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SAN JOSE URBAN JOURNALISM WORKSHOP WWW.MOSAICWORKSHOP.ORG THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2004

INVOLVING TEENS IN POLITICS

MOMENTUM: TWO LAWMAKERS PUSH TO LOWER VOTING AGE IN CALIFORNIA

By Sara Malik
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

James Liu is an ambitious 17-year-old who started a club called "Democracy Matters" with some friends at Saratoga High School, with the goal of getting more young people engaged in politics.

"If I could, I would vote because if you look at the people who ... don't, it's just because they don't think it's worth their time," James said. "I'm not easily influenced. It's really important when it comes to politics that you see all sides of a story."

James does not stand alone. Teens and adults alike have been pushing for more youth involvement for years.

And among the proposed solutions, lowering the voting age has become increasingly popular.

In June, a proposed amendment to the California constitution that would have allowed 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections if they turn 18 before the general election was defeated in the Senate. The bill's creator and main proponent, Assemblyman Gene Mullin, D-San Mateo, plans to reintroduce the bill.

Mullin's attempt comes at a time

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KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Emily Jardine, left, registers to vote on June 27 with help from Livla Shirkey, a volunteer with the Kerry presidential campaign.

VIEWPOINT: YOUNG PEOPLE NOT READY TO HANDLE RESPONSIBILITY OF VOTING

Margot Leong

As someone who likes to keep up with the political comings and goings of the world, I'm all for the idea of getting more teenagers into politics. But lowering the voting age to 14, 15 or 16 is not the best way to accomplish this.

Let's face it. Most teenagers would rather vote for the next American Idol than participate in a local referendum about funding a new overpass on Highway 101. It's not our fault. As teenagers, we are interested in many different things. It's just that pop culture appeals to us much more than politics ever will. It's the way our minds work.

Many youth groups have used the well-known phrase of our Founding Fathers, "No taxation without representation" as the crux of their argument — that youth have adult responsibilities, but not

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What's in a name?

Peer pressure fuels teens' taste for pricey clothing

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

Above, Kelli McCormick, 16, and Caitlin Strottrup, 17, stroll through Valley Fair. Below, David Cilia, 17, totes his buys from Abercrombie and Fitch.

By Jessica Li and Vikram Mahal
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

With the famous blue bag swinging from her hand, 13-year-old Michaela Brown exited the Tiffany & Co. store with a look of satisfaction. She had just purchased a $125 necklace."It was a gift from me to my mom," she said. "I saved up for a long time."

But even if she had been shopping for herself, the price tag wouldn't have been significantly less.

Michaela's tastes draw her to exclusive brands, from Tiffany to American Eagle. Like Michaela, many teenagers today flock to expensive, name-brand stores to buy the latest styles. Though there are less costly choices, many students prefer to shop at stores such as Abercrombie and Fitch and Urban Outfitters despite their higher prices.

Michaela believes that if she stops buying popular brands and looks for cheaper alternatives, people would change their perception of her. "People are so judgmental these days," said Michaela, who attends Fisher Middle School in Los Gatos and was interviewed at Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair.

There are many reasons why students opt for more expensive clothing and accessories. If asked to choose between a $30 polo shirt from Abercrombie and Fitch and a $6 polo from Target, most students — if they have the means — would choose Abercrombie.

In times when the economy is less than thriving, young people still find ways to spend $175 billion a year, according to a study by Harris Interactive, a global market research firm based in Rochester, N.Y.

See **BRANDS**, *Page 5*

'Wearing an Italian designer like Versace is probably going to do more for their self-image than K-Mart.'
— JEFFREY YING, 17, OF FREMONT

Young workers, adult burdens

SOME TEENS JUGGLE SCHOOL, WORK — AND HELPING PUT FOOD ON THE TABLE

By Ricardo Herrera
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Diego Flores is a teenager who, at an age when most of his peers are working to buy the latest fashions or pay for a night out with friends, is dealing with other demands on his paycheck. The San Jose teen helps his family pay the rent and buy groceries.

Every month, Diego gives his mom about $400 from what he earns washing dishes and making pizzas at Calfornia Pizza Kitchen at Westfield Shoppingtown Oakridge in San Jose. Some teens might resent giving up their hard-earned money, but Diego said it actually makes him feel good.

"I know my mom can get stuff she wouldn't be able to get" without his help, said Diego.

In cities across the country — most often in poor neighborhoods — there are kids who go to work to help support the family. Findings from studies on the topic have been mixed.

The Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., for example, found that low-income teenagers have a tougher time finding good

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Drivers find strategies to cope with high gas prices

By Tiffany Pan
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Sixteen-year-old Duy Phan drives his Honda Accord everywhere, quenches his car's thirst with $50 of premium fuel every week and always opts for the closest station rather than the cheapest. Duy's parents foot his gas bill.

Steven Hao, 17, only pumps $5 worth of gas and lets his parents fill up the rest. "But if I had to pay for all my gas," said Steven, "I wouldn't drive at all."

While some students are passing the burden onto their parents, others are finding ways — from carpooling to comparison shopping — to cope with gas prices that are burning holes in drivers' pockets.

As of June 15, the average price for a gallon of gas in the Bay Area was $2.33, according to the California State Automobile Association. A year ago, it was $1.88.

The steep rise in prices forced Annette Rodriguez to stop driving her car and start taking the bus two months ago.

"I used to drive a Toyota Echo and it gets 32 miles per gallon," said Rodriguez, a 20-year-old

See **GAS**, *Page 5*

Trust, respect key to acceptance of interracial dating

'It's not the color that matters. It's the love that counts.'
— MICHELLE KIM, 17, MONTA VISTA HIGH SENIOR

By Regina Chan
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

When Michelle Kim, a 17-year-old Korean-American, first started dating her white boyfriend, her parents had a difficult time accepting that their daughter was in an interracial relationship.

A generation ago, such an idea would have been out of the question. But rather than abandon her relationship, Michelle stuck it out and eventually, her parents came around.

"It's two people getting to know each other more. It really doesn't make a difference what race you are," said Michelle, who will be a senior at Monta Vista High School in the fall. "It's not the color that matters. It's the love that counts."

More parents, especially in the Bay Area, have come to realize that. And experts say interracial dating has become more acceptable because it's more prevalent in our society.

"My mom was raised here, in this area, so she's seen the cultural change here, she knows about it," said 18-year-old Nick Bedell. Bedell, who lives in San Jose, is white and his girlfriend is Chinese-American. "The ethnic diversity is the heart of this area. Without it, Silicon Valley wouldn't be what it is today."

Dr. Gayle Peterson, a family therapist in Berkeley and author of "Making Healthy Families," believes that the reason some parents do not embrace the idea of interracial dating is because they do not fully understand it. "They're not exposed to it," she said.

Sanjit Biswas of San Jose has a white girlfriend, and said her family is still in the process of dealing with it.

"Her family's Southern and very religious so some problems came up," said Biswas, 22. "They just have to get used to it. It's not even something we need to deal with, but something they need to deal with."

Fortunately for Biswas, his parents approved of his interracial relationship. "They're perfectly OK with it because it's getting common these days," he said. In fact, Biswas' uncle is married to a white woman.

Many young people who have dated interracially say the relationships have nothing to do with race. "You have to see them as people and not so much as people of color," said Biswas. "It makes a big difference."

Meesun Yuk recently graduated from Monta Vista High School in

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MEMBERS OF THE MOSAIC

MIRIAM ALVARADO, SANTA CLARA

A self-proclaimed "queen of thrift-store shopping" and an admirer of gypsies, 15-year-old Miriam Alvarado from Archbishop Mitty High School is anything but ordinary.

Born in the hazy city of London, Miriam loves dancing and traveling, but especially photography. She describes photojournalism as a medium that opens her eyes to life around her. She says she sees things through the camera that she might otherwise overlook.

Half Salvadoran and half Swiss, this vivacious girl's favorite foods are the California roll, enchiladas and mangos. Her snazzy duct-tape wallet serves as a reminder that we do not need designer bags to make us happy.

A passionate and caring girl who will never leave you behind, Miriam is even determined to motivate someone to go running at 7 a.m. She is someone who lives in the moment.

— Margot Leong

NEERAJ BERRY, FREMONT

Just because 16-year-old Neeraj Berry does Lincoln Douglas speech and debate at Mission San Jose High School doesn't mean he's a nerd. He admits to hating his science classes.

Born in Kuwait of Indian descent, the incoming senior does many things that are very un-nerdy. In his free time, Neeraj enjoys playing basketball and Texas Hold'em, watching "SportsCenter" and "The O.C," and listening to Maroon 5, Yellowcard and Tupac.

Neeraj is eager to take over as editor-in-chief of his school newspaper, The Smoke Signal, this school year. After graduation, he hopes to major in business or journalism at the University of California-Berkeley or UCLA.

— Johnny Du

KONINA BISWAS, SAN JOSE

Konina Biswas, 16, is passionate about her interests, such as her love for cinematography. This self-described "creative, outgoing enthusiast" is especially interested in foreign films, which fuel her fascination with other cultures.

She even started a film club at her school, Lynbrook High, where students gather to watch and discuss movies.

Konina also adores music. She plays the flute and piano, and rock groups such as The Beatles and Deep Blue Something inspired her to teach herself to play the guitar.

Konina also is a living miracle. She defied doctors and learned to walk again after a car accident disabled her at a young age.

— Stephanie Foo

REGINA CHAN, CUPERTINO

At first glance, Regina Chan appears composed and in control. And that's exactly what she is.

This future editor-in-chief of El Etoque, Monta Vista High School's newspaper, has strong inclinations for Coach bags, Starbucks and Ralph Lauren. Regina is 16 and enjoys ice skating and drawing.

At Monta Vista, she plays badminton and will be the Student Life Commissioner during her senior year. Here at Mosaic, she will be remembered for her impeccable style and the pensive looks she wears around the San Jose State campus.

With a bright outlook on the future, Regina hopes to attend the University of Southern California, where she wants to major in journalism.

— Sara Malik

JOHNNY DU, SANTA CLARA

From spending countless hours managing his school newspaper, The Scribe, to aspiring to write for the Daily Cal, 16-year-old Johnny Du is a boy with journalism flowing through his veins.

Johnny, a soon-to-be senior at Wilcox High School, is an ambitious and determined individual. He's also bald.

But most people don't just remember that clean-shaven head when they think of Johnny. More likely, they are struck by his zealous attitude toward the world of newspaper reporting.

Johnny isn't a complete workaholic. In fact, he calls himself a "bum" in other aspects of his life. "I love to sleep and listen to music," he said. Johnny also enjoys watching TV — specifically "The O.C," "Alias," "24" and "Late Night with Conan O'Brien." He also is a fan of the soap opera "Days of Our Lives."

"I catch the last 20 minutes every day when I come home from school," he said. "But during the summer I get to watch the whole show. It's pretty awesome."

— Neeraj Berry

STEPHANIE FOO, SAN JOSE

If Stephanie Foo, 16, could be any pizza topping, she would be a mushroom. "They're small, cute and can be deadly," she said.

Stephanie, an aspiring editor for the "Piedmont Hills Legend, applied for Mosaic with hopes of finding what she wants in.

She moved from Malaysia when she was 3 and loves to draw, read and use the Internet. Stephanie is active at her school: she's part of ASB publicity and the Piedmont Hills High varsity tennis team.

Stephanie is quirky and upbeat. The only thing that could get in her way is arachnophobia. Her fear of death even takes second place to her fear of spiders.

— Konina Biswas

NEHA HEMMAD, SAN JOSE

Neha Hemmad, 16, who attends Mission High School in San Jose, grew up in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. But her childhood was very American, because she attended an English-language private school. When she moved to the United States in the eighth grade, she quickly became involved in journalism.

Neha is currently entertainment editor of Youth Today, Fremont's local teen newspaper. She and her friends also host, produce and write a television show for teenagers called "Youth Speaks," which airs weekly on local cable channel 26. They cover teen issues and run entertainment reviews.

She has been studying Bharatanatyam, a type of Indian classical dancing, for more than 10 years, and is preparing for a solo recital in November.

— Anna Tong

RICARDO HERRERA, SAN JOSE

Sixteen-year-old Ricardo Herrera was born in Indio and lives in East San Jose with his mother, four brothers and a cat named Kitty.

He enjoys a variety of music, especially house and trance, and keeps his radio tuned to Wild 94.9.

Ricardo used to play roller hockey and soccer. Unfortunately, he can't play these days, having "busted" his nose after getting jumped. Instead, he gets his soccer thrills from FIFA '04, his favorite video game.

Looking at Ricardo, one would never guess he is a shy guy with a fear of heights. Ricardo sports a goatee and earrings, and has styled his eyebrows since seventh grade.

In the fall, Ricardo will be a senior at James Lick High School. A native speaker of Spanish and English, he enjoys studying math, Spanish literature and history. Ricardo aspires to attend Santa Clara University, where he plans to major in automotive technology, philosophy or literature.

— Sameer Jain

ALEX HO, SAN JOSE

Alex "USB" Ho is a tech freak. Spending most of his spare time with his 1999 Pentium3 IBM, Alex uses it for playing video games, editing digital video, flash-programming and basic animation.

In his non-computer life, his main activities include learning Japanese, reading, drawing and perfecting his journalistic abilities.

All of these facets of his life have been nurtured not only at his loving home of late, but also at Silver Creek High School.

— Robby Valderrama

SAMEER JAIN, SAN JOSE

Sameer Jain brings new meaning to the term "well-rounded" guy. The soon-to-be-senior at Bellarmine College Preparatory scored 1590 on his SATs and has a 4.0 grade-point average.

This friendly 17-year-old enjoys video games, hip-hop and alternative music but balances his life with Lincoln Douglas debate, which is a one-on-one philosophical debate, as well as expository speaking. He isn't all books and no games, however.

He also plays golf, tennis and basketball. Even with all of his accomplishments, one would never know he often feels insecure about himself and is a huge procrastinator.

— Ricardo Herrera

MARGOT LEONG, ATHERTON

With her raven black hair and sunny smile, Margot Leong, 16, is the kind of friend who will get up at 7:10 in the morning to go running with you, even after getting only four hours of sleep.

She is a quirky, thoughtful, politically passionate classical guitarist and former competitive table tennis player. She is looking forward to becoming a columnist for the San Mateo Daily Journal.

Margot is managing editor of the school newspaper at Menlo High School, where she will be a senior in September. Journalism and politics are two possibilities in her future, and both careers would give this determined Chinese-New Zealander opportunities to express herself and make a difference.

— Miriam Alvarado

JESSICA LI, SARATOGA

Outgoing, loving, warm and smart — this is how Jessica Li seems to people when they first meet her. She's very funny and has a great laugh.

Jessica, 16, lives in Saratoga and goes to Saratoga High School. She loves pasta, fruit, Hollister (the store), cheerleading and the color pink. She has a sister, Samantha, who is 11. Her favorite actors are Paul Walker and Nicole Kidman.

Among the things she hates are mean people, eggplant, radishes and her tan tube top because it looks like she's not wearing anything.

— Rhiannon Wheeler

VIKRAM MAHAL, SAN JOSE

Sleep has a way of keeping us from many things, and slumber almost kept Vikram Mahal from the life he is living today.

While napping in the car at age 3, Vikram's door flew open when his family's car was sideswiped. After surfing on the remains of the car door, he had a piece of glass embedded in his head. Seventy stitches and some tears later, he was as good as new.

Vikram, who will be a senior at Bellarmine College Preparatory this fall, likes shopping. "I will buy things that I don't need," he said.

When this 17-year-old resident of South San Jose isn't busy spending the money burning a hole in his pocket, he spends time with his friends, dances and dreams of becoming a master of medicine one day.

— Carl Ponzio

SARA MALIK, FREMONT

Sara Malik, a junior this fall at Mission San Jose High School, has found passion in journalism, kung fu and the piano. She'll be a second-year technical editor at Mission San Jose High's newspaper, the Smoke Signal.

Already on her purple belt, Sara has been attending the California Wushu Academy for two years. She's also been playing piano for six years and said she actually enjoys it, "unlike the typical Asian student."

Sara hopes to attend Stanford University or the University of California-Berkeley and major in political science.

— Regina Chan

TIFFANY PAN, SAN JOSE

Self-described as "impulsive and sparky," 16-year-old Tiffany Pan is looking forward to her senior year as co-editor-in-chief of The Epic, the newspaper of Lynbrook High School.

Tiffany has been on the varsity basketball team for four years and plays the flute for the South Bay Youth Orchestra. She also enjoys munching on strawberry granola bars, watching the television show "Coupling" (the British version) and playing Connect Four with her friends.

If she could meet anyone in the world, alive or dead, she would like to have known the late Arnetta Garcia, the inspirational adviser of The Epic for many years.

Her advice for life is: "A hand you hold is a hand that holds you down."

— Victoria Tang

CARL PONZIO, CAMPBELL

A motivated and avid writer, Carl Ponzio graduated this year from Westmont High School and will be attending California State University-Chico in the fall.

Carl enjoys watching bands, critiquing movies and reading comics. One of his quiet hobbies is writing a book about life, pulling in different life experiences. Carl has remained loyal to the Oakland Raiders through all their ups and downs, which is indicative of his perseverance.

Although he loves his family dearly, Carl is looking forward to his college experience.

— Vikram Mahal

VICTORIA TANG, FREMONT

If Victoria Tang were a crayon, she would be "Purple Mountains Majesty."

Victoria, 16, stands a solid 5 feet tall, but that doesn't keep her from feeling like she towers over her peers. She makes up in strength what she won't admit she lacks in height. Describing herself as ambitious, creative and (hesitantly) clever, Victoria looks forward to being editor in chief of the Irvington High School newspaper.

She enjoys lasagna, "Will and Grace," and her only-child status, and she lives by the phrase "stupid is as stupid does," from her favorite movie, "Forrest Gump."

Victoria, who rates her Etch A Sketch ability a seven out of 10, would trade in this rare talent for ambidexterity.

Temporarily satisfied with a Toyota Camry, Victoria insists she should be driving a silver Mini Cooper. She is, after all, a material girl in a material world.

— Tiffany Pan

ANNA TONG, PALO ALTO

Anna Tong is a hard-working girl with many aspirations. She was born and raised in Palo Alto, and will be a senior at Gunn High School in the fall.

Anna's passion for writing can be seen through her accomplishments in her school newspaper. She was the news editor and currently is the entertainment editor. Her work has led her to decide to pursue a career in journalism.

Anna also is a ballet dancer and has been learning dance for more than seven years. Among her other interests are cartooning, drawing, writing and reading.

— Neha Hemmad

ROBBY VALDERRAMA, SAN JOSE

Robby Valderrama is a 17-year-old soon-to-be senior at Valley Christian High School. The second of four children, his life is anything but ordinary.

Robby has visited more than 20 states and more than 15 countries. His travel was possible thanks to his mother's former job as a flight attendant. When Robby isn't studying, he volunteers at his church and plays tennis.

Robby teaches guitar and is the guitarist of the Celtic band, Cold De. He also does digital video editing and has made a few music videos for his band (although they are not online, yet).

— Alex Ho

RHIANNON WHEELER, SANTA CLARA

Rhiannon Wheeler, 18, recently graduated from Wilcox High School and will attend Brooks Institute of Photography in the fall.

Rhiannon has two older brothers, James, 24, and Nick, 21. Her hobbies include horseback riding, making Native American crafts, going to wine and arts festivals and reading photography magazines.

Rhiannon's favorite color is blue and her favorite store is Ritz Camera. Rhiannon's biggest pet peeve is Wal-Mart because she believes that it hinders the nation's economy. Her least favorite vegetable is spinach.

— Jessica Li

Members of the Mosaic 2004 staff include high school students from around the Bay Area and journalists from the San Jose Mercury News. In two weeks, the students learned about reporting and photography and produced the Mosaic, a 20-page newspaper.

Crash course in journalism

By Anna Tong and Johnny Du
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

For two weeks, 20 high schoolers from around the Bay Area were identified as members of the professional press. After introductions and a restless night, we were subjected to a crash course in journalism and immediately dove into our story ideas. Our editors — Sam, Michelle, Sal, Lori, Donna, Gary and Anne-Marie — helped shape our ideas and then cut us loose.

The first step was researching topics, which for many was a friendly Google search. The next step — interacting with real people — was a little harder because humans aren't quite as reliable as the Internet. We quickly learned how differently we were viewed now that we were members of the media. With press passes hanging around our necks and our spiels rehearsed, we morphed from ordinary teenagers to journalists.

Some people were eager to talk to us, but when others realized we were MEDIA, they avoided us at all costs. Our questions were met with nervous laughs and shifty eyes. Mall security guards chased our photographers out of stores. On the other hand, the press pass got us into John Kerry rallies and press boxes complete with free food.

Then it was down to the actual writing process, a difficult job made harder by archaic iMacs.

It was grueling work, but we were supplied with good doses of inspiration along the way. First in line was the legendary David Early, a Mercury News reporter bringing wisdom and stories of his Afro. Our first few dinners gave us the opportunity to meet other Mercury News reporters and photographers. Next in line was a visit to the Knight Ridder headquarters, where we met six executives who sported important-sounding titles.

We managed to imitate professionals by day, but at night we became high schoolers again. When the workday finally ended, we would gather back at Joe West Hall at San Jose State University, ready to lose all sense of professionalism.

Our dorms on the ninth floor weren't exactly the Fairmont, but we spent so little time sleeping that it did not matter. A group of us watched as Ricardo trimmed his own hair. Some got henna tattoos that said things such as "LP" — Lefty Pride. Sam brought poker chips for us, so "Dorm Dad" Joe took our lunch money away in one round of Texas Hold'em.

Down in the second-floor lounge area, Robby, Vikram and Neeraj took turns playing ping-pong, while Sameer and Margot did a tortuous "Heart and Soul" duet on the piano every single night. All the while, "Dorm Mom" Deb made sure we behaved ourselves.

At the end of two weeks, our printed newspaper went to press and Mosaic 2004 was complete, but 20 high schoolers kept their dual personalities as professionals and kids.

2004 MOSAIC STAFF

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Teens: Internet filters are flawed

STUDENTS UPSET WITH WEB RESTRICTIONS AT SCHOOL

By Alexander Ho
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Lana Hyatt was surfing the Web on the computers at Lee Mathson Middle School in San Jose, searching for pictures of her favorite music group, B2K, when she clicked on the forbidden link to MTV.com.

"This site has been blocked," the message read.

It's a typical response on computers connected to public networks — in libraries, on school campuses and even businesses. Some teens, who say there's nothing offensive about the sites they're visiting, are becoming irked by the restrictions placed upon them.

But the Internet filters put in place to keep hate sites, pornography sites and other offensive material away from their eyes aren't likely to disappear anytime soon.

Lana, 14, thinks the filters are flawed.

"They blocked many sites that didn't deserve a block and they missed a lot of sites," she said. "When I found that MTV.com was blocked, I just used Google" to find the images.

But what was so offensive on the MTV.com Web site?

It's hard to say. The rules and guidelines for blocking offensive content are decided, for the most part, by trial and error.

"We know almost nothing about how they select restricted sites," said Ann Beeson, a lawyer with the American Civil Liberties Union in New York. "It's very dangerous because decisions can be made based on ideological factors, such as religious or personal factors."

For public schools, installing Internet filters on computer networks wasn't something school officials had much say about. The Children's Internet Protection Act, which was signed into law by President Clinton in 2000, requires all public schools and libraries that receive government funding to install filters.

Quang To, who worked as a volunteer in Oakland High School's administration office in Oakland, said the filter there has done a good job of keeping students out of pornography Web sites or those that

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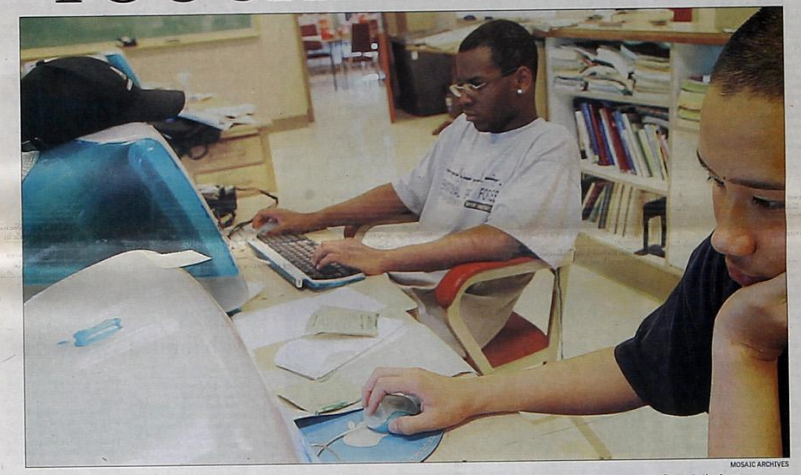
YOUNG LIVES TOUCHED BY WAR



MOSAIC ARCHIVES

Jason Miles was a participant in the Mosaic journalism workshop in summer 2002. He's now stationed in Iraq, where he's seen some dangerous things as a rifleman in the Army.

Proposals to bring back draft ignites debate

By Sameer Jain
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

As the conflict drags on in Iraq, American teens have mixed feelings about the possibility of a military draft.

"I think it's ridiculous," said Sean Wilson, 14, who was visiting San Jose State University recently for a leadership conference. "It makes no sense. If there was a draft, I'd probably go to jail."

Other teens believe they have a duty to fight for their country.

"If I got drafted, I'd go for sure," said Jared Slesnick, 18, a recent graduate of Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose.

More than 30 years after the U.S. military ended the draft and turned to an all-volunteer service, the question of whether to force Americans to fight has reignited a heated debate.

In January 2003, Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., and Sen. Fritz Hollings, D-S.C., made headlines when they introduced bills that would force 18- to 26-year-old Americans to serve two years in the military or in a civilian capacity that, as determined by the President, promotes the national defense, including national or community service and homeland security." Although members of the Bush administration say they have no plans to bring back the draft, many teens worry about whether their

See **DRAFT**, *Page 4*

Draft worries

If you're worried about the draft, J.E. McKeil of the Center on Conscience and War has a few suggestions:

Think about how you'd respond to a draft. If you're a conscientious objector, someone who refuses to fight for religious or moral reasons, start preparing evidence of your beliefs.

Lobby your congressional representatives. Call and write to them so they know you oppose the draft.

Vote. Remember that Congress members and the president you elect will be the officials who decide whether to institute a draft.

For more information, see www.nisbco.org.

MOSAIC ALUMNUS TALKS ABOUT DANGERS, REALITIES OF IRAQ DUTY

By Sameer Jain
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Jason Miles attended Mosaic in summer 2002 to learn to write an effective news story. Now, he is a part of the biggest news story in the world today.

"Since age 8, I knew I was going to be in the military," said Miles, an Army private first class who is stationed in Iraq.

Soon after arriving in Iraq, Miles learned to expect the unexpected.

"It may sound cliché, but there is no typical day in Iraq," Miles, 20, wrote in an e-mail from Camp Al Iskandariyah, 25 miles south of Baghdad. "A routine mounted patrol can quickly turn into an enemy ambush."

A rifleman, Miles protects both troops and key buildings.

He has also trained members of the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi police. His team secured and occupied a power plant that supplied nearly 70 percent of the power for major cities in Iraq, "and was always under threat of terrorist attacks."

His time in Iraq hasn't been easy.

"When I first got here in March," Miles said, "mortar attacks were an every night event."

A military legacy

Born in Madera, Miles comes from a military family. He grew up drinking out of Marine Corps water bottles and "wearing a Marine Corps baseball cap everywhere I went."

The Mosaic alumnus attended both Gunn High School in Palo Alto and Menlo-Atherton High School in

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS BREAKING RACIAL BARRIERS

MANY YOUTHS REPORT FEW CHANGES, BUT SOME ARE MAKING STRIDES

By Neeraj Berry
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

It's just a regular day at Monta Vista High School in Cupertino, one of the most diverse schools in the Bay Area. In classrooms, students of all ethnic backgrounds mix together.

But as soon as the lunch bell rings, things change. Suddenly the Asian students are congregating at one lunch table, the African-American students at another, white students in yet another area.

It has been well over 50 years since the historical Brown vs. Board of Education Supreme Court case took place. The Supreme Court ruled that separate but equal institutions were inherently unequal, and from that moment on the world of education has become more and more diverse.

However, a closer look at high schools across the Bay Area and the nation shows that even though many improvements have been made in terms of integrating different cultures, students still tend to group themselves socially by race.

According to a study of 638 students conducted by Stanford University Assistant Professor Anthony Antonio, more than 90 percent of students acknowledged that, while on campus, students tend to cluster around individuals who are similar to themselves.

Irmina Gaviias, 17, said that at Monta Vista, students tend to group themselves into small social circles, often along racial lines.

"At my school, all the Asian people hang out with Asian people, and Caucasian people with Caucasians, and everyone else with their own race," Irmina said.

Educators see this as a natural occurrence.

"Students do tend to associate with people of the same race, but it is simply because everyone likes to be with people who they have a lot in common with," said Sandy Prairie, vice principal of Mission San Jose High School in Fremont.

Andrea Wong, a 15-year-old incoming junior at Gunn High School in Palo Alto who is Chinese, feels that in today's schools, being the same race allows stu-

See **RACE**, *Page 4*

RACE | Students breaking barriers

Continued from Page 3

dents to reach a comfort zone.

"I can relate to other Chinese people in a lot of ways," she said. "Even just language-wise, we can tell each other jokes in Chinese and just do things I can't do with other types of people."

Psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum said in her book "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?" that the desire to form racial cliques can be traced to the brain. She said racial grouping is simply a developmental process students undergo in response to an environmental stressor, racism.

However, Prairie and Andrea both agree that there is a fine line between trying to be comfortable and creating animosity between people of different races. Being shut out of a group, whether because of your race or other factors, is hurtful.

Ameya Ananth, 17, a student at Lynbrook High School, doesn't like it when students isolate themselves into racial groups. Ameya remembered a time when she was left out of a study group because she wasn't part of the clique. She thinks it might have been because she was a different race.

Some people are fighting to break down racial barriers. Mike Seppi established the Diversity Awareness Partnership with the idea of breaking down stereotypes.

While Seppi said he does believe that "it's a natural tendency to associate with someone that is like you because it helps alleviate the insecurity of being judged by others," he added that "many teenagers are developing a lot of prejudice, which is a big problem." The DAP's mission is to show the value of diversity, and eliminate obstacles that can divide communities.

Matt Pogue, a 17-year-old Campbell resident, said he believes that high schools share some of the blame for racial segregation that exists on campuses.

"A lot of the segregation on campuses has to do with the schools and society, because of their hypocrisy," he said. "The school administrators always say that segregation is bad, but then they do nothing to stop it, which is kind of like they are promoting it."

Other students have different experiences in their high school. Nancy Lee, 20, a junior at the University of California-San Diego, recalled a program at Palo Alto High School designed to promote interaction between students from different neighborhoods, including East Palo Alto.

Regardless of a school's attempts to strengthen the relationship between different groups of people, eventually the burden falls on individuals.

Chanukya Dasari, 17, a senior from Mission San Jose, is a firm believer in interracial interactions.

While he acknowledges that the easy way out is to interact with people of the same ethnicity only, he said just a little bit of effort can produce amazing results.

"I'm Indian. I hang out with a lot of Indians because they know where I'm coming from and they share the same family backgrounds, so we have a lot in common," said Chanukya, who is vice president of Mission San Jose High's Black Student Union. "But on the other hand, I also make an effort to talk to people of other races, because I have a lot in common with those people too. To break down social barriers, you just need to realize that everybody has something in common, so there is something you can relate to with other people."

Dancers perform during the highland games at the Campbell Community Center.

A CELTIC CELEBRATION

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

Above, bagpipers provide the soundtrack during the Campbell Highland Games on June 26. The event also featured competitions like a stone put contest, plus soccer and rugby matches. At left, the focus was on old Scotland for Sir Keegan Gunn, a member of Saint Andrew's Noble Order of Royal Scots, which reenacts scenes from Scotland's court in the 1500s.

ALUMNUS | Former Mosaic student talks about war

Continued from Page 3

Atherton. He earned his GED after dropping out so he could work full time to support his family.

Then he followed his uncle and father into the military.

"I discovered that the Army had a better organization, met my needs more than any other branch, and was more professional," Miles said.

At 18, Miles arrived at Fort Benning, Ga., for One Station Unit Training — the infantry version of boot camp. After more than 14 weeks of rigorous training, he flew to Fort Drum, N.Y., to join the prestigious 10th Mountain Division, "regarded as the best non-special forces unit in the Army," he said.

"Literally about a month and a half after stepping foot in Fort Drum (where a warm day is 40 degrees)," Miles wrote, "I stepped off a plane into Iraq."

Tales from the front

In his four months in Iraq, Miles has faced threats from vicious dogs, enemy soldiers and improvised exploding devices (IEDs), which he said were "recently the No. 1 killer of American soldiers."

According to Miles, these powerful bombs hurl shrapnel hundreds of meters in every direction. He "has been through four IEDs in about a month," but has sustained nothing more than a flesh wound, he said.

One day while Miles was on patrol, a dog snuck up on him and started barking ferociously.

"I swear, that dog must have been one of Saddam's stealthy lookout dogs, trained in infantry tactics," Miles wrote. "Because from where I saw it, it had to have silently low-crawled about 15 meters, and hid in the only patch of high grass in my area!"

Miles said that so far, his missions in Iraq have succeeded in "in killing, capturing or deterring the enemy."

He has had to endure grueling missions, sometimes in full body armor, in temperatures of more than 120 degrees.

"We acquired a two-story house and set up our position on the roof," Miles said about his mission in Falluja. "We had to carry 45-pound sandbags and cinder blocks, plywood and other materials up two flights of winding, uneven and unstable stairs. That was my worst experience in the Army because of the heat, lack of sleep and potential for injury.

"Another of my worst experiences was seeing the poverty level in Iraq."

'I don't regret enlisting'

Overall, Miles has found his service in Iraq to be rewarding.

"I don't regret enlisting at all," he said. "My best experience while in Iraq was having the local children come up to you, and in what broken English they know, congratulate you and show appreciation for the humanitarian missions we've done to make their lives a little easier. One of the most fulfilling things to me is patrolling on foot or vehicle, and sharing some much-needed laughter with the kids."

Still, he worries that troops are being kept in Iraq for too long.

"By the time we leave, soldiers from my unit will have been there more than a year," he said. "I think tours of duty should be six months in duration, and the only extensions should be voluntary. The issue of morale is a chain reaction of feelings and thoughts.

"Depletion in morale means depletion in caring. Depletion in caring means potential of increased individual complacency skyrocketing and in Iraq, complacency is just as deadly as a bullet.

"Every day I think of the faulty evidence (or lack thereof) that prompted this war," Miles wrote. "But of course, me and my fellow soldiers are glad that we got this unique chance to rid Iraq of a horrible oppressor."

The statements, thoughts and words expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the 10th Mountain Division, the U.S. Army, or the U.S. military, coalition forces, allies, or any person or entity officially or unofficially linked to the U.S. government/military, or any other government or military.

FILTERS | Teens upset with limited Web access

Continued from Page 3

allow illegal downloads of commercial software.

But that doesn't mean the system hasn't had its share of problems. A few pornography sites have slipped through, and other sites that should have been free to access were locked out, he said.

Most filtering programs work by searching for a specific list of words or phrases found in a Web site's address or on any page within that site. Mostly, those lists are monitored by a computer, which might not know that a site about breast cancer education isn't necessarily offensive. That's where people intervene, updating the lists and marking some sites as safe or unsafe.

David Miller, vice president of the Citizens for Community Values group in Cincinnati, said the government has set standards for filtering and that the filters have done a good job so far.

"Sometimes students are doing research and have to go to a site that's been labeled questionable," Miller said. "But I think, by and large, that the filters are objective because offensive things can be easily defined."

However, on the Internet, there's always a way around restrictions.

There are programs, such as the circumventor software found at **www.peacefire.org**, that will connect a blocked computer to an unblocked remote computer to access the Web site in question. The filtering system thinks that the user is accessing a safe site, when the user is actually viewing something that should have been blocked.

DRAFT | Debate provokes mixed feelings

Continued from Page 3

future might include military service.

Unlike the draft during the Vietnam War, which only conscripted males and exempted full-time college students, the new bills would include women and would only allow deferrals until the end of the semester. Rangel, who opposes the war in Iraq, said he believes an equitable draft would force legislators to seriously examine U.S. involvement in the Iraq conflict.

But Larry Lauro, a counselor at Bellarmine, said he believes that a draft would have the opposite effect.

"If we continue to fund our military compared to other things, we continue to look for military solutions," he said. "Diplomacy gets put on the back burner and military power comes to the front. Mark Twain said that if the only tool you have is a hammer, you'll perceive all the problems as nails."

Some government officials also say a draft would cause more problems than it would solve. Dr. Leonard Wong of the U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute in Carlisle, Penn., said training draftees to meet the stringent "mental, moral, and physical aptitudes" of the Army "would cost more money."

A draft also "makes it harder to bring in high quality," Wong said. He offered the following analogy: "I'd rather have you as a volunteer reporter instead of a forced reporter. I think your productivity would be better if you were a volunteer."

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told the Newspaper Association of America in April that the military could easily meet troop requirements by using existing personnel more effectively.

"I don't know anyone in the executive branch of the government who believes that it would be appropriate or necessary to reinstitute the draft," he said.

Another reason a draft may be unlikely is that the agency that would handle the draft has few resources, said public affairs specialist Dan Amon. The Selective Service System has a $26.3 million budget and 160 employees, far below the $600 million and 6,000 employees needed to conduct a draft, he said.

But others see signs of an impending draft.

J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War, said she believes that troop shortages indicate "some likelihood" of a draft. McNeil said that the military has hired contract workers for thousands of dollars a day, while American troops are paid far less.

"That can't last," she said. "To me, that's just a stopgap to keep us from having the draft right before a political election."

Indeed, it could be disastrous for politicians to support a draft for such an unpopular war. Many teens say it's time the United States leaves Iraq.

Kimberly Holford, 17, a Las Vegas resident also attending the leadership conference at SJSU, said she thought the United States had already done its job in Iraq.

"We have Saddam," she said. "I don't think we should force our democracy on people who don't want it."

Fabien Thayamballi, 16 and a senior at Mission San Jose High School in Fremont, thinks the need for a draft signals a fundamental problem with American foreign policy. If troops are seemingly spread too thin, the United States should stop sending them everywhere, he said.

"Basically, we have a suitable volunteer military; we just need to use it more efficiently," he said.

Michael Moore, 15, another Las Vegas teen at the San Jose leadership conference, said: "We should stay there until the job is done. But we shouldn't drag new lives into it."

Teens like Moore say they disapprove of the war. But Vietnam veteran Horace Coleman, who supports a draft, worries that Americans are just complaining about the war without doing anything to stop it.

"There's no sense of urgency in the American people," said the Long Beach resident, a member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. "They say 'support the troops,' but they don't do anything about it except wave the flag and pat themselves on the back.

"If we're really in a war, if there are really sacrifices to be made, let the general public make those sacrifices or reassess the war," he said. "Share the pain."

What is the draft?

The draft is a system by which a country forces young men to serve in the military. In the United States, the first draft was established during the Civil War in 1863. Men were also drafted during both world wars and the Korean and Vietnam wars. The bill recently proposed in Congress would require two years of service by all American residents 18 to 20. Those who are exempt from military service would have to perform an alternative community service that's yet unspecified. The bill is currently "dead in committee," according to J.E. McNeil, executive director of the Center on Conscience and War. That means, she said, that the bill doesn't have much support right now.

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Many teens say the allure of a wardrobe from stores like Abercrombie and Fitch can come with a hefty price tag.

BRANDS | Youths link status, designer names

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Sonya Thompson, a professor of Human Ecology at the University of Alberta in Canada, said she felt compelled to create a class called "Marketing to Teens: Gotta Have It! Designer & Brand Names" so that students could "step back and begin to clarify their values around consumerism.

"Adolescents get stuck in a very superficial version of reality," said Thompson. "One of the effects of this is that we lose touch with what is really important and focus instead on how we look and what we wear."

And that might be what makes teens spend outrageous amounts of money on the hottest new trends. Peer pressure also plays a significant role in this name-brand obsession. Experts say that pressure functions as a type of "bragging right," prompting teens to display how much one owns, and how much he or she has to spend.

Teens admit that the desire to fit in, as well as look good, can lead to expensive habits.

"Clothing is more or less an expression of one's personality," said Jeffrey Ying, 17, of Fremont.

Jeffrey said he shops at upscale retailers such as Saks Fifth Avenue, Gucci and Versace because he believes that these stores offer a more unique look. "They cut very well," he explained. "And they have good sizes."

Jeffrey sells unwanted accessories, clothing and other miscellaneous items on eBay for extra spending money to bolster his allowance, which is about $100 a month.

Jeffrey agreed with other teens that high-end fashions are popular because of peoples' obsessions with looking good.

"Wearing an Italian designer like Versace is probably going to do more for their self-image than K-Mart," he said.

Materialism also influences the choices teens make about shopping.

Michelle Thelen-Steere, a partner in Native Intelligence, Consultative Educators, said that Americans, especially on the West Coast, are at the heart of consumerism worldwide. She argued that the media fills the public with materialistic principles, prompting teens to buy into the overpriced market.

"Teens nowadays are the No. 1 population targeted because they are the consumers of the future," said Thelen-Steere. "It's analogous to the stock market: teens are treated as investments that yield higher returns as time continues."

Thelen-Steere said corporations use that attitude to market their products to teens. Instead of using mainstream tactics of advertising, she said, these companies use "masstrans," which is a belief system that subconsciously appeals to the ego.

While Jeffrey uses eBay to help him buy expensive labels, where do other teens get the means to pay for these pricey items?

Michaela does 20 chores around the house each week, and in return, her parents give her $20.

Seventeen-year-old David Cilia, who just graduated from Prospect High School, works as chief supervisor in a restaurant to satisfy his love for expensive, name-brand clothing. David likes shopping at upscale stores such as Abercrombie, American Eagle and Banana Republic because, he said, "they have really good clothes, and sometimes they have specials for less money."

Some people may argue that simply having Abercrombie and Fitch's little embroidered mouse on a shirt isn't worth the extra money, but teens find a way to justify their spending.

"True, Abercrombie's clothes may be more expensive, but they're more likely to last longer than Target's," said 15-year-old Katrina Totten of Fort Bragg, who with a San Jose friend was shopping at Valley Fair. Her favorite stores are Hollister, Abercrombie and Urban Outfitters.

Some parents and teens argue about adolescent spending habits, but it's not an issue between Jeffrey and his mother.

Jeffrey said his mother does not put a cap on his spending, and actually likes to buy expensive purses and shoes as well. And since he earns his own money, his mother doesn't really care about how he spends it.

That's exactly what those who market their products to youth like to hear.

Marketing officials at big corporations know that many parents have a laissez-faire attitude when it comes to their kids' spending habits and they take advantage of this by purposely creating advertisements that make the gap between parents and their children even wider.

The proliferation of technology means marketers can, and do, advertise to youth through many types of media, including the Internet and television. These experts talk to psychologists and find out how to woo young customers. Studies show that 26 percent of children under the age of two have televisions in their bedrooms.

And some experts say that since the obsession with brand names is a symptom of poor self-esteem, the solutions really lie in teens themselves.

"People are bombarded with messages that clothes make you sexy, cool. Marketers make people think that they are dumb if they don't follow the trends," said Susan Linn, associate director of the Media Center for Children at Harvard University's Judge Baker Children's Center.

"There isn't just one solution; it's a societal solution, ultimately. But teens can make a difference."

'Adolescents get stuck in a very superficial version of reality.'

— SONYA THOMPSON, A PROFESSOR OF HUMAN ECOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA IN CANADA

WORKING | Paychecks help at home

Continued from Page 1

jobs because they often lack the basic skills for those jobs.

The United States Department of Labor concluded that teens often don't show up in labor reports because many of them are working at home, caring for siblings and doing household chores while their parents work longer hours or a second job.

And a study by Temple University found that, with fewer options for jobs, poor teens sometimes turn to dealing drugs and other illegal activities for money.

Miguel Avalos, 18, admits now that he made bad decisions in his early teen years to bring home much-needed cash. By junior high, he was running with gangs and had had run-ins with the police. But after he started working — at Great America when he was 14 and later at the Capitol 16 movie theater — things started to turn around for him and his family.

Having a job has not only kept him off the streets and lightened the tension at home but also has pushed him to work harder in school. He graduated from Overfelt High School in San Jose last month and is now making more money as a bagger at an Albertsons store.

He recently moved in with his sister, Teresa Silvera, who lives in a different area of San Jose, so he could stay away from the gang influences from his old neighborhood.

He's not only sharing his paycheck with his mother, but now his sister, too. Neither one is asking for the money, but he insists they take it.

"I don't want them to have to worry about money," he said.

The Urban Institute study found that low-income teenagers who work actually perform better in school and become more involved with their studies when they find steady employment but warned that too many hours and demands on a teenager can have negative effects.

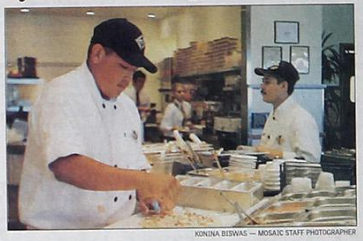
Demanding work schedules — more than 20 hours per week — often can lead to a number of other problems, including higher rates of delinquency, increased abuse of drugs and alcohol and a distanced-relationship from parents, according to the Temple University report.

Diego said he tries to keep his life balanced and that it helps having a boss who works around his busy schedule and gives him extra hours when he can.

Diego's work hours often go late into the evening — his shift usually is from 5 p.m. to midnight — but that leaves his mornings open for classes at Wilson High School in Santa Clara, where he is working toward a high school diploma and attending vocational classes to learn about auto mechanics.

It's a busy life, but Diego is OK with running back and forth between school, work and home.

"Working has made me a better person," said Diego. "I am more responsible and I don't have to depend on others as much as before. Instead, I get to help others out."



KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Diego Flores often works the late shift at California Pizza Kitchen at Oakridge. The money he earns goes toward his family's groceries and rent.

GAS | High prices force teen drivers to change habits

Continued from Page 1

San Jose resident.

But she still complained about prices: "I'm not driving anymore because it was such a headache. It was so hard finding the money to get some place."

Realistically, the only way for Rodriguez to slash her expenses was to sacrifice her set of wheels, but with her switch to public transportation came inconvenience and inflexibility.

"I want to go to S.F. and hit up the beach but I can't exactly take the bus. I'd have to leave at four in the morning to get there at 11," she said.

West Valley student Lilia Cortes, 19, doesn't have a choice because her family can't afford a second car. Cortes has taken public transportation since the sixth grade because her parents drive their family van to work.

"We don't use it unless it's necessary — like to buy groceries and for my parents to commute to work," she said.

But public transportation doesn't work for everyone.

A four-hour round trip work commute is prompting San Jose resident Rose Amora, 18, to abandon Valley Transportation Authority buses and invest in a car.

"I'm afraid, because it's a lot of money," she said. "Every time I see the gas stations, the price is going up."

Brenda Jessup, 17, is uncomfortable with public transportation, so instead she drives farther for lower prices. She "would drive 10 minutes for gas that is five cents cheaper," said Brenda, who spends about $20 a week on gas, and "more than a half an hour for a 50-cent discount."

Another way to deal with the crunch is to carpool.

Lee Pendleton, 20, owns a gas-guzzling Ford Mustang but rides in a friend's Honda Civic about twice a week.

"When I go out with friends, we always take the car that gets the best gas mileage," he said.

Teens aren't the only ones hurting and finding solutions.

Serena Tam, 26, is "100 used to the independence" of having her own car to use public transportation, so she's literally adjusted the way she drives to improve gas mileage.

"I've changed my driving habits more so than how much I drive," she said. "I have a stick shift, so I shift from brake to neutral and drive on lower RPMs."

And as a parent, Bill Buckner, 54, is trying to set an example for his daughter, who has just started behind the wheel with her learner's permit.

Buckner combines driving, taking Caltrain and riding his bicycle to reduce the number of trips he takes in his gas-slurping sport-utility vehicle.

"I drive to work on Monday, take the train back and forth and then drive the car back on Fridays," said Buckner, who found that this alternative, which includes riding his bike to and from the station, allows him to cut his total gas expenses by half.

Still nothing compares to "1969, when I was 19," Buckner said, "and gas used to be 36 cents per gallon."

GAS SAVING TIPS

Here are some ideas from the AAA of Northern California to save money and increase gas mileage this summer:

- Consolidate trips and errands to cut down on driving time.
- Slow down. The faster a car or truck travels, the more gas it burns. Driving faster than posted speed limits is dangerous and increases stress.
- Avoid quick starts and sudden stops. This wastes gas and is harder on your car.
- Lighten the load. Don't haul extra weight in the passenger compartment, trunk or cargo area of your vehicle. A heavier vehicle uses more gasoline.
- If your vehicle does not require premium or mid-grade fuel, buy less expensive regular unleaded gas.
- Shop for low gasoline prices locally, but don't waste gas driving to a distant gas station to save a few cents.

Source: AAA of Northern California

DATING | Interracial couples gain acceptance

Continued from Page 1

Cupertino and has dated guys of various races. "I think that race is never a factor in a relationship," said Yuk, 18.

Peterson said that young people are more tolerant of such relationships, even if they come from families where they are looked down upon.

"Teenagers are more open in general," she said. "Many have not formed certain prejudices."

Biswas agrees that teenagers view the situation differently from their parents.

"First of all, the cultural differences aren't between the two people but between the parents involved, in terms of acceptance," he said. "Parents have stereotypes that may be different from kids."

And many young people said they would have no problem if their friends dated outside their race.

"I don't think my friends really care because we all hang out anyway," said Yuk. "All my friends are pretty diverse so our relationship is pretty normal."

But some parents still have a hard time fully accepting the relationships.

"For me, it's mostly a little awkward... because of her family," said Bedell. "With my last girlfriend, who is Chinese, she couldn't tell her parents we were dating. They wouldn't tolerate the idea of a white guy."

Experts say some parents fear seeing their child with a person of a different race because they believe the cultural differences would be too difficult to deal with.

"Many parents automatically think 'I don't want to overcome the differences.' It's too hard for me," Peterson said. "But that's selfish. They have to see that they aren't in charge of their children's choices."

And that requires a certain level of trust and respect.

"I don't decide who he dates so therefore I don't really choose the girls," said Bedell's mom, Elaine. "But I accept my son's judgment."

Nick Bedell said that especially living in the Bay Area, interracial relationships are something that many people will eventually encounter.

"It's inevitable," he said. "Instead of avoiding it, you need to embrace it, take it on and accept that it's going to happen and deal with it better."

Some teens and experts say parents should try to understand that relationships are about the two people involved and how they feel about each other.

Elaine Bedell's advice to parents who are not completely comfortable with interracial dating is simple: get to know the kids.

"I think you need to spend time with them, and the kids need to be willing to interact, too," said Bedell. "It's the character and values of the person that really matters."

Michelle said eventually that's what her mom learned. At first, her mother preferred that Michelle date only Koreans.

"She thought that Asians should be with Asians, Caucasians should be with Caucasians," said Michelle. But in the end, her mom did not stand in the way of her happiness.

'The cultural differences aren't between the two people but between the parents involved, in terms of acceptance.'

— SANJIT BISWAS

CAFE SOCIETY

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF COFFEE DRINKING MAY BE NUTURING CAFFEINE ADDICTS

By Regina Chan
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Rosie Sanchez, an incoming senior at Cupertino High School, visits Starbucks anywhere from one to three times a day, spending about $200 a month on macchiatos and mochas.

"I used to drink it to wake me up for work, but it doesn't really work anymore," she said. "Now, I'm used to drinking it and it's just yummy."

Because there are few places for young people to go for fun, teenagers tend to congregate at coffeehouses like Starbucks.

And hanging out at such places has led to an enormous increase in caffeine consumption by teens. As they sit for hours talking or studying, some teenagers have become young caffeine addicts without even realizing it.

Tiffany Lee, 18, of Cupertino, said that most teenagers probably do not need the caffeine — but it's the social scene that attracts them to cafes.

"Some college kids really need it to stay up but younger kids just go there to hang out," said Lee. "The atmosphere is just a place to be. It's nice to just sit down and talk to friends."

With Starbucks drinks in hand, 13-year-olds Katia Alexandrova and Katie Wang purposely took the bus to sit at Starbucks on Hacienda Boulevard in Saratoga for several hours, conversing on the patio outside of the popular coffeehouse. "It's fun here," said Katia.

Although the lattes Katie drinks actually make her sleepy, she still visits the coffeehouse to spend $3.15 on the grande drink. But Katie loves sitting on the patio just talking to her friend. "Going to Starbucks is the funnest thing I've done all summer," she said.

It's apparent that a number of teens drink coffee because of the social aspect. Glenn Chiou, 18, just graduated from Monta Vista High School and works at a teahouse where that's obvious. Although he has only worked at Tapioca Express for a couple of months, he knows why so many teenagers hang out there.

"They have no lives so they go for social reasons," he said. "When you talk to your friends and want to hang out, the first place people say is 'let's go to Tap-Ex' because that's where everyone else is."

Ina Chang, who attends Lynbrook High School, makes daily trips to Starbucks. She pleads guilty to spending about $120 per month on coffee. She doesn't go for the caffeine — simply for the taste.

"I'm not affected by the caffeine at all. It tastes better when I add an extra shot of espresso," said Ina, 17. "It's pretty nice and the scent is nice and adds flavor."

Many teens are not aware of — or don't care about — the harmful health effects of caffeine, such as nervousness, headaches, increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure and higher cholesterol.

Dr. Cal Gordon, chief of pediatric medicine at Kaiser Permanente, said caffeine has many negative side effects.

"Like all medications, caffeine works differently on different people, and the effects are going to be different," said Gordon. "Caffeine can be used as a treatment of migraines . . . but if you drink a lot of caffeine you can become dependent on it and it can actually create headaches."

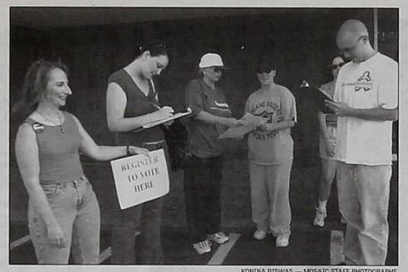
Although not many long-term studies have been done, experts agree that excessive amounts of caffeine can become a problem. In one study, caffeine was found to inhibit the ability of certain cells in the body to repair themselves, increasing the chances of those cells becoming cancerous.

Another study showed that caffeine can block receptors necessary for sleep, which may explain why some teens claim that drinking caffeine makes them sleepier.

"It doesn't affect me that much, so I don't think about it," said Lee. "Everyone talks about how caffeine makes you stay up but I think that's even psychological. All I notice is that you go to the bathroom more, so it doesn't affect me positively or negatively."

Some are completely oblivious to the damage caffeine can do.

"If I knew all of the side effects and believed them, I would try to drink less but I wouldn't stop," said Ina. "It's the same with junk food. We all know it's fat and bad but we all still eat it. . . . The drinks are just good."



KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

Volunteer Alyson Abramowtiz, far left, encourages people to register to vote at a June 27 showing of "Fahrenheit 9/11" at the Century 23 theater in San Jose. Fellow volunteer Livia Shirkey, third from left, helps Emily Jardine, second from left, Nissa Guerrero, and Jeremy Osborne to sign up.

VOTING AGE | Several states look to lower threshold

Continued from Page 1

when the number of young voters has dwindled. Vermeer said voting among those 18 to 24 years old has dropped 15 percent in the past 32 years. Politicians, lawmakers and MTV's Rock the Vote hope to increase voter turnout to 20 million youths.

"Young people who are about to enter the majority at 18 are affected by the decisions made by voting and ... they should be able to participate in those decisions," said Beth Moore Haines, spokeswoman for the Green Party of California. "The Green Party has long sought to engage young people in politics, especially in an era where young people ... don't see a point in going into politics."

The effort isn't unique to California. Similar measures have popped up in numerous states including Arizona, Hawaii and Texas. Earlier this year, Maine approved a measure allowing 17-year-olds to vote in primary elections.

Teens' reaction to lowering the voting age vary greatly. Some argue that six months or so age difference is critical, others say that any hindrance in voting is harmful.

"I don't care," said Nhan Le, 19, an opponent of Mullin's bill. "It should be at an age level where you can learn and understand how lives work."

When informed about the bill, Abraham Huerta, 16, nodded his head approvingly.

"It benefits the people. It's our voice being heard even though we aren't the right age," he said. "If not, our thoughts will never be thought. Nobody would hear them."

Several groups are focusing on getting more youths to the polls.

State Sen. John Vasconcellos, D-San Jose, also is also taking a stand on lowering the voting age.

The man responsible for California's "self-esteem" movement composed a constitutional amendment that would give 14- and 15-year-olds a quarter of a vote and 16- and 17-year-olds half of a vote.

"I like to get teens involved, it's sorta like training wheels for citizenship," Vasconcellos said. "You'll make politics more exciting and people will start voting. It will become part of their lives. If we invite people into that, the better democracy is."

His measure isn't flawless. Lawmakers and policy analyst still have qualms about the maturity of teenagers. Their concern is that some teenagers won't understand some issues they would be asked to vote on, ranging from finances to health care.

David Chiang, 17, said if allowed, he would vote because "for one thing, I have an opinion about the government. Since I'm not a lobbyist or a politician, it's the only way I can be heard."

David believes that teens younger than 18 should have the right to vote, but there should be an age limit.

"Teens are opinionated people," David said. "If they aren't heard, it gives them less of an incentive to vote in the future."

Some parents say they don't know if lowering the voting age is the answer.

"My son is mature enough to vote, but he is more mature than people his same age," said David's mother, Shen-Ling Chiang. She is worried about teens voting because it's "a special age with emotion and influence from others."

But constitutional amendments are not the only path to teen involvement.

Groups like the Education Commission of the States support civic education starting in kindergarten.

"Teens that want to get involved can go to school board meetings, city meetings, and, if they can, they should register to vote," said Susan Vermeer, a policy analyst for the education commission. "We need to have civic engagement."

Experts agree that civic education at earlier ages will interest teens in politics. And some say that giving them the right to vote, as well as education, would increase voter turnout.

"Teens might not be mature enough to understand politics. One of the ways to get political involvement is through education," Vermeer said. "Schools should teach them through government classes. It's called civic education."

Benjamin Quinto of the Global Youth Action Network — an international organization aimed at making teens more politically active — says polling shows young adults' most pressing political concerns are violence, the war on terror, drug and alcohol abuse and cuts to education funding.

Lack of appeal

Fifteen-year-old San Francisco Youth Commissioner Constance Mourning said another issue for teens is "not having things to do." And she believes that politicians do not know how to appeal to teenagers.

"A lot of times, politicians don't pay as much attention," Mourning said. "When they do, they go about it in such a way that they are almost mocking us."

Youth coalitions — with the help of large entertainment enterprises — have found one way to attract young voters.

LOWERING THE VOTING AGE

State	Bill Number	Summary	Bill/Initiative	Year	Status
California	SCA 19	Gives 14- and 15-year-olds a quarter of a vote, 16- and 17-year-olds half of a vote.	Bill	2004	Pending
Florida	n/a	Gives 16- and 17-year-olds the right to vote. Also lowers the age to register to 15 if the election is on or after the person's 16th birthday.	Initiative	2004	Collecting signatures
Maine	LD 640	Gives 17-year-olds the right to vote in a primary election if they will be 18 by the general election.	Bill	2003	Passed
North Dakota	n/a	Gives 16-year-olds the right to vote.	Initiative	2004	Collecting signatures
Texas	HB 482	Gives 16-year-olds the right to vote and 15-year-olds and 10 months the right to register.	Bill	2003	Failed

SOURCE: MOSAIC REPORTING

Groups focus on getting young voters to the polls

18- TO 24-YEAR-OLDS HAVE HAD POOR SHOWING IN PAST ELECTION

By Margot Leong
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Carlota Montes believes that voting is a privilege.

As a student representative in the East Side Union High School District, a member of the San Jose Youth Commission, an intern at Councilwoman Nora Campos' office and a soon-to-be freshman at George Washington University, Montes is an accomplished young woman.

Turning 18 was a landmark for her, and Montes is especially excited that she will be voting for the first time in the November election. Voters ages 18 to 24 have historically had the lowest turnout at the polls. According to the U.S. Census, only 32 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds who were registered actually voted in the 2000 presidential election.

Montes does not believe that teenagers are responsible for this lack of voter participation. She blames politicians.

"It's your right to choose whether or not you want to vote. As teenagers, we are a very large population, yet we're still being treated like a minority group and are often being overlooked," she said. "If politicians are not getting teens motivated about politics, they won't want to vote."

Swing voters

Young adults just might be the newest "swing voters" of the 21st century, according to Ajita Talwalkar of the United States Student Association, a group that represents youth on Capitol Hill.

"The elections have been getting closer and closer in subsequent years and there are very defined groups of voters right now," said Talwalkar, 24. "Students are really untapped pools of voters, so it would make sense for partisan campaigns to target them."

But why exactly have young adults been lagging behind other groups in voter turnout?

"A lot of times, young people do not feel that candidates are addressing their concerns and their issues," said Veronica De La Garza, executive director of the Youth Vote Coalition in Washington, D.C.

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Youth coalitions — with the help of large entertainment enterprises — have found one way to attract young voters.

"Smackdown Your Vote!" is a collaboration between World Wrestling Entertainment Inc. (WWE) and MTV and is supported by the League of Women Voters, Youth Vote Coalition, the National Foundation of Women Legislators, Project Vote Smart and the Harvard Institute of Politics.

The aim of "Smackdown Your Vote!" according to executive director Gary Davis, is to use a nonpartisan approach to get young people involved in the political process and registered to vote. When it was created in July of 2000, "Smackdown Your Vote!" registered 150,000 new voters and is looking to register 20 million more young adults by the November 2004 general election.

Youth issues

Some say that teens would be more engaged if lawmakers would show that they care about issues important to youth.

Adam Fletcher of The Freechild Project, which promotes social change by youth, said politicians get their cues from the media, which often portrays young people as lazy and apathetic. And, he added, most teens never receive positive feedback from the media that their perspectives matter.

One way for leaders to reach out to young people is through the alternative media — Internet blogs, Web sites and movies. Fletcher believes more young people would vote if they thought their votes could make a difference.

"We actually need a real acknowledgment of our voting demographic," he said.

Davis of "Smackdown Your Vote!" said, in the end, youth coalitions and organizations just want teens to be empowered.

"If you vote, you have power. If you vote, you win," Davis said. "It doesn't even matter who you vote for."

ONLINE RESOURCES

If you're interested in learning more about youth coalition groups and politics in general, log on to one of the sites below.

- 18 to 35
www.18to35.org
- CIRCLE (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement)
www.civicyouth.org
- Global Youth Action Network
www.youthlink.org
- The Freechild Project
www.freechild.org
- Smackdown Your Vote
www.smackdownyourvote.com
- United States Student Association
www.usstudents.org
- Youth Vote Coalition
www.youthvote.org

Source: Mosaic reporting

VIEWPOINT | Teens aren't ready for the responsibility

Continued from Page 1

adult rights. But the opposite is true. Teenagers actually have most of these adult rights and no responsibilities, because the law dictates that parents are responsible for their children and their actions until they turn 18.

For now, 18 is considered the age when teenagers make the transition into adulthood. It is the time when they venture out into college, join the military, start paying taxes and vote. It is a time when they start assuming the responsibilities of a certain age. If teens want to have the right to vote at 14, 15 or 16, they should take the responsibilities along with it — including paying taxes, supporting themselves and the possibility of being drafted into the military. When teens take on new responsibilities, they actually start to understand how the world really works. Think about it: what does your average 14-year-old know (or care) about Medicare, Social Security or income taxes?

It's a known fact that the 18- to 24-year-old group has the worst voting record in the U.S. It is already hard enough to lure them to the polls, so what makes us think that 14- to 16-year-olds would do any better? There are some 16-year-olds who would be capable of voting more intelligently than some adults, but they would be a small minority in comparison to the huge group of teens who just don't care.

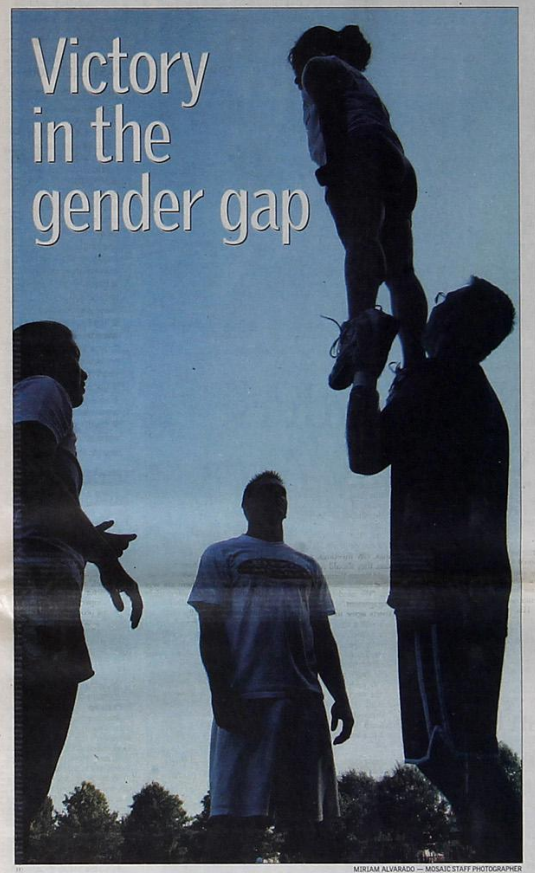
Many youth-rights groups have also argued that if 15-year-olds can be tried as adults, they should also able to vote. But being tried as an adult does not indicate that the culprit has reached maturity, but implies that the crime committed was serious enough not to be waved away as something minor.

A 15-year-old who shoots someone is not a mature adult capable of making decisions concerning society; thus, the crime is obviously something that cannot be fixed by spending a few years in juvenile hall. The culprit did not have the maturity or the common sense to understand the seriousness of his or her actions, but he or she should still be conditioned out of this behavior in an adult manner.

Most teenagers have a hard enough time choosing what to wear every morning, let alone choosing their future leaders. I'm not saying that most teens are stupid or lazy because they have strong and justified opinions about issues they care about. It's just that teens are not as firmly entrenched in their values because they are always influenced by their surroundings. Teenagers can be very fickle, switching from one thing to another and constantly following the trends. I, for one, do not want our laws and policies to be affected by erratic emotions and neither would the framers of our Constitution.

Restless teens out there who can't wait to vote or get involved in politics shouldn't give up. People are always talking about how apathetic teens are. Show them that this stereotype is not true. Throw yourself into your community, join the local youth commission or start a community service project. And once you turn 18, don't worry. Your crossover into adulthood will not be completely fruitless. I mean, at least you'll finally get to vote.

Victory in the gender gap



MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Cheerleader Daniel Maxfield, 22, hoists Alpha Aquisap, 23, into the air as spotters Jessica Muh, left, and Kevin Alger stand by. A growing number of males are participating in sports that are traditionally dominated by females, such as cheerleading.

MORE MEN PARTICIPATING IN FEMALE-DOMINATED SPORTS

By Alexander Ho
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Kevin Alger, 20, is an ordinary college student. He goes to San Jose State University, hangs with his friends, stresses about school and does sports. What kind of sports? Just one: cheerleading.

Alger is a member of the Titans, a competitive cheerleading squad.

While cheerleading is traditionally a female sport, it's one of a growing number of athletic activities with an increasing number of male participants. Other examples include ballet, synchronized swimming and gymnastics. These sports don't usually draw many men; in fact, sometimes they're considered not manly enough.

But the opposite is true, Alger said. The techniques can be very challenging and dangerous for those who aren't physically prepared.

The Titans had three male cheerleaders in 2002 and more than doubled that number to seven in 2004. At Western Ballet, a Mountain View dance school, there are 15 male dancers compared to 100 female dancers, a ratio that's been pretty consistent over the years.

Men are also pursuing synchronized swimming, a women-only sport in the Olympics. The Santa Clara Aquamaids and San Jose State synchronized swimming teams each have had one male.

Why are men attracted to these so-called women's sports?

Some men said they simply thought it was cool or they just tried it and found it was fun. Such is the case of Gonzalo Espinoza, a male ballet teacher at Western Ballet.

"I saw how athletic it was in college, and I wanted to see what it was about," said Espinoza, 40. "I took it for college credits, found out it was fun, and kept going."

He's been dancing for 20 years.

Greg Borromeo, 20, a member of the Titans squad, joined cheerleading because

See MEN, Page 8

Quakes consider move out of S.J.

ATTENDANCE LAGGING DESPITE MAJOR WINS; TEAM LOOKING FOR NAME OUTSIDE BAY AREA

By Johnny Du
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Despite winning Major League Soccer titles in 2001 and 2003, the San Jose Earthquakes have failed to capture the level of popularity of other Bay Area professional sports teams.

"Championships clearly aren't cutting it," defenseman Craig Waibel said with some sarcasm.

Now, with time passing and attendance stagnant, the Earthquakes' future in San Jose hangs in the balance.

Anschutz Entertainment Group, the company that operates the Earthquakes, has begun seeking a new stadium in the Bay Area. But AEG isn't ruling out a move away from the Bay Area, with Houston and San Diego being mentioned in news reports as cities willing to finance a new facility.

Last year, the Earthquakes averaged 10,086 fans in 15 home games at San Jose State's Spartan Stadium, which placed them second-to-last in the league in six home games this year, the average has increased marginally to 10,956 fans.

That figure got a boost when 17,667 fans flocked to see 14-year-old phenom Freddy Adu

See QUAKES, Page 8

OAKLAND VS. SAN FRANCISCO: THE RIVALRY

BATTLES BY THE BAY

Baseball fans coexist, more or less

By Neeraj Berry
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

While Modesto resident William Velazquez was putting on his baseball cap embellished with San Francisco Giants logos Saturday, his girlfriend Sarah Flores was in the next room looking through a wardrobe filled with the vibrant green and gold colors of the Oakland A's.

Soon the two were sitting quietly, side by side, on a BART train headed for Network Associates Coliseum in Oakland, where they took sides against each other as the Bay Area's two baseball teams battled it out.

Velazquez and Flores have been able to coexist despite being huge supporters of different baseball teams. But the Oakland A's organization recently has attempted to create a bigger rift between fans of the two teams.

A June 21 advertisement in the San Jose Mercury News told fans that "straddling the bridge is not allowed" and insisted the time to choose sides is now. The advertisement denounced the "ridiculous hats that are half San Francisco Giants and half

See RIVALRY, Page 8

South Bay angles for A's; Giants hinder deal

AGING COLISEUM IS AT HEART OF TUG-OF-WAR

By Neeraj Berry and Robby Valderrama
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Don Barreau loves the Oakland A's. A season-ticket holder since the 1980s, Barreau's involvement with the team reached new heights a few years later when he became the president of the A's Booster Club.

"I like the Coliseum and I like my spot," Barreau said during Saturday's game against the Giants.

But Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig does not share his affection for Network Associates Coliseum.

"Clearly for this club to be competitive in the future it needs a new venue," Selig said in a release following a May visit to the stadium. "Once people around you start getting new ballparks and generating more revenue, it becomes hard for that particular franchise to compete."

A's owner Steve Schott shares

See MOVING, Page 8

RUNNING FOR HER LIFE

WILCOX GRAD DOESN'T LET ILLNESS, INJURY AND GRIEF STOP HER

By Neha Hemmad
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Sitting in a quiet San Jose living room, Danielle Passanisi ties up her shoelaces. She leans forward and begins stretching to get ready to run her daily two miles. Running could be the one thing that keeps her from losing her ability to walk.

Passanisi, 18, underwent physical and emotional losses in her four years at Wilcox High School. She suffered injuries, illnesses, and lost her mentor. But now she has returned to a high level of strength, one she maintains with her daily run.

"Running, to me, is being in touch with yourself, being in touch with the inner peace which you contain," she said. "Running, to me, is taking a break from everyday life, and setting myself into a free zone."

Soon after Passanisi began running track in 2000 at Wilcox High, she seriously injured her knee in a basketball game. Doctors told Passanisi, 15 at the time, that she wouldn't be able to have knee surgery until she was 18 and her knee had fully developed. After this injury, Danielle was devastated because she couldn't run for some time.

Several months later, during her sophomore year, Passanisi developed a sinus infection, which was treated with amoxycillin, a penicillin derivative. She developed an allergic face rash, later diagnosed as infantigo, a skin disease, and began to feel weak. When she went to the hospital to have the skin disease treated, doctors discovered her kidneys and liver had shut down because of the allergic reaction. She was in the hospital for a week, receiving intravenous medication until she was healthy again.

See PASSANISSI, Page 8

Danielle Passanissi, 18, a graduate of Wilcox High School in Santa Clara, talks about a knee injury and her ordeal with a life-threatening allergic reaction.

RHIANNON WHEELER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Spotty attendance left several open seats at a recent game between the San Jose Earthquakes and the Kansas City Wizards at Spartan Stadium in San Jose.

QUAKES| Team considers move from S.J., Bay Area

Continued from Page 7

make his first appearance in San Jose with D.C. United on May 1. Despite this slight uptick, the Earthquakes remain stuck.

"Soccer is a sport that is still trying to gain its foothold in this country," said Seth Burton, the Earthquakes' media relations coordinator. "But I think we're pretty good at promoting attendance."

At the home game between the Earthquakes and the Kansas City Wizards on Saturday, several faithful fans expressed concern about the Earthquakes' uncertain future.

"The U.S. isn't very soccer-oriented," said Zoya Ashfar, 16, whose family has been season-ticket holders since 2000. "There are so many other sports that overshadow it. People don't see what a great product we have locally."

Joel Scoles, 17, of Bay Point, said he believes any possible move boils down to an old cliché: "In the end, it's all about money."

Players and fans alike suggested several ways to increase attendance, including better marketing and a more lucrative television contract.

One solution players and fans agree would help attendance woes would be a new soccer-specific stadium. The Earthquakes have been playing at Spartan Stadium for their entire nine-year existence. Columbus and Los Angeles have recently built new soccer-only stadiums, and similar facilities are in the works for Chicago, Dallas and New Jersey. AEG has committed $15 million towards a new stadium and is asking cities where the team might relocate to commit $50 million.

Burton points to the stadiums where the San Francisco Giants and Oakland A's play to demonstrate how a new facility can make a difference.

"If you look at SBC Park and Network Associates from a physical standpoint, it's obvious why the Giants outdraw the A's," said Burton.

Spartan Stadium "is a very old facility, and in this day and age, you need to be able to keep up and maintain a brand new facility," he added.

Waibel and other players have dealt with questions about the stadium and attendance for several years, but he said that it shouldn't affect how they play.

"As an athlete, you accept that you could be traded, waived or released. Moving is the same way; it could happen," said Waibel.

Star forward Landon Donovan said he believes things are heading in the right direction.

"For the most part, things are going well," said Donovan. "But it's not easy pushing soccer in America."

Still, Donovan tried to look on the bright side: "The only way is up. We have to hope."

PASSANISSI| Star doesn't let injury hold her down

Continued from Page 7

"If it hadn't been for the infantigo, I wouldn't be here today," Passanissi said.

Although Passanissi suffered so many traumas in such a short time, she pushed herself to get back on her feet and run again. During the time she was unable to run, she realized how much she loved sports and how much she wanted to be able to run track. She felt that by running, she was removing herself from the adversity she faced.

"Running has always been my sanctuary. By running, I can take myself away from reality, and that's why I love it so much," she said.

But she couldn't do it alone. Mike Hazlett, a physical education teacher and coach at Wilcox High, inspired her to get better. He taught Passanissi to walk again, and helped her regain her strength through special stretches and exercises. Their dual goal was to get her back in shape for the track team. That dream seemed to crash when Hazlett died of cancer in February 2003, just weeks before the track season started.

"I always wanted to run so that I could win an award and take a picture with Mr. Hazlett," Passanissi said. "When Mr. Hazlett died, my dream sort of died as well. I don't think he ever knew how important he was to me, or to any of us."

Although she lost her mentor and source of inspiration, Passanissi regained her determination and decided to run again. Running, she said, would be a way to honor all the time and effort Hazlett had put into helping her rehabilitate.

Even though there were people who pushed her to do better, there were those who also tried to put her down. People at school and even sometimes friends would tell her that she wouldn't be a track star again. More than anything, Passanissi wanted to prove them wrong.

"I'm the kind of person who cannot be told that I can't do something, if someone tries to put me down, I always try to prove them wrong."

Passanissi did indeed prove them wrong. Passanissi reached a personal best of 33 feet in the triple jump and took first at several meets. She also competed in sprints and the long jump.

Sara Vincent, 19, was a teammate of Passanissi's at Wilcox High and remembered her comeback.

"Danielle worked really hard, sometimes she would get on the track and just run to the point where she felt sick," Vincent said. "This was all because she is so determined to achieve her goals."

Passanissi, who graduated from Wilcox High in June, plans to have surgery on her knee as soon as possible. She also wants to study to become an emergency medical technician.

"I want to be able to help people, the same way that I was helped," she said. No matter what lies ahead of her, she said, "running is definitely a part of my future."

RHIANNON WHEELER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Danielle Passanissi sprints up steps to build the muscles in her legs. In the last four years, the Wilcox High School graduate faced injuries, poor health and the death of her mentor, which affected her drive and ability to keep running.

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Greg Borromeo, 20, catches Maryjane Serafica, also 20, as the two cheerleaders practice a lift in the Rose Garden.

MEN| More males compete in female-dominated sports

Continued from Page 7

he wanted to be at football games.

"I was very active in football in high school," he said. "I wasn't at a high-enough caliber for football in college, so I joined cheerleading instead."

Daniel Maxfield, another member of the Titans, sums up the reason for his participation in one phrase: "It's like working out at the gym, but our weights look better."

Cheerleaders mostly are female so the male team members are sometimes subjected to insults from observers, usually from the crowd at football games.

But the men who participate in these female-dominated athletics say the sports require a lot of strength and stamina. A typical cheerleader practice session begins with stretching to warm up. Then the male cheerleaders lift women cheerleaders into the air and try to hold them up without dropping them. They practice the moves over and over for two hours or more.

Ballet, too, requires strength, stamina and discipline. Whether the dancers are professionals or are training to be, the sessions are rigorous and long.

Mark Foehringer, the director of Western Ballet, said he always got ridiculed from the time started dancing at age 15. That quickly stopped, though, when he became a professional at 17.

Bill May, 21, is a synchronized swimmer for the Santa Clara Aquamaids who tried out for the 2004 Olympics in synchronized swimming. He was not allowed to join the team because he is male and forbidden from participation, according to the rules of Federation Internationale de Natation (FINA), the organization that governs the sport for the Olympics. Mixed-gender pairs are not allowed to compete.

Would May have been eligible if he were a she?

"Yes," said Amy McClintock, the Olympics media relations director.

"He is a very good athlete," said Betty Hazle, the president of the synchronized swimming division of FINA. "He is very comparable to the female swimmers in the Olympics."

Alger and the other men say there are perks to being one of a few men on a largely female team. The snide comments don't really bother them.

"They're just jealous because we get to pick up beautiful women," Alger said.

RIVALRY| Baseball fans coexist, more or less

Continued from Page 7

Oakland A's," taking the Giants-A's rivalry to new heights.

The strategy seems to be more of a marketing battle than a representation of public opinion, as many fans don't seem to mind the bridge straddlers.

Peter Maguire, a 41-year-old Gilroy resident, has been a die-hard Oakland A's fan for more than 34 years, but he does not mind fans who support both teams.

"If the Giants got to the World Series, I'd probably root for them just because I'm a Bay Area sports fan," said Maguire. "But hey, if the A's are still in, then I'd be rooting for them 100 percent."

There are some fans who believe that rooting for both teams is unacceptable, including Rob Chang, 19, a University of California-Berkeley sophomore. "I don't believe anyone who is a true A's fan or a true Giants fan can possibly be a fan of both," said Chang. "Because they've had a cross-town rivalry for years, and whenever two teams have a rivalry, you can't genuinely go for both teams."

Regardless of how the fans behave, the games between the teams are always special. The Giants lead the series record 20-19, and both sides bring plenty of fans across the Bay Bridge whenever they play each other. Saturday's game set the league high for this season with 55,989 fans in attendance.

MOVING| Giants hinder A's move to South Bay

Continued from Page 7

Selig's opinion and has advocated moving the A's to a new stadium. "We need a new facility to insure the A's will be financially competitive for the long term," Schott said in a statement at the time. "We can't achieve that goal in our present facility."

The A's are open to a new stadium in Oakland, but another proposal the team has entertained is a move to the South Bay. And some South Bay boosters would like to see the team move to the San Jose area.

The Bay Area is the nation's fourth-largest baseball market, according to an article on Internet magazine Diamondangle.com, and even split into three parts, all three would stay in the top 15.

Larry Stone, the Santa Clara County Assessor, is on the executive committee of Baseball San Jose, a group that is attempting to lure the A's or any major league baseball team.

"Every complete metropolitan city needs a few things: the arts buildings, the education facilities and the vibrant retail," said Stone. "Sports teams are just part of that."

It seems like a perfect match: the A's want to move, San Jose wants the team. So why are the A's still in Oakland? The answer: An early 1990s agreement between Major League Baseball and the San Francisco Giants that granted the National League team exclusive territorial rights to Santa Clara County. That means no other team may move there – nor could a new team be based there - without the Giants' permission.

Giants owner Peter Magowan has used the agreement to block an A's move, citing a large revenue source from the South Bay that he claims would be lost if the move was made.

But many A's and Giants fans doubt that an A's move to the South Bay would have a major effect on the Giants.

"I wouldn't care if the A's moved to the Santa Clara area," said Scott Myers, 30, a die-hard Giants fan from Santa Clara. "They could move into my back yard and I still wouldn't support them. Giants for life!"

Of course, many A's fans in Oakland don't want to see their beloved team leave town.

"For me personally, the fact that I can't get up and go to an A's game is a negative. I would very much dislike the commute," said Oakland native Zach Iohile.

But in the meantime, many A's fans such as Barreau are content with the status quo.

"Frankly," he said. "I just like it how it is."

Eastridge seeks revival with major makeover

By Johnny Du
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Hundreds of eager shoppers will flood the stores of Santana Row and Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair this weekend, but at Eastridge Shopping Center business won't be nearly as bustling.

These days, chairs in the lounge areas of the 34-year-old mall are usually unoccupied. The escalators rarely carry more than two shoppers at a time. Shoppers are scattered throughout the stores and walkways, browsing through the racks and shelves.

Eastridge's owners hope a large-scale expansion and redevelopment project that began in March will change the fortunes of the East San Jose shopping center.

"We want to give shoppers a chance where they can eat, shop and catch a movie," explained marketing manager Sue Wareham. "It's all about the possibilities being offered."

The changes will include:

- A 16-screen AMC theater with stadium seating in a new building connected to a new food court in the original building by a walkway.
- Sit-down restaurants around the mall's perimeter.
- A completely redesigned interior, with new stores, a center court with cushioned seats and a children's play area.
- A streetscape, offering a variety of shops, added in conjunction with the movie theater.
- Reducing the height of the center from three stories to two.
- Additional parking. The mall will have 7,500 parking spaces, about the same as Valley Fair, but all of Eastridge's parking spaces are on a flat surface, accommodating shoppers who want to make a quick stop and avoid parking garages.

This is the mall's fourth renovation since its opening in 1970. It is the first complete make-over of the center — renovating 254,951 square feet and eliminating the ice rink, the vacant Emporium building and other internal stores.

Just one-third of the mall's stores will remain open during construction, which is expected to be completed in October 2005.

Will customers come back? Denise Tran doesn't think so.

"They just don't care about their customers," said Denise, 15, a student at Silver Creek High School. Denise said that she used to go to Eastridge but now frequents Westfield Shoppingtown Oakridge in South San Jose. "I mean, they shut down half the mall."

Jimmy Phan, 16, a student at Silver Creek High School, wondered if customers will be lured back for good.

"They'll come out the first couple of weeks because of the 'new factor,' said Jimmy. "But the mall needs a lot of variety to make sure they don't leave."

Another challenge facing the renovation project is coming from the Santa Clara and San Benito Counties Building and Construction Trades Council, which has accused project managers of hiring out-of-state workers to cut costs.

The group recently held a protest outside the mall and has purchased full-page advertisements in the Mercury News urging customers not to shop at Eastridge.

"We've been working closely with the labor unions for some time, so we were quite surprised that they used these tactics," said Wareham.

In response, General Growth Properties, owner of Eastridge, bought a full-page ad in the June 23 Mercury News, attempting to rebut the claims of the trades council.

Controversy aside, Danh Nguyen, 18, an incoming freshman at San Jose State University, best sums up the consensus among South Bay shoppers: "I think I'm going to just wait and see."

RHIANNON WHEELER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

Construction workers Francisco Nunez, 32, left, and Jose Lopez, 22, work on street improvements near the Eastridge Shopping Center in East San Jose.

The east foothills frame this image of the 34-year-old Eastridge Shopping Center. New stores, restaurants and other attractions are planned.

Great America's StarWatch tracking system needs work

By Margot Leong and Vikram Mahal
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Anyone who's ever gone to an amusement park with a family or a large group knows how tough it can be to keep track of everyone in the group.

Paramount's Great America launched a new, high-tech service this season that should solve every group's problem — or so it would seem.

StarWatch — a tracking system that involves a wrist-watch-like device and kiosks scattered throughout the park — is far from a problem solver. It's a step in the right direction for using Silicon Valley technology to keep partners in touch with each other but it needs so much refining that it was tough for us to get excited about it.

The device itself charts the journeys of different group members by using a local positioning system (LPS) that is networked throughout the park using antennas operating over radio frequencies. The park is divided into different zones and, as a StarWatch user moves through those zones, data about their whereabouts is transmitted to a central computer on the park's grounds.

The problem is that all of the cool things that StarWatch offers — the ability to track people in your group, even find the nearest restroom or send e-mail and instant messages to other users — is all dependent on finding one of the seven kiosk screens scattered throughout the park.

STEPHANIE FOO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Great America has introduced a wrist-watch-sized device to help families keep track of one another in the park.

Finding the closest restroom was easier than finding one of the kiosks, which aren't marked on the Great America park map. The stations are very inconspicuous, looking like four-foot campsite trashcans with touch screens. There are also no signs pointing out any of the stations and they have no lighting around them at night.

Also, the audio pronunciation of names at the kiosk was atrocious. No one expects perfection but it was surprising that SafeTone Technologies, the maker of the StarWatch, even bothered with audio. The system doesn't need it.

The e-mail and instant-messaging features were very cool but StarWatch offers no alert system to notify users when they have a new message. Who wants to keep looking for a kiosk just to see if there are new messages?

And if Great America really wants people to use StarWatch, the rental booth needs to be easier to find. It was in an obscure area next to a popcorn stand, not next to the entrance. It seems as though it would be really easy to just walk out of the park with the watch because there are no security measures to make sure that forgetful users — exhausted after a long day with children or a large group — return it.

StarWatch charges $5 per day per watch, which seems a bit high after we learned that the handful of other parks across the country with StarWatch charge users about $2.50 per day.

Great America and the other parks are smart to offer a tracking system such as StarWatch. The walkie-talkie radios so many families use to stay in touch become a garbled mess when too many people try to talk to each other over the same radio channels.

But StarWatch — or something like it — needs more research and more fine-tuning for the future. While StarWatch seems to offer many benefits, the device — for now — just doesn't seem very practical.

Teenagers log on to IM trend

EXPERTS CONCERNED ABOUT EFFECTS ON SOCIAL SKILLS

By Vikram Mahal
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Sarah Story spotted the little yellow man in the bottom corner of her computer screen. She clicked on him, typed her password as fast as she could and let out a sigh of relief.

She was logged on.

Sarah is one of 36 million users of America Online's Instant Messenger service that allows people to chat with each other through text. There are about 105 million users of IM services, including Yahoo and MSN Messanger. About 15 percent of AIM users are from 13 to 17 years old.

"During the summer when I'm at home, I spend about 10 hours a day online," Sarah said. "It's great. I can watch TV, talk on the phone and IM six people at once."

Instant messaging has sparked interest among adolescents, but has this fascination turned into an addiction?

According to Krista Thomas, spokeswoman for AIM, the average use time is six hours daily.

"Log-on time for AIM is booming," she said. "One reason that AIM is so popular is it helps things get done quickly; it has speed benefits."

Many people say they're hooked on the service because it serves as a medium through which people can communicate with greater efficiency. Some people even use the feature to talk to themselves.

"I talk to myself on different accounts often," said Aly Fiebrantz, a senior at Alta Loma High School in Rancho Cucamonga. "It's fun that way, especially when I'm bored."

It is this mindset that Alan Kanner, a psychologist at the Wright Institute in Berkeley, condemns when analyzing the increasing trend of communication through impersonal technology.

"Narrowing the amount of information and development of linguistics causes us to lose people skills," Kanner said. "We start spending less time with people and forget what we are truly missing."

Ruchi Jhaveri, a senior at Harker School in San Jose, said there are advantages and disadvantages of messaging for her.

"It's easier to bring up difficult topics online than it is on the phone or in person," she said. "Even though it's convenient, my parents hate it because it wastes so much time. When I'm doing my homework and online at the same time, it takes double the time to get it done."

One of the reasons instant messaging has reached so many people around the world is through advertising, from television to Internet to magazines. Thomas said the service makes money "from the pop-up screen that appears when people sign on, to new video chatting available for all to use."

But Kanner said advertisers love the service because it delivers them a captive audience.

"Marketers hire psychologists in order to analyze and understand the adolescent mind," he said. "These professionals understand teenage desire and, therefore, market toward this specific population with their ads located on the AIM screen."

Katie Heil, a senior at Presentation High School in San Jose, agrees that instant messaging is useful at times to talk with many friends, but is useless when having important conversations.

"My goal is to stop using the service as much as possible because of a fight with my friend," she said. "I wonder if the same conflict would have happened in person, because online chats open the door to say whatever without understanding how the other person feels."

Katie's mom, Barbara, enjoys the AIM service because it enables her to talk to her five children all around the world. "I talk to my husband sometimes through AIM because his office is on a different side of the house than mine," she said. "It's more convenient than walking to ask a question."

This trend is not going to go away. In fact, the technology is evolving to allow instant-messaging capabilities on smaller handheld devices such as PDAs (personal digital assistants) and cell phones.

Although many young people say they like that AIM enables them to stay anonymous and not deal with people face to face, experts like Kanner say that can cause teens to become distanced from real-life communication. That can be helpful for shy people, who find it easier to communicate online, but if they only chat online, they never truly learn the skills they need to socialize at school.

Some psychologists believe that a possible remedy could be for teens to just take a step back and reevaluate their positions online, making sure that they don't lose fundamental skills in the process of their impersonal chatting.

While closing the windows on her screen, Sarah witnessed her conversations finish box-by-box, click-by-click. As the file menu dropped and the cursor descended the list of options, Sarah pondered whether to sign off or not.

She opted for her "away" message — so she could stay connected, just in case.

IM ACRONYMS

Instant messaging has its own language. And it consists mostly of abbreviations and acronyms. Here is a list of some commonly used IM terms:

AFK	Away from keyboard
A/S/L	Age/Sex/Location
ATM	At the moment
BBS	Be back soon
BC	Because
BRB	Be right back
BTW	By the way
CUL8R	See you later
CYA	See ya
FYI	For your information
G2G	Got to go
GRB	Great
HW	Homework
IC	I see
IDK	I don't know
JK	Just kidding
JP	Just playin'
K	Okay
L8R	Later
LOL	Laughing out loud
NP	No problem
OIC	Oh I see
PLZ	Please
RUOK?	Are you okay?
SUP	What's up?
THNX	Thanks
TTFN	Ta ta for now
TTYL	Talk to you later
U	You
WB	Welcome back
WTH?	What the heck?
Y?	Why?

Source: www.aim.com/acronyms.adp?aolp=

KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
A group of newly registered voters wait in front of Century 23 in San Jose for "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Carl Ponzio

CONNECTING THE DOTS

"FAHRENHEIT 9/11" TURNS INTO LESSON IN VOTING

I registered to vote while waiting in line to see Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11."

Not many people in my age group vote. In fact, according to the U.S. Census, 18- to 24-year-olds are the lowest percentage of registered voters, but I don't like to follow trends.

Now that I'm 19 and leaning toward the left, I knew that it was time to take political action. Being a novice voter, this election has inspired me to look under every rock in search of my own political ideology. And I wanted to find my path without the guidance of CNN or Fox News.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" is the sludge I found after I turned over those rocks.

The film is from the creator of "Bowling for Columbine." And though some see it as a cheap shot against President George W. Bush's administration, I see it as mud being slung in a fresh fashion. "Fahrenheit" exposes Bush's seedy underbelly and has left me wondering how trustworthy our president truly is.

During the last presidential election, I was 15, I didn't care who took office and I had no political views. I was more concerned about missing my favorite TV shows than two old guys fighting for the presidency.

After the events of Sept. 11 and the collapse of the economy, I started to care about who was running the country. I needed more guidance than my family could give me. I needed to see stuff that I would not see on TV. I needed someone like Moore to shed light on our commander in chief.

And when I saw what he had to offer, I was convinced that the American public doesn't know as much as they think they do about Mr. Bush.

The movie starts with fireworks bursting in air, followed by the peculiar events that followed election 2000. How did all of the controversy over who captured the presidency get started in the first place? Moore's movie claims that one man is responsible — John Ellis.

Ellis, one of the big wigs at Fox News, took it upon himself to declare Bush the winner in Florida, thus cementing the election.

Oh, did I mention Ellis is Bush's first cousin?

Moore goes from there to reveal that the president was on vacation 42 percent of the first eight months he was in office. Funny, where great presidents such as Franklin D. Roosevelt took instant action to revive the nation after a national crisis, Bush hit the courses to practice his golf swing. I wish I could get a job in which I controlled the "free world," was paid $400,000 a year and got about 20 weeks of paid time off.

From there, Moore moves on to a touchier topic — Sept. 11. Moore shows glimpses of people in tears, but what I thought was truly shocking was how Bush was notified that Osama bin Laden had threatened the United States weeks before Sept. 11, 2001, and was given a report stating that fact in the title of the report. Moore's film makes it look as though Bush ignored that report.

Angela Anderson, a De Anza College student, thinks that "Fahrenheit 9/11" is an "excellent portrayal of how ignorant Bush is."

Is Bush really ignorant or just playing dumb?

Let's give some more credit to the man. He isn't dumb; he's crafty.

The Bush family has a large amount of money invested with the Carlyle Group, a corporation that specializes in defense. And what better way for them to gain financially than to promote defense after the destruction of the World Trade Center?

Bush stood to gain a lot if he ignored the threats of Osama bin Laden — a lot of money! The picture is so clear to me now. The Saudi members that were on the Carlyle Group's board with Bush, the ignored threats, the cut in soldiers' pay and veterans' checks. I've connected the dots. And they have revealed a tremendous dollar sign.

Repulsive. I can't have a man serving me as president who cares more about his own well-being than the good of a nation. Watching Moore's film has made me more aware of the things happening in the world of politics. I'll be staying up on the issues more than I ever have before, because my vote counts.

Moore has made his case, and I'm not the only one rallying behind him. "Get Bush out," Anderson said "I don't care who it is."

Seeing Bush's puzzled looks on TV, hearing his butchered sayings and living through the hardship of the economy he produced made me want to register to vote. But watching "Fahrenheit 9/11" has encouraged me to cast a ballot against him no matter where I am on Nov. 2.

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Thousands came to Barnes & Noble in San Jose this week, hoping to meet Clinton.

Clinton visit draws thousands to store

First in line wait more than 36 hours for book signing at San Jose store

KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Rick Rivas, sits on the carpet at Barnes & Noble, exhausted after waiting in line for 38 hours to meet former President Bill Clinton.

By Margot Leong and Regina Chan
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Monica Flores bounded out of the Barnes & Noble store on Stevens Creek Boulevard, nearly collapsing with joy. She had waited 36 hours to have her copy of "My Life" signed by former President Bill Clinton.

For Flores, it was worth the wait.

"It just feels so good," said Flores, of San Jose. "It was so fantastic."

More than 3,000 people from all over California lined up for a chance to meet Clinton. But only the first 1,000 got their books signed.

For the two days leading up to the highly anticipated book signing Tuesday, the parking lot at Barnes & Noble was filled with excitement, happiness, frustration, anxiety and annoyance.

Angela Boyd, who drove six hours from her hometown of Los Angeles, was one of many who left in tears. "It was perfect," Boyd said. "He shook my hand and even talked to me. It was worth every second of my wait."

But only one-third of the crowd left Barnes & Noble with a signed book and handshake. Many left with nothing but a sour attitude and a sunburn.

"I'm pissed off," said Sammy Tsang of Oakland, who had waited in line more than 18 hours. "They said they would give out 1,500 bracelets, but they only gave out a 1,000."

"We are sunburned too. We didn't get anything because there was no organization — it was horrible," said Julia Nita, a resident of Fremont. "It's not fair because we were willing to follow the rules."

Although Clinton was not scheduled to arrive until 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, the adventure started much earlier.

At 6 a.m. Monday, Ruben Mendez and his daughter were the first to arrive — more than 36 hours early. "I knew a lot of people would be coming. I even called Sunday night to see if people were here lining up already," said Mendez, of San Jose. "The people working kind of laughed and said no, but I just wanted the head start."

Though Mendez and his daughter were first, the line quickly grew to include thousands of people.

Fred and Ali Menbari, who are cousins from San Jose, arrived at 1 p.m. Monday.

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Shawn Rivera, 12, holds a copy of Bill Clinton's book as he waits to meet the former president on Tuesday.

"The day went by fast, actually," Fred Menbari said. "We've been keeping ourselves busy with dominos and the name game."

Menbari said some might think it's ridiculous to camp in a parking lot overnight. But he thought it was worth it. "It's a manner of respect," he said. "He's one of the best presidents ever."

Many of the people who waited long hours in line to meet Clinton said they did it for the same reason.

"I think the world of him," said Denise Eliason, a resident of San Jose. "We feel he deserves the strength from us after all the pain he's been through. He's a very special man."

Steve and Lynda Cuckovesh drove two hours from their home in Sacramento.

"We actually drove to Berkeley because they told us that it was on a first-come, first-served basis, but someone lied," Steve Cuckovesh said. "So we were shut out at Berkeley, shut out at San Francisco — this is it."

Barnes & Noble's lack of organization infuriated many in line.

San Jose resident Maria Adorador could have gotten a wristband if not for the two people who cut in front of her in line.

"Basically I would've gotten a signature with better crowd control," Adorador said. "There was no control of the flow of traffic — not at all."

"When we first got here we started making a list," said Mendez, who was first in line. "This lady down the line was number 23, but a little later, she turned out to be number 47."

Many of the attendees were angry — and blamed Barnes & Nobles.

"I'd tell people not to shop here," Adorador said. "If I bought my book here I would return it."

Some in the crowd said there was miscommunication long before the day of the event between the bookstore and the visitors. Robert Aguirre of San Jose said he called the store three weeks earlier so he could be clear on the rules for the book signing.

"They told me there was no camping. They actually even told me that no one was allowed on Barnes & Noble property before 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday," Aguirre said. That's why Aguirre and his family did not show up until 9:30 a.m. on the day of the event — and ended up with no wristband.

Many nearby coffee shops took advantage of the hoards of people, opening their doors a few hours earlier to attract those waiting in line. Numerous food vendors patrolled the lines, taking orders and displaying their tasty wares.

Another distraction appeared shortly before Clinton was to arrive. Four Clinton protesters congregated in front of Barnes & Noble and held up signs, despite heckling from many Clinton supporters.

As 8 p.m. neared, people became increasingly anxious.

Clinton emerged promptly at 8:15 p.m. from the second in a succession of four green SUVs, escorted by U.S. Secret Service agents and local police. He looked sharp in black-rimmed glasses, a sports jacket and a pink tie.

All the confusion, chaos and angst that had abounded in the morning and afternoon melted away once he stepped into the store.

Seated in the children's section of the bookstore, Clinton was amiable as he offered a friendly hello to each person, signing their books and giving them a firm handshake.

"You are beautiful," Clinton said to one toddler after signing the child's hat, even though the fliers said that he would sign nothing but books. Others got a "god bless" from the former president, along with a "thank you" to every compliment that came his way. And, when people would walk off without their signed book, because they were still in awe of him, Clinton would gently remind them to pick up their copies.

Some who braved it all to get their books signed described the experience as almost transcendental.

Sunnyvale resident Nitin Matthew, 19, was in pure joy, saying that when he shook Clinton's hand, he literally felt the chills running down his spine.

"I didn't know what to say when it was my turn, so I just said, 'I play tennis just like you,'" he laughed. "It was a trip."

Megan and Sarah Kindsvatter, sisters from Cupertino, said they'd always cherish the memory of meeting Clinton.

"We are never washing our hands again," they said.

Mosaic staff writers Carl Ponzio, Vikram Mahal, Sara Malik, Neeraj Bery and Victoria Tang contributed to this report.

Kerry's appeal bridges generation gap in S.J. stop

By Tiffany Pan and Robby Valderrama
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

The gap between older and younger generations has long been a problem for politicians, but presumed Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry has been commended for addressing and uniting both sides in his campaign.

Kerry's attempt to bridge that gap was reflected even in his use of campaign songs ranging from Tom Petty's "I Won't Back Down" to Outkast's "Hey Ya!" at an appearance at San Jose State University on June 24.

"The focus is not just on the next election, but on the next generation," Kerry told an audience of more than 1,000 at the university's student union.

It's a theme Kerry continued in his speech, which acknowledged America's manufacturing and industrial history and reinforced Silicon Valley's position at the forefront of future digital and innovation frontiers.

"Technological revolution is the foundation of a 21st century economy," said Kerry, who promised a strong business environment that would create "not only new jobs, but whole new professions."

Vietnam veteran Robert Adams, who led the Pledge of Allegiance before Kerry's speech, said he thinks Kerry is "a very young thinker."

RHIANNON WHEELER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Lee Iacocca, retired chairman of Chrysler, introduces presidential candidate John Kerry during a campaign appearance on June 24 at the San Jose State student union building.

"There's quite a dichotomy of old vs. new," he said. "Even though Kerry is 60, he's bringing new ideas."

One of those ideas is a concentrated effort to extend cutting-edge technology to primary schools and high schools. Kerry's proposal to build the high-tech workforce of tomorrow begins with an investment today in math and science programs for children in grades K-12.

Kerry expects to fund his $30 billion plan through the development and auction of a nationwide broadband network.

The Kerry campaign recently got a boost from the endorsement of Lee Iacocca, retired chairman of Chrysler Corp., who was deeply involved in President George W. Bush's 2000 campaign.

Iacocca, who pioneered the development of the Ford Mustang in the 1960s and rescued Chrysler Corp. from bankruptcy in the '80s, commended what Kerry is calling "An Innovative Economy for a Stronger America."

That plan includes opening foreign markets to U.S. imports, eliminating capital gains taxes on small businesses, expanding government investment in research and ending special tax breaks for companies who ship jobs overseas.

Evan Low, a 21-year-old candidate for Campbell City Council who attended the Kerry rally, said that Iacocca's endorsement brought credibility to the campaign. "It showed that Kerry changed a particular influential individual."

Steve Preminger, chairman of the Santa Clara County Democratic party, said he thought the rally was a success. "It attracted a lot of curious people," Preminger said. "Kerry came across as charming and sensitive."

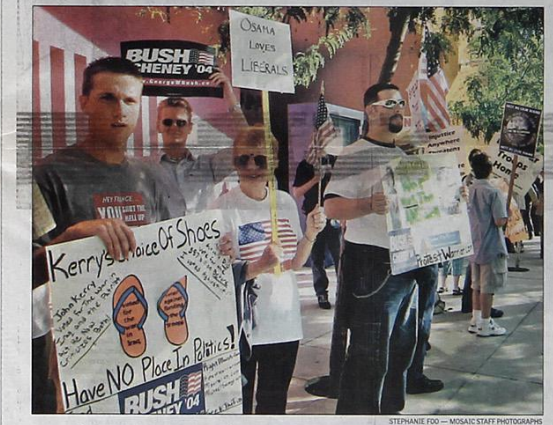
Low said that Kerry effectively played to both his contemporaries and younger supporters. "He engaged both students and adults," said Low. "People could see him with their own eyes, hear him with their own ears."

San Jose State student Laina Gaoteote, 22, attended the event with other students from her political science class at the urging of her professor. While she makes an effort to keep herself politically aware, she is not surprised few young people are following her example.

"The reason they're apathetic is that they think nobody represents them," said Gaoteote. "Nobody has in the past, or now."

But Kerry hopes to change that.

As the loud energy of U2's "Beautiful Day" drowned out the fading rhythm of Chuck Berry's "Johnny B. Goode," Kerry's words resonated: "We just need to believe in ourselves - and in opening up the paths of progress, America will be America again."



STEPHANIE FOO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS
A group of Republican activists holds signs, some with messages about presidential candidate John Kerry, who appeared at the Tech Museum of Innovation in downtown San Jose on June 24 during a campaign stop.

Candidate's visit draws cheers, jeers

PROTESTERS AT TECH FUNDRAISER MIRROR POLITICAL SPECTRUM

By Stephanie Foo and Victoria Tang
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

John Kerry's visit to the Tech Museum of Innovation in San Jose last week to raise money for his presidential campaign was met with a crowd of supporters — and two separate groups of protesters.

A line of formally dressed men and women wearing business suits and military uniforms entering the fundraiser dinner peered skeptically at about 60 protesters with loudspeakers and signs. The activists were bedecked in campaign buttons and T-shirts with such slogans as "Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation!"

Each group of protesters wanted to get its own message across to passersby. One was vehemently pro-Kerry. One was passionately rallying for President George W. Bush. One condemned both.

That group was made up of very vocal activists who tried to convince passersby that both presidential candidates were corrupt. They marched and chanted, "Kerry is just another Bush!"

Activists protesting the presence of U.S. troops in Iraq march during an appearance by presidential candidate John Kerry in downtown San Jose.

"What leftists are pushing is really hindering social movements, which is really the only thing that's going to stop the war in Iraq and stop the genocide of Palestinians," said Alessandro Tinonga, 19, a student at the University of California-Santa Cruz and a West Coast representative for Campus Anti-War Network, a group opposed to both Bush and Kerry.

"It cannot be achieved by voting for Kerry, who does not have an anti-war plan and does not have a strong stance against the Republican party," said Tinonga.

Tinonga and other protesters with his group didn't voice viable solutions except to say that protesting could be the answer to end the war.

"I say vote for yourself! Give yourself a vote of confidence," said Tinonga.

On the other side of the street, a more conservative group of Republican protesters held signs reading, "The little people are for Bush" and "Osama loves liberals."

"I realize that a lot of youth is for Kerry, but I know that a lot of us have been fed up with all this propaganda that we've been fed since 12-year-old Bush supporter David Latour, who was standing with the Republican group. "I believe there's only one right and wrong foreign policy, and that's to support America, be against terrorists and anyone who wants to take away our freedom. Bush has done a good job of that."

But Kerry's supporters remained loyal.

"We're totally not interested in the protesters," said a man who identified himself as Vietnam War veteran and wished to remain anonymous. "We're interested in supporting John Kerry. I just like his positions on everything. Bush and Kerry are not the same."

BANNING TANNING

KEEP THE GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE TANNING BOOTH

Jessica Li

Can't, can't, can't.

Legislators are constantly reminding teenagers that they aren't old enough or mature enough to make important decisions on their own.

In the latest ludicrous attempt to restrict teenagers, Assemblyman Joe Nation, D-San Rafael, is trying to push a law that prevents teens younger than 18 from going to tanning salons - even with their parents' permission.

The bill was passed by the state Assembly on May 20. It must pass the state Senate and be signed by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger by Sept. 30 to become law.

It is true that health benefits are associated with this law. The Ultraviolet A lighting in tanning salons is actually two to three times more powerful than the UVA rays that occur naturally from the sun. In fact, Nation proposed the bill as a result of his own battle with skin cancer.

Seventeen-year-old Katie Drew, who recently graduated from Piedmont Hills High School in San Jose, prefers artificial tanning to going outdoors because "you get tanned faster."

It seems ridiculous to pass a law that stops adolescents from going to tanning salons. There is already a law in place that requires teens from ages 15 to 18 to obtain a parent or legal guardian's permission to use a tanning booth. And those 14 and younger must have a parent or legal guardian accompany them to the tanning salon.

It isn't a question of teenagers' maturity levels, or their ability to make big decisions. If the government tries to pass this law, it will be interfering not only with youth rights, but parental rights as well.

Teenagers are old enough to decide for themselves whether they want to put themselves in these cancer boxes. And if their parents allow them to go, the government should have no right to stop them.

Parental consent is required prior to getting tattoos and piercings, and the state isn't making any laws to stop teens from doing those things to their bodies. So why should it be any different for tanning?

The very idea of this law leaves people saying, "What's next? What is left that the government can prohibit?"

Pretty soon, the state could restrict teens from rated R movies — with or without parental consent. But that won't happen, because Big Brother doesn't care how much violence adolescents are exposed to. He only wants to stop us from getting a golden glow.

"If this bill passes, it proves there is no part of somebody's life that this legislature won't stick it's nose into," Assemblyman Ray Haynes, R-Murrieta, said in an article published by the San Diego Union-Tribune.

The government needs to stop focusing its attention on petty laws like Nation's. Instead, legislators should focus the state's resources and energy on restoring the programs to public schools that have been decimated by budget cuts.

Married to change

CULTURAL TRENDS ARE AFFECTING HOW TEENS FEEL ABOUT TYING THE KNOT

By Victoria Tang
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Oops, she did it again.

Britney Spears is set to marry for the second time. The pop star recently announced she's engaged to Kevin Federline, a former backup dancer for her tour. Earlier this year, she married her childhood friend Jason Alexander in Las Vegas and annulled the union a few hours later.

Are her actions just one more reason teens today look at the institution of marriage in a different way?

It's not just Spears and other celebrities fond of quickie marriages and divorces molding young perspectives. Other pop culture trends also are making an impact, such as reality shows like "Who Wants to Marry My Dad?"

But at the most fundamental level, marriage today doesn't look like it did 50 or even 25 years ago. Compared to past generations when marriage was defined only in the traditional sense, modern times have led to broader definitions: easy divorces, remarriages and same-sex marriages.

It has also changed as equality has increased between men and women, with expanded roles for both, according to marriage and family counselor Larry Isaacs.

"The father used to be the breadwinner, and women took care of the children," said Isaacs, who practices in Berkeley. "Now, things are changing."

Shifting values

The divorce rate in the United States nearly doubled from 1962 to 2003, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. This increase may be one reason youths today say they recognize marriage as an agreement that can be terminated at any time and for any reason.

"Kids feel separated sometimes, but it's not their fault," said Giovanna Hernandez, 12, a student at Monroe Middle School. "Divorce is not a big deal for some people anymore."

And in recent months, same-sex marriages have challenged tradition as homosexuals fight for their right to be wed despite President George W. Bush's opposition.

"People should choose who they want to marry," said Nicole Garthwait, 13, who was shopping recently at Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair. "Gays should be respected as people."

As seen on television

Exposure to reality television shows that depict love as a material item also contributes to the mentality that marriage is disposable.

"They give the impression that marriage is easy. People could just be on these shows for the fame and time on television," said 16-year-old Eric Wang, a student at Lynbrook High School.

Some reality television shows also send the message that faithfulness in marriage is no longer important. Shows such as "The Bachelor" and "Who Wants to Marry My Dad?" involve couples who claim to devote themselves to each other, but few of those matches actually survive the test of time. Other shows, such as "For Love or Money," represent love as a paycheck instead of a genuine feeling.

"I hate reality television shows. I think they are fake and they probably do not find love at first sight," said 15-year-old Dalan Dinh, who also is a student at Lynbrook High.

Love and the tabloids

Celebrity weddings are often widely publicized. But the divorces that are right around the corner demonstrate that marriage can just as easily be thrown away.

A perfect example of a celebrity who has tied the knot — for a third time in this case — is actress-singer Jennifer Lopez.

She married singer Marc Anthony just months after her famous breakup with actor Ben Affleck. At the time of the wedding, Anthony himself had only been divorced from former Miss Universe Dayanara Torres for less than a week.

"It is immature for celebrities to act this way," said psychiatrist Morris Brock, who practices in San Francisco. "Marriage is presented in a casual way."

Emphasizing tradition

Still, some people are working to strengthen the focus on the traditional aspects of marriage.

The Catholic Church, for example, requires couples to participate in premarital retreats where they are supposed to realize that marriage involves intimacy and trust, not simply a physical attraction.

"Marriage is faith in general," said the Rev. Robert Brocato of the Christ the King Catholic Church in San Jose. "It is not seen in the same light by kids today, who are more critical of what they see as traditional religious practice."

But others say the changes that are in motion are far-reaching and can't be stopped that easily.

"Values are changing rapidly," said Isaacs, the marriage counselor. "Gay marriage is not a governmental issue; it is a cultural issue. The attitude about marriage has evolved, but I'm not sure if it is positive on society."

For many teens, these issues have prompted them to adopt a new set of guidelines about marriage.

"Marriage can't be taken for granted; it is sacred," said Owais Mahesri, 16, a student at Irvington High School in Fremont. "The way Americans in general observe marriage is way off-base, like it is some kind of temporary restraining order keeping a person faithful."

Education

School cutbacks cause struggle

STUDENTS, TEACHERS, PARENTS FEEL PINCH

By Stephanie Foo
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Christy Kampanero used to teach at Christa McAuliffe School, a Cupertino campus where teachers were well-paid, students earned high test scores and parents held bake sales and fundraisers to supplement the school's budget.

Then, in 1999, she moved to Salinas, a less-affluent area with a drastically different school environment. The restrooms at her Salinas school, funded primarily by the state, were in desperate need of cleaning and renovation.

"In Cupertino, it wouldn't be stood for at all," she said.

Her experience is an example of the widening gap between schools that are dependent solely on money from the state and those that receive funding mostly through foundations, property taxes and private donations. By far, the majority of schools are state-funded but schools in wealthier areas - notably Los Gatos and Palo Alto - rely on the community to stay afloat.

When the state's finances are in turmoil, as they are now, state-funded schools feel the pinch - and that means extras such as laptop computers at Independence High School or sports programs at Piedmont Hills High School are in danger of being cut.

"We've lost our jazz choir and our laptops," said Emilie Rivard, 17, a senior at Independence. "We've had to cut or combine classes, our class sizes are bigger and teachers have been laid off. I'm disappointed in the lack of support for education."

But it's not as though parents, school administrators and students aren't trying to bring in extra funds or get other parents involved.

In Palo Alto, a fundraising group raised almost $1.2 million for schools while parents in Campbell brought in $44,000.

"People just aren't aware of the need and parents are far too busy," said Tish Bayer, president of the Campbell Education Foundation. "They expect the state to take care of all of their needs."

And those who do understand that there's a problem often don't know how they can help and sometimes simply give up.

"It's kind of swept under the carpet," said Kampanero. "It's very sad, because you see these kids and their parents struggling to make a better life for them, yet they can't get ahead."

Maria Mendoza buys school supplies for her kids and donates money - when she can - to the fundraising efforts at James Lick High School in San Jose, where her daughter Christina Martinez is a senior.

"I would volunteer but I've got four kids and I work full-time," said Mendoza. "In the richer schools, the parents have more money to pay for more things and they have better everything."

But sometimes it takes more than asking for money to get parents involved. Raising awareness about how schools are funded and how the community can help is just as challenging.

"It's hard to raise money wherever you are, especially for school, because people say, 'Look, we pay all these taxes for school already, I don't understand,'" said Deborah Stephens, a working mother who spearheaded a campaign that raised $45,000 for the music programs in the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District. "You have to explain how the schools have been impacted. You have to educate them."

In Campbell, school officials asked last year voters to approve a parcel tax, an extra fee added to local property tax bills, to generate millions of dollars for the school. But the measure failed by less than four percent, or about 300 votes.

"One of the things we're hoping is that people realize that the only real way to sustain these programs would be through the passage of a parcel tax," said Terry Pehuso, the director of administrative services for the Campbell Union High School District. "The $200,000 gathered at a fundraiser would be good for one year, but the parcel tax would sustain that program for four or five years."

At Piedmont Hills High School in San Jose, just one program - the after-school Math Mastery tutoring program - costs about $32,000.

"Every type of program needs a teacher," said principal Carol Blackerby. "A teacher, plus benefits, costs $15,000 to $30,000 a period. We used to have a literacy coach, but we lost him because it's so expensive."

A parcel tax could save the career tech center and library at Piedmont Hills, said Blackerby.

"How can you run a school with all these people without a career tech?" she asked.

"And how can the district say it cares about literacy without any librarians in a school? Eventually the district did fund them but without a parcel tax, there will be a good chance they will be cut next year."

That's tough for teens to understand — especially when they see how state dollars are spent on other services.

Lincoln High School student Manana Barba, 16, looked around Cesar Chavez Park in downtown San Jose recently and wondered if the money spent on beautification of "an already decent area" could save the performing arts programs that are in danger of being cut at her school.

"I don't think it's fair or logical, especially when it comes to something as pivotal as education," she said.

BURIED IN BOOKS

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SUMMER READING: A patron scans the aisles for vacation reading at the Martin Luther King Jr. Main Library in downtown San Jose on a recent evening.

SOMETHING'S GOT TO GIVE

TEENS COPE WITH PRESSURE TO SUCCEED

By Jessica Li
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

With his head in his hands, 16-year-old William To stared at his computer screen as a wave of fatigue rolled through him. He glanced at his watch — it was 3 a.m. Scrambling to finish his five-page essay after a long day, William longed for sleep but was forced to keep writing.

"There are weeks when it seems like everything is due at the same time," he said.

Because many teens today strive to live up to increasingly high expectations concerning school and college acceptance, stress levels among adolescents have risen greatly.

According to a 1999 study conducted by Reuters Health, nearly two-thirds of U.S. teens admit to being stressed at least once a week, and one-third feel stressed on a daily basis. Experts say that a possible reason behind the anxiety is that parents, teachers — and society — expect teens to excel at everything from sports to school.

'My parents want me to go to Stanford. And when I don't get straight A's, my parents get more strict.'
— PING MATTHREY, 17, GUNN HIGH SCHOOL, PALO ALTO

"When you do so much, something's going to give," William said. "Either schoolwork won't be up to par, or you won't go out as much."

The requirements needed for a solid college application have increased and become harder to accomplish. In addition to high grade-point averages and SAT scores, students now have to participate in extracurricular activities and obtain as many leadership positions as possible.

"The whole philosophy on college has changed," said 17-year-old Ping Matthrey, who attends Gunn High School in Palo Alto. "It started out only being white males that went to college, but now, everyone gets out of high school and goes to college, so there's more competition."

Susan Linn, associate director of the Media Center for Children at Harvard University's Judge Baker Children's Center, feels that the reason for this increased pressure lies elsewhere.

Many parents today expect their kids to strive to get accepted into "designer" colleges that are well known, such as the prestigious Ivy League schools, Linn said.

Ping's parents fit that profile.

"My parents want me to go to Stanford," Ping said. "And when I don't get straight As, my parents get more strict. But luckily, I don't really get grounded."

At a time when students feel bombarded by all the qualifications needed for college, some, like William, sacrifice sleep in to lengthen their days. But lack of sleep only hinders performance in other areas, experts said.

According to an article by WebMDHealth, bad sleeping habits can affect a child's health, mood and productivity later in life. Because teens have so many things to do, they try to maximize their waking hours to accomplish everything that needs to be done.

Many teens give up their healthy dose of nine hours of sleep to get all their work done, but there are others who choose a different, less honorable route.

Cheating has resurfaced as a seemingly easy way out for students who feel overburdened.

"Things are so tough now that people will do anything to get ahead of others," William said. "They know that cheating is wrong, but as long as they think they can't get caught, no one will know."

Many students say they cheat in an effort to save time - from copying a friend's homework to spying on a classmate's test during class.

"There are lots of pressures on kids today in that some ways the message we're sending them is that the ends justify the means," Linn said. "That the results are more important than the way they got there, which certainly leads to cheating."

Of course, students know that cheating is wrong. But some experts say that students today put their ethics aside when it comes to gaining an extra hour of sleep, or getting an A on a test.

Cheating has become an increasingly difficult issue to address as it becomes more popular, and in some ways, a little more accepted.

Late last year, students at Saratoga High School were caught circulating a test. Though cheating is certainly not unique to Saratoga, school administrators used the incident to address the problem in the future. Ethics classes were proposed, and there were many conferences between students, parents and the administration in efforts to prevent a similar incident from happening again.

Because teens today are so in touch with - and have easy access to - the media, seeing all the cheating and dishonesty affects what they think is right and wrong. Linn believes that there have been a rash of exposés about corporate corruption, such as the Enron debacle. And those don't set a good example for kids today.

"I hope that kids will take a look at the culture and values, and think about what they really want," Linn said. "Hopefully there are kids out there that believe that material objects aren't the most important things in life."

Competition drives resume-building

By Anna Tong
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Lianne Zhang, an incoming senior at Palo Alto High School, feels she is being pushed to fit a perfect formula.

"All these people are telling me what to do for college," said the 16-year-old. "It's really crazy."

To give herself an edge, Lianne, who has a 3.9 GPA, has taken four SAT preparation classes and spends her free time doing various extracurricular activities - and not always ones she wants to do.

"Freshman year, my mom signed me up for fencing, for an 'unusual sport,'" she said. "I joined these random national societies, which are just for my college application. France was for a 'cultural experience.' I didn't quit the piano because it looks bad for college, even though I really hated it. I've volunteered at the library for over 200 hours. If it wasn't for college, I definitely wouldn't have started all this stuff."

Getting into a prestigious university has never been more difficult. There is more competition and fewer slots. So students and parents are doing whatever they can to get an advantage, and some begin plotting how to stand out from the crowd even before high school.

Lianne's parents are so worried that they have scaled back their expectations.

"My parents have given up on me going to Stanford; they just want me to go to a UC now," Lianne said. But Lianne's mother, Ying Li, still puts college on the top of her priority list.

"Education is so important," Li said. "The college you go to and how well you do in four years will determine the rest of your life. Going to a good college will make your life better because you can rely on what you've learned."

Competition for college slots is increasing because of a growing tidal wave of applicants who are the children of baby boomers. The college-age population (18 to 24 years old) in the United States, at more than 28 million people, shows signs of being crowded. In 1984, Yale University had 10,304 applicants and accepted 2,130 students, or 20.7 percent of applicants. In 2004, Yale had almost 20,000 applicants and admitted only 1,950 students, or 9.9 percent of applicants. Other top schools have similar statistics.

Budget cuts have forced the University of California and California State University systems to cut their freshman spots by 10 percent, or about 30,000 students. About 7,600 students in the top 12 percent of their class, traditionally guaranteed admission to a UC campus, were denied this year. The CSU system cut its student population by approximately 20,000 new admissions.

Recognizing an opportunity, myriad application-brightening services have sprung up. Lianne's family has spent more than $1,200 on four Princeton Review courses for the SAT 1 and 2.

"It's a waste of money, but everyone goes," Lianne said. "Every time I go to a Princeton Review class, I see lots of people from my school there."

Another expensive step is to hire a private college counselor. Mary Clarke, of Menlo Park, has never advertised but said she doesn't have any trouble finding students who are willing to pay her $75 per hour fee. She meets with students for one hour every week starting during the freshman year and guides them through the maze of high school academics and college applications.

"She pushes people to try to get into the best college they can, and if you need to do more extra-curriculars, she'll tell you what to do," said Raven Chu, a 17-year-old student at Gunn High School in Palo Alto, who is one of Clarke's students.

But not everyone can afford or is willing to do these extras. Samuel Germaine, 18, who will be a freshman at West Valley College this fall, said that not taking SAT classes left him disadvantaged.

"Even if it was one little thing that helped me do a little bit better, I would have taken them," he said.

Some admissions officers say a neatly groomed resume may not necessarily guarantee admission into a top school.

Daniel Krause, an admissions officer at Pomona College, said he sees application padding frequently, and he said he can't always tell if the applicant is really passionate or just prettily packaged.

"There are ways and indications, though," Krause said. "Sometimes if the resume is a mile long, then they probably did each thing once. It's better to be really invested in this club, and have a really personal connection."

Company boosts Ivy League chances — for a steep price

IvySuccess has a 100 percent success rate in getting high school students accepted to their most competitive college choices. IvySuccess also charges $18,000 for its services.

In a time when parents begin preparing their children for college admission in grade school, IvySuccess (www.ivysuccess.com) caters to students who are determined and have big checkbooks.

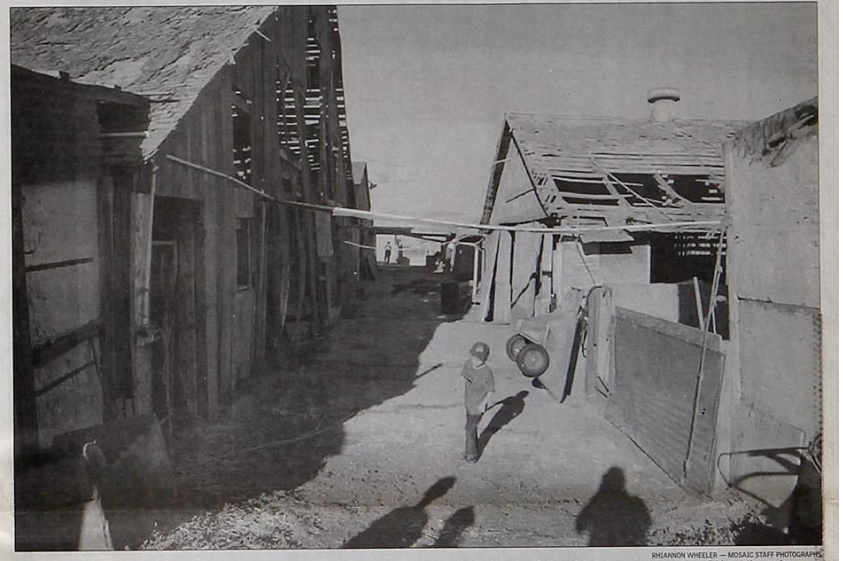
The five partners of IvySuccess, which was founded in 1995, served as admissions officers at Ivy League universities. In the company's "Complete Strategy" program, consultants tailor a college admissions strategy suited to their client.

"Unlike traditional admissions counselors who look only at one side of the equation, the student, IvySuccess turns the admissions process inside out, analyzing the school as much as the student to create the right match between the two," said Peter Storandt, a partner at IvySuccess who was an admissions official at Yale and Harvard.

IvySuccess, which rejects more than half the students interested in its services, will edit and rewrite admission essays, help students with SAT and Advanced Placement exams and give students unlimited access to tutors.

— Anna Tong

A HAVEN FOR HORSES



RHIANNON WHEELER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Four-year-old Carlos Cruz, of San Jose, runs through an alley between old barns at Arzino's Ranch in Alviso. Carlos' horse boards there. A foal, above, was born at dawn Friday at the ranch.

Arzino Ranch in Alviso offers a rustic home amid city life

By Rhiannon Wheeler
MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

In the shadow of the bustling metropolis known as Silicon Valley sits a small piece of heaven.

Arzino's Ranch in Alviso is where all genders, races and creeds come together for one reason: the love of their horses.

The ranch is home to about 70 horses, most owned by families and individuals who live in the San Jose area and board their horses there.

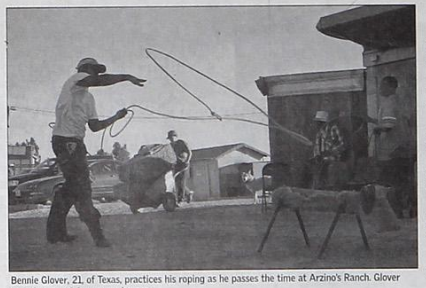
There's nothing luxurious about the ranch. It's an environment where everything is not always neat and tidy, or prim and proper. But it's home.

Activities at the ranch include training for many events such as horse racing, barrel racing, English dressage riding, and lessons for children who are learning how to ride.

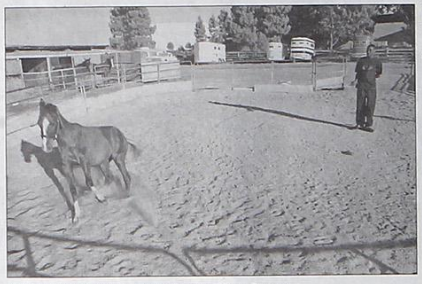
There are two tracks where the horses can run as well as an arena that's used for training.

A boy of 4 runs past a barn that's more than 50 years old. A foal is born. A young man lovingly exercises his horse. A man practices his roping. A child wraps up a riding lesson.

To the people who spend their time here, it's just another day on the ranch.



Bennie Glover, 21, of Texas, practices his roping as he passes the time at Arzino's Ranch. Glover was there to pick up some horses.



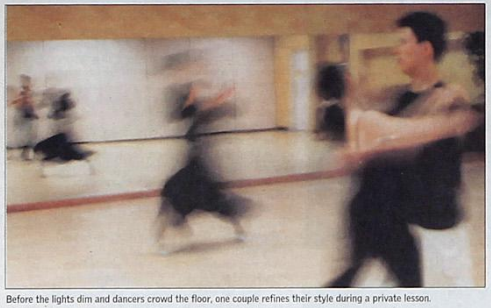
O.D. Sims, 18, of Palo Alto, exercises his 7-month-old horse, Diamond.

Matthew Pilling, 7, of Palo Alto, leads his horse, Skipper, after a day of riding.

Swept away by dance

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

A young couple dances at Starlite, a ballroom studio in Sunnyvale. People of all ages come to the studio to learn dances like salsa, the hustle, tango and the two-step. A display of dancing shoes, above, gracefully decorates the entry of the studio.



Before the lights dim and dancers crowd the floor, one couple refines their style during a private lesson.

As the sun sets, a woman approaches the doors of the Starlite Dance Club, which offers lessons for beginners before opening the floor to dancers Thursday through Sunday.

Hitting the floor at Starlite in Sunnyvale

By Miriam Alvarado
MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The only hint of the magic awaiting inside the office building is a bluish neon sign that beckons with the promise of a romantic escape from the toils of everyday life; a brief reprise from the stress and pressures of daily routines.

"Starlite," the sign reads.

Through the doors of the Starlite Dance Club in Sunnyvale, a whole world of fairytale shoes, twinkling lights and shiny hardwood floors begging to be danced upon invites dancers inside. Mirrors reflect and multiply the beauty and joy radiating from couples in the room.

From 8 p.m. until midnight, this is a place where one can become a line in the poem of movement.

Starlite, which claims to be the Bay Area's largest dance club, provides dancers with three unique atmospheres. The Café, a quaint room bathed in yellow, is the smallest of the dance floors. The Club, a room infused with the color red and lit by modern, artistic lighting, inspires the passion to dance. The Ballroom, the club's grandest dance floor, feels like a night under the stars with its deep blue walls.

On Fridays, lessons are offered for beginners before the floors are opened to dancers. Instructors lead classes in a variety of dances, including salsa, swing, the hustle, tango and ballroom dancing. These lessons offer an environment that isn't intimidating for newcomers who have never danced.

The Starlite Dance Club also offers instruction in the waltz, rumba, two-step, fox trot, cha-cha, quickstep, samba and bolero. Drop-in classes, series classes and private lessons are available.

It's a place where nothing else matters, as long as you aren't afraid to let your heart soar and your soul fly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
To learn more about the Starlite Dance Club, visit **www.starlitedanceclub.com.**

Tenor drummer Richard Powell practices at Vanguard Hall in Santa Clara. The Corps will compete in a national championship in August.

Trumpet player Corey Kuruma, left, a student at Monta Vista High School, and mellophone player Pablo Coppola from Diamond Bar participate in a small practice parade in San Jose. Kuruma has turned 21 and must "age out" of the Cadet Corp after four years.

From left, Ramon Esquivel, Julianna Manbler Scott Driscoll and Richard Powell practice at Mission College.

WALL OF SOUND

Summertime is one long drill line for the Santa Clara Vanguard, a brass-and-percussion team that's heavy on commitment

KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

Contrabass players Robert Wendland, left, a 19-year-old from Stockton, and Syna Saberi, 19, of Sunnyvale, warm up as brass captain Ken Rydeen conducts the Santa Clara Vanguard horn line. Rydeen, an instructor, is from San Jose.

By Konina Biswas
MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Don't call the Santa Clara Vanguard Cadet Corps a "marching band."

Every summer, about 100 Bay Area students between the ages of 12 and 18 meet six days a week at Mission College in Santa Clara to perfect their musical talent and practice their drills. The Vanguard Cadet Corps offers students the chance to do something rewarding for three months.

The corps is made up of the pit, which includes timpani, gongs, concert base, chimes and even bottles; the percussion line with basses, cymbals and tenors; and the brass line that includes trumpets, baritones and tubas. The corps is accompanied by the Santa Clara Vanguard Colorguard, the corps' dancers.

Although most students are involved with their school band programs, director George Brown welcomes everyone to try out.

"It's a big activity that's very well hidden," said Cadet drum major Nicole Segula, 18, a student at Wilcox High School in Santa Clara who is in charge of leading the corps during a performance.

"The best thing that they get is the opportunity to commit to something for a whole summer," said Chris Williams, visual coordinator in charge of the overall movement of the corps.

The Cadets meet weekly starting in January. Once school is out in June, they meet every day except Sunday.

The Vanguard Cadet Corps competes in six to eight competitions during the summer. The next major one is the Drum Corps International championships in Denver next month.

"One thing that's different is that it's more than just the competition," said Shawn Hines, an instructor for the brass section. "We pride ourselves in doing things with integrity."

For more information about the Santa Clara Vanguard Cadet Corps, contact (408) 727-5591 or see **www.scvanguard.org.**

A neighborhood child caught up in the excitement of a live performance follows the Vanguard brass line on his bike. The mini-parade was staged on Williams Road in San Jose.

Style

In search of modesty

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
High school student Lisa Bailey carries a faux "designer" handbag, which she bought at Target, while she shops at Valley Fair mall.

THE FAD FOR FAUX

BUSINESS IS BRISK FOR THOSE SELLING 'DESIGNER' GOODS

By Anna Tong
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Designer handbags, social status symbols of the rich and famous, seem to have fallen accidentally into the hands of eager teenage girls. Supposedly rare and coveted, they are now ubiquitous in the mall and on the streets.

Taking a closer look, though, the trademark "Burberry" plaid is slightly skewed. Or the inside lining of a "Dior" bag is poorly sewn and says "Made in China."

That's because these handbags are counterfeits. And although illegal, many teenagers carry them because they want what Paris Hilton has but they aren't heirs to a hotel industry. So they buy copies and counterfeits of the high-priced brand.

"At my school, nobody could afford a real Gucci," said Tiffany DaRosa, 16, a student at Leland High School. "But everybody's got the fake ones."

Some of the coveted bags closely resemble the real thing while others are easy to spot.

According to the International Chamber of Commerce, counterfeiting makes up five to seven percent of global trade, or $450 billion to $500 billion. Any name brand is at risk for counterfeiting, and

See **FAUX**, Page 17

HOW TO TELL A VUITTON MONOGRAM CANVAS BAG

We asked Quyen Nguyen, assistant manager at Louis Vuitton in Valley Fair, how to tell the real thing from a fake:

- The classic Louis Vuitton monogram bags run from $400 to more than $1,000. Fakes range in price from $20 to $80.
- Take a close look at the handles. The color should be made of an entire strip of natural leather. When first purchased, the handle is a light tan color, and over the next few weeks with use, it oxidizes and turns into a darker, cognac color. A fake bag's handle will not change color because the handle is probably painted. The stitching should be clean and consistent. Vuitton uses yellow thread. The sides of the handle should be a shiny glazed red.
- The zipper pull should be brass hardware, and heavy to the touch. Look for a neatly imprinted "LV" symbol on it.
- The canvas of the bag should not be too soft or stiff. It shouldn't be "billy" or shiny.
- The LV monogram should have irregular brown lines through the gold colored "LV" and flower pattern. Fake monograms may be solid colored, or too green or too orange.
- Look for identification. There should be a card with the style number and name inside the bag.
- Know what styles of the bags are genuine and look at the lining. Fake bags often come in styles and colors not available in the real thing and the lining will be different.

-Anna Tong

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
A girl wearing a red mini-skirt takes a break from shopping to eat ice cream at Valley Fair mall. Some teens are steering away from recent body-baring styles and demanding more conservative clothing.

SOME TEENS WANT ALTERNATIVES TO BODY-BARING STYLES

By Neha Hemmad
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Since the popularity of belly-baring shirts and low-rise jeans is fading, many teens have begun to demand more modest clothing.

But some are saying that not much change is occurring in the stores and that it's not easy to find attractive alternatives. There also are girls who say that they don't want to cover up.

Becky Flanagan, 14, visiting from South Carolina and shopping at Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair, says finding a skirt she likes is almost impossible.

"They always rise high above my thighs since I'm so tall," said Becky, who was wearing a pink tank top and slightly baggy jeans.

Walking through Forever 21 in Valley Fair, a store where teen girls frequently shop, there is a splash of tank tops and short skirts hanging on the clothing racks. Despite the supposed reports of clothing becoming more modest, some girls seem to be frustrated with the type of clothes they find in their favorite stores, including Forever 21.

In recent national headline news, an 11-year-old Washington girl wrote a letter to Nordstrom, asking the chain to sell less revealing clothing for her age group. Ella's letter made its way all the way up to Peter Nordstrom, executive vice-president, according to the Seattle Times. Two executives responded by promising to educate employees on the fashion choices young people should have.

Other stores also are aware of the demands being made by teens.

Monica Gubrud, the special events manager for Macy's Valley Fair store, said, "Macy's has a broad sense of what the teenage girls wear. There is modest clothing, which is made to be cute, but at times is conservative. However, there is also clothing which is slightly risque to satisfy those who like to show a little bit

See **MODESTY**, Page 17

MEN'S FASHION TRENDS

Sorry sagging trend shouldn't worry fashion police

I've been wondering for some time why teenage boys are wearing their pants so low these days. I have no desire to see their underwear, and it seems kind of silly that they have to waddle around to keep their pants from falling to the ground.

So I decided to loosen my belt, lower my pants and do some research on this latest fashion craze.

Sameer Jain

My colleague, Ricardo Herrera, hit the streets to explore the origin of sagging. He says that teenagers from low-income areas never intended to make a fashion statement by wearing baggy hand-me-downs. They never expected kids from the suburbs to adopt their look.

But in cities from Palo Alto to Santoga, kids with the money to buy clothes that fit are spending top dollar on clothes that are way too loose.

Thomas Niemasik, a senior at Menlo School in Menlo Park, said he started wearing his pants low because he just wanted to look cool.

"I started mainly because I saw other people doing it," Thomas, 17, said. "I was never a real socialite, so this was a way for me to sort of gain a bit of similarity to the cool kids."

Of course, looking cool never hurts when it comes to meeting girls. Unless, of course, the girls think it looks stupid.

Elena Park, a 17-year-old student at Cupertino High School, said that sagging is "not appeal-

See **SAGGING**, Page 17

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
A teen shopper at Valley Fair mall shows off plaid undergarments under a pair of low-riding, baggy jeans.

CULTURE CLASH

KIDS FROM THE 'BURBS SHOULD BE CAREFUL ABOUT ADOPTING INNER-CITY STYLES

Since the time of the rebels and the greasers of the 1950s, kids from the suburbs have been mimicking the fashion style of inner-city teenagers.

The thing is that those teens from the streets weren't trying to set fashion trends. They were simply wearing the only clothes they had.

Some trends — like sagging pants that are worn well below the waist — were never meant to be copied.

My colleague, Sameer Jain, talked to teenagers from the 'burbs who think it's cool to dress like a rap star or a gang member. He even found a politician who thinks that sagging pants should be a crime that's punishable by jail time or a hefty fine.

Do the police really need another tool to target people in poor neighborhoods? Does anyone really think that cops are going to cruise around rich neighborhoods to look for kids who are sagging?

I don't think so either.

But the thing that society doesn't understand is that wearing sagging pants didn't start off as a way to look cool. The look didn't come from prisoners or gang members trying to

Ricardo Herrera

See **CULTURE**, Page 17

FAUX| Counterfeit 'designer' goods popular

Continued from Page 16

the most commonly counterfeited fashion labels include Louis Vuitton, Kate Spade, Christian Dior, Prada, Gucci and Burberry.

Flea market vendors often sell counterfeit handbags. At the San Jose Flea Market, there are several stalls displaying bags vaguely reminiscent of the Louis Vuitton monogram prints, selling for about $20. Instead of the trademarked "LV" logo, the bags displayed an "XL" monogram. When asked for the "real" counterfeits, one seller, 33-year-old Terry Tren, dug through boxes in the back of her stall.

"I don't want to display them because somebody will steal them," she said. She said they cost $85, and explained the higher cost denotes their higher quality. Despite the cost, she said that "a lot of people" were interested in buying the actual counterfeits. "When you buy it, nobody knows (that it is fake)," she said. "This is $85, the real one is $800."

Kiosks at shopping centers offer a variety of imitation items. Melody Wang, 17, a senior at Saratoga High School, bought a knockoff Prada bag from a vendor at Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair for $30. "It's really cute and it looks real," she said.

In cities such as New York, counterfeits are most easily found in Chinatowns and garment districts. Crowded shopping districts like SoHo also have salespeople stationed on the street who will attempt to make eye contact with shoppers to bring them to private houses with stashes of counterfeits. The price of a handbag is usually about $20.

"I bought my fake bag in Los Angeles for $18," 14-year-old Ivannia Serpas said. "Some people thought it was real." Most are cheap, but some high-quality counterfeits may cost up to one-sixth of the real price.

A common place to buy a handbag is in countries such as China, Mexico and Thailand, where manufacturing is a big industry. In those countries, the government does not have enough police to enforce trademarking, so counterfeiting runs rampant, according to brandchannel.com.

When 18-year-old Mike Sun, a freshman at the University of California-Davis, went to China with his basketball team, he bought fake Louis Vuitton and Prada purses and wallets to bring home as gifts.

"They were everywhere, and a lot of tourists bought them," he said. "They were only $5 to $10, which is so cheap compared to the real thing. And they look pretty similar."

So-called "purse parties" — in which a seller brings a selection of fake handbags to a private gathering - have become the modern woman's Tupperware party.

"I met Blis woman through a friend who came to my house," said 25-year-old Beatriz Monjaras. "There was Gucci, all the fake kinds. They were nice and cost $40 to $80."

Selling these counterfeits is definitely illegal, but so is buying them.

"Purchasing an illegal item is usually not prosecuted," said attorney Erin Williams, who works at the Intellectual Property Law Group in San Jose. "But it could be confiscated, especially when you go through an airport or something like that."

Counterfeiting dilutes brand names by stealing the company's identity, she said.

"If you see somebody walking around with a Coach bag that looks bad, it reflects badly on Coach and Coach doesn't have as many sales," she said. "If you see a 15-year-old with what looks like a $20,000 Rolex watch, it dilutes the value of the watch. People don't want to wear the same thing as a 15-year-old."

Consumers are hurt when they buy products they think are genuine that turn out to be fakes.

"Counterfeit products are not just purses or shoes, but cosmetics, medications and practically anything," said Williams. "Do you want to put things on your face or swallow things that haven't been tested or approved by the FDA?"

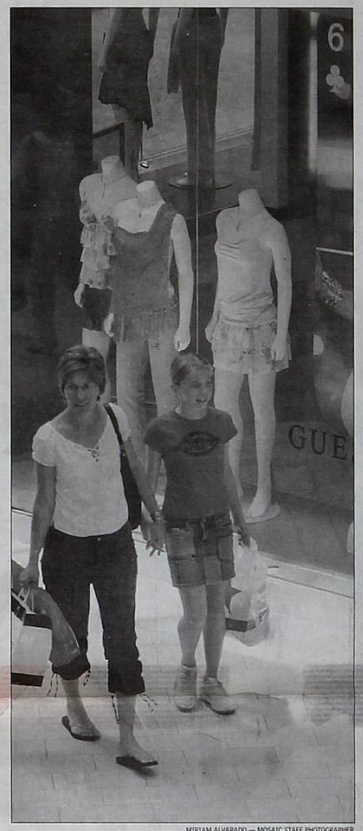
Counterfeiting, though, is hard to stop because it's expensive to catch and prosecute violators. Teens may not be aware that buying counterfeits keeps sweatshops — that often employ child labor — in business.

What's safe is to buy the department and chain stores items that closely resemble designer bags in look. Brands like Guess imitate the Coach signature print, but replace the "C" with a "G." Or the signature triangle metal Prada label might say "Guess" instead of Prada. These are not counterfeits because they do not imitate the actual logo; only the fashion style, so it is considered "artistic license."

Still, designer companies stay in business because there are many devoted customers willing to pay for the real thing.

Stephanie DiPietro, a 40ish woman shopping at Valley Fair, said she previously bought a fake Louis Vuitton, but the majority of her designer handbags are real.

"Fake ones look cheap, and it's just not the same feeling," she said.



MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Two shoppers wearing more conservative clothing walk past a window display of shoulder-baring shirts and thigh-high skirts. Many teens are demanding more modest styles.

MODESTY| Teens search for less risque clothing

Continued from Page 16

of their stomach. We also market everything in between."

Macy's junior department sells clothes ranging from designer labels such as DKNY and Guess to brands that are less well known, such as Necessary Objects.

"Our clothing basically reflects the runway models' style," said Lauren Halpern, public relations director for Bloomingdale's at Stanford Shopping Center. "Modesty is the trend for fall of 2004, but it will take a couple seasons to get popular because people usually wait to see if the style sticks."

Most stores sell a broad range of clothing that includes both risque and conservative styles. Many girls say the clothing they find in the stores doesn't bother them. They think girls should have a choice and as long as they feel comfortable wearing short skirts and low-cut tops, they should be able to wear them instead of knee-length skirts and boat-neck shirts.

"Everyone has a different comfort level, and if they want to wear revealing clothing and they're comfortable with it, then it's none of my business to tell them what to wear," said Julia Kwan, 18, who likes to shop at American Eagle.

Other teens believe that even as they voice their frustrations, not much changes.

"When I go shopping, I don't see anything different. The clothing is just as revealing as it used to be," said Jackee Nguyen, 16, a Fremont High School student who tends to wear jeans and tops from Forever 21 and Abercrombie and Fitch.

Idols like Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears, who favor body-exposing clothes, are now being challenged by the more elegant, feminine style of such stars as Mischa Barton (of "The O.C.") and Katie Holmes (of "Dawson's Creek"). Their characters are generally seen wearing sundresses, flannel shirts and jeans and in real life, they wear the latest clothes by designers such as Chanel and Carolina Herrera.

"I don't really like Britney Spears," said Flanagan, the South Carolina teen. "The main reason I don't like her is because of the clothing she wears."

The teens who are bothered by revealing clothing say that sometimes people are judged by the way they dress.

"It's true that girls are judged upon the clothing they wear, because if they're wearing some outrageous clothing, they're probably not going to be someone I would take home to see my family," said Mike Gorsche, 17, a student at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose. "To me, it seems as though a girl wearing revealing clothes is still trying to find herself and trying to fit in."

Zehara Levins agrees.

"I personally judge people if they wear something tacky and overly revealing," said the 17-year-old from Gunn High School in Palo Alto. "I think it makes them seem trashy, but I'm not going to tell them what to wear."

No matter what the trend is, the girls interviewed for this story believe that modesty will never be entirely popular.

Girls are always going to wear revealing clothing," said Cheryl Chu, 15, of Fremont High. "It's never going to change."

SAGGING| Loose-fitting clothes hot in suburbs

Continued from Page 16

ing" and "kind of disrespectful."

But Jeff Cabebe, 18, of San Jose, said sagging is "more of a comfort thing. It's the same thing with my friends. It's not to be badass and show off, just to relax and be comfortable."

Again, I don't get it. For two days, I tried to wear my pants way below my waist. But there was nothing comfortable about it. I was constantly watching my step in fear that my pants would plummet to my feet.

Maybe it's just me. But I don't think so.

There's a politician in Louisiana who is so adamant about doing away with sagging that he sponsored a bill in the state legislature to make it a crime. Rep. Derrick Shepherd's bill proposed a fine of up to $500 or as much as six months in jail for anyone caught wearing pants below the waist and "thereby exposing his skin or intimate clothing."

Give me a break. What's next? Fashion police dressed in skin-tight leather, cruising around in Mini Coopers? Instead of guns, they could carry rulers in their holsters to quickly measure the distance from my waist to the top of my pants.

"It was a stupid bill," said Joe Cook, executive director of American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana. "It didn't fit the constitutionally allowable definition of obscenity, and it could be used as a pretext for racial profiling."

And it already had a loophole roomier than the empty space in a sagger's Levi's.

"They have a huge lobby, so we were going to exempt plumbers," Shepherd told me.

I was surprised by his sincerity. But what amazed me most was that 38 politicians actually thought this was a good idea. The bill was defeated 38-55 in May.

"There's a silent majority of people who are sick and tired of seeing people's underwear," Shepherd said. "We think that this is a fad that is just as indecent as streaking. And we will try again next year."

OK, so they just won't give up. But the way fashion trends come and go with teenagers, the folks in Louisiana ought to listen to parents like Wally Niemasik, whose son Thomas from Menlo School started sagging to look cool.

"I think it would be very boring if all kids dressed the same way," Niemasik said. "If you're doing things that the older generation is uncomfortable with, you're kind of setting your own identity."

No one knows how the teenagers of tomorrow will be wearing their pants, he said.

"Maybe your kids will be wearing their pants up high," he said.

CULTURE| Teens are adopting street style from inner-city

Continued from Page 16

rebel against parents or teachers or police. The origin of this trend came from poor neighborhoods, where families simply make clothes last.

As the older brother, I know that my younger brothers sometimes get the clothes that I've outgrown.

There's nothing really wrong with them. I would keep wearing them if I could. And my mom does a great job at keeping them nice and clean so they can be passed down the line from one kid to the next. But sometimes, they're still too big for the next kid.

And they sag.

I ducked into a Goodwill store in East San Jose to look for moms who might be shopping for pants for their sons - just to make sure my brothers aren't the only ones getting hand-me-downs.

"I buy clothes for the oldest and keep them until they don't fit the youngest one or until they are useless," said Araceli Henriquez of San Jose, who has four boys. "It's smarter to buy here because there isn't a lot of money to buy clothes for them at the bigger stores."

She doesn't like the idea of sagging as a fashion trend and said she tries to buy belts for the boys and hem the cuffs so they don't drag. They still sag sometimes. It's uncontrollable.

Cantinflas, a well-known Mexican comic from the 1940s, was one of the first to sag, according to Enrique Flores, director of diversity and outreach at Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose. But even he wasn't trying to be fashionable. He was poor and simply couldn't afford a belt, which caused his pants to droop. Eventually, he used the look as a form of protest against society.

Later, sagging pants did become a fashion trend set by the *pachucos*, the 1950s-era Latino gang members. Even later, Latino gang members known as *cholos* adopted the look in the 1970s as a way to hide and easily access weapons in their clothes, Flores said.

That's why this fashion trend has the potential to become dangerous.

Kids in the suburbs think it's cool to look like kids from the city streets. But those kids need to watch what they take from the streets. There's no arguing that East San Jose has its problems with street gangs. And it's true that some of those gang members are sagging on purpose.

When suburban kids make their way into the cities, they're probably safe if they don't come around provoking people and trying to act like they're better than people from urban communities. But I wonder how many sagging suburban kids would know how to handle themselves on the streets if a gang member - seeing their style of dress - did confront them.

I think they're just looking for trouble that they really don't want to find. And I think the kids who are sagging out of necessity, not fashion, are doing their best to avoid trouble from the police and lawmakers who think they look like criminals.

They're not trying to look like thugs. They're just wearing the clothes their mothers gave them.

A Thai feast for less than $40

MILPITAS EATERY SERVES AFFORDABLE, TASTY MEALS

By Neha Hemmad, Jessica Li, Johnny Du and Stephanie Foo
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

We were breaking out and gaining weight fast.

Having stuffed our faces with fast food for two weeks, we were on a mission to find an alternative to burgers and fries. Armed with $40 in our pockets, we set out to find a cheap sit-down restaurant that wouldn't clog our pores and affect our waistlines.

We found a small Thai restaurant called Thai Town (1783 N. Milpitas Blvd., Milpitas), which was clean, quiet and empty.

Our waitress was quick and very patient. She brought water for everyone almost right after we sat down and brought the soup soon after. The food came more quickly than expected (in about five minutes), and overall, the service was fast and friendly.

In addition to the soup, we ordered and sampled from four lunch combinations. Each was quite large and filling.

The entrees were so economical that we had enough money to order dessert. We had three options: a drink, a serving of durian (a smelly fruit) and, the one we choose, a rice and mango combination.

We were absolutely stuffed by the time we finished dessert. There were so many leftovers, we had a take-out box for each meal. Because our meal was so big, we would recommend choosing three dishes for $16.50, instead of ordering combinations.

Each combination was $6.25, except for the pineapple fried rice, which was $6.50. The sweet rice and mango dessert was $3.95. Our total came to $31.67, and we left a $5 tip.

We had succeeded in filling our stomachs and satisfying our craving for healthy food for only a little more than $36.

MEAL REVIEWS

Here is our taste-bud analysis of the meals:

Tom yum soup (included with meal)

Neha: "It was a little diluted, but good."

Jessica: "When I first swallowed it, it was slightly spicy down my throat and I didn't like it at first, but then I got used to it."

Yellow curry and satay chicken

Neha: "I didn't like it, because there was too much coconut, and it needed more salt."

Stephanie: "The coconut gave it a very distinctive taste, which I liked. The satay chicken was well-cooked, and had some great spices on the outside, but inside it was moist and delicious."

Pad Thai

Neha: "It needed more spice, but it was good other than that."

Jessica: "The noodles were chewy, and it was sweet but a little sour."

Green curry

Jessica: "I liked it less than I liked the yellow curry because it tasted more of basil than it did of coconut."

Johnny: "Royally sucks."

Pineapple fried rice and basil tofu

Neha: "The fried rice was really good, slightly sweet, and the pineapples were fresh. The basil tofu was well-cooked, not too spicy, and not too bland."

Stephanie: "The green beans in the tofu were a little under-cooked, otherwise, it was good."

Sweet rice with mango

Jessica: "The rice and the mango balanced each other out, and they tasted best together."

Stephanie: "Even if you don't like mango, the subtle coconut taste in the rice will make you fall in love with it."

DINING ON A DIME

FOUR SPOTS THAT WON'T BREAK THE BANK

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Around lunchtime, Panda Express is always bustling with people, as shoppers line up to place their orders and slide trays full of steaming food to the cashier.

By Robby Valderrama
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Today's teens are rebellious, searching — and hungry.

And with limited cash, many young people in the Bay Area choose going out to eat as a social activity. Here are four restaurants that attract teens with quality food and value in the bustling, pricey Bay Area.

In-N-Out Burger

Why it's a hot spot for teens: In-N-Out's late hours, honest atmosphere and friendly employees make for the ideal locale for teens looking for late-night food.

Location: Various locations in the South Bay, including San Jose, Milpitas, Mountain View and Santa Clara.

Hours: 10:30 a.m.-1 a.m. Sundays-Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 a.m. Fridays-Saturdays.

Price range: Most menu items are under $3. Value meals range from $4-$6.

Web site: www.in-n-out.com

What they serve: The regular menu consists of burgers, fries, milkshakes and soft drinks. What sets In-N-Out apart is its freshness. The burgers are served on buns delivered each day with hand-leafed lettuce. French fries are hand cut every day - not cooked frozen out of a bag. The well-known secret menu lets customers order burgers "animal style" - a mustard-cooked beef patty, with pickles, grilled onions and extra spread. Or, go beyond the traditional "Double Double" (double-meat, double-cheese) with a 3x3 (three patties) or a 4x4 (four patties). The protein style burger (wrapped in lettuce instead of on a bun) is popular with people on low-carb diets. For vegetarians, In-N-Out offers grilled cheese and veggie burgers.

What teens say about it: Harker School graduate Ravi Mohan, 18, says "The burgers, fries, and shakes taste better" than those at other places.

Panda Express

Why it's a hot spot for teens: It's got a great location at the food court of Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair and young people are drawn to the inexpensive chance to try many foods -including peppers, broccoli and egg rolls - which aren't on the regular menus of a lot of American fast-food restaurants.

Location: Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair on Stevens Creek Boulevard; Westfield Shoppingtown Oakridge on Blossom Hill Road.

Hours: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Sundays, 9:45 a.m.-10 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays.

Price range: For $5.52 (plus tax), you can purchase a two-entree plate with rice or chow mein. Another entree is $1.40 more.

Web site: www.pandaexpress.com

What they serve: Traditional Chinese food such as kung pao chicken, beef broccoli, potstickers, shrimp and orange chicken. Most entrees include rice (steamed or fried) or chow mein.

What teens say about it: "You can smell Chinese food from all over the food court," teenage shopper Abri Nelson said at Valley Fair.

Little Caesar's Pizza

Why it's a hot spot for teens: For those countless teens who find themselves hungry with little money, Little Caesar's fits their situation perfectly.

Location: Various locations around the Bay Area.

Hours: 11 a.m.-10 p.m. Sundays-Thursdays, 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays.

Web site: www.littlecaesars.com

Price range: It's only 99 cents for Crazy Bread (bread sticks) and $5 for a large pepperoni or cheese pizza.

What they serve: Little Caesar's is known for its pizza and Crazy Bread, but the menu also includes chicken wings, sandwiches and salads.

What teens say about it: "I think it's cool for friends to get together and each put in $5 and get four pizzas," said Anthony Paramo, 17, of San Jose.

Taco Bell

Why it's a hot spot for teens: Similar to Little Caesar's, Taco Bell is popular with students because of its low prices and convenience. "They have good food and it's cheap," Mission San Jose Senior Ritu Ghai said.

Location: Located throughout the Bay Area.

Hours: Opens at 9 a.m. daily. On the weekends, it is open until 1:30 a.m., and until 1 a.m. Sundays-Thusdays.

Web site: www.tacobell.com

Price range: Regular tacos and burritos cost less than $1, but a great value is the "grande meal" — a combination of 10 tacos and burritos for $7.47 that's great for two.

What they serve: In addition to tacos and burritos, other items with a Mexican twist include quesadillas, Mexican pizza, gorditas and nachos.

What teens say about it: "Whenever I go to Taco Bell, I get a taco because it's only $1," said Fischer Middle School student Hilary Humphries.

El Charro serves up quality at a fair price

Mexico has crept from the South to a small location in San Jose.

El Charro, a Mexican restaurant located at 799 South First St., has much more to offer than burritos and tacos.

The savory tastes and menu quickly reveal why a restaurant doesn't have to worry much about its outside appearance if the food speaks for itself. The restaurant was established in 1956.

I walked into the faded red brick building a skeptic. But that changed immediately. We were served a bowl of complimentary, homemade tortilla chips accompanied by two bowls of salsa. One was a cilantro style that had onions and tomatoes and the other was a chili paste style. The funny thing was, even after I had my fill of lunch, I still found myself munching the crunchy triangles.

Carl Ponzio

After my stomach was full, I had to ask myself whether this was a place that my friends and I could frequent. I let my eyes wander from an amateur painting of Aztec Indians to the large booths. Because price plays such a major role in where young people eat out, I decided my friends and I would choose El Charro, especially since the prices were very reasonable for the amount of food on each plate.

The lunch menu includes dishes such as chimichangas and tostadas, and every lunch is accompanied by beans and rice. Don't know what a chimichanga is? Don't sweat it. The menu features a small description of each plate. Dinner selections come with soup or salad, beans and rice.

The whole left side of the menu appeares to be like every other Mexican restaurant in town — burritos, tacos and enchiladas.

Ah, but check out the right side of the menu. That's where the house specials are listed. They include a variety of seafood appetizers, cocktails, seafood plates and drinks. Breakfast and lunch specials are found on the back. And if someone in the party doesn't like Mexican food, El Charro offers a cheeseburger and fries for $3.95.

I ordered the flautas ($9.75) then sat back to enjoy my salad and the sounds of Carlos Santana on the jukebox. I also had a chance to try the Albondigas, a meatball soup that was very tasty.

My flautas came quickly and were devoured even faster. They were incredible. The shredded beef that peeked out of the rolled tortillas was savory and cheese generously covered the refried beans. The rice was good, but could have used a little more pizzazz. I also tried a piece of the carne asada ($9.75) — the lemon/pepper marinade was a plus to a piece of meat that was cooked to perfection. The flan dessert looked appetizing, but I simply didn't have room.

The atmosphere was great, the food was even better and it all came at a reasonable price. What more could a hungry group of teens ask for?

El Charro
WHERE: 799 S. First St. San Jose
HOURS: 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Mondays-Thursdays, 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Saturdays and 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Sundays
HOW MUCH: Breakfast, $5.95-$7.95; lunch, $5.50-$7.25; dinner: $9.75
Visa, Mastercard or cash. No checks.

FAT CHANCE

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKER RISKS HIS HEALTH TO MAKE A POINT ABOUT OUR FAST-FOOD OBSESSION

By Neeraj Berry and Victoria Tang
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

"A Pizza Hut, a Pizza Hut, Kentucky Fried Chicken and a Pizza Hut. McDonald's! McDonald's!" chants a group of overweight, jolly children at the beginning of Morgan Spurlock's documentary "Super Size Me."

Besides attracting viewers with catchy songs and humorous caricatures, Spurlock's film provides a much-needed and insightful look at the harms of eating fast food.

The film begins with the story of two girls who attempt to sue McDonald's for causing obesity. The judge rules that in order for the girls to have a case, they must prove that fast foods are directly responsible for health problems.

This inspired Spurlock, an open opponent of the fast-food industry, to set out to prove the inherent harms of consuming these products. But how to go about doing that? Eat nothing but Mickey D's for 30 days. He forces himself to eat three meals a day there, and when cashiers offer the "super size" option, he takes it.

Sound unhealthy? Spurlock thought so, too. Which is why he hires a trio of doctors and a nutritionist to advise him throughout his crusade. He has periodic checkups and soon the health experts are warning him about immediate threats to his health, including chest pains, difficulty breathing and scary cholesterol numbers that shot up 65 points.

Many times throughout the movie, doctors strongly advise him to end his experiment to save his health.

But Spurlock's mission doesn't stop at the doors of the Golden Arches. He also takes an in-depth look at school cafeterias across the nation. To his credit, Spurlock does a fantastic job exposing the unhealthy and canned or processed foods given to children on a daily basis. He goes on to conduct many experiments dealing with the effects of McDonald's propaganda on the younger generation. One shocking experiment shows kids who are able to recognize the face of Ronald McDonald but not of George Washington or Jesus Christ.

Morgan Spurlock's "Super Size Me" takes on the fast-food industry.

Many parts of the documentary are entertaining — including a graphic gastric bypass surgery complete with classical background music and a cartoon that explains how Chicken McNuggets are made. But there were several slow scenes when Spurlock conducts man-on-the-street interviews with people in Manhattan regarding their opinions about fast food. His many visits to see doctors become very repetitive (each time, they tell him his health is in danger).

The documentary seems to present only one side of the story. Spurlock gains 24.5 pounds during the making of the film, but little is made of his drop in exercise or sudden change in living conditions. The message sent to viewers is that eating at McDonald's will result in bad health regardless of the circumstances.

But overall, Spurlock's film provides much-needed warnings about eating fast food. His experiment ingrained unforgettable images. His physical and mental changes were indisputable and the unhealthy diet most Americans have is crystal clear.

Should you watch this film? Yes. Should you believe everything Spurlock says? Maybe not. But either way, just don't go before you eat.

MUSIC | Finding sound outside of mainstream

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Fans talk music before the June 22 show begins at the Gaslighter in Campbell.

Continued from Page 20

senior at Westmont High School, said it doesn't bother him that he's not part of the "in crowd."

"Music tells me to be who I want to be and do what I want to do," he said. "It's basically all for the music."

On a recent evening at the Gaslighter Theater in Campbell, more than 200 young people milled around waiting for Sentenced to Burn to begin their set of black, symphonic metal.

Most of the teens and young people were dressed for the show. They wore black t-shirts featuring gory scenes or castles in ruins; jeans or Dickies that either covered a tattered pair of Converse or were rolled up to the shins displaying a pair of surplus boots.

"It affects the way I dress, I tend to like things with an atmosphere," said Ayax, keyboardist for Sentenced to Burn. "My life is pretty much metal."

Ayax said he and others turn to the Gaslighter for a place to go where they can find people who talk, dress and act like them.

It's not uncommon to see people dressed like the metalheads at the Gaslighter on the streets of San Jose or standing outside a local record store. But many young people who are into styles and music that stray from MTV culture feel they are being judged and looked down upon.

"Sometimes it can be demeaning," said Branham High School student Joey Bowler, who favors heavy metal. "But I'm the type of person who will support what I like."

Metal is just one genre of music that is not recognized greatly by the mainstream media or accepted by other music fans.

Campbell resident Sergy El-Morshedy 17, is a fan of underground hip-hop. Unlike mainstream hip-hop, which focuses on money, cars and women, underground hip-hop explores more metaphors and deeper issues.

Sergy appreciates artists like Atmosphere, Sage Francis and Prozac Turner, even though they are not popular hip-hop groups.

"I listen to underground hip-hop and a lot of mainstreamers will say it's crappy," he said.

Sean Wilson, a student at South Side High School in Alaska, is a dial-turner who gathers with people who listen to what he does — mainstream rap.

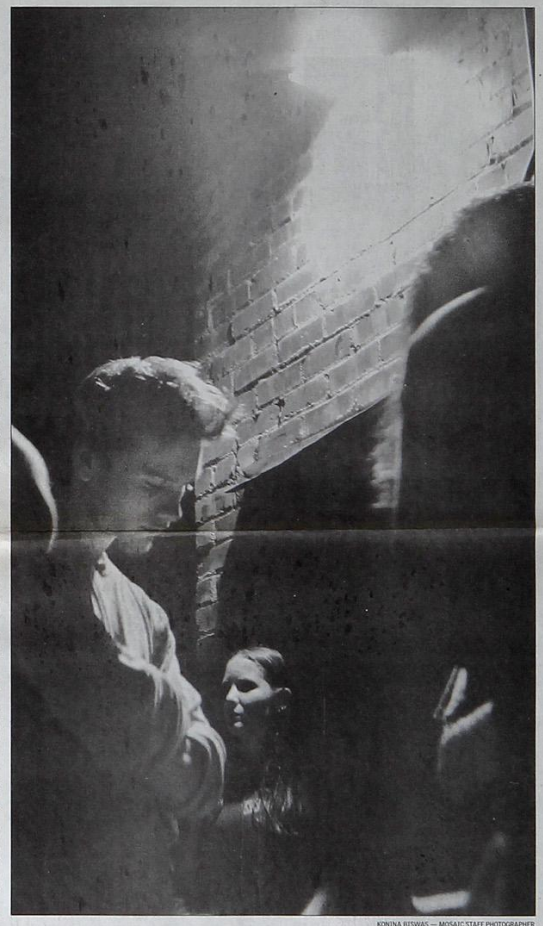
"If I feel uncomfortable around a certain group of people, I will find a group of people who like rap," said Sean, after talking about one of his favorite artists, Sean "P. Diddy" Combs.

Tommy Selves, who listens to heavy metal and punk, said he and his friends are not much different from teens who listen to maigstream music.

They still hang out with friends and spend time doing other things.

"I'm a 'Star Wars' freak," said Bairese, when asked what he likes to do in his spare time.

"And I still play with Legos."



KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

After Sentenced to Burn's show, singer Justin McDowell reflects on the performance with fellow band members.

ENTERTAIN | Bay Area teenagers explore arts scene

Continued from Page 20

Erickson, the executive director of Theatre Bay Area, a San Francisco-based company that works to strengthen and promote theater in the region. "Kids who are involved in theater are more likely to attend shows."

Live performances have several perks that don't exist in other forms of entertainment. The interaction between the performers and the crowd creates a one-of-a-kind pizzazz that isn't found in high-tech forms of recreation, event organizers said.

"Slam poetry is the distillation of emotion," said Rebecca DeKeuster, who hosts the poetry slam at Waves. "It is energetic, physical and involves the audience. Humans need to hear each other and make a connection."

Comedy Sports, similar to television show "Whose Line is it Anyway?," is competitive improvisational comedy between two teams, complete with an umpire and an Astroturf stage on the second floor of Bella Mia restaurant in San Jose. The show involves participation from audience members, who offer suggestions to the players. The audience also might have a chance to choose games, call fouls and volunteer for a variety of tasks. Ultimately, the audience decides which team wins.

'Slam poetry is the distillation of emotion. It is energetic, physical and involves the audience.'

— REBECCA DEKEUSFER, WHO HOSTS THE POETRY SLAM AT WAVES

"I like how it is funny because they are feeding off the audience's reactions so that we feel more involved," said Katie Warren, 19, of San Jose.

Compared to recorded programs, live productions tend to offer their audiences more of a motivational experience, McIntyre said.

"When you see actors in a play in front of you, it is tangible inspiration," she said. "People on television have the perfect life on screen, but the artists in front of you can make you dream. They are more realistic."

Teens have differing thoughts about live entertainment vs. high-tech fun.

"It is hard to act live on stage," said 16-year-old Homestead High School student Shir Hasson. "Movie actors can re-do scenes and make lots of money, but actors in plays have to practice and get it right."

But 18-year-old Orr Golevarg of Sunnyvale saw it differently.

"Live performances are slow," he said. "They are boring unless you know the performers."

Jeff Kramer, a player in the Comedy Sports show, said there's nothing like seeing something live.

"Picture watching something on television at home as opposed to being there," he said. "The excitement of the crowd is overwhelming. The first thing you would say to someone who didn't go is, 'You should have been there!' "

MOVIES | Classic 'Around the World' beats remake starring Chan

Continued from Page 20

showcase of Chan's stunts and fight scenes. I couldn't recall any of the scenes two days later, while images from Anderson's film are still ingrained in my mind.

The cast of Coraci's movie places great emphasis on physical humor. The stunts, falls and animated expressions take talent, but I still feel that their portrayal of the characters lacks depth and emotions seem underplayed.

Anderson's film had a much more in-depth perspective. The lack of physical humor forced the actors to pull spectacular performances. Humor came from dialogue and actors carried themselves as the characters they played, not high-paid stunt artists.

Technology sides with Coraci's version. The 1956 classic was plagued with obvious examples of special effects — something I regrettably have to hold the older film accountable for. Modern advances have given moviemakers new techniques, including the green screen, which is digitally enhanced to simulate various backgrounds. The green screen allows Phileas Fogg to soar through the air. Coraci rushes the plot, but definitely tries to impress with the explosions and sweeping global views.

Sara Malik

Anderson's film had some elaborate scenes of bullfighting, greenery and ships. On the other hand, Coraci's most elaborate scene is either the view of Fogg's house or the palace of Prince Hapi, played by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The cinematography seemed much more worldly in Anderson's original, and it gave me the sensation that I was present in the film.

In a day and age where people rush about most of the day and traffic stands still at rush hour, time is unforgiving. Anderson's "Around the World in 80 Days" was more than three hours long. Coraci's version is a polite hour and a half. Venturing to see the 1956 original is a considerable task and requires significant time.

For those of us with shorter attention spans, 2004's "Around the World in 80 Days" is the solution.

I found the original movie more rewarding, but as a student I don't have three hours to watch a movie.

Anderson's movie will always be the original film version of "Around the World in 80 Days." Comic relief from the real world comes in the form of Jackie Chan, but if you want a true movie experience, classics are the way to go.

DAVID APPLEBY — BUENA VISTA PICTURES

Passepartout (Jackie Chan), left, Monique (Cecile De France) and Phineas Fogg (Steve Coogan) take to the skies in "Around the World in 80 Days."

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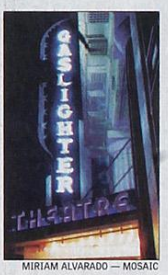
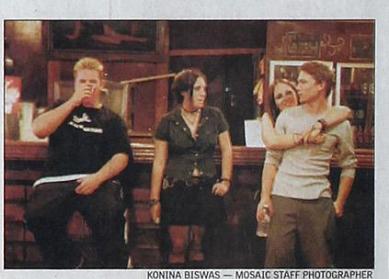
FEEDING YOUR FACE
Four places for a cash-strapped teen to get a cheap meal
PAGE 18

MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Tommy Selves, left, a Westmont High School senior, and Erika Hawkins, a student at De Anza College, wait for the show to start.



MIRIAM ALVARADO — MOSAIC
Shows at the Gaslighter feature upcoming bands.



KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Singer Justin McDowell, far right, and his fiancee Sara Anderson, second from right, relax with fellow music fans.

SOUNDS FROM THE UNDERGROUND

FOR SOME FANS, THEIR CHOICE OF MUSIC ISN'T MADE FOR THE MASSES

By Carl Ponzio
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Bassist Tony Bursese of the band Sentenced to Burn feels that he has been ostracized because of his first love — heavy metal music.

"I've always been considered an outsider," said Bursese, 19, a San Jose resident and De Anza College student. "I've never taken anyone's opinion, but I try to be cool with people."

The types of music young people listen to today vary greatly — and many say it's hard to find tolerance for tastes outside of the mainstream. While some teens listen to whatever they find on the radio dial, others flock to sounds that are slowly rising from the subterranean venues of their communities.

"Music tells me to be who I want to be and do what I want to do. It's basically all for the music."
— TOMMY SELVES, WESTMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Whether they listen to hip-hop, Goth or country music, many of these people say they are often misunderstood and may appear intimidating and different. But, they say, they are not so different from anyone else.

Deena Weinstein, a sociology professor at DePaul University in Chicago and author of the book "Heavy Metal: The Music and Culture," said people who listen to music that's outside the mainstream often feel ostracized.

But Weinstein said she's seen research that suggests teens who listen to heavy metal music are actually less depressed than other teens — a notion that debunks the stereotype of the "metalhead."

With artists like Britney Spears and 50 Cent at the top of the charts right now, it can be tough for people who like bands such as Dimmu Borgir and Fear Factory to feel like they are accepted by society.

"I don't consider myself in the mainstream or out of it," said 23-year-old Billy Young. "In the trend area I consider myself independent, mystic."

Tommy Selves, who will be a senior at Westmont High School,

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KONINA BISWAS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Justin McDowell, lead singer of Sentenced to Burn, performs during a June 22 show at the Gaslighter in Campbell.

Beyond movies, music for fun

TEENS TRY OUT THEATER, COMEDY, POETRY SLAMS

By Victoria Tang
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

In the dimly lit bar, a single yellow spotlight bounced off the red velvet stage curtains to accent Kyle Houston's black Foo-Fighters shirt and baggy gray shorts.

The San Jose teen stepped behind the microphone and began his poetic message:

"Conform to your individuality without being a conformist individual.

"Cause trying to be like everyone else is not cool."

Houston, 18, looks like a typical teenager but his passion for poetry sets him apart.

He's become a regular at Waves Smokehouse & Saloon in downtown San Jose, which becomes a poetry hotspot each Tuesday. On stage, he criticizes the way young people follow societal trends and compares them to mass-produced products that all look the same.

Poetry slams, much like live theater and improvisational comedy shows, are gaining in popularity among Bay Area teens as an alternative form of entertainment that's competing with movies, concerts, television and Internet surfing. And the hosts of these events are thrilled to see teens becoming more involved.

"We want kids and teenagers to see the importance of bringing art into people's lives," said Jill McIntyre, spokeswoman for San Jose Repertory Theater.

The Rep isn't alone in urging young people to sample live theater.

"We encourage kids to be involved in theater productions - to act, direct, do tech work and design costumes," said Brad

See **ENTERTAIN**, Page 19

Sara Malik

A tale of two movies

I'm a firm believer that remakes rarely outshine the original movie's acclaim.

To test my theory, I saw two very different films, both based on the Jules Verne classic "Around the World in 80 Days": director Michael Anderson's 1956 version and the latest effort from director Frank Coraci. After reviewing and analyzing both films, the classic wins hands down over this year's Jackie Chan rendition.

I judged both films on the following five categories: plot, acting, special effects, cinematography and length.

While the 2004 version was more visually appealing at times, its plot was far from perfect. Frankly, I find it hard to believe that a "true romance" blossoms after Phileas Fogg catches a glimpse of travel companion Monique's leg. The newer film also strays far too much from the book. Instead of an epic journey around the world, it turns into a

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