity Network hosted a series of conferences in D.C. and Mitty students delivered a presentation on social justice videos at Georgetown University. They emphasized the six steps to advocacy: Research and Case Building, Developing Public Awareness, Organizing a Strategy and Campaign, Call to Action, Legislative Negotiation, and Follow-up.

Mr. Accorsi stated that the main goal of their presentation was “to show the impact that videos can have on increasing awareness within the community.” The presentation covered the basics of making videos, and how to implement technology to directly employ the third step the conference focused on: Organizing a Strategy and Campaign. Alisha Dua, Amanda Dillon, and Megan Linney were the key presenters who facilitated and led this interactive session.

In addition to presenting at Georgetown, the students demonstrated their passion and hard work at five legislative meetings with senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein, as well as many members of the legislative staff, including Congresswoman Anna Eshoo’s Chief of Staff, Mieke Eoyang; Congressman Mike Honda’s Senior Legislative Assistant, Ken Takeda; and Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren’s Chief Coun-



Photo Courtesy of Mr. Accorsi

Mitty students after a successful advocacy presentation at Georgetown University.

cilwoman, Ur Mendoza Jaddou. Despite the challenges of a hectic day, the students lobbied successfully for a variety of issues that the Catholic Church supports. Proving to be the most prepared, Mitty students ran two Senatorial sessions representing all CA Catholic universities and high schools.

Jonathan Reyes explained that during one of their meetings, he directly experienced the impact that Mitty students were making. “An aid informed us that there was no stance currently held on the issue concerning the School of Americas (SOA). I later made it known to him that this was an important issue to us. [The aid] made a note of it. That moment right there told me that young students like me can make an impact if we go out there and try.”

When they met with Ur Mendoza Jaddou, Mitty students highlighted the issue of human trafficking, specifically the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). Ms. Jaddou provided them with extensive information about the issue. In addition, Mitty students and Ms. Jaddou discussed immigration reform.

Head facilitators, Alisha Dua and Megan Linney argued that immigration reform is prime for bipartisan support as the change in majority takes place.

Mr. Accorsi stated that “Mitty’s students were highly prepared, and led the charge while serving as role models for other schools.”

Several students who attended the trip said that many factors made the experience an outstanding one.

Alisha Dua explained, “I think what was the best thing about this trip was the fact that it encompassed everything. It was a college visit, a vacation, an educational experience,

a professional endeavor, and a regular weekend, all in one. Honestly, I couldn’t have asked for much more.”

The trip was life-changing for many, including junior Megan Linney, who claimed, “I always knew that I wanted to get involved with politics. However, there were parts of me that were always a little bit uncertain. After going to D.C., I am more positive than ever that this is what I want to do with my life.”

Reflecting on the trip, Mr. Accorsi added, “I had never been so proud of these students. There wasn’t a single minute to rest; we were so busy, yet the students presented with the utmost confidence, determination, and passion.”

When the group was not lobbying or preparing for presentations, they visited several historic landmarks such as the Lincoln Memorial.

Mrs. Walker fondly recalled that particular moment, “There we were, at one of the great landmarks of civil rights victories in this country. As I looked at this group, so proud of their efforts and accomplishments, I knew that here is our hope for the future.”

She encourages all students to be active in their communities. “The youth voice is a powerful and compelling one, and I’d like to see all of our students realize that elected officials do want to know about your concerns for the world you live in and will lead in the not-too-distant future.”

For more information on the Mitty Advocacy Project (MAP), go to www.mittyadvocacy.wordpress.com or contact President Sruthi Ramaswami, sruthiramaswami12@mittymonarch.com

Over the Years: Christmas Wishes

By **Trevor Bates and the News Staff**

Every year around mid-December, the entirety of Mitty’s student body congregates in the Fien Gymnasium with the alacrity of children on Christmas morning. Yes, there is indeed a seasonal pleasure other than KOIT-FM’s Christmas music or presents under the tree: the Christmas Rally. After all, what could be more exciting and more holiday-esque than granting wishes to Mitty students and faculty?

Here are some favorite Christmas wishes from the past:

- A student really wanted to have her own pig as a pet. Student Activities granted her wish by bringing a baby pig from a farm to her during the Christmas rally. She was able to spend time with the pig, as well as a variety of other farm animals in her own personal petting zoo.
- An injured football player was presented with a Letterman jacket and a variety

of football gear. This was a touching moment for the football team, the player, and the whole Mitty community.

- One year, several boys who routinely “sagged” their pants were called down. Santa gave each of them high-waist pants with belts, and they were told to change into them. It was definitely a time for laughs!
- Every year, one student is picked during the Magazine Drive to receive a trip to Hawaii, all expenses paid. **Mr. Hicks** had his eye on the trip for many years, and last year, was called down to “go to Hawaii” during the Christmas rally. He enjoyed his new Hawaii attire, miniature pool, and beach chairs that brought the beach experience to the Fien Gymnasium!

As we enter the holiday season, let’s see what this year’s Christmas rally has to offer!

OPINIONS

Opposing Viewpoints: Video Games and Teens

THE NEW TYLENOL

By Hari Krishnan
Staff Writer

One of the most common misconceptions that video games face is that they are just a gratifying pastime, usually enjoyed by younger generations. The predominant view is that they are nothing but fanciful amusements that only have harmful effects on all who play them. However, both clinical trials and general trends show that video games can be beneficial to players.

Teenagers who play video games are much more likely to undergo an expansion of their motor skills, reflexes, and their mental capacities.

Clinical studies have proven that teenagers who regularly play game are likely to perform better in stressful environments than non-gamers. In one such study, 30 teenagers who had never played any video games before were asked to take a comprehensive, timed test involving multiple advanced high-school level questions.

They were then given the classic video game Tetris and were required to log 1 hour a day of this game. After 3 weeks, the test was repeated, and all of them received a significantly higher score on the test after their mild exposure to video games, proving the value of such games.

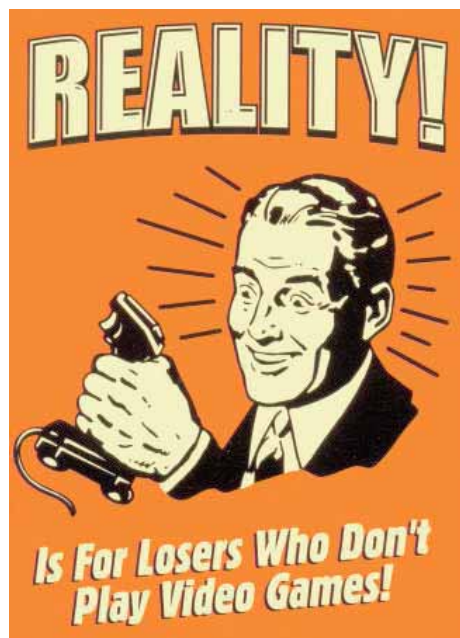
Another study has shown that many 'twitch' shooters such as *Call of Duty: Black Ops* can significantly increase the hand-eye coordination of players as well as slightly improve their reflexes. Gamers who have played twitch shooters were found to be able to match hidden pictures much faster than those who do not, demonstrating how the beneficial effects can be transferred into real world applications.

Such studies challenge the conventional view of video games as simply an enjoyable pastime, as now the many beneficial effects of video games are becoming apparent.

Another benefit of video games is to re-

lieve stress. With so many different classes, sports, and extracurricular activities, there is an immense amount of stress on a student.

The enormous amount of stress causes teenagers to look for forms of stress relief; video games are the perfect solution for them. They can distract players from their hectic schedule by immersing them in another world where they do not have to think about their current situation.



The appeal of video games as a form of stress relief becomes apparent when we look at some of the alternatives that some teenagers decide to utilize. With drugs, alcohol, and tobacco as options to relieve stress, video games provide the system that can be used to vent this stress and at the same time dissuade teenagers from illegal activities, an outcome that any parent, adolescent, or critic is sure to appreciate.

But in the end, like any form of entertainment, video games can have deprecatory effects if played in excess, but when one shows restraint, they can be infinitely enjoyable and have many favorable effects.

JUST ANOTHER DISTRACTION

By Raymond Hoagland
Staff Writer

Despite their immediate benefits, video games in the long run have very detrimental effects. Not only are games expensive, but overuse can lessen time spent on studying, while leading to increased anger and lower grades. While an average user is unlikely to be affected by these problems, there are

is more harmful than other types of media violence because the person is actually interacting with the game and participating in the violence.

Kevin Keiffer, a professor of psychology at Saint Leo University, agrees stating that there has been a trend linking video game violence to more aggressive behavior in adolescents. In recent times with popular shooting games such as *Halo: Reach* and *Call of Duty: Black Ops*, aggressive behavior within adolescents is becoming more and more prevalent. Gamers may have more aggressive thoughts, angrier feelings, and increased heart rates immediately after playing a violent game, suggesting that video games may indeed increase aggressive thoughts, as confirmed by *The Los Angeles Times*.

Another detrimental effect of video games is that they can take away from time spent socializing and talking to friends. If the gamer is not socially outgoing, the problem will continue to worsen and leave the user socially impaired.

In essence, video games have been shown in some situations to perpetuate the problem that plagues many teens today: social awkwardness. While video games cannot be attributed to the stem of the problem, they do in fact augment the problem. With their expanding communities, online video games have become so appealing to gamers that they spend less time with their friends in the real world and more time playing video games online. This is worse still for gamers who already feel secluded from the real world. For them, video games can become a virtual world of friends, a habit that will undoubtedly have catastrophic consequences as the gamers grow older.

In the end, although video games are enticing, the negative consequences that accompany them often outweigh their benefits. And if played excessively, video games can and almost certainly will have even more devastating effects on adolescents.



several cases in which people have become so interested in a game that it is an addiction.

According to MSN, in these cases, some doctors say that the addiction can be as bad as that of heroine. The article goes on to say that up to ninety percent of all children play video games, and a horrifying number of these, up to fifteen percent, may be addicted.

Even worse than addiction, video games that depict violent behavior also tend to lead to more aggressive behaviors in life. Elizabeth Carll, former president of the media section of the American Psychological Association, says that video game violence

PRESS THE START BUTTON

New Limitations on Nuclear Arms

By Makoto Lalwani
Staff Writer

It seems as if a possible breakthrough may be a moment's notice away.

Earlier this year, on April 8, the United States and Russia jointly signed New START, the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, after the first treaty of 1991 expired. If this treaty is ratified, it will further limit the number of nuclear warheads and ICBM ballistic missiles that can be deployed by each nation, furthering a slow but steady decline of tensions between the two nuclear powers. However, in order for START to pass, it must first get through a formidable obstacle: the United States Senate.

For the Senate to ratify the New

START, 67 votes are required; of these, 59 are Democratic votes that are more or less secured. The question, then, is if the remaining eight votes necessary will be provided by Republicans.

Although the treaty has bipartisan support outside of Congress, Senate Republicans look poised to block it over complaints that it may limit the US's ability to develop and produce new weapons.

Republican Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona recently withdrew his support for the bill, citing that there isn't enough time within the year to settle the "complex and unresolved issues related to START and modernization." In response, Democrats, including President Obama himself, have stressed that the treaty is of urgent national security and

that it must be ratified as quickly as possible.

The Democrats' urgency is justified, both because of the compelling need to pass START and the fact that after a new Congress is sworn in in January, the increased number of Republicans in the Senate will make it even more difficult to ratify the treaty.

While failure to ratify the treaty will not result in nukes showering down upon America, New START will be a great step forward in further dismantling the threat of nuclear warfare. The treaty also presents a spectacular opportunity for the United States to maintain and strengthen relations with Russia.

On the other hand, if START is not passed, it will reflect a general incompe-

tence on the part of the United States to make decisions on a global scale and in turn blemish our reputation in the international community. Not only this, it will further undermine our position on other issues regarding nuclear power, most notably our nuclear sanctions on Iran.

START presents an essential opportunity to reach out to Russia and further strengthen our international bonds. However, it also reflects the necessity for our Republicans to put petty needs aside and collaborate for the greater good. By approving START, we can kill two birds with one stone—while stepping towards cooperation within our government, we can simultaneously step further and further away from mutually assured destruction.



ATTACK OF THE TROLLS

By Claire Chu
Staff Writer

Phony accounts set up to ridicule or harass classmates. Embarrassing pictures and videos posted without the subject's consent. Untrue statements set as statuses or written on walls, hate groups targeting specific individuals or causes, events created to intentionally exclude others. The potential for abuse and cyberbullying on Facebook is unlimited, with the imaginations of users themselves the only limits.

This raises the question of whether or not the sixth most trafficked site, and wildly successful social networking platform, should step up and take responsibility for the actions of its users.

With a user population outnumbering 500 million, 700 status updates per second, and more than 30 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, photo albums, etc.) shared each month,

Facebook is becoming ubiquitous to a point where regulation of all posts is neither possible, nor effective.

In one instance in January, five students died in a car crash in Melbourne—an incident which subsequently resulted in the creation of several memorial pages on Facebook. Like public books of condolences, users could freely post pictures and messages, as well as communicate their sorrows with fellow mourners. However, Facebook “trolls,” those who intentionally disrupt online communities and find amusement in doing so, were quick to deface and vandalize the pages with disrespectful content—mourning the car, the tree, and in addition posting gruesome pictures and tactless commentary.

As Facebook removed the offensive pages and accounts of the trolls, the perpe-

trators only continued to create fake identities to continue wreaking emotional havoc on the friends and family of the deceased. One offended woman noted that, “The trolls are more organized than Facebook can keep up with. There are teams of people on Facebook reporting this sordid stuff and it gets nowhere.”

Anna Bligh, the Premier of Queensland, wrote to Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and conveyed her distaste toward such content on the site, further fueled by complaints of child pornography and bestiality images found posted on memorial sites of two other young people.

Facebook responded, maintaining that while it had worked alongside Australian police and acted quickly to remove “despicable” content, “Complete prevention or eradication of tasteless material is not

something we or any society can deliver.”

In addition, Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities explicitly states that “by using or accessing Facebook, [users] agree to this Statement.”

In the “Disputes” section of the statement, it is disclaimed that “We do not guarantee that Facebook will be safe or secure.” More importantly, in the same section, the Statement spells out that “If anyone brings a claim against us related to your actions, content or information on Facebook, you will indemnify and hold us harmless from and against all damages, losses, and expenses of any kind related to such claim.”

In being a part of Facebook's 500 million population, a user cannot demand that the networking site take liability for the actions of other users online, no matter how disturbing or offensive such actions are.

People who find that Facebook should heed users' complaints and take more than cursory actions in dealing with what content is posted, need to also realize that they are demanding something that is explicitly stated by Facebook to not be its responsibility.

One way or another, as Internet legal expert Associate Professor Melissa de Zwart, it is impossible for Facebook to moderate every entry made. And it is impossible for Facebook to be held liable for entries made over which it possesses no control, and legally holds no claims to.

FACEBOOK FRENZY A “Safe” Community?



By Suryatej Gundavelli
Staff Writer

Having spread rapidly across the nation and even into a global frenzy, Facebook has now consumed Archbishop Mitty as a part of its community. With many students and even teachers joining Facebook, our online freedom and capabilities expand, yet our privacy rights are violated even more.

Facebook can determine our age, gender, and race from the information we post on our profiles and wall posts. It is now easier than ever before for hackers to commit identity theft due to the amount of information that people share online. Hackers can use our posts, status updates, quiz answers, notes, and even applications to collect personal data. Once the information is available, hackers can directly access your email account. Security questions such as “what city were you born in” and “what high school did you go to” can be effortlessly answered using information we post or comments we make about others. After gaining access to our email account, hackers can subsequently enter into many other accounts linked to our email, including bank accounts, causing immense financial damage to Facebook users.

Thankfully, Facebook now gives us the option of deciding which contacts we would like to share our information with, and which contacts to bar from viewing our personal information. While some Facebook's ideas on increasing privacy will prove to be useful in the innovative world of social networking, there is still much to be done before Facebook users can feel “safe.”

AIRPORT BODY SCANS The Latest Excess in the War on Terror

By Tyler Van Valkenburg
Staff Writer

Tom Sawyer, age 61, is a retired special education teacher from Michigan. He is also a survivor of bladder cancer, and on Nov. 7 had the bag that now collects his urine spilled all over his clothing during an airport security pat-down. After not being able to change his clothes before his flight, the man was left in tears. “I was absolutely humiliated, I couldn't even speak,” he told MSNBC. Sawyer is not alone in his humiliation. North Carolinian flight attendant Cathy Bossi had to show her prosthetic breast during a pat-down after declining the full body scan at the security checkpoint.

These stories, along with many others, have become part of the American discourse since the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) implemented its new, more stringent—and, for many, more invasive—security measures. Fliers in many airports must now walk through full-body scanners, and may be required to undergo a pat-down if they set off a scanner's alarm—as do most individuals with prosthetics—or if they opt out of being scanned.

Some fliers have opted out of being scanned, arguing that it is an invasion of privacy. The scans produced by the screenings show a white image of the traveler's naked body, as can be seen at right.

You can decide for yourself whether the privacy of those screened is being infringed upon. Flyers are also concerned about the potential harm to their health that the scanners pose. The machines use x-rays to render the images, and the effect of the radiation, while certified by the Food and Drug Administration as safe, has not been conclusively established. In fact, the US Airline Pilots Association has recommended that their pilots avoid being screened as the constant exposure to radiation might pose a health risk. This recommendation is, if anything, frightening to those Americans whose jobs require them to travel by plane on a weekly or even daily basis.

However, opting out of such screenings will force fliers to pat-downs that are much more invasive than

before, and which now include TSA agents feeling over sensitive areas of the body, including genitalia.

The government is invoking the possibility of an imminent terrorist attack to justify these degrading new measures. However, this argument has become less and less convincing to those who have watched, for nearly a decade, as similar infringements on privacy have been imposed by our government.

In truth, we live now in an America where privacy is only an afterthought in the unending fight against terrorism, and where policies such as those recently implemented by the TSA should be met with widespread objection, but are instead submissively accepted or, if not, create only a minor controversy that is forgotten weeks after it makes headlines.

This new invasion of privacy is just one of a series of security measures, all of which have been defended by our government with the seemingly unassailable justification that they are essential for our security. That's why, though the screenings themselves might prove—not just by a government organization but by an independent research group—harmless, and pat-downs might prove rare, the new measures should be challenged by the American people.

After such privacy-violating government measures as the Patriot Act and warrantless wiretapping have been met with little to no resistance from the American people, it is reassuring that the TSA's new policies are being met with some, even if mild and so far unproductive, public anger—it is, after all, good to know that there are some out there who still value the 4th amendment (you know, the one that talks about that whole right to privacy thing).

In this “War on Terror” in which we find ourselves today, let's not forget that privacy is a right guaranteed to all citizens, and one on which our country's free way of life depends. As Founding Father Benjamin Franklin himself said, “Anyone who trades liberty for security deserves neither liberty nor security.” I, for one, am not ready to make that trade.

Hopefully the American people aren't either.



GOING NEGATIVE

Candidates Revert to Mudslinging

By **Katie Ericksen**
Staff Writer

Which works better, negative or positive campaigning? As America just completed election season, everyone saw plenty of ads for Jerry Brown, Meg Whitman, Barbara Boxer and Carly Fiorina. Such an onslaught of negative ads provokes a question about the candidates' campaigning style, namely: Why do candidates resort to negative campaigning?

The president of Campaign Connection of Seattle says that negative campaigning is the right choice for candidates and victors often spend more money on such advertisements than their opponents by a wide margin. Another time a candidate might turn to

negative campaigning is if there is incontestable information that their opponent has done wrong, and the media will not publish



it. Other reasons that a candidate might campaign negatively is if their name is not well known, or to bite back at an opponent who is himself campaigning negatively.

Which is more effective? Positive or negative campaigning? Thisnation.com states, "negative campaign ads are more easily remembered, and, therefore, have a greater influence on voters' attitudes and vote decisions, and candidates who run negative ads are more likely to win." Trumanindex.com claims that the reason we don't read any stories about successful politicians who do not campaign negatively is because there are none.

The politicians, whose name everyone knows, are the ones who play dirty. Clearly, negative campaigning is a strategy that can work.

THE PLURALITY SYSTEM

Why Reform Is Needed

By **Eugene Woo**
Staff Writer

America: the first democracy of the modern world, of the people, by the people, and for the people. But just how much government is conducted by the people? Our political system, founded upon the basic ideals of representation, has increasingly come under fire for poorly representing the population.

To the Constitution numerous amendments have been made, almost all of them increasing the influence of the common people. The 12th, 17th, and 23rd Amendments have all improved the amount of government representation that the people have.

Yet, the American political system still has some deep-rooted deficiencies that make it much less representative

than our counterparts in the rest of the world.

It's indisputable that the two party American system does not accommodate the needs of every American. Why must we settle for a party that doesn't completely hold our views?

Even split-ticket voting often leaves voters with the distaste of having to settle for the lesser of two evils.

The basis of the issue is the winner-take-all system. No other democracies in the rest of the world use the winner-take-all system—most modern democracies were founded as, or have become a parliamentary, proportional victory system.

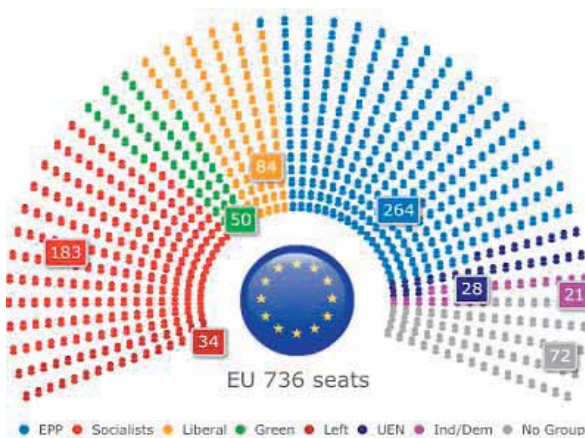
In our system, even if a party has 48% of the population behind it, the winning party with 50% of the vote gains office.

The 48% who sided with the losing party have no representation at all now. As indisputably great as Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Truman were, the eighteen year stretch of Democratic dominance is a prime example of the dangers of our system.

Most European democracies have a plurality system, meaning that, if the voting results turned out as 45%, 30%, 10%, and 5%, even the 5% would still have representation in the government.

The American government functions on the mandate given by its people: The idea that a majority endorses the winning candidates and supports their policies.

But for that other 49%, their fate could be to stand by and helplessly watch as policy after policy they oppose passes, simply waiting two more years until they can once more fight for office.



UNKNOWN ATHLETES

Women in Sports Not Recognized

By **Sneha Singh**
Staff Writer

Tamika Catchings. Babe Didrikson Zaharias. Martina Navratilova. Let's face it. You probably do not recognize any of these names, so let's try again.

LeBron James. Tiger Woods. Rafael Nadal.

Better?

Why is it that people can rattle off entire NBA and NFL team rosters, but not really care when it comes to athletes of the opposite gender?

No one cares about women's names, but when asked to identify any female athlete, out pours a long stream of descriptions. That one really good soccer player who took her shirt off. The openly-gay tennis player. The pretty, blonde softball girl. The 40-year-old Olympic swimmer. The ice skater that got clubbed.

Someone married to Andre Agassi. The gymnast from that one communist country. And of course, who could forget those beach volleyball players?

Perhaps the only ounce of media attention given to female athletes is to question whether they are in fact, male. In 2009, South African Track and Field star, Caster Semenya won two of her races and the African Junior Championships, and showed significant improvement in both.

These times showed a combined

twenty five second improvement, a feat deemed by the International Association of Athletic Federation (IAAF) as something that they were "obligated to investigate." A more straightforward translation of this statement reveals what these people truly wanted to say—"Your success in sports is too impressive for a

female. Are you sure you do not possess a hidden Y-chromosome?"

Although the South African teen was able to keep her medal and winnings, the IAAF proceeded to say that its "threshold for when a female is considered ineligible to compete as a woman is unclear." But of course, it is always for the preservation of "fairness" when a group like the IAAF forces a young athlete to go through examinations to make sure she's "female enough." Perhaps the reason no one cares about women in sports is simply the belief that women's sports are not exciting enough.

Clearly Billie Jean King destroying poor Bobby Riggs in the great Battle of the Sexes was not enough to show that women can be as good as, if not better, than men in certain respects.

Babe Didrikson Zaharias managed to win two Olympic gold medals in track, and then later dominated the golf scene as not only an amateur, but also a professional. How many men have done that?

It's truly ridiculous that despite the fact that women's sports require just as much skill and can be just as exciting as men's sports, people still tune out. How can so many people call themselves "sports fans" when they only care about men's sports?

THE DANCE BEAT



By **Jessica Dumov**
Staff Writer

usually come to school in t-shirts wear ties to the event.

Mitty students love to dance, but every student has their own way that they would like to be seen on the dance floor. When the spotlight is thrown onto you, do you prefer to be seen fancy and formal or casual and cool? There are many arguments behind why someone might pick one or the other.

As for me, I prefer formal dances because they offer something special that is very different from everyday school life. It's fun to see classmates a little differently. At formal dances, the girls who normally wear jeans show up in dresses, and all the guys who

Also, I think it is enjoyable for me personally to change up my attire for one night. My friends and I take pleasure in spending time to prepare ourselves for the evening. It makes the dance feel more important than the average Saturday night. People take pictures, and sense the heightened significance of the three hours ahead.

I still consider informal dances to be entertaining, but the casual attire makes the atmosphere feel far more ordinary, like regular school events. The extra flourishes of formal dances, such as dressing up and getting ready, are what give formal dances a better beat.

Arts & Entertainment

His Royal Fools Meet Mitty's Own Talents

By Zoya Qureshy
A&E Editor

Archbishop Mitty features a talented body of students ranging from the classroom to the field to the stage of performing arts. David (Willie) Olivas, Richard Guzikowski, and Nikhil Bellamkonda (along with 8th grader Henry Olivas from University Preparatory Academy) have formed a band named His Royal Fools. I interviewed Willie and Nikhil about what they have been doing so far with regards to their music:

How long have you been playing your respective instruments?

Nikhil: About 5 years now, but I only started getting into and getting better at guitar when Willie found a new (and now our current) teacher, Brian Hackett, who really got me going. And now learning stuff comes from self-interest and a lot of motivation to just get better

How and when did you guys form the band?

Willie: It was back in either 2008 or 2009, Nikhil and I had started to play guitar a lot together and eventually worked that into my brother's drums. It was a little unbalanced with three guitars and a drummer, so we pitched in and bought an old bass guitar and amp. Now we just switch off playing that since we can all do a little bass thanks to our backgrounds in guitar. We're musicians and live close together. I guess a band was bound to happen.

What are the bands or artists that serve as musical inspiration to you guys?

Willie: I find my inspiration in the bands that maybe aren't mainstream, but they rock nonetheless. I admire the bands that write their own songs, especially in the bands where all the songs are written by one person, such as Mikel Jollett of The Airborne Toxic Event, Rob Thomas of Matchbox Twenty, Max Collins of Eve 6, and Doug Robb of Hoobastank. Every new song from these bands is another demonstration of how you can never run out of words, you can never run out of songs, can never run out of stories. You can only get better at telling them.

In terms of the music you guys play, is it just covers or do you guys have original material?

Nikhil: We do both. Willie's great at making original stuff, so that is where it stems from. He makes the lyrics and the general rhythm, brings it to the rest of us, and we all add our own parts, licks, and just influence the song. When we last played in front of people, we covered Linkin Park, AC/DC, and a few others, and we played one of our own. Also, we can do instrumental songs on the spot pretty much, which are always fun.

Is music something all of you want to pursue as a career in the future?

Nikhil: That would be amazing, playing professionally is always the dream. I mean, it's pretty much every musician's dream, really. But the music industry is hard and risky, and we've gotten our share of death glares from parents when bringing music up as a future. So, we'll see!

Where did the idea for your band name come from?

Willie: Personally, I've always thought it's the perfect name for what we hope to do; we keep our music simple and entertaining, but at the same time we rock your socks. The name is both comical and majestic- when I hear it the first thing I think of is a jester, but then the image of a king comes to mind. We won't be written off so easily as amateurs, as posers, as common fools. We're royal fools.



From left to right: Henry Olivas, Nikhil Bellamkonda, Willie Olivas, and Richard Guzikowski

His Royal Fools is looking to put up some original tracks online in the very near future, so keep an eye out for them!

MULTICULTURAL WEEK Mitty's Newest Club Event

By Steffie Ko
A&E Editor

At Archbishop Mitty High School, diversity among the student population is never an issue. Our school boasts students from a variety of cultures, from Indian to Japanese to Scottish and more.

Luckily, every student is able to experience and learn about these different cultures through the many clubs we have on campus: Asian Pacific Islander Student Union (APISU), African American Student Union (AASU), Latin American Student Union (LASU), South Asian Student Association (SASA), French Club, Italian Club, and Mandarin Club. With the newest event on campus, students will be able to visit five separate ethnicities and cultures within one week.

Multicultural Week began as an idea of senior Elizabeth Sowers after she participated in a similar event at St. Francis.

According to Elizabeth, "They put on a showcase every year that I attend, and it looked like so much fun that I wanted to do something comparable at Mitty. But we have to start small here, so we decided to try lunchtime activities."

Realizing what an impact it could make at Mitty, she quickly approached Student Activities with the idea. A few months later, her vision of Multicultural Week is finally a reality as Mitty's first Multicultural Week is being held December 6-10. With APISU, AASU, LASU, SASA and Mandarin Club all participating and fully supportive, each club will be able to represent their culture with events during lunch on each day of the week.

Weather permitting, on Monday, Dec. 6, SASA was first to present their eclectic heritage through a cricket tournament. Tuesday, APISU had an origami table and ukulele performance. On Wednesday, Mandarin Club demonstrated their knowledge and abilities by offering posters with students' names in Chinese characters. On Thursday, LASU performed a traditional Aztec dance and on the last day of Multicultural Week, AASU will be presenting.

For many, Multicultural Week is more than just a regular club even—it's an opportunity. Elizabeth is



"hoping it will bring some excitement about new and different cultures to campus. We live in such a diverse area that we should explore others' traditions. If nothing else, sometimes it's just fun to try something new."

Others agree. Chandni Jain, one of SASA's co-presidents, states, "I'm really excited that for the first time we're having something as ethnic as a multicultural week. With the growing diversity, both at Mitty and in America, it's important to learn what these cultures are really about."

Attending such a diverse school as Mitty provides students with a great opportunity to learn about the global environment and to develop a stronger understanding and appreciation for different areas around the world. The first step to doing so will be through this new experience at school. Students will be taking the opportunity to learn how to play cricket, to fold origami, to read Chinese characters, and to appreciate the more traditional and historical aspects of one's family history through Aztec dance.

Multicultural Week is an opportunity to immerse ourselves in other cultures: both an entertaining and an educational experience. The cultural dancing, music, and games surely will not disappoint.

Under the Radar: Natalia Kills

By Andy Vo
Staff Writer

Although you may not know who she is, Natalia Kills is certainly one of the most exciting new pop stars of our generation. Kills got her start in the entertainment business as an actress in British television. Later, as both a singer and rapper, Kills released her *Wommanequin* EP in 2008 and caught the attention of Will.I.Am after leaving her previous company (Adventures in Music Recording Company) and moving to LA, and he signed her to Interscope Records under the Cherrytree Records subdivision.

Kills is versatile: she is a songwriter, singer, rapper, actress, producer, and director. While there are many similarities to Madonna and Gaga in her work in terms of their strong visuals, hands on approach, and theatricality, Kills has a completely different point of view. Her music is best described as dark pop, with aggressive and



twisted themes aimed at creating radio friendly pop with deeper emotional meaning. In her song "Wonderland," she discusses how from a young age, people are led to believe in fairytale endings and how love is different from those false ideals.

Her current single "Mirrors" is a dark and sensual electro pop song with a booming chorus. The song has irresistibly smooth production and aggressive and fame fatale-esque lyrics.

I was fortunate enough to have been able to ask Kills three questions through Twitter and she provided insight on her upcoming album and live performances.

She described her upcoming album "The Perfectionist" as a concept album that explores multiple sides of her personality: happiness, sadness, love, loss, and regret.

Despite the impressive choreography at her shows, Kills revealed to me that she is not a trained dancer.

Kills is certainly an artist to watch for in the coming year. "Mirrors" is currently available on iTunes and her debut album "The Perfectionist" is due in early January. She is currently on tour with LGBT friendly pop stars Robyn and Kelis, slowly building a strong fan base throughout the gay community. Natalia is talented and we look forward to her "killing" the music industry with her irresistibly catchy and dark brand of electronic pop music.

The Legacy of The Boy-Who-Lived

By Christina Collins
Staff Writer

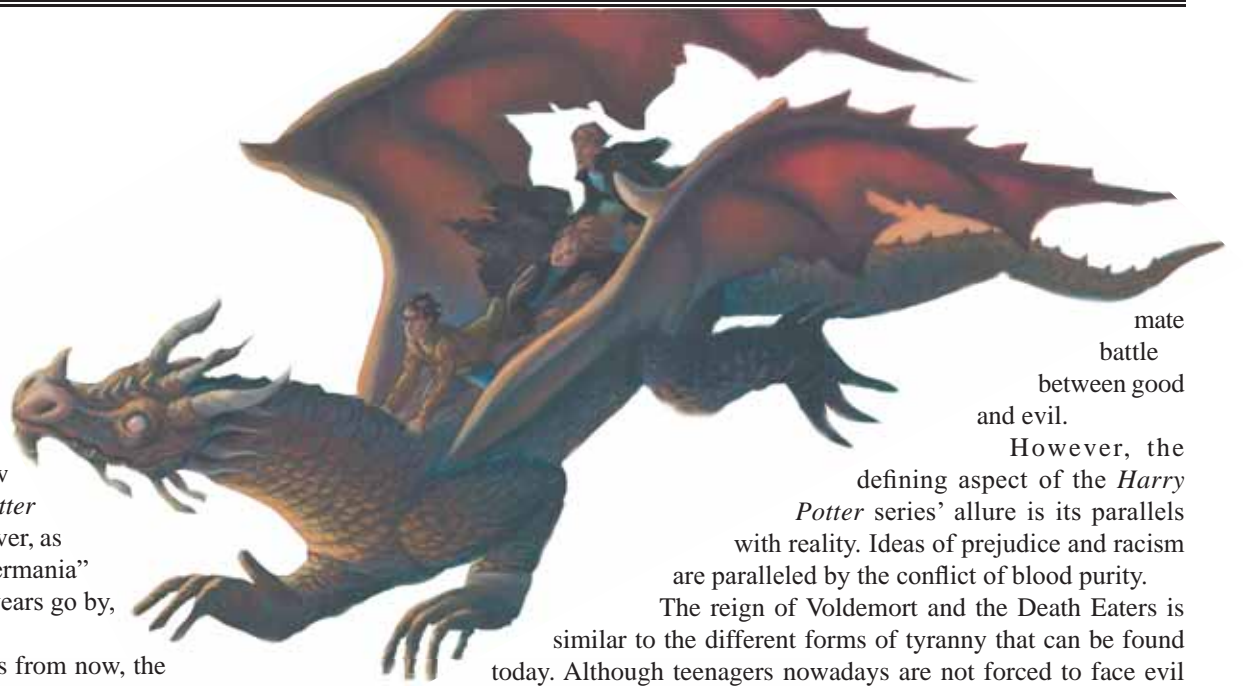
With its seven best-selling books, hit movies, countless amount of merchandising and overall "charm," the *Harry Potter* phenomenon is unlike any other. Although Harry Potter's beloved story has changed the face of books and film, no one could have possibly imagined this to be the case in 1995.

J.K. Rowling's original manuscript was rejected by twelve different publishers, and she almost gave up on publishing her story. Now released in over 49 languages and in 200 different countries, *Harry Potter* has become one of the most successful franchises in the world. However, as the film series comes to a close in July 2011, many wonder if "Pottermania" is just a fad. Will the series withstand time? Or will it fade away as years go by, as many franchises have?

Although the last movie is due to be released only eight months from now, the *Harry Potter* trend is expected to last for a long time to come. The series is so much more than just its blockbuster movies; Rowling's impeccable ability to write gives *Potter* the power to endure decade after decade. The books ushered in a new era, making reading fun for children and providing an unthinkable escape to the Wizarding World.

Fans also find themselves and their personalities embedded in the characters of *Harry Potter*, another aspect of Rowling's unique gift. The houses of Hogwarts represent the qualities of many: Ravenclaw for intelligence, Gryffindor for bravery, Hufflepuff for loyalty and Slytherin for those who are cunning.

She writes the characters of Harry, Ron, Hermione and the rest as struggling teenagers who experience the same perils of those in our daily lives: doubt, alienation, feeling the weight of the world on your shoulders. The transition from childhood to young adulthood that Harry undergoes relates to many and the reader is easily able to sympathize with his struggles. Anyone can relate with Harry's attempts to protect and save those he loves and the ulti-



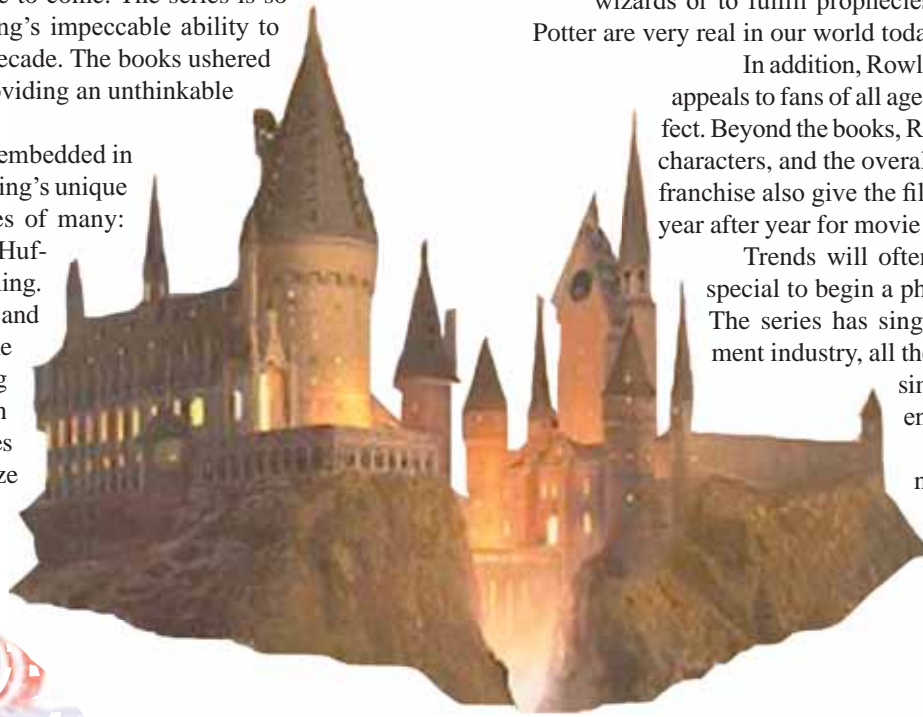
mate battle between good and evil.

However, the defining aspect of the *Harry Potter* series' allure is its parallels with reality. Ideas of prejudice and racism are paralleled by the conflict of blood purity. The reign of Voldemort and the Death Eaters is similar to the different forms of tyranny that can be found today. Although teenagers nowadays are not forced to face evil wizards or to fulfill prophecies, the situations and obstacles in *Harry Potter* are very real in our world today.

In addition, Rowling's writing transcends any age gaps and appeals to fans of all ages, which gives it an undeniably lasting effect. Beyond the books, Rowling's imaginative storylines, inspiring characters, and the overall "anything is possible" mentality of the franchise also give the films a "magical" quality, bringing fans in year after year for movie premieres and skyrocketing DVD sales.

Trends will often come and go, but it takes something special to begin a phenomenon such as the *Potter* franchise. The series has single-handedly transformed the entertainment industry, all the while teaching fans young and old that simple pleasures such as reading are always enjoyable.

Harry Potter is something that can never be duplicated, and its legacy will continue to live on in the hearts of fans worldwide.



Fashion's Gift of Giving How Fashion Gives Back

By Alyssa Caban
Staff Writer

In the middle of the season of giving, it can be easy to lose sight of the true purpose of gift giving. But some new fashion companies are reminding consumers that little gifts can go a long way in helping others.

Sure, scarves, knee high boots, peacoats, and dolman sleeve blouses may

be the all the rave in the upcoming season's styles, but a new trend is spreading through the fashion industry that involves much more than just looking good. It requires opening your heart to helping others. Clothing and make-up brands are taking pride in donating portions of their proceeds to combat international and local justice issues. If you're a shopaholic *fashionista*, there are a few ways you can keep looking fabulous while also supporting causes to help others.

One of the latest trends in footwear is TOMS Shoes. While the shoes are extremely comfortable, lightweight, and easily coordinated with any outfit, the TOMS "One for One" movement is simply remarkable. Buying a pair of TOMS is essentially like buying two pairs of shoes because, "With every pair you purchase, TOMS will give a pair of new shoes to a child in need."

The founder of the company, Blake Mycoskie, realized the huge problem of barefoot children and soil-transmitted diseases after witnessing it firsthand in Argentina. TOMS now provides shoes for children in over 24 countries and has been an inspiration for other brands,

including Element and Ralph Lauren, to join their "One for One" cause.

Who knew a little tube of lipstick could make a significant impact on someone's life? M.A.C Cosmetics' AIDS Fund centers its mission on serving people of all ages, races, and sexes affected by the disease in areas where they are most neglected and at highest risk to contract it. M.A.C makes this possible by donating 100% of the selling price of their VIVA GLAM Lipsticks and Lipglasses to the AIDS Fund.

Buying one tube of lipstick can translate to emergency boxes, one week's worth of groceries, safer-sex kits, an hour counseling session, an oral HIV test, condoms, and so much more to those affected by AIDS. It can definitely be said that M.A.C Cosmetics is, "Making a difference, one VIVA GLAM lipstick at a time."

Other fashion brands supporting charity include Thread 4 Thought, Stop Traffick Fashion, and BOLD Girlz. With merchandise found at your local Nordstrom store, Thread 4 Thought is a "green-minded" brand that uses sustainable fabrics and donates a portion of their proceeds to charity. Stop Traffick Fashion supports the fight against human trafficking and raises awareness of this international crime by donating to organizations that rescue and rehabilitate victims. Another brand, BOLD Girlz, motivates teenage girls to embrace their inner beauty and spread the word of female empowerment. BOLD Girlz also sponsors a different non-profit organization each month by donating 10% of its proceeds to different projects.

These brands in the fashion industry are just a few amongst the many charitable companies that are finding ways to give back to the community and be socially and environmentally responsible. The GAP's Product Red Campaign, Keep a Breast Foundation, PRVCY Premium, Bertz Bees, Estee Lauder, Hero Brand Clothing and countless more brands each have their own missions in mixing charity with fashion.

Make a change this winter season, and when buying presents for your loved ones, be mindful of the brands you choose.

Remember to buy the gift that keeps on giving.



MONARCH CRITICS

BURLESQUE

Burlesque

By Diana Pawell
Staff Writer



Those who saw Mitty's fall musical *Cabaret* will appreciate this new smash-hit. Making a strong entrance into the Thanksgiving movie scene, the musical *Burlesque* leaves nothing to be desired. Driven by flashy dancing, excellent cinematography, and Christina Aguilera's soulful vocals, this movie promises to be 100 minutes well-spent.

Possessing broad appeal, *Burlesque* is not solely catered towards musical-buffs; the storyline and characters are widely accessible. Ali, a sweet, stubborn, small-town girl from Iowa, hops on a bus to Hollywood one day, hoping to make her show-biz dreams come true. Along the way, she makes many friends and a few enemies, but still manages to sing and dance her way to a happy ending.

The star-studded cast includes Christina Aguilera as leading ingénue Ali, Cher as Tess, Ali's mentor and owner of the Burlesque club, Kristen Bell as Ali's nemesis Nikki, Cam Gigandet as the hunky but unavailable roommate Jack, Eric Dane as bad boy businessman Markus, and Stanley Tucci as the lovable, witty stage manager Sean.

Although Aguilera's acting is initially bland (this is her acting debut) and mainly includes staring misty-eyed at the club stage and saying little, she grows into her role throughout the course of the film and by the end is multidimensional, passionate and engaging. Gigandet, whose most recent film was *Easy A*, does not solely rely on his good looks, but instead reveals substantial acting abilities, especially in a confrontation scene between Jack, Ali, and Jack's fiancé Natalie (played by Dianna Agron). Tucci's performance is almost exactly the same as his previous character Nigel in 2006's *The Devil Wears Prada*, but is nonetheless charming to watch. Bell, under-used in her unusual role of the antagonist, makes only a few appearances throughout the film, but is thoroughly convincing in her jealousy of Ali. Cher, however, outshines all others with her likeable, no-nonsense, extremely loyal character Tess, who struggles with imminent eviction, a divorce, and nasty club-girls.

The film alternates smoothly and perfectly between pounding, energy-filled performances at the club and following the character's different journeys. Between the musical numbers and the story-telling, the latter is definitely the weaker of the two—however, the fantastic dance numbers more than make up for the generic dialogue and simplistic scenes. Overall, *Burlesque* is entertaining and just plain fun to watch. It will not disappoint.



La Patisserie

By Anushka Pushpala
Staff Writer



If you whizz too fast by Portal Avenue and Stevens Creek Boulevard in Cupertino, you will definitely miss this petite French bakery. In the complex in it is located, the overpowering Elephant Bar

seems to cast a dark shadow over what should be the crown jewel of bakeries in the South Bay.

As you walk in through the door and hear the bell chime, the blissful smell of chocolate being tempered by the skilled pastry chefs in the back of the kitchen greets your senses and immediately relaxes you. Friendly employees at the counter help to create a familial atmosphere reminiscent of your family's Thanksgiving dinner party. The clear glass display cases feature the utmost variety of pastries known to a sweets' consumer.

From coffee cakes to crême brulee, La Patisserie offers a plethora of sweet and airy pastries. There is a prominent touch of sugar in every bite of an éclair, but the light whipped cream adds plenty of satisfaction without the guilt. In addition to the taste of these pastries, the overall aesthetic appeal helps set them apart from the rest. The pastry chefs' attention to detail is showcased through the edible chocolate ribbons on their cakes and icing flowers piped to perfection.

One of the shop's bestsellers is "Le Desir." This fluffy, white sponge cake is topped with both chocolate and caramel mousses that are whipped to perfection. A hint of cinnamon tops it off, and you enjoy the flavors blending in a sweet dance on your palate. The "Brown Derby" is a favorite of residents of Cupertino, with its moist chocolate cake filled with chocolate whipped cream and iced with, you guessed it, chocolate! Likewise, "Cupid's Kiss" is a chocolate fantasy; the sweet butter tartlet is coated with dark chocolate, and filled with an airy chocolate mousse and tart raspberries.

For all chocolate lovers, La Patisserie is the stairway to heaven, a gem among the busy streets of Cupertino. For lovers of all sweets such as conventional pastries all the way to carrot cakes, La Patisserie is the way to satisfy that craving for sweetness.



Ke\$ha

By Shivali Singh
Staff Writer



Ke\$ha's first EP to be released, the nine-song *Cannibal* plays on many of the same themes as her debut album, *Animal* (2010): *Cannibal* acts as its extension, carrying much of the same sound. For the most part, she stays true to her usual carefree

spirit, and she definitely does not disappoint in delivering danceable beats; even the beautifully emotional "The Harold Song" retains that solid beat so commonly attributed to Ke\$ha, though it showcases a new side of her music. She is able to masterfully convey an undertone of vulnerability with powerful lyrics such as "I see your face in strangers on the street/ I still say your name when I talk in my sleep." This break from her traditional wild and carefree attitude definitely receives a warm welcome as an introduction to Ke\$ha's newfound versatility.

Interestingly enough, the memorable hit single "We R Who We R" was written in response to the recent wave of gay suicides, which Ke\$ha was very strongly moved by. She wrote the song as an anthem for the outcasts and estranged, encouraging them to celebrate themselves. The songs takes on a tone that rejoices in the idea of independence and individuality, and the romping beat reminds listeners to live life to the fullest. Other singles released on the iTunes "Countdown to Ke\$ha" were "Sleazy," "Cannibal," and "Blow," respectively. The catchy title track, "Cannibal," contains a raw, animal-like energy fitting to the mood of the compilation. "Sleazy" captures the essence of Ke\$ha's typical music as it successfully delivers an upbeat dance tempo that is sure to be a hit at dances and parties, and all the while sending a message of lightheartedness and freedom from inhibitions.

All in all, this EP is well worth the hype it has received. I would have preferred that more songs be included, as every song Ke\$ha creates is dance-beat worthy. In this respect, *Cannibal* does not fall short of expectations. Perhaps a greater number of emotive tracks like "The Harold Song" would have added more emotional dimension and depth to the production, but it is still a release deserving of praise. Ke\$ha's artistic abilities are truly displayed in her new album.

Tangled

By Sarah Guzman
Staff Writer



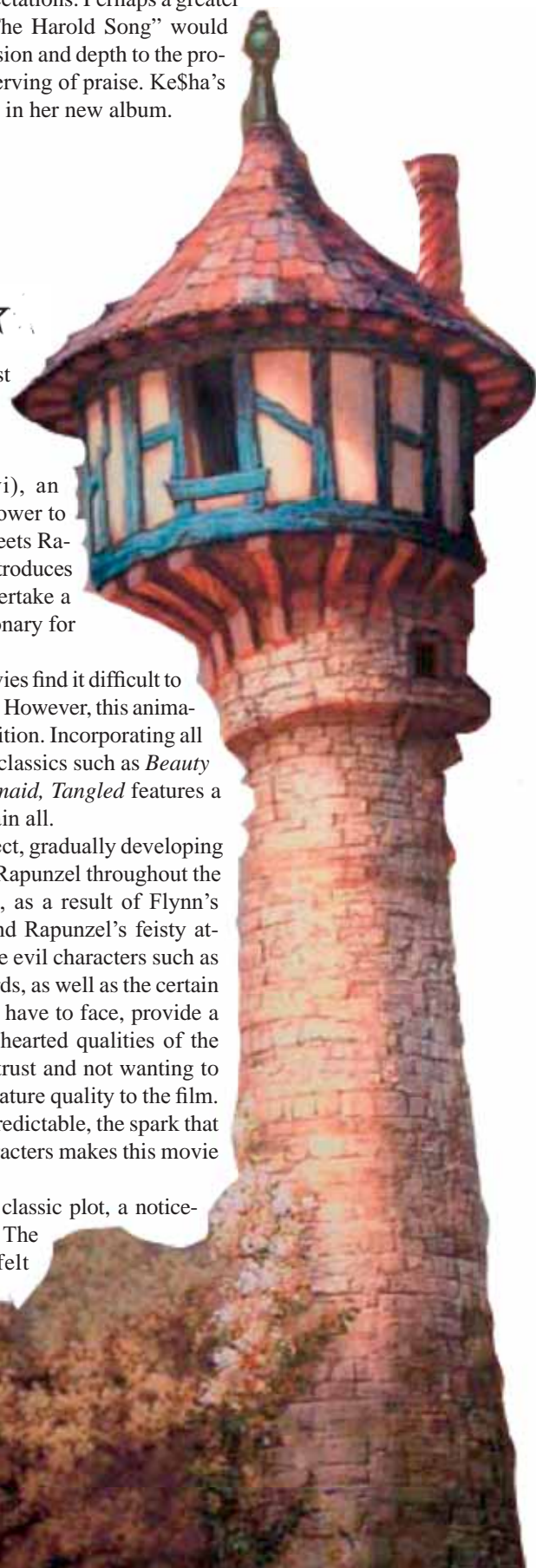
Recently declared to be the last film in the Disney Princess series, *Tangled* is a film based on the classic tale of Rapunzel.

Flynn Rider (Zachary Levi), an outlaw, finds himself hiding in a tower to escape palace guards, where he meets Rapunzel (Mandy Moore). After he introduces her to the outside world, they undertake a journey that proves to be revolutionary for the both of them.

These days, newer Disney movies find it difficult to avoid criticism for being too cliché. However, this animation proved to be worthy of recognition. Incorporating all elements seen in previous Disney classics such as *Beauty and the Beast* and *The Little Mermaid*, *Tangled* features a multi-faceted film that will entertain all.

The light romance is just perfect, gradually developing the chemistry between Flynn and Rapunzel throughout the movie. Comedy is also prevalent, as a result of Flynn's charmingly self-loving manner and Rapunzel's feisty attitude. The suspense built up by the evil characters such as Mother Gothel and the palace guards, as well as the certain emotional battles the protagonists have to face, provide a balance to the juvenile and light-hearted qualities of the movie. Problems such as lack of trust and not wanting to hurt those one cares about add a mature quality to the film. Though these characteristics are predictable, the spark that Moore and Levi bring to their characters makes this movie go beyond what was expected.

Despite the great casting and classic plot, a noticeable flaw is the lackluster music. The lyrics and music of the songs felt unoriginal and lacked many memorable or noteworthy songs that can be found in Disney's previous animations. This aside, the movie is recommended for audiences of all ages.

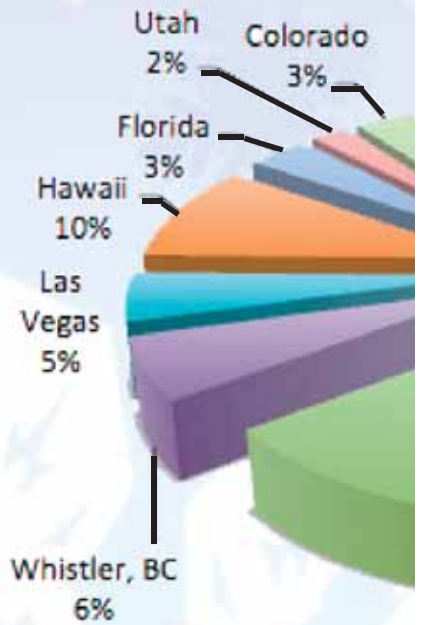


Focus On

Winter Wonderland

Winter

By Ann



The ski term "yard sale" is a wipeout that results in the skier or snowboarder's mittens, hat, etc. being scattered near the crash site.

A single 1 mg snowflake contains about 3.34×10^{13} water molecules.

Snow can be a thermal insulator, protecting crops from subfreezing weather by conserving heat.

SNOW FACTS

By Ji Soo Kim
Staff Writer

Fresh snow absorbs sound by reducing vibration in the air trapped in between snowflakes.

In the NFL, making a snow angel on the field to celebrate is categorized as unsportsmanlike conduct.

The official record of the greatest amount of snowfall in Phoenix, Arizona is one inch in 1933.

A Taste of

By Puja S
Staff

It's time to ring in the holidays by making gingerbread houses with the gingerbread houses is a great way for families to have some friendly competition in the holiday season. The tradition of building gingerbread houses goes back all the way to the 19th century. Gingerbread houses became very popular after the story "Hansel and Gretel" that had just been published in the style of the witch's house in the fairy tale. 'lebkuchenhaeusle', or what we thank you for in America.

Gingerbread houses have become a popular holiday tradition. Competitions are held locally and internationally. The largest gingerbread house dates back to 1890, built to build, covered 1,496 square feet, and was as big as most single family homes!

This year, there have been some creative gingerbread houses. Many of them are "green" with environmentally friendly features, such as windmills. In the future, these houses are likely to become more common. After all, it is up to each person's own imagination to build their gingerbread houses, and that's why building gingerbread houses is a fun activity in the winter time.

Hottest Winter Gifts of 2010

By Katrina Vokt & Elena Theodora-Georgieva
Staff Writers

Barbie® Video Girl™

"I am a REAL working camera!" the ads proclaim. My, how times have changed; now you can have a Barbie with a camera in it. Her stylish necklace is actually a video camera, and behind her pink, sparkly hoodie is a small LCD screen. You can make a movie from Barbies point of view, and then attach her to your computer and watch your movie on the big screen!

ZhuZhu Pets™

Who needs a real hamster? Recent 2010 "Toy of the Year" award winner, ZhuZhu Pets™ are little furry mechanical hamsters that can zoom around on their own. Each Zhu Zhu Pets™ Hamster has its own unique personality, whimsical sounds, and customizable habitat.

Nintendo Wii

Although the Wii may be a less popular gift in 2010 than it has been in recent years, it remains a favorite on kid's Christmas lists for an obvious reason: it's cool! The Wii is great because it's a gift that the whole family can enjoy!

Apple Products

iTouch, iPad, iPod shuffle, iPod nano, iPod classic. Nearly every apple creation is a top-selling hit! Anything apple related is bound to sell this year due to its technological perfection, sleek design, and lower cost in comparison to recent years.

Picture Perfect

*Cold and frosty flakes float down from the sky
All steely grey with few traces of blue,
While happy children play on frozen lakes
With brightly colored scarves flying behind.
They skate across the lake without a care
In their happy Christmas card wonderland.
I stare at these cards and I try to choose
The one that will mean the most to my friends,
But picking cards is harder when you live
In California where there is not snow.
Snow-filled meadows create some irony
When you have never seen the pure white flakes.
But Christmas cards are snowy nonetheless
And do not care about the snow-less west.*

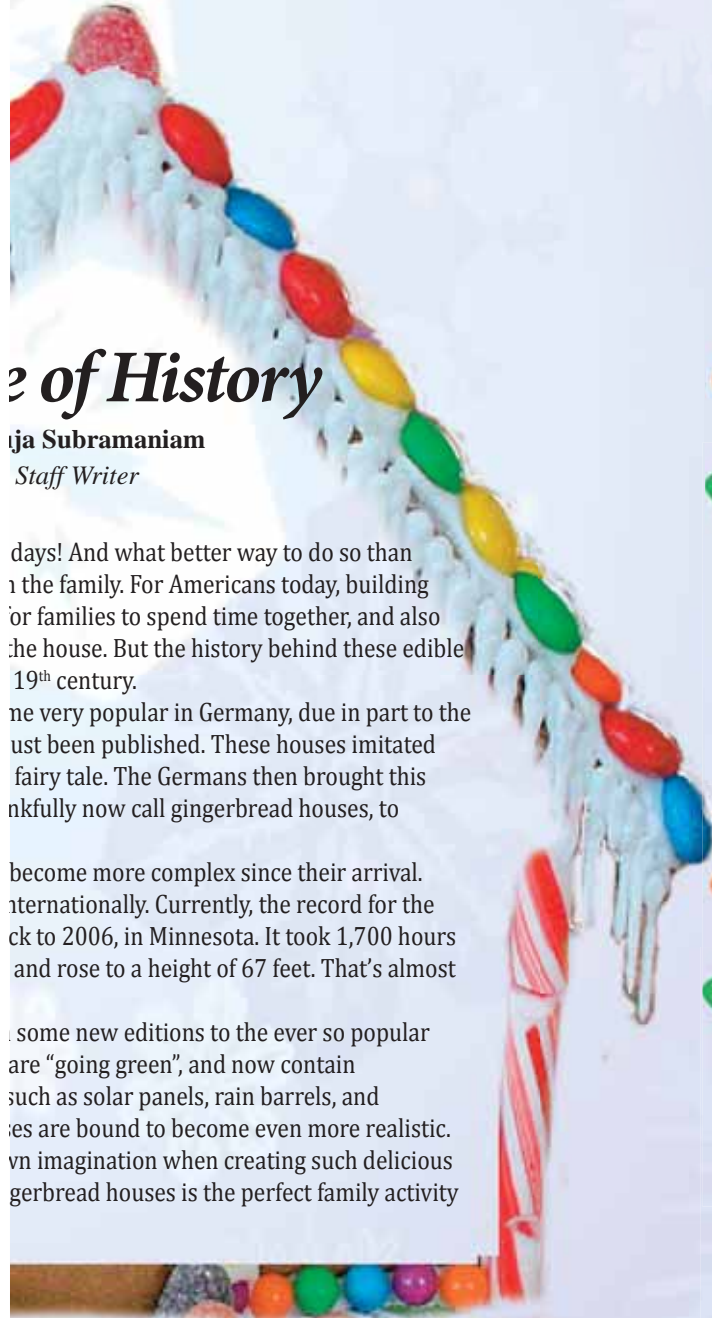
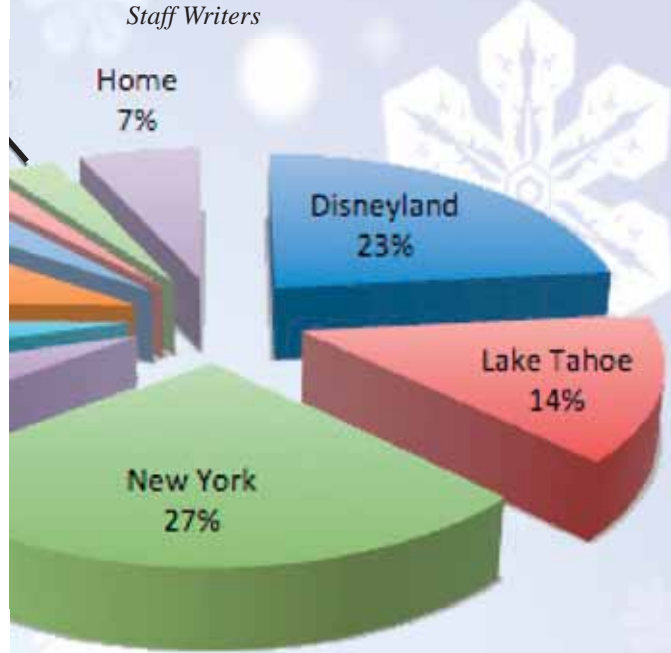
By Alexandra Garfield
Staff Writer

Th

*The hawk soaring
the corner of my eye
a crack in a large
The predator flies
am sure it sees me
the crevice but...uh
fit. The white color
camouflage with pu
snow, but neverth
the hawk is so close
see its piercing eyes
last option is the "s
strategy." The ha
swoops and exten
its dagger claws
capture me, but at
last moment, I em
pungent odor and
raptor cras*

Vacation Hotspots

AnnaLiese Burich and Julianna Roy
Staff Writers



2 of History

Ija Subramaniam
Staff Writer

days! And what better way to do so than with the family. For Americans today, building gingerbread houses or families to spend time together, and also building gingerbread houses. But the history behind these edible houses dates back to the 19th century. Gingerbread houses were very popular in Germany, due in part to the fact that they had not been published. These houses imitated gingerbread houses from a fairy tale. The Germans then brought this tradition to America, which they now call gingerbread houses, to become more complex since their arrival in America. Internationally, the record for the tallest gingerbread house to date is to 2006, in Minnesota. It took 1,700 hours to build and rose to a height of 67 feet. That's almost twice the height of some new editions to the ever so popular gingerbread houses. They are "going green", and now contain ingredients such as solar panels, rain barrels, and other items. These are bound to become even more realistic. The use of imagination when creating such delicious gingerbread houses is the perfect family activity.

The Least Weasel

By Kate Coffey
Staff Writer

...aring above is caught by my eye as I slink towards the large rock to find refuge. The hawk flies lower and lower. I follow. I stick my head into the snow. Uh oh. My head doesn't fit. The color of my fur helps me blend in. With pure white fur, nevertheless, I can't close my eyes. My ears are flat. The hawk extends its talons to catch me. I emit a high-pitched scream and the hawk crashes

into the blanketed snow. I sneak away and notice the hawk has moved on in search of other prey. My stomach rumbles, so I begin my search for food. Lately, there have been few rodents around, so instead, I look for other animals such as rabbits or small birds. In the distance, I see a large white rabbit, so I stalk it, observing its movements. As I get closer, I begin to quickly dart back and forth, and then I wrap myself around the clueless rabbit and sink my teeth into its skull. Despite my small size and adorable face, I am a ruthless killer.



- "Since I'm allergic to carrot and cotton..." By Anni Huang
Staff Cartoonist



Holidays Galore

By Kanako Shimizu
Staff Writer

In America, we are constantly exposed to a multicultural world, as the freedom of religion is guaranteed in our constitution. From Christmas, a familiar Christian holiday, to Pancha Ganapati, a traditional Hindu celebration, winter is the period when many express in ritual and word their spiritual views. Although we are familiar with some holidays during the winter, others are subtle in our communities, as we do not experience these celebrations. Many of our diverse traditions result in the connection between religious communities, making them an essential piece in our world. As a Catholic high school, our community of faith recognizes Christmas. With the total Christians in the world being 2.1 billion and growing, Christmas is a significant holiday in the lives of many. This celebration, of course, commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christianity, and is thus given a central place in the religious community. Christmas is also recognized for non-Christians as a notable holiday, as such mythic figures as Saint Nicholas are associated with giving gifts to children. Other modern customs during Christmas include greeting cards, church celebrations, and displays of many decorations: Christmas trees, lights, mistletoe, nativity scenes, holly. The incorporation of the tree into the Christian holiday is seen as the Christianization of the pagan tradition and ritual of the winter solstice, and an adaptation of pagan tree worship. Many beliefs in the origin of the Christmas tree, as well as the other traditions in Christmas, reveal the diversity of Christianity. With the pieces of other traditions from around the globe, Christianity has been able to incorporate varying symbols from different religions. The birth of Jesus Christ is emphasized by the many fragments of traditions from other faiths, creating a unique celebration in the Christian community. In the diverse Bay Area, Kwanzaa, too is celebrated at this time of year. Kwanzaa brings a cultural message and is celebrated from the 26th of December to the 1st of January. It emphasizes family, community, and African culture. Kwanzaa was established as a celebration to gain respect and to represent African culture and commitment to the holiday. The colors of the

celebration are black, red, and green, each unified to create the African heritage and represent the culture. The symbolic representations for these colors demonstrate black for the people, red for their struggle, and green for the future and the hope that comes from their experiences. These colors are incorporated into such Kwanzaa traditions as the mishumaa saba, or the seven candles, which represent the seven principles of the culture. Just as Dr. Maulana Karenga, the founder of a Kwanzaa site, states, Kwanzaa is both an ancient and living cultural tradition, reflecting the best of African thought and practice. In our communities, we are able to recognize the diverse traditions and religions that surround us, and embrace these cultural experiences. Although harder to identify, Pancha Ganapati, a traditional Hindu celebration, holds a spiritual value similar to the other religious celebrations during the year, and is commemorated, as a type of winter solstice, for it is the traditional season for the worship of Lord Ganesha. This festival falls on the 21st of December and travels through the 25th. This celebration, symbolic of new beginnings and mending the mistakes in the past, involves the creation of a festive shrine to house the Lord Pancha Ganapati. The five days of the celebration are marked by five distinct colors: yellow, blue, red, green, and orange. These colors are significant as with each new morning a different color is used to adorn the Lord Pancha Ganapati, marking the specific day of the celebration. Diverse sadhanas, spiritual movements that are consciously systematized, are incorporated into the Pancha Ganapati activities. Some of these spiritual movements include creating a vibration of love and harmony among immediate family members, neighbors, relatives, and close friends, during the Pancha Ganapati season. The Pancha Ganapati celebration emphasizes the love and harmony between their spiritual communities, by creating a bond within their faith. America is able to bring together a variety of traditions in our society, to emphasize the spiritual necessities in different communities of faith. The customs and the diverse religions practiced in the Bay Area by the multicultural peoples in our community portray the varied, yet unified society we live in.



Connor Gibson

How did you start your interest in photography?

I started taking pictures about four years ago. I had always loved to take random pictures with point-and-shoots, but I felt like I could do more. That was when my dad got his first DSLR, a Nikon D50. I shot with it every chance I could, mostly just taking pictures of my dogs and random items around my house. After that, I was hooked. I saved my money and got my first camera, the Nikon D40.



Why did you choose the photos you submitted?

I suppose you could say that I enjoy capturing the moment without people expecting the picture; I love to get the raw essence of things.

What three words would you use to describe your style?

Organic. Personal. Eclectic.

What intrigues you about photography?

For me, photography is the challenge of using lights, cameras, and my imagination to create images that I can share with others.



Through the Lens:

Monarch Photography



Interested in being a featured photographer for The Monarch's next issue? Email us at themonarch.photo@gmail.com to tell us why you should be chosen. All entries welcome!



Morgan Mein

How did you start taking pictures?

I always found myself volunteering to take the pictures for family events and with friends, and after awhile, I got more creative with it.



Why did you choose to submit these photographs?

I feel like these photos well represent the way I look at life by noticing all the little things other people might not.

What do they say about your style?

I think they show my passion for photography and that I also like to explore the world around me.

What three words would you use to describe your style?

Urban. Insightful. Unique.

What intrigues you about photography?

The fact that I can capture a moment and share it with anyone.



Above: "It doesn't usually snow in San Jose, if ever at all, but on Thanksgiving morning, it was a winter wonderland nonetheless. The miniscule dandelion seed vessels were so laden with melting ice crystals that it was kind of hard to make a wish that morning. Might as well take a picture!" —**Gloria Liang, Junior**

Left: "My mom and I started our tomato garden for the first time in a while, and I wanted to showcase our first two tomatoes." —**Brandon Roosenboom, Senior**



Above: "After days of rocky and dry scenery, this river reminded me of the existence of water. This beautiful scene took my breath away on the last hike of my ECJ trip and left me truly speechless with awe of the reservation's land." —**Sabrina Li, Senior**

Right: "I wanted to capture a moment of true curiosity: Children find pleasure in the simplest things." —**Nhi Nguyen, Senior**



"I really liked how the tree stretched diagonally across the sky. I felt that the angle truly emphasized the tree's enormity and beauty." —**Melanie Mascarenhas, Junior**

Like what you see?
 Want to be a part of
The Monarch's
 next issue?
 Send in a
 request to themonarch.photo@gmail.com,
 and *you*
 could be featured
 in the next issue!

Justice Awareness

D.C. Advocacy

In November, a group of 11 Mitty students as part of the Mitty Advocacy Project (MAP) went to D.C. to talk to legislators about current bills and issues. Amongst these were human trafficking, WHINSEC (the School of the Americas), and the DREAM Act. From meeting with California legislators to giving a presentation at Georgetown University, these students traveled across the country with the purpose and determination to represent the voiceless in society.

What did these students specifically address?

Here were the issues:

The Latin American Training Review Act:
Mitty students lobbied this act, which addresses the injustices in the School of the Americas. Renamed the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (WHINSEC) and located in Fort Benning, Georgia, the school trains Latin American soldiers. Initially established in Panama in 1946, the school was removed in 1984 due to its supposed involvement in teaching dangerous tactics. WHINSEC-trained soldiers have been known to return to their countries of origin and commit atrocities upon their people. Under the Latin America Training Review Act, human rights violations associated with the school would be investigated, operations at the school would be suspended, and military training would be overseen.

The DREAM Act:
The Development, Relief, and Education of Alien Minors Act, or DREAM Act, was advocated by Mitty students during their visit to Capitol Hill. Under this bill, undocumented immigrants who arrived in the U.S. under the age of 16, have remained here for 5 years, have a high school diploma, and have no criminal record will be given 6 years of temporary citizenship to obtain a 2-year college degree or perform 2 years of military service. They can then become U.S. citizens.

THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACT:
Many are blind to the fact that slavery still exists in America. Though human trafficking is usually associated with sexual exploitation, most victims are actually subjected to forced labor. In response to this severe violation of human rights, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act was created in 2000 as an aim to protect victims of all forms of modern slavery. Mitty students advocated the renewal of this important bill.

"The most memorable moment of the trip was when I realized how much of an impact we made in DC and how much change it would bring to our lives."
-Marguerite Metzger, Junior

"The most memorable part of the trip for me was when we walked through Capitol Hill and walked by the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court and the Capitol Building. Later that day we met with the California representatives and senators and it was just an amazing experience to finally deliver the message that we had brought all the way across the country."
Vincent Kelsey, Junior

"To witness a student walk into the office of a U.S. Senator and speak with brilliance and conviction is more than a proud moment as a teacher—it is testimony to the power of education and the values we uphold at Mitty."
Mr. Michael Accorsi

"Working and strategizing with this group of students in particular was the highlight of my career as a teacher. It makes me feel confident that the future leadership of this country is not only in good hands, but going to face a serious upgrade."
Mr. Michael Accorsi

"What I will remember most about this trip was going to the Vietnam Memorial and Lincoln Memorial at night when everything was lit up because it was so beautiful! We saw the White House, made a presentation at Georgetown University on advocacy, had dinner at the famous Old Ebbitt Grill, and lobbied to congressmen and women about the bills on behalf of the Catholic Church."
Amanda Guillard, Junior



PROFILES IN JUSTICE

By Heather Lee
Staff Writer



Spotlight On Shelby Crespi

Shelby Crespi, a junior at Mitty, has witnessed a potential injustice that will affect the community center she volunteers at. Due to the economic downturn and lack of funding, the city of San Jose is considering cutting the program Kinderfun, a summer program for children with developmental disabilities, from the Roosevelt Community Center of Downtown, San Jose. Shelby has decided to raise money to subsidize the cost of the program and ultimately save the program from being cut.

How is Shelby approaching this issue?

"I'm still in the process of filing a 501C3 application which will allow non-profit status," explains Shelby. Shelby is working closely with Jeff Conboy-Heiser, the founder of Kinderfun. "The money will be given to Jeff as a grant. Kinderfun is more expensive than regular camp. For every two kids, there is one staff member." Because Roosevelt Community Center is located in a poorer part of Downtown, San Jose, Shelby says, it is harder for people to pay for the camp—unlike in other more privileged areas, such as Almaden.

How much money is Shelby planning to raise?

Shelby responded by providing me with a spreadsheet with two different breakdowns of the costs, courtesy of Mr. Heiser. "My ultimate goal is to raise around \$17,440 to subsidize a free four hour program. Or, I could make it twice as long ... but have it cost the same price as the four hour program." The data provided illustrates the difficulty Kinderfun is having in raising sufficient funds. For every \$100 dollars that the Roosevelt Community Center raises from the tuition of the camp, the city needs to pay another \$81.67 for "full cost recovery." "I'm going to write to corporations I've worked with in the past...who want to help with the school supplies." Shelby is planning on "selling t-shirts, friendship bracelets, and more...at community centers and farmers markets." Shelby's program is also open to donations.

In the midst of other programs being cut, why does Shelby want to help Kinderfun?

"Cutting Kinderfun is an injustice." By cutting Kinderfun but sustaining many other programs where kids are not affected by mental or psychological disabilities, the city is being unfair. Shelby feels that, "No one has the authority... to decide whether one kid is worth more than another."

*Shelby is always looking for more people to help.
"Anyone who's interested can help by raising money... talking to parents, and spreading awareness."

BP Oil Spill: The New Black Death

By Makoto Lalwani
Staff Writer

On April 20, 2010, an MODU (Mobile Offshore Drilling Unit) named the Deepwater Horizon, owned by offshore drilling company British Petroleum, or B.P., exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico.

Thus began one of the greatest environmental, not to mention economic, disasters of the past decade: the B.P. Oil Disaster.

Fast forward three months; after numerous failed attempts, B.P. finally managed to cap the well shut. Immediate reactions

to the disaster were chaotic, frenzied, agitated. People clamored to know what would happen and who would be held responsible. Yet as time progressed and the leak was finally stopped, the incident slowly faded away from public consciousness. Despite this lack of attention, one fact remains agonizingly clear: This problem is far from over.

The lack of media regarding the spill has made it appear to the public that the problems have been solved, but have they? Although the flow of additional oil into the Gulf has been prevented, massive amounts of damage continue to be dealt to the multitude of ecosystems present in the Gulf of Mexico.

There is the matter of the 185 million or so gallons that managed to escape while B.P. was scrambling to find a solution.

There is the matter of oil plumes floating below the surface, which stimulate bacteria that eat the oil, but at the

same time cause oxygen depletion at various sea levels.

There is the matter of the coral reefs that are dying off as a result of contact with the oil from the spill.

There is the matter of the natural gases that were released along with the oil, which have been conveniently ignored in cleanup efforts, despite constituting 40% of the spill contents.

And there is the matter of the effect on the economy. For example, the fishing, seafood, and tourism industries in the region have all taken a huge hit, and thousands of jobs have been lost due to declining revenue.

So who is to blame for this quandary? Most will point their fingers at the obvious culprit,

B.P., whose negligence ultimately led to the explosion of the rig in the first place. However, B.P. has in turn pointed to two other companies: Transocean Ltd., which lent the oil rig for the drilling itself, and Halliburton, which provided the cement mixture used in the well.

With all of these companies pointing fingers at each other, it is easy to forget one other guilty party: the Obama Administration. Amongst others faults, misleading public reports, fudging information to downplay the magnitude of the catastrophe, and the seeming lack of initiative to solve the crisis has caused the government to receive understandable criticism.

As this problem still lingers, it is evident that the Gulf Oil Spill will have underlying consequences for years to come. If you want to help: you can contribute through websites such as RestoreTheGulf.gov, or through our very own Green Club.

**Despite this lack of attention,
one fact remains
agonizingly clear:
This problem is far from over.**

The "Green Movement"

By Esha Joshi
Staff Writer

Over the last few years, large companies have overwhelmed billboards, commercials, newspapers, and the general mass media with an barrage of green: fuel-efficient cars like the Prius, expensive but ultimately beneficial solar panels, and admirable attempts into getting families to eat wholesome and healthy foods.

However the funding and use of such products largely depend on the influx of more green: money.

With a struggling economy and rising oil prices, green companies' hopes of accomplishing a true green revolution without sacrificing profits are challenging.

According to Ms. Ursula Burns in *Business Week*, her commitment to this movement is through smart businesses and jobs. Her job at Xerox Corporation is to meet the needs of customers—a role which doesn't officially involve "going green," but which depends on reducing costs and making the company operate more efficiently, the ultimate goal of the green movement.

Ms. Burns' strategy seems to be working for her company; in 2006 Xerox Corp. saved about \$18 million

by their efforts in reducing greenhouse gases.

Like Xerox, many of corporate America's companies are embracing the green movement as a way to both garner support and reduce costs. Large consumer-based companies, such as airlines, banks, and car dealerships, have been introducing basic, effective strategies of power efficiency. Environmental Tall Leader claims that this sudden cultivation of environmentally friendly products is to appease customers and increase revenue for those who are regular consumers. However, like organically grown produce, green products—while better for us and our world—are often more difficult and costly to create, and many companies refuse to invest valuable time and money into strategies that may reduce their profits.

Nevertheless, President Obama's commitment to a green environment has been a blessing for green and clean technology. Obama's promise includes the National Science Foundation devoting \$150 billion over ten years to clean technology.

Indeed, Obama's stimulus plan made great strides in funding green technology companies such as Solyndra, a solar panel company located in Fremont.

The Truth About Chicken Nuggets

By Heather Lee
Staff Writer

Jamie Oliver, a strong advocate for healthy school lunches, recently started a TV series called *Jamie's Food Revolution*. In the second episode of the first season, he invites a group of elementary students to his kitchen and says that he is going to show the students the most disgusting ingredients in the most processed foods. He explains that his experiment will answer the biting question: Will our kids still eat the food—even if they are aware that the ingredients are disgusting—if it is in the shape or form of something they have learned to love?

He commences his experiment by removing all the real meat of the chicken and grinding up the chicken carcass, which he subsequently fries to make chicken nuggets. He triumphantly asks the students, "Now who would still eat this?" To his dismay, everyone's hand raises.

Fast food has had this miraculous effect on its patrons

for years. From the video, it appears that society has taught its children to ignore the process by which unhealthy food is made, just as long as the product looks edible and tastes good. But who can really blame those that follow these loose criteria, now being taught from such a young age?

According to HollisticMed.com, genetically engineered foods are in a multitude of goods we consume. Among the more obvious are various types of chips, chocolate and candy, Coca Cola, and fast foods like McDonald's french fries. Yet, also on the list are non-organic tomatoes, potatoes, corn, soy, canola oil, cotton seed oil, and yellow crook-neck squash. It appears that the processed food pandemic is unavoidable.

According to the New York Times, "Americans eat 31 percent more packaged food than fresh food, and they consume more packaged food per person than all their counterparts in nearly all other countries."

So next time you reach for a packaged snack or roll through a drive through, think about what went into the food, and consequently what will soon be going into you.



SPORTS

Fall Sports Wrap-Up: 2010 Season Finals

By Erik Chu, Kyle Payne, and Caneron Schott
Staff Writers

The Mitty **Women's Golf** team put forth a swinging effort this season, finishing with a 7-4-1 record and a third-place finish in the WCAL. Building off the team's first ever appearance in the CCS playoffs last year, the girls placed fifth in this year's tournament. Junior Lauren Salazar also became the first women's golfer in Mitty history to qualify for NorCal Championships.

When asked about the 2010 season, senior Lani Ng responded, "This season showed the team's dedication to seriously compete with the other teams in the league. I am so proud of all of our achievements this year."

One of the moments that will be remembered was the team's victory over Presentation, the first time in school history that the Monarchs defeated the Panthers. With several of the varsity players returning next year, the team will look to continue their success and qualify for the sectional playoffs for the third consecutive year.

The Mitty **Cross Country** team showed an impressive improvement from the 2009 season. The women's team finished fifth in CCS, and the men placed eighth. Senior Mary Kriege and sophomore Richard Guzikowski both qualified for state finals.

Coach Dina Oakland said about the season, "I felt the season was great. The new coaching staff implemented an entirely new system that required a lot of hard work and intensity. I think that every runner finished with a significant improvement in their running form and speed."

Richard Guzikowski also thought that the season was a success. "I felt that we had were great overall as a team. Our young varsity team made it to CCS for the first time in years, and our JV and Frosh/Soph teams all have fresh talent as well. In almost every meet, over half the team broke their personal records." As for state finals, Richard's goal is, "To beat my personal record by 30 seconds, and finish within the top 100 for our division." The Monarchs' cross country teams have drastically improved as they wrap up an effective season.

Although Mitty's **Women's Volleyball** team was not as dominant as they have historically been, the Monarchs were still able to pull together a 22-12 record and another CCS appearance. The young team had some big shoes to fill, and they performed admirably.

Senior Tara Maclean said, "I think that throughout the

season we showed a lot of heart. We were able to come together as a family and compete against some incredible teams. We worked hard every day and as a result we grew as a team."

2009 National Coach of the Year Bret Almazan-Cezar felt that, "While our competitive endeavors didn't reach the 'norms' of the past few years, this group lived the passion and effort of any other team we've had here."

The team had many highlight moments this year, but Maclean's was, "Playing Dos Pueblos in the Mitty tournament. We were able to showcase exactly what we worked so hard on in practice. We had a plan and we executed it."



Photo courtesy of Mr. Adam Vasquez

Sophomore Richard Guzikowski at the Nike Clovis Invitational in Concord.

After fighting back from a rough start to begin the 2010 season, the Monarch **Football** team had their season come to a close in the first round of the CCS playoffs, falling to the undefeated Palo Alto Vikings. Even though the Monarchs were ahead for the majority of the low-scoring contest, Palo Alto's last-second touchdown ended the Monarchs' playoff hopes. Mitty finished the season 6-4-1, finishing strongly after a 1-2 start.

The highlight of the year came during the team's yearly home contest against Bellarmine, when a Kyle Boehm QB sneak as time expired defeated Mitty's archivals. The team has high expectations for next year, when many key players, toughened by this emotional campaign, will return for another quest at the title.

The 2010 **Women's Tennis** team finished their season by defeating St. Ignatius 6-1, clinching their fifth straight WCAL title. They did so by going 12-0 in league play, their remarkable fourth consecutive undefeated season. With leadership provided by their solid coaching staff and the emergence of many talented players, the team continued their streak of unbelievable success this season.

"After losing some strong starters to graduation in 2009, the team worked hard to remain one of the top teams in the Section," Coach Jason Scales said.

Asked about the season, senior leader Stacy Yam responded, "I was expecting this season to go very smoothly, as it did in all the league matches. I thought we would be able to maybe pull through the semis and get to the finals but I knew it would be tough, but everyone on the team met my expectations and did an outstanding job. I was really proud of every single girl this season." Their complete command of every opponent goes to show that only one word can truly explain this team—dominant.

Both the **Men's and the Women's Water Polo** teams finished their seasons in admirable fashion once again. The men took a huge step forward towards being a WCAL powerhouse for years to come, putting together a remarkable season even in the midst of hardship. The young team matured as the year went on, and was able to overcome a difficult beginning of the season to go on to finish second in the Dough Wahlgreen tournament. Their counterparts, the women, were excellent, going an amazing 19-1 in league play, and advancing to the CCS quarterfinals. With many members of both the men's and the women's teams returning, both teams look to start next season as viable contenders for CCS titles.

Building off a promising campaign in 2009, the Mitty **Field Hockey** team was impressive this season, capping their year off with an appearance in the semifinals of the CCS Playoffs. Coach Justina Williams' squad finished the regular season with an 8-3-3 record. The year's highlight came against Gilroy High School, where the Monarchs defeated the Mustangs 2-0 in dominating fashion. Even though Mitty later fell to Gilroy in the CCS semifinals, the Monarchs regard their victory over the Mustangs earlier in the year as one of the many high points from the season. What's more, 16 of the team's 20 players are returning next year, meaning that the team will be a definite contender in 2011.

Athletes Speak

What is your outlook for the season?



Nicholas Filice, Senior

"My outlook for the season is an extremely positive one. This year we have a very young team but every player is willing to go above and beyond and give their all into each practice and game. With a new coaching staff we look to do well and hang banners up in the gym for the men's soccer program."



Amanda Lovely, Junior

"Our team this year is very talented and we have a lot of potential to have a successful season. Although we have a young team, we have great chemistry on and off the court. We have been working hard to prepare for the tough schedule we have ahead of us, and are very excited to get the season going!"

Diego Gaxiola, Junior

"The team expects to send a full squad to the CCS finals and some wrestlers to the State finals this year. Last year we took third in the WCAL finals and wish to improve to a second or first place finish. We are looking forward to this season and are working hard in the wrestling room to prepare for upcoming matches."



Lindsay Mewes, Junior

"I'm really excited for the season to start because I think that although we are a younger team this year, we have a lot of potential. Despite losing quite a few influential seniors, we have plenty of players ready to be leaders and fill their shoes. I have no doubt in my mind that we can be successful, as long as we play to our strengths and keep working hard!"



Compiled by Rebecca Casey
Sports Editor

Men's Basketball Aims High Again

By Neil Jariwala
Staff Writer

Fresh off a CCS championship, the Archbishop Mitty Men's Basketball program seeks to improve upon its success from last year and work toward another championship season.

Tim Kennedy enters his third season at head coach with a solid, talented roster looking to dominate on the court this season. Seniors Brent Younger, Kyle Toth, Colin Wan, and sophomore Aaron Gordon return to an already strong starting lineup, with junior Neil Vranicar and senior Brandon White expected to make key contributions as well. Toth, one of the premier shooters in the WCAL, anchors the offense, while rising junior forward Neil Vranicar will also trouble opposing defenses, especially when Gordon is double-teamed.

The key to the Monarchs' season will be a strong start that will eventually build into a consistent season.

Says Kennedy, "Our expectations as a team are the same year in, year out: Compete every

day in practice and in every game and work to get better each day. If we do that, we expect to challenge for the WCAL, CCS and Nor-Cal championships."

Senior Kyle Toth notes, "We are already ranked pretty high, but we don't want to get ahead of ourselves. We simply want to take this season one game at a time."

The team's roster, both up front and on the bench, will surely help them fulfill high expectations. Gordon, an All-Mercury News and All-WCAL sophomore, averaged a double-double as a freshman and, notes Kennedy, "will only be better this season."

There is no doubt that the success of the team depends heavily on the strong and unselfish play of the seniors. A team that was

built around juniors last year is expected to mature and play at a competitive level every game.

"We have so many players on offense who can score," says Kennedy. "Our willingness to work together as a team and ability to share the ball on offense are two of our biggest strengths entering this season."



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

Senior Brandon White goes above the rim.

Women's Basketball Goes for Gold

By Patrick Le
Staff Writer

There is always room for improvement for imperfect teams. However, how can you improve when you were only two points away from perfection? Apparently, the heartbreaking loss to Carondelet High School in last winter's CIF Championship game proved to be a powerful motivator for this year's Monarch Women's Basketball team.

Coming down to the final seconds, Mitty's girls fell just shy of another chance at a state Championship, losing 40-38 to the Carondelet Cougars of Concord. It ended their 26-5 season (12-0 in league play).

Nonetheless, they plan to remain persistent and improve in several aspects of their play. Despite the fact that nearly half of last year's players graduated, the Monarchs

want to continue to build upon the strategy that won them so many games in the previous season.

After all, almost half of their victories were by double digits. After two convincing wins to start the California Interscholastic Federation Championship, the girls came upon an opponent of similar talent, but ultimately Carondelet proved to be just

barely superior. (The Cougars went on to lose to Mater Dei in the final round.)

The team is "young and athletic," as described by senior guard Ashley Watson, and she believes that the team's collective maturation should lead them to victory.

"Strength of character" aided significantly in the team's growth last year, explained Coach Sue Phillips. "You are your actions. The content of one's character is what matters most."

Obviously the Monarchs believe that success on the court stems not only from skill, but also from their effort and self-confidence. Senior center Vanessa Leo executes these principles on-court; she follows the attitude "that it takes more than just hustle and shots to win a game. Heart and collectively working as a team wins games."

Undoubtedly, Coach Phillips and the players want to improve this year. Any sports fan knows that the close losses hurt the most. Following their persevering attitude, the Monarchs seek to arrive at the same place that they did last year—only this time, they expect another Championship banner to follow them when they come back home.



Photo courtesy of Mr. Luie Lopez

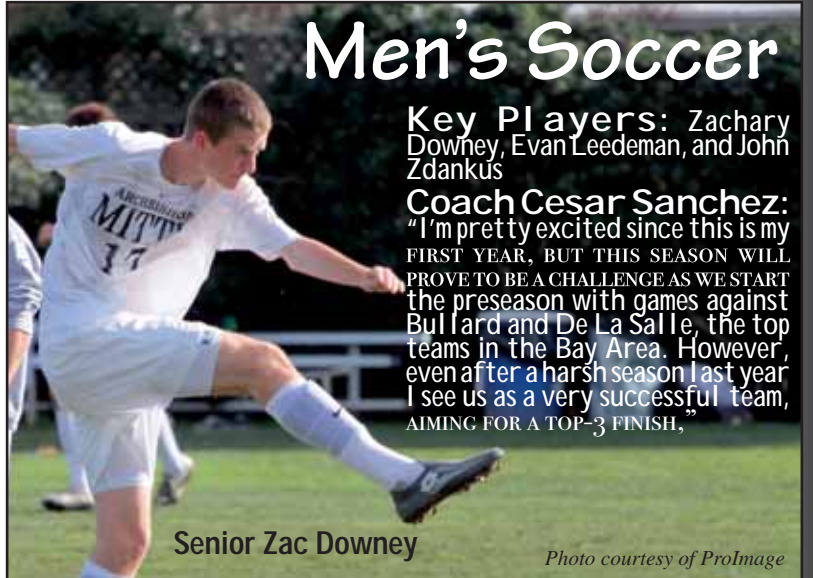
Senior Ashley Watson drops one down.

Highlight REEL

Men's Soccer

Key Players: Zachary Downey, Evan Leedeman, and John Zdankus

Coach Cesar Sanchez: "I'm pretty excited since this is my first year, but this season will prove to be a challenge as we start the preseason with games against Bullard and De La Salle, the top teams in the Bay Area. However, even after a harsh season last year I see us as a very successful team, aiming for a top-3 finish."



Senior Zac Downey

Photo courtesy of ProImage

Wrestling

Key Contributors Michael Atondo, Justin Evans, Chris Chestnut, Diego Gaxiola, Kyle Jackson, Michael Sywyk and Dion Windom

Coach Curry: "There are three keys to a good wrestling season: leadership, dedication, and a good work ethic. Out of all 5 of my years as coach, this is the most talented freshman class I've seen. My hope for the season is for these young men to compete to their full potential and build upon each match."



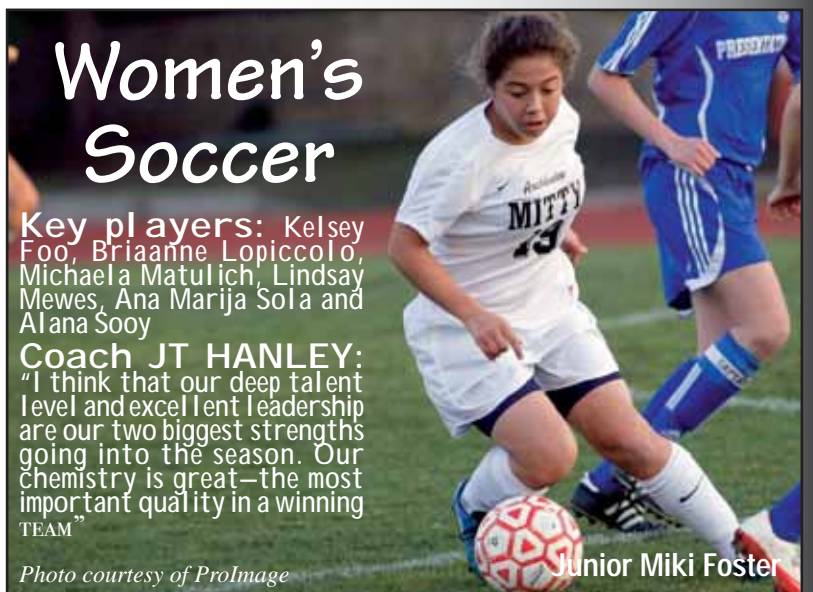
Senior Steven Figone and Sophomore Bryan Puentes

Photo courtesy of ProImage

Women's Soccer

Key players: Kelsey Foo, Brianne Lopiccolo, Michaela Matulich, Lindsay Mewes, Ana Marija Sola and Alana Sooy

Coach JT HANLEY: "I think that our deep talent level and excellent leadership are our two biggest strengths going into the season. Our chemistry is great—the most important quality in a winning team"



Junior Miki Foster

Photo courtesy of ProImage

Compiled by Mahir Kahn, Riley Back, and Ariq Chowdhury
Staff Writers

Coach Jason Perez Saves Christian Silveira's Life

By Anay Dattawadkar
Sports Editor

It was just another day of soccer tryouts for coach Jason Perez. He had just sent his soccer players out for a warm-up run when he heard a commotion near the baseball field. Perez didn't think it was anything serious until he reached the diamond and saw one of his players collapsed near the bleachers. He immediately recognized the player as Christian Silveira, a promising sophomore who had been on the team since freshman year.

Christian was unconscious and breathing weakly. When Perez checked for a pulse, he felt nothing. Perez, who works as a paramedic, immediately knew that he was going to have to step in. He told his players to call 911, and then started CPR, alternating between chest compressions and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. He did this for about five minutes, until a fire engine arrived at the scene.

Christian was taken to the hospital, where his condition was stabilized. He recently

had surgery to insert a defibrillator that will restart his heart should it ever fail again. He will make a full recovery. When he regained consciousness, however, he was greeted with bad news. He would never play soccer competitively again.

The loss of his soccer career, something that had been such a big part of his life for so long, was extremely hard on Christian. When he was told the news, he broke down in front of his family. However, the huge influx of help he received from his teammates and friends has helped him cope with the loss. Christian now has perspective on his side. Losing soccer is much better than losing his life.

Perez, the man who literally saved Christian's life, deserves much praise for his actions. The paramedic's on-the-fly thinking and quick actions were the only reason that Christian survived.

Ever modest, Perez deflected any praise, giving the credit to the players who helped save Christian as well. "Like I expect of you guys," he told them, "you performed under pressure, just like I knew you would."

STUDENT CENTE(R)ED

Ravi Patel

By **Tabitha Ahearn**
Staff Writer



In movies like *We Were Soldiers* and *Black Hawk Down*, we see the undercover work of FBI members, government agents, and members of the military without recognizing the reality in their work. Within our own Mitty community is junior **Ravi Patel**, a member of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP), a federally supported non-profit corporation that serves as the official civilian auxiliary of the US Air Force. The program is open to all teens ages twelve to eighteen, although applicants have the chance to stay in the program until they are twenty-one, after which they can simply join the military.

Ravi applied for the program as a sixth grader after hearing about CAP from some friends. He says he “always had an interest in joining the military and eventually the Air Force.” Considering his dad never had the chance to, Ravi felt inspired to join CAP. The program teaches young teens about leadership, stress management, and communication in a strict military-like setting in the hope that teens will be able to use the skills they learn from their training at CAP in their everyday lives. After being in the program for almost six years, Ravi has earned the ranking of a Cadet 1st Lieutenant, just five rankings below the highest ranking of a Cadet Colonel.

A significant goal of the program is to implement what participants have learned in leadership roles, such as the training of new cadets. In terms of the training, Ravi says that the training program is just like that of the military. Cadets are briefed about the history, rules, and regulations of the military before beginning a strict leadership training program. As in the military, cadets are ranked, and must excel on both a physical and written test as well as an interview before earning a new rank. Ravi has spent time in several different parts of the program and has experience as a member of both the color guard and the search and rescue department team.

Through his experience as both a member and a leader of the Civil Air Patrol, Ravi has learned some extremely important values that help him in everyday situations.

“Especially in school, students struggle with the pressures and stress of their everyday lives. Through my experiences, I have learned to deal with stress, and I do not struggle with it anymore.”

In the future, Ravi wants to work in the government, possibly as an FBI official within the Air Force. He is excited about the prospect of working as an intern for the FBI this summer. He hopes to gain some valuable experience, while using the skills he has learned in CAP as he moves forward.



By **Gwen Holst**
News Editor

On November 2, the nation held its midterm election. Some seniors, including **Kimberly Lowell**, were 18 years old, the legal voting age, and exercised their right to vote.

Kimberly explains, “I chose to vote because I believe that our country can only function as a true democracy if its citizens participate. Elections are the perfect opportunity to express your opinion in the government. Voter apathy is a major problem, and the United States has a very low voter turnout compared to other countries. Voting is important, and I voted to do my part to reverse these downward trends.”

After casting her vote, Kimberly reflected on her experience, “It felt refreshing to vote. After so many years of watching election results and inaugurations and silently cheering on my favorite candidate, I can finally have a small part in the decisions.”

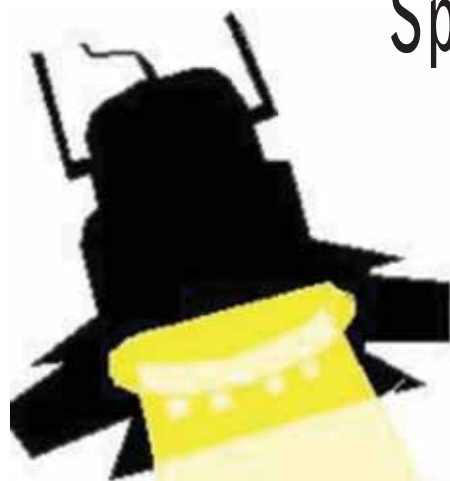
This politically savvy young woman has followed the advice of social studies teacher Mr. Michael Hicks who reveals, “Statistics show that the least likely group to vote are the young. The age group of people 18-25 years old has the lowest percentage of voters. I challenge young people to not let senior citizens, who vote at the highest level, control the future. Vote and do not let others control your future.”

The results of the election could cause a huge change in the American political climate. With all of the 435 House positions up for reelection, Republicans made a net gain of over 60 seats, thereby replacing Democrats as the majority party. In the senate, where 37 of the 100 total seats were up for reelection, the shift was less dramatic. Democrats retained their majority, with a 53 to 47 lead. However, Republicans received a net gain of six senators, leaving Democrats in the majority, but with less support than their previous majority.

California, on the other hand, has remained a strong Democratic bastion, with senator Barbara Boxer retaining her incumbent position and Democrat Jerry Brown replacing Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger as the state’s governor. Additionally, Democrat Kamala Harris, a woman of both Indian and African American descent, became the Attorney General, a first in terms of the position’s gender and ethnicity.

Spotlight: Pardon My French

By **Katya Lohngoen**
Staff Writer



Previously known as Lucky 13, Archbishop Mitty’s Sketch Comedy group, Pardon My French, has been revamped for a whole new round of comedy.

In past years, the team has done two sketch shows: one in the fall and one in the spring, which were straight “sketch” comedy. However, this year, the two shows will have very different concepts. The fall show, performed on Thursday, Nov. 18, was in the familiar style, which differed slightly from previous renditions, in that, as senior cast member **Trevor Bates** recalls, “The subject matter was cleaner this time around.”

The spring show will be a complete deviation, taking the form of an improvised musical. The title the group will be bringing to life at this show will be “After Ten Years in Siberia,” as suggested by an audience member. This style of show was made popular by the contemporary “Baby Wants Candy” troupe and will be an exciting change to an already popular event.

The team will also continue connecting with local schools, in an outreach program set up in a “Whose Line Is It Anyway” format, in which children give the actors suggestions for scenes, which the players must perform without having had any practice.

The group has also been transformed by the types of actors involved. For **Mr. Santana**, the sketch team has always been a place for variety. He describes how, “Our team isn’t just for the Performing Arts kids, it’s for

everyone who loves improv whether they are involved in student government, campus ministry, a varsity sports team or performing arts.”

One member, junior **Megan Linney**, who is also actively involved with Varsity Golf and the Mitty Advocacy Project, explains how Pardon My French “is definitely a new experience. I have enjoyed getting to know everyone on the team because normally I never would have gotten to know these kids. Trevor [Bates], Adrienne [Eller], Michelle [Martinelli], and Ryan [Ballard] are some people I never would have spoken to otherwise because they are in theater and I’m not.” Megan’s involvement in an activity she would not normally be associated with testifies to the medley of influences present in Pardon My French and the diversity of the Mitty community.

In order to accommodate these various changes, Pardon My French has also changed its practice schedule. Trevor explains how “we have much more rehearsal time now because we meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings at 7 and Friday afternoons until 4.”

Adrienne Eller added, “We came up with two sketches per morning and [the extra rehearsal time] is much more efficient than last year.” **Christina Moore**, one of the newest members of the team claimed Tuesdays and Thursdays were now her favorite days of the week because of “sketch in the morning” and Trevor added with a smile, “It’s like waking up with comedy.”



THE MONARCH

Volume 20 Number 2

Advisors
Mr. Mick VanValkenburg & Mr. Craig Whitt

News
Sruthi Ramaswami, Gwendolyn Holst,
& Melanie Mascarenhas

Opinions
Sarang Shankar, Isabel Sausjord, Linda Nguyen
& Manosai Eerabathini

Arts & Entertainment
Steffie Ko, Chaddy Georges, & Zoya Qureshy

Focus
Taji Hutchins, Nhi Nguyen, & Seethim Naicker

Justice Awareness
Elise Sudlow, Angela Hodge, Olivia Bartz,
& Briana Saunders

Sports
Ayman Ullah, Rebecca Casey, Anay Dattawadkar
& Arjun Ravishankar

Photo
Avantika Abhyankar & Nikita Nathan

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