



**The Scion:  
Lawn mower  
on steroids**

**BUSINESS**  
**Teens fuel surge  
of cool gadgets**

PAGE 3

**ARTS**

**Hip-hop in the South Bay**

PAGE 5

SAN JOSE URBAN JOURNALISM WORKSHOP

THURSDAY, JULY 10, 2003

## A changing sports field

DIVERSITY DRIVES POPULARITY OF BADMINTON, TENNIS, OTHER 'NON-TRADITIONAL' GAMES

By Manu Jain and Ajay Krishnamurthy  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Sweat dripping from his brow, 16-year-old Chris Chen anxiously waited on the bench for his chance to get into the game.

Absent-mindedly taping his aching wrists, Chris stared out onto the court, where his friends and little brother battled. A voice called out to him to quickly get onto the court — he had "lost."

Chris slowly got up from the bench, wiped off his black basketball shorts — and picked up his badminton racket and a shuttlecock.

Chris, a junior at Fremont High School in Sunnyvale, is just one of thousands of Bay Area teens who have turned away from the "all-American" sports of football, baseball and basket-

ball and picked up a new breed of athletics, such as badminton, tennis, soccer and lacrosse.

"Nationwide, the two biggest shifts in the last couple decades have been a burning interest in soccer and a flight from baseball," said Kevin Matthews, director for external affairs at the Center for Sport in Society at Northeastern University.

The evolving culture of sports mirrors the Bay Area's increasing diversity.

"The diversity in the Bay Area strengthens badminton," said Phu Khuu, Saratoga High School's badminton coach. "We have every nationality you can think of."

Khuu is the owner of the Bintang Badminton Academy in Mountain View, and he privately

trains hundreds of teens interested in playing competitive badminton. Khuu's team recently took home eight medals at the U.S. Junior Nationals in Louisiana. He disputes the notion that badminton is a "soft" sport.

"It's easier to play, but it's hard to play at a high level," Khuu said. "You need the gracefulness of ballet but also the strength of a wrestler."

Fremont High School junior Terrence Hun said he quit playing basketball because so many of his friends started playing badminton.

"I used to play basketball but I lost interest in basketball," he said.

But some say the growing interest in sports

See **SPORTS**, Page 13

## File sharing could cost you

RECORD COMPANIES THREATEN USERS WITH HEFTY LAWSUITS

By Kimberly Lien

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

You may soon find yourself in need of a lawyer if you're one of the 60 million people who are using an Internet file-sharing program to swap music files with other users.

Starting next month, the Recording Industry Association of America is planning to file suits against the people who allow others to download music files from their computers through file-sharing programs such as Grokster, LimeWire and Kazaa. The RIAA will be asking for money — as much as \$150,000 per song shared — but the suits ultimately aren't about the money.

The RIAA simply wants computer users to quit sharing music illegally.

"We're not looking to bankrupt anybody," Amy Weiss, RIAA spokeswoman, said. "We are just protecting the rights of people who work hard. From the Dixie Chicks to Wynonna Judd to the Rolling Stones, they don't want their music traded illegally online."

And while the RIAA makes it sound like lawsuits will bring an end to music piracy on the Internet, the issue remains clouded. Grokster and the other peer-to-peer networks (also known as P2Ps) are arguing their positions in Washington, D.C. The Electronic Frontier Foundation is stepping up to protect the rights of individuals using the Internet. And, frankly, some users are calling the RIAA's bluff, refusing to stop using the pro-

See **FILE SHARING**, Page 12

## Forget about the phone

MORE TEENS CHOOSE INSTANT MESSAGING TO REACH FRIENDS

By Olga Levin

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

For decades, teenagers have relied on the telephone as their main source of communication. It wasn't uncommon to spend hours chatting and gossiping — or fighting with siblings over who got to use the phone.

These days, it is the computer they're fighting over.

Teenagers have abandoned the telephone as their primary means of communication, and now many rely solely on instant messaging — a way to chat online, with an unlimited number of conversations.

"Just like the technologies that preceded it — the telephone, voice mail, e-mail, cell phones and pagers — instant messaging has gone from a novelty to mainstream use, fundamentally changing the way many people communicate," said Sheila Tran, spokeswoman for America Online, provider of AOL Instant Messenger, the most widely used form of instant messaging. "And it's a way of life for teens today."

According to AOL's research, 93 percent of 13- to 17-year-olds who use the Internet use instant messaging systems, and 73 percent of them say they use instant messaging more than e-mail.

See **IM**, Page 14

## INSTANT MESSAGE EXCHANGE

Here's an example of typical conversations.

**Mosaic2003:** hey  
**Friend:** hi  
**Mosaic2003:** what's up?  
**Friend:** nm ... just chillin  
**Mosaic2003:** cool, same here  
**Friend:** wanna go hang out?  
**Mosaic2003:** yea sure  
**Friend:** I'll ask mike too  
**Friend:** hey mike  
**Mike:** hey friend  
**Friend:** wanna hang out with me and mosaic?  
**Mike:** yea sure  
**Friend:** k he's coming too  
**Mosaic2003:** alright do you wanna go eat?  
**Friend:** ok I'll pick you up in 10 min  
**Mosaic2003:** ok bye

## WHAT A GRIND



Ernie Guerrero sails over stairs at the Plaza de Cesar Chavez in San Jose. Skating is not allowed in public places in San Jose so local skaters take a break when police roll by. More photographs, **PAGE 8**.

MIKE REIS — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

## Schools take big hit in budget crisis

VICTIMS OF SHORTFALL: LIBRARIES, YEARBOOK AND CHEERLEADING

By Rupa Dev

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

There will be no librarians to help students find books in San Jose Unified schools next year. Students at Lynbrook High School won't have yearbook class anymore. And in Morgan Hill, kids will be walking instead of taking the bus.

From cheerleading to journalism, from football to school counselors, Bay Area schools have had to make deep cuts.

And it hurts. "I was really upset when yearbook class was cut because it feels like we got shafted for our senior year," said Julie Chen, 17, a senior, who was a member of the yearbook staff at Lynbrook High School.

Some students said budget cuts will make their lives more hectic.

"I won't be able to take statistics AP next year," said Peter Peng, 17, who will be a senior at Monta Vista High School. "I am going to have to commute to De Anza College if I still want to take the class."

This year was one of California's worst budget years, as the state grappled with a record \$38.2 billion deficit. In past years, the state was flush as revenues skyrocketed, fueled by the success of the technology boom and the high-flying stock market. California spending had

See **BUDGET**, Page 13

## GROWING UP WITH CANCER

YOUNG SUFFERERS LEARN HARSH LESSONS

By Terra Perez

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Kathy Gordon remembers vividly what it felt like when she was rushed to the hospital with a temperature of 104 and swollen lymph nodes.

For a split second, she thought, "Are you going to tell me I'm going to die?"

The doctor told Kathy she had cancer. And dying was a possibility.

She was 12 years old.

"It felt as though I was on a roller coaster without my seat belt," said Kathy, now 17, who lives in Dixon near Sacramento.

Before being diagnosed with

acute lymphoma, Kathy was like so many other 12-year-olds; she loved basketball, roller skating, running around with friends and going to the mall. After she was told she had cancer, all Kathy wanted to do was try her best to prolong her life.

Kathy remembers the first few weeks after being diagnosed as a whirlwind. There were frequent check-ups, blood drawing and even spinal taps.

Then came chemotherapy. She lost her hair. Though that's a tough thing to deal with at 12, Kathy took it in stride because her family and friends were so sup-

See **CANCER**, Page 14



GABRIELLE FINCUTTER — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Justin Mickelson, 19, greets Jory Coticchio, 19. Mickelson was diagnosed with cancer at 17 but is in remission.

## Patriotism is no excuse to ignore civil rights

The national unity that arose after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 was a touching reminder that the American people are capable of great patriotism.

For me, it seemed like a horrifying sense of déjà vu.

Citizens were discarding the protections of the Constitution as if they were going out of style; indeed, the new trend was to be patriotic, to help Uncle Sam fight the enemy.

A zealous nationalism not seen since the Cold War era has



Ryan Bell

enveloped the nation. As for the hundreds of Muslim men held captive without legal representation after Sept. 11? They were probably terrorists any-

way; lock 'em all up and let the U.S. Justice Department sort them out. And any action that opposed these actions must be a communist-er, un-American.

Even respected celebrities have been shunned and blacklisted for voicing their opinions. As a result, John Q. Public has

See **PATRIOTISM**, Page 13

# WE ARE THE MOSAIC

**Born and raised in San Jose, BILAL AHMED, 16, is a Pakistani teen who aspires to be like his hero Malcolm X. A man he considers a strong leader. Bilal lives with his mother, father and two sisters.**

Bilal loves blue objects, pizza and cloudy days. When asked about his favorite activity, he said, "I enjoy playing basketball and I love staying up late."

If he had a superpower, it would be to possess god-like strength. He prefers "Mad TV" over "Saturday Night Live" because the show starts earlier and, in his opinion, is funnier.

His favorite country is the United Arab Emirates. He said it has a great nightlife. Bilal plans to go to the University of California-Berkeley or UCLA but has not decided on a major.

—*Rosie Choi*

**RYAN BELL, 13**, is a year-old with a great sense of humor. He will be a senior at Branham High School in the fall and editor-in-chief of his high school newspaper, *The Bear Witness*.

Ryan describes himself as friendly and easygoing, but able to get down to business when necessary.

"When it comes to work, I'm a perfectionist," he said. He especially enjoys creating layouts for his newspaper.

When he's not busy, Ryan tries to kick back and relax with his friends. An only child, he has a dog named "Toya," a cocker spaniel and poodle mix.

When speaking about journalism, his eyes light up. He hopes to attend San Jose State University as a journalism major after he graduates and become an entertainment writer for a magazine.

—*Amy Krishnamoorthy*

**DEREK BRANT, 16**, was raised in a semi-urban neighborhood in Milpitas and lives with his mom, Cybil, his stepfather, Ahmed Abdil, and his half-brother, Hashim Ali.

Derek was on the honor roll throughout elementary and middle school, playing basketball with his friends in his spare time. Derek attends Milpitas High School.

He enjoys dancing, socializing and playing sports with his friends. He found rap is his own form of art at the beginning of his freshman year and has written many unreleased pieces. Derek feels that rap is "a way to get things off my mind, and it's the best way to express talent when I'm not writing."

He's looking forward to going to college, where he plans to major in journalism business, but he also has hopes of making it in the entertainment industry.

—*Toscar Elassal*

**RONNIE CHOI, 16**, is a student at Westwood High School in Campbell. He hopes to attend the University of Southern California, University of California-Santa Barbara or Northwestern University, and he plans to pursue a career in journalism. "If that doesn't work out, he hopes to be a reality TV show."

Ronnie's hobbies include playing video games and downloading Japanese animation, television shows and music from the Internet.

His favorite color is brown. Reading books and playing the piano, trumpet, or flute are just some of the things Ronnie does in his spare time.

If he could have the power to do anything, he would want to be able to read people's minds because he is curious to know what others think.

—*Bilal Ahmed*

**ROSA DEVI, 17**, has lived mostly in Cupertino except for one year in India. "In the sixth grade, Hewlett-Packard transferred my dad to New Delhi, India," Rosa said. "I was supposed to stay there for two months with him, and he was supposed to stay four months."

But the whole family ended up staying much longer than that.

"My parents said, 'Well, it's just four more months.' We ended up staying for a whole year, and I only had two duffel bags of clothes."

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

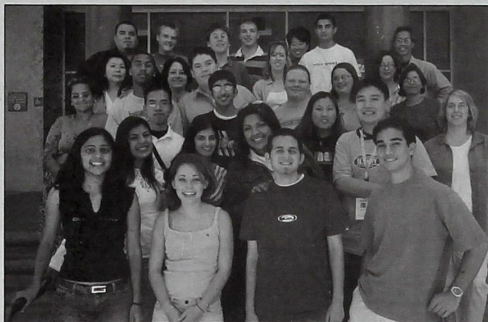
—*Karina Heerto*

**STEPHEN GONZALES, 16**, came to the Mosaic program with the hope of improving his journalism skills so that he could follow his dream of becoming a food critic for a newspaper.

The ambitious Santa Clara High School sports fan is extremely active at school, participating in the school newspaper and news conventions clubs. He also has a great talent for playing basketball, but he would like to help him grow. This mindset and his outgoing attitude aid him when

**YASSER ELASSAL, 16**, just like his name, Yasser, 17, is an interesting young man to meet. He was born in Egypt and his family moved to Houston when he was 3. Yasser's first language was Arabic, but, like everything else he comes across, he would learn for him to learn English.

He is now a senior at Live Oak in



Members of the Mosaic 2003 staff include high school students from around the Bay Area and journalists from the San Jose Mercury News. In two weeks, they learned about reporting and writing stories and produced the Mosaic, a 16-page newspaper.

## Real World Mosaic 2003

**By Nicole Mehta**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

This is the story of its struggles, thrown onto the campus of San Jose State University to create a newspaper called Mosaic.

The silence was deafening as we gathered in a dark lecture hall for the next two weeks. San broke the silence early in the week with a pizza incident for a probably late to forget, but all of us will remember forever. From that moment on, we were building memories of inside jokes and experiences that would fill the days and nights. We were becoming a tight circle of friends that we thought we would never lose.

Our editors warned us that the deadlines were real, but it didn't sink in until they isolated us from others and threatened to glue us to our chairs. We told them that we were waiting for phone calls to be returned. We told them that our on-the-spot interviews were tougher than we thought. We worked hard and long — and still they sent us back for more.

It made the off-hours seem much more fun.

We laughed ourselves silly when Rups did this weird thing with her Rabbis. Rabbis, Rabbis. We sang and danced in Club 105, the place where their own beer was.

We filled the building with applause when Terns — our own "American Idol" — sang out with a voice that no one would have ever suspected. As fun as the late nights were, the mornings sucked as we got up on every day as we forced ourselves out of bed and into the newsroom of the Spartan Daily, the place where

youth and journalism — and plenty of pranks — would come together. We learned how to shoot pictures and conduct interviews just like the pros do. Joe Nalati, the publisher of the Mercury News, ate lunch with us one afternoon and talked openly about the real-life newspaper experiences we were living through.

Our editors warned us that the deadlines were real, but it didn't sink in until they isolated us from others and threatened to glue us to our chairs. We told them that we were waiting for phone calls to be returned. We told them that our on-the-spot interviews were tougher than we thought. We worked hard and long — and still they sent us back for more.

It made the off-hours seem much more fun.

We laughed ourselves silly when Rups did this weird thing with her Rabbis. Rabbis, Rabbis. We sang and danced in Club 105, the place where their own beer was.

We filled the building with applause when Terns — our own "American Idol" — sang out with a voice that no one would have ever suspected. As fun as the late nights were, the mornings sucked as we got up on every day as we forced ourselves out of bed and into the newsroom of the Spartan Daily, the place where

reporting for the school newspaper and his own school paper. He doesn't have much time for leisure because he is always busy with student body events and stage-managing drama productions.

Yasser's musical preference is alternative rock, and he played the drums for a while. His favorite type of drum is the snare, and sometimes he taps his hand and fingers on his knees as he makes rhythms in his head.

Yasser said he prefers to write about technology and science. Although he doesn't plan to pursue a career in journalism, he believes that when he becomes a scientist one day, these writing skills will come in handy after he makes a discovery.

—*Derek Bryant*

"Happiness is like pee in your pants — everyone can see it, but only you can smell it," said **CARULLI**.

**FINCIUTER, 18**, who is self-proclaimed as "Giggling Gabby."

She has lived in Menlo Park for her first three years in Washington with her family to San Jose.

Manu and Gabby's earliest and favorite memories as a child was a trip to the San Diego Zoo. She remembers getting a stuffed panda and thinking she was China.

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

—*Karina Heerto*

**STEPHEN GONZALES, 16**, came to the Mosaic program with the hope of improving his journalism skills so that he could follow his dream of becoming a food critic for a newspaper.

The ambitious Santa Clara High School sports fan is extremely active at school, participating in the school newspaper and news conventions clubs. He also has a great talent for playing basketball, but he would like to help him grow. This mindset and his outgoing attitude aid him when

**YASSER ELASSAL, 16**, just like his name, Yasser, 17, is an interesting young man to meet. He was born in Egypt and his family moved to Houston when he was 3. Yasser's first language was Arabic, but, like everything else he comes across, he would learn for him to learn English.

He is now a senior at Live Oak in

**ROSA DEVI, 17**, has lived mostly in Cupertino except for one year in India. "In the sixth grade, Hewlett-Packard transferred my dad to New Delhi, India," Rosa said. "I was supposed to stay there for two months with him, and he was supposed to stay four months."

But the whole family ended up staying much longer than that.

"My parents said, 'Well, it's just four more months.' We ended up staying for a whole year, and I only had two duffel bags of clothes."

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

—*Karina Heerto*

**STEPHEN GONZALES, 16**, came to the Mosaic program with the hope of improving his journalism skills so that he could follow his dream of becoming a food critic for a newspaper.

The ambitious Santa Clara High School sports fan is extremely active at school, participating in the school newspaper and news conventions clubs. He also has a great talent for playing basketball, but he would like to help him grow. This mindset and his outgoing attitude aid him when

**YASSER ELASSAL, 16**, just like his name, Yasser, 17, is an interesting young man to meet. He was born in Egypt and his family moved to Houston when he was 3. Yasser's first language was Arabic, but, like everything else he comes across, he would learn for him to learn English.

He is now a senior at Live Oak in

**KIMBERLY LEIN, 17**, is an American-born Chinese girl raised in San Jose. The graduate of Mount Pleasant High School will attend University of California-Los Angeles this fall.

Kimberly participated in the Chinese/Vietnamese club, where she danced traditional hot dances. She also was involved with the Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) club.

Kimberly was part of Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID), which represented minority students and aided teachers and counselors, tutored students and did other community service activities. Kim plans to major in art history at UCLA. Her dream job is to be an appraiser for "The Antiques Road Show" or to work as a model.

—*Olga Levin*

Cruising in a Mini Cooper would be a dream for **THOM MAU, 16**, known as John. The Hives would be blasting in the CD player and he would be on his way to stroll in Alamogordo Park.

This self-proclaimed "photo freak" would make sure he had his camera handy, in case he came across the perfect picture during his walk.

John, who "lives and breathes the newspaper" will be the editor-in-chief of his school newspaper at Overfelt High School in the fall.

So whether you see John cruising in a Mini (I listen to anything besides country), playing a game ("only when I'm winning") or sipping on a coffee while he lives his dream of traveling the world, he will go at it like a "total freak," he said.

—*Manu Jain*

**NICOLE MEHTA, 18**, is an outgoing sports fanatic, born in Mountain View. Nicole recently graduated from Fremont High School in Sunnyvale.

Her biggest accomplishment so far has been becoming team captain for the girls' Bay State League, where she competed against five other schools writing and editing poetry.

Nicole will be attending San Diego State University and wants to major in communications. Her goal in life is to have her own sports show on ESPN or Fox Sports.

As for her favorite NBA basketball team, it's the Warriors. Her favorite player is "I love Kobe," she said.

—*Terra Perez*

**STACY LOPPEL, 18**, became fascinated with movies, specifically fantasy, at a young age.

"I was only in middle school when I came across Terry Brooks' *The Sword of Shannara* series. I was hooked ever since," Stacy said.

She graduated from Glen High School, where she was president of the Bookclub club. Bookclub was created by one of her friends to discuss and change different works of literature.

Stacy is currently working for a long-lasting friendship and creative professions that will help her move on to the story of Real World Mosaic 2003.

reporting for the school newspaper and his own school paper. He doesn't have much time for leisure because he is always busy with student body events and stage-managing drama productions.

Yasser's musical preference is alternative rock, and he played the drums for a while. His favorite type of drum is the snare, and sometimes he taps his hand and fingers on his knees as he makes rhythms in his head.

Yasser said he prefers to write about technology and science. Although he doesn't plan to pursue a career in journalism, he believes that when he becomes a scientist one day, these writing skills will come in handy after he makes a discovery.

—*Derek Bryant*

"Happiness is like pee in your pants — everyone can see it, but only you can smell it," said **CARULLI**.

**FINCIUTER, 18**, who is self-proclaimed as "Giggling Gabby."

She has lived in Menlo Park for her first three years in Washington with her family to San Jose.

Manu and Gabby's earliest and favorite memories as a child was a trip to the San Diego Zoo. She remembers getting a stuffed panda and thinking she was China.

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

—*Karina Heerto*

**STEPHEN GONZALES, 16**, came to the Mosaic program with the hope of improving his journalism skills so that he could follow his dream of becoming a food critic for a newspaper.

The ambitious Santa Clara High School sports fan is extremely active at school, participating in the school newspaper and news conventions clubs. He also has a great talent for playing basketball, but he would like to help him grow. This mindset and his outgoing attitude aid him when

**YASSER ELASSAL, 16**, just like his name, Yasser, 17, is an interesting young man to meet. He was born in Egypt and his family moved to Houston when he was 3. Yasser's first language was Arabic, but, like everything else he comes across, he would learn for him to learn English.

He is now a senior at Live Oak in

**ROSA DEVI, 17**, has lived mostly in Cupertino except for one year in India. "In the sixth grade, Hewlett-Packard transferred my dad to New Delhi, India," Rosa said. "I was supposed to stay there for two months with him, and he was supposed to stay four months."

But the whole family ended up staying much longer than that.

"My parents said, 'Well, it's just four more months.' We ended up staying for a whole year, and I only had two duffel bags of clothes."

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

—*Karina Heerto*

# Business

## Teens live on the cutting edge

### Cell phone, Internet connection a part of their everyday lives

**By Kimberly Lein**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Finding Jimmy Ma is never really a challenge. Between his time on AOL Instant Messenger and a cell phone that rarely lives in his Jimmy's friends and parents now pretty much find him any time of the day.

"I'm going out. I have to have my cell phone," said Jimmy, 17. "My friends will call me, and most of the time my mom, too."

Like many other teenagers, Jimmy's life

revolves around technology and he's not just instant messaging and the cell phone. Jimmy spends time playing games on his PlayStation, and it seems as if his at-home DSL connection works in hardest when he downloads music from the Web. None of it seems strange to him, maybe because his friends are all chatting online and carrying cell phones, too.

But his parents are sometimes surprised



Young people are often toying with products adults are still trying to understand. Like, the latest crop of cellular phones with built-in digital cameras.

**By Yasser Elassal**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

It doesn't seem too long ago that cell phones were only for the elite and one had to have a hand of an elite player. But technological innovation have hit the market quickly in the 21st century — and what he today could easily find itself in the yard sale pile tomorrow.

Teenagers play a big role in deciding what the next must-have gadget will be. They are part of a generation that has grown up with

technology at their fingertips. They're not afraid to try something new. And they're not afraid to do something that comes across as a waste of their money.

That explains why teens are sometimes toying with products adults are still trying to understand. Like, for example, the newest advancement in cellular phones: the built-in digital camera.

—*See TECHNOLOGY, Page 4*

## Game rating system grows

### SOME PARENTS SAY CHANGES AREN'T ENOUGH

**By Raga Dev**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

The Entertainment Software Rating Board recently added four new categories to its video game rating system. Some parents and advocacy groups say they are skeptical about how effective the changes will be.

The ESRB, the organization that oversees the video game rating system, hopes these new and older labels will help consumers better understand the extent of violence within a video game.

"The ESRB exists to provide parents and other consumers with the information they need to make informed purchasing decisions," said Patricia Vance, president of the ESRB.

The new descriptions offer even more detail about the need of violence in video games and include phrases like Intense Violence, Extreme Violence, Cartoon Violence and Sexual Violence.

For example, a game with an Intense Violence rating would say, "Graphic and realistic-looking depictions of murder and assault. May involve extreme and/or realistic blood, guns, weapons and depictions of human injury and death."

The four new content descriptors are subcategories of the four major rating categories, which are divided by age appropriateness: EC (early childhood) for ages 3 and older, E (everyone) for ages 6 and older, T (teen) for ages 13 and older, and M (mature) for ages 17 and older. (A adult) is only available for adults. The new descriptions join 26 rating categories that are used to rate video games.

But some parents aren't certain the new categories will do enough to protect children from violent video games, and still may not offer enough information.

Gabe Korman, a mother of two boys ages 12 and 13, believes the rating system is "a little bit confusing."

"I wish they could rate the 'real' games more effectively," Korman said. "I think the system is becoming very different from a 13-year-old and a 17-year-old, so his definition is becoming a rating and a 'wide' range."

Another mother, Asha Singh, is skeptical about the rating system.

"I only buy games that are rated E for everyone or M for mature," Singh said. "But still, I think that some of the E-rated games are not appropriate for kids age 6."

Organizations like the Lion & Lamb Project, which was created to monitor the marketing of violence to kids, are also unsure how effective the additions to the new system will be.

"Adding these four descriptions to video games is a 'check,' said Lindsey Schaefer, a program associate for the Lion & Lamb Project. "Kids can still walk into a store and buy a rated video game with extreme violence if they wanted to."

—*See CONNECTED, Page 4*

**STACY LOPPEL, 18**, became fascinated with movies, specifically fantasy, at a young age.

"I was only in middle school when I came across Terry Brooks' *The Sword of Shannara* series. I was hooked ever since," Stacy said.

She graduated from Glen High School, where she was president of the Bookclub club. Bookclub was created by one of her friends to discuss and change different works of literature.

Stacy is currently working for a long-lasting friendship and creative professions that will help her move on to the story of Real World Mosaic 2003.

reporting for the school newspaper and his own school paper. He doesn't have much time for leisure because he is always busy with student body events and stage-managing drama productions.

Yasser's musical preference is alternative rock, and he played the drums for a while. His favorite type of drum is the snare, and sometimes he taps his hand and fingers on his knees as he makes rhythms in his head.

Yasser said he prefers to write about technology and science. Although he doesn't plan to pursue a career in journalism, he believes that when he becomes a scientist one day, these writing skills will come in handy after he makes a discovery.

—*Derek Bryant*

"Happiness is like pee in your pants — everyone can see it, but only you can smell it," said **CARULLI**.

**FINCIUTER, 18**, who is self-proclaimed as "Giggling Gabby."

She has lived in Menlo Park for her first three years in Washington with her family to San Jose.

Manu and Gabby's earliest and favorite memories as a child was a trip to the San Diego Zoo. She remembers getting a stuffed panda and thinking she was China.

She attended Queen of Apostles school for elementary and junior high and Presentation High School in the fall. She plans to attend West Valley College and study business and photography. After she graduates from college, she hopes to move to New Zealand and pursue photography there.

—*Karina Heerto*

**STEPHEN GONZALES, 16**, came to the Mosaic program with the hope of improving his journalism skills so that he could follow his dream of becoming a food critic for a newspaper.

The ambitious Santa Clara High School sports fan is extremely active at school, participating in the school newspaper and news conventions clubs. He also has a great talent for playing basketball, but he would like to help him grow. This mindset and his outgoing attitude aid him when

## MONEY TALKS

# A BUYING FORCE



Laura Francis, 17, and Jamie Newton, 14, shop at Forever 21 at Westfield Shoppingtown Valley Fair in San Jose.

## RETAILERS CAPITALIZING ON YOUTH'S SPENDING POWER

**By Ronnie Choi**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

During a trip to the mall, an average teenager might buy a copy of "Candy" (Thea Austin, Vireo Co.) for his PlayStation 2, head to Old Navy to pick up a pair of cargo pants, flip-flops and a pink shirt after buying pictures from a friend taking a recently purchased camera cell phone.

Spending habits like these have helped turn today's teens, a generation that knows what it wants, into a group coveted by retailers.

Teenagers are the leading edge of entertainment and technology, said Keith Murray, director of sports marketing at the video game company Electronic Arts. "These are the people that are about to consume."

According to Teenage Research Unlimited, U.S. teenagers spent \$72 billion in 2001, up from \$100 billion in 1995. According to the firm, the typical teenager spent \$104 a week. About one-fourth to one-third of all U.S. retail spending is done for or by teens. The Census Bureau estimates that the number of U.S. 13-to-19-year-olds is expected to grow from 32 million now to 34 million by 2010.

In the Bay Area, teens said they shopped on brand-name goods, new technology and online. Michelle Boyd, a 17-year-old graduate of Fremont High School, said she spends about \$40 a week at The Topic — a hip teen clothing store — and about \$20 on GameStop, a video game store. A 15-year-old student at Lymbark High School, spends most of his money on computer technology.

Jessica Andrews, a 16-year-old at Live Oak High School, spends her money on apparel.

"I spend \$60 a week on clothing," she said. She shops at stores ranging from Target

to Old Navy to Macy's.

And then there's 17-year-old Erin Connors, from Valley Christian High School — a retailer's dream. She spends \$200 a week on clothing from Abercrombie & Fitch and other stores.

Steve Addis, chief executive of Addis, a Berkeley-based branding and marketing company, said today's teenagers are more buying power than before.

"As a result, companies are looking

## TEST DRIVE

# New Toyota Scion isn't very impressive

### BOXY SHAPE, WEAK ENGINE ARE UNAPPEALING

**By Yasser Elassal**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

It'd be tough to miss the new Toyota-made Scion XB it drives along the freeway.

Maybe it's the abnormal shape of what is essentially a rectangle on wheels. Rather than curves and an aerodynamic design, the XB's boxy sports lines, zany fenders and photos about young people and their interests.

Or maybe it's the way the car pulls over in its rear-view mirror as it puts-puffs along, struggling to keep up with fast-moving traffic.

The folks at Toyota would have us believe that the Scion XB offers new style and versatility for car-buyers motivated by an affordable \$19,000 sticker price. Presumably, I don't buy it.

That's unfortunate, because Scion executives are setting their marketing strategy toward a younger crowd, mostly young men in their late teens and early twenties. They want a guy like me.

They're advertising the Scion XB by giving out music CDs with the Scion logo, and some of the promotional brochures include a pop culture music database featuring artists and photos about young people and their interests.

Or maybe it's the way the car pulls over in its rear-view mirror as it puts-puffs along, struggling to keep up with fast-moving traffic.

The folks at Toyota would have us believe that the Scion XB offers new style and versatility for car-buyers motivated by an affordable \$19,000 sticker price. Presumably, I don't buy it.

**BILAL AHMED** - MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER  
Mosaic staff member Stephen Gonzales, 16, of Santa Clara High School, waves from a Toyota Scion XB during July 11st driver

**2003 Mosaic Staff**  
**Co-directors:** Sam Diaz and Donna Kato **Editors:** Lori Anzani and Michelle Guido **Photo editors:** Anne-Marie McRoyolds and Gary Reyes **Copy editors:** Natalie Martinez and Kathy Medina **Designers:** Sylvia Ulloa and Kenny Marlett **Biz/Editorial Assistant:** Michael Green **Chapman:** John Kwan, Deborah Lohse, Claudia Melendez **Guest Editors:** Mike Anderson, Crystal Carreras, Cynthia Chen, Kelly Holley, Matt Hayes, Ron Kitagawa, Naomi Leung, Warner Liu, Charlie McCollum, Nhat V. Meyer, Matt Nauman, Sam Pizarro, Patrick Tsohan, Daniel Vasquez, Kevin Wendt, Mark Yamamoto, Greg Colette, Tracy Cox, Nicole C. Wong, San Jose Mercury News, Tim Burke and Mack Lundstrom, San Jose State University, Catherine Linger, Jose Yanez, Department.

**News:** Dow Jones Newspaper Fund, California Chicano News Media Association, San Jose Mercury News, San Jose State University, University of Journalism and Mass Communication, Kato-Fisher. **Contributors:** Paramount's Great America and Sony Electronics. Special thanks to Mercury News Publisher Joe Natoli.

*See VIDEO GAMES, Page 4*

*See TEST DRIVE, Page 4*



# LEGACY TERMINATED

"RISE OF THE MACHINES" DOESN'T LIVE UP TO PREDECESSORS



Arnold Schwarzenegger is back for another round of mayhem in "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."

By Ryan Bell and Nicole Mehta

MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Before reviewing "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines," we took a trip to Blockbuster to rent the first two episodes of the series.

The high standard set by the first two movies had us looking forward to seeing "T3." Unfortunately, the sequel did not live up to our expectations.

**Ryan:** I was psyched. T-1000 of "Terminator 2" is perhaps one of the best movie villains ever, so I was eager to see how the new terminator, T-X, would be developed. Although Kristanna Loken is excellent in the role—and does the "mean robot face" so well—her lack of spoken lines really prevents her from being as intimidating and sinister as her predecessor.

**Nicole:** I was expecting a lot more from Loken's character. She was so hyped up as the first female Terminator. But in the movie, she barely spoke and her fighting capabilities were unoriginal and repetitive. She was supposed to be the powerful female fighter in the movie, but she showed more of that in the interviews she did promoting the movie.

**Ryan:** T-X was designed to be a fully-equipped killing machine, but ends up using a handgun for much of the film. Unfulfilling and disappointing. The action sequences also were a letdown. Special effects also were a letdown. Special effects in the first



Claire Danes, who plays Kate Brewster, is caught in a battle of killing machines from the future in "Terminator 3."

two augmented exciting scenes but "T3" had too many explosions for the sake of explosions. I never knew a pet clinic could be so flammable. The fighting scenes were repetitive and in dire need of innovation. Bringing Jackie Chan on board for the next film—as a stunt director or co-star—would really make things exciting.

**Nicole:** They might as well hire bring Chris Tucker, too. He could be a comedy coach. The film tries to integrate comedy by giving Arnold Schwarzenegger "funny" lines, but they are out of place. He should stick

to action. He can't be funny, and when he tries, he just looks like an idiot. **Ryan:** The storyline was also trite—nothing—not nearly as creative or full of twists as the originals. The exposition was confusing and lacked direction, full of unnecessary characters that bogged down the plot and distracted the audience. Call me a purist, but I liked it when the only real complexity was the perplexing properties of the space-time continuum. While the paradox of time-travel was intriguing and well-done in the first two films, it created a mess of

plot holes and seemed to be thrown in without much thought in this one.

**Nicole:** The movie was very predictable. Every time there was a fight or a climactic moment, it was obvious who was going to win, how they were going to get away, etc. The action scenes in "Finding Nemo" were more suspenseful than "T3."

**Ryan:** The acting is adequate, but the characters are shallow. Kate Brewster (Claire Danes) is a damsel in distress that, aside from the steel-willed Sarah Connor of "T2," John Connor (Nick Stahl) is "rescued" by his father. I would be "bored" too, if it had not been about seeing the monster picked up from Philosophy 101. Connor and Brewster are supposed to fall in love in the future, but there is virtually no chemistry between them.

**Nicole:** Danes' character could have been more meaningful. It seemed she was just there to play the token helpless female. In one scene, she picks up a AK-47, but it is a weak attempt to show that she can be a courageous heroine. And I find it ridiculous that Connor has been running from machines all his life and still has no way to defend himself without Arnold by his side.

**Ryan:** Strip the name "Terminator" from it and "Rise of the Machines" has little else to stand on. Save your money and go to Starbucks instead.

## RESTAURANTS

### Santana Row: Not too pricey for hungry teens

By Olga Levin

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Santana Row's expensive environment may intimidate teenagers, who may not even try the restaurants in the new upscale shopping and dining complex. Everything sounds so appealing, but look at those prices. However, there are many places teens can eat for about \$15 each.

If you just want a drink, Starbucks, Peet's Coffee and Tea, and Fantasia Tea Cafe can open your thirst for \$5 or less.

The three outdoor food pavilions include 5 Foot Way, which sells Thai food; Backyard Grill, hamburgers and hot dogs; and Cause Croute, which offers crepes and sandwiches. All of these items are less than \$10.

Other restaurants that have elegant style and fancy music playing can also be attainable for teens who want to dine at Santana Row.

Pasta, Pizzoccolo, Chilli Grill & Bar and Pizza Antica are all nice restaurants where you can find something on the menu for about \$10, and they would definitely satisfy your hunger with big food portions.

Restaurants such as Blowfish Sushi to Die For, Yankee Peet, Straits Cafe, Amber India and Casuelas get more expensive, and meals average about \$15 to \$20.

For desserts and snacks, Ben and Jerry's or Cocoa Bakery will satisfy your sweet tooth. But the cakes and cookies at Cocoa Bakery are a bit expensive, considering their small size.

After looking at the menus and peering inside these very appealing restaurants, my companion and I chose to eat at Maggiano's Little Italy, a family-style restaurant where prices range from about \$7 for an appetizer to about \$12 for pasta.

We wanted to see if we could spend less than \$30 dollars for both of us. But we spent 80 cents more and also had to add a 15 percent tip. The total was \$45.80.

What set us over our budget was that they charged for drink refills, though the cups were pretty small to begin with.

Being at such an upscale restaurant with amazing atmosphere, I also expected the food to be better.

My fettuccini Alfredo with broccoli, while a huge portion, was dry and flavorless. After eating half of it, I found all the sauce at the bottom of the plate. However, it was good and creamy when I found it.

Prepared for time, we only had entrees. My companion ate the chicken parmigiana, which came with two big chicken breasts on one plate and spaghetti on another plate. The spaghetti sauce had an odd taste to it, almost burnt and too much wine in it.

Despite my disappointment in the food, the service and environment were impressive. The music being played sounded like old lounge music and led to no touches in the room. There were black and white photos of different people on the walls, along with old porcelain and brass bottles on the shelves, lamps and chandeliers hanging low and tables with red-checkered tablecloths.

The servers were bubbly and came back often to let us know the food would be arriving soon.

The Santana Row Web site says, "Don't just eat. Enjoy. Santana Row restaurants offer the very best to satisfy your palette. From a delicious snack to a candlelit dinner, treat yourself to a better taste of life."

Although I think the Web site captures the feel of the place, the food we ate at Maggiano's didn't exactly meet expectations.

**Rating:** 5 out of 10.

## MOVIES

# LEGACY TERMINATED

"RISE OF THE MACHINES" DOESN'T LIVE UP TO PREDECESSORS



Arnold Schwarzenegger is back for another round of mayhem in "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines."

By Ryan Bell and Nicole Mehta

MOSAIC STAFF WRITERS

Before reviewing "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines," we took a trip to Blockbuster to rent the first two episodes of the series.

The high standard set by the first two movies had us looking forward to seeing "T3." Unfortunately, the sequel did not live up to our expectations.

**Ryan:** I was psyched. T-1000 of "Terminator 2" is perhaps one of the best movie villains ever, so I was eager to see how the new terminator, T-X, would be developed. Although Kristanna Loken is excellent in the role—and does the "mean robot face" so well—her lack of spoken lines really prevents her from being as intimidating and sinister as her predecessor.

**Nicole:** I was expecting a lot more from Loken's character. She was so hyped up as the first female Terminator. But in the movie, she barely spoke and her fighting capabilities were unoriginal and repetitive. She was supposed to be the powerful female fighter in the movie, but she showed more of that in the interviews she did promoting the movie.

**Ryan:** T-X was designed to be a fully-equipped killing machine, but ends up using a handgun for much of the film. Unfulfilling and disappointing. The action sequences also were a letdown. Special effects also were a letdown. Special effects in the first



Claire Danes, who plays Kate Brewster, is caught in a battle of killing machines from the future in "Terminator 3."

two augmented exciting scenes but "T3" had too many explosions for the sake of explosions. I never knew a pet clinic could be so flammable. The fighting scenes were repetitive and in dire need of innovation. Bringing Jackie Chan on board for the next film—as a stunt director or co-star—would really make things exciting.

**Nicole:** They might as well hire bring Chris Tucker, too. He could be a comedy coach. The film tries to integrate comedy by giving Arnold Schwarzenegger "funny" lines, but they are out of place. He should stick

to action. He can't be funny, and when he tries, he just looks like an idiot. **Ryan:** The storyline was also trite—nothing—not nearly as creative or full of twists as the originals. The exposition was confusing and lacked direction, full of unnecessary characters that bogged down the plot and distracted the audience. Call me a purist, but I liked it when the only real complexity was the perplexing properties of the space-time continuum. While the paradox of time-travel was intriguing and well-done in the first two films, it created a mess of

plot holes and seemed to be thrown in without much thought in this one.

**Nicole:** The movie was very predictable. Every time there was a fight or a climactic moment, it was obvious who was going to win, how they were going to get away, etc. The action scenes in "Finding Nemo" were more suspenseful than "T3."

**Ryan:** The acting is adequate, but the characters are shallow. Kate Brewster (Claire Danes) is a damsel in distress that, aside from the steel-willed Sarah Connor of "T2," John Connor (Nick Stahl) is "rescued" by his father. I would be "bored" too, if it had not been about seeing the monster picked up from Philosophy 101. Connor and Brewster are supposed to fall in love in the future, but there is virtually no chemistry between them.

**Nicole:** Danes' character could have been more meaningful. It seemed she was just there to play the token helpless female. In one scene, she picks up a AK-47, but it is a weak attempt to show that she can be a courageous heroine. And I find it ridiculous that Connor has been running from machines all his life and still has no way to defend himself without Arnold by his side.

**Ryan:** Strip the name "Terminator" from it and "Rise of the Machines" has little else to stand on. Save your money and go to Starbucks instead.

## MUSIC

### Lyrics don't drown 'Elephunk'-y sound

By Ajay Krishnamurthy

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Bring on the funk. "Elephunk," the Black Eyed Peas' aptly named third album, comes through as promised with fast-paced, catchy songs that are guaranteed to get the party started.

While the lyrics are anemic and uninspired, "Elephunk" boasts some of the best instrumental and beats I've ever come across. The eclectic combinations of electric guitars, pianos, saxophones and horns come off as incredibly fresh and unique on most tracks.

One of the reasons "Elephunk" is so interesting is that two songs are alike: Although the Black Eyed Peas are a hip-hop group, their experiment with jazz, rock, samba and reggae. They break out the full jazz ensemble for future dancehall classics like "Lover Boy" and "Let's Get Retarded," while the reggae-tinted "Hey Mama" has a distinctly Sean Paul-esque sound.

For the most part, their mix-and-match style, created by producer and frontman Will.i.am, is the strongest aspect of "Elephunk."

Fergie, the group's new female singer, dominates on several tracks like the emotional "Shut Up" and "Fly Away."

Her smooth voice adds needed relief from the weak, scat-like rymes of rappers Will.i.am, Taboo and apl.de.ap.

The Black Eyed Peas' lyrics are a huge letdown compared to their instrumental tracks. These are hardly ever clever or original, and some of their



lines leave listeners shaking their heads at the stupidity of the songwriters.

Unfortunately, when the Black Eyed Peas stray from the tried-and-true party tracks, their already questionable lyrics lead even further south. Their attempts to be serious or portly angst seem so fake, they are laughable.

The angry rap-rock track "Ain't No" a collaboration with Papa Roach, seems out of place and has too much of a Linkin Park sound to be original.

The made-for-MTV hit single "Where is the Love" with Justin Timberlake seems like a corny and watered-down excuse to work with one of pop music's hottest stars.

If there were only a way to mute the lyrics, "Elephunk" would have been one of the best albums I've ever listened to.

The Black Eyed Peas definitely deliver the funk—but not a whole lot else.

**Rating:** 5 out of 10

### Idol: You'll love it and hate it, too

By Ronnie Choi

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

The second "American Idol" returned with bigger talents, prettier faces and more controversy.

The "American Idol Season 2: All-Time Classic American Love Songs" CD showcases the second season's finalists. Because of the diversity of talent, the CD will be a mixed bag to most people.

Some people might adore finalist Carmen Rasmusen's yodeling, but detest winner Ruben Studdard's angry voice. Others might enjoy the place Kimberly Caldwell's wannabe-busy tones, while hating runner-up Clay Aiken's way-broad range. You'll love it and you'll hate it.

Kimberly Locke, however, is the exception. Her version of "Over the Rainbow" is absolutely amazing. Every single note is charged with emotion and passion. She begins with a low jazzy voice that soothes ears wounded by Rasmusen's wretched screeching during a previous track. Locke's voice melts the coldest of hearts.

Though Locke is the star, Ruben Studdard, Clay Aiken, Fergie and Julia Dematto also perform wonderfully. Although Studdard was unimpressive and overdid his version of the Carpenters' "Superstar" on the CD scores moodiness. Studdard's smoothness is at its best.

Aiken's version of "The Wings of Love" was a great selection. Normally, Aiken's voice sounds horrid, but his harmonies disappeared with the magic of recording. His high range is overdone, but the song's beauty over his dramatic voice.

Fergie and Dematto, who looked like pretty zombies on stage, were pleasantly surprising on



this CD. Fergie sings a great version of "Let's Stay Together," and Dematto sings a terrific version of "At Last." However, it is very obvious that both were given more direction, because they sound dramatically different from when they sang live.

For truly memorable tracks, Rasmusen and Caldwell tend to shine. They are incredibly beautiful. Truly Caldwell's song "Killing Me Softly With His Song" if you replace "his" with "your" and "softly" with "loudly," it would be a more accurate title of Caldwell's version of the song. The song is wretchedly repetitive and causes utter pain.

Rasmusen shouts out unusual noises during "How Do I Live (Without You)." Honestly, the song is the worst track on the album. Some people might disagree, but they probably have been kicked in both ears repeatedly.

In the end, this CD is worth buying for Locke, Studdard, Aiken, Fergie and Dematto. It recommends this CD because there is something for everyone.

**Rating:** 6 out of 10.



Dean Ka'ahuanui demonstrates festival-goers with a Polynesian-style flute.

# A CALL TO CULTURE

SAN JOSE'S TAHITI FETE CELEBRATES THE SIGHTS AND SOUNDS OF POLYNESIA



Young dancers move to the rhythms of the Tahiti Fete on July 6. The 13th annual festival, at San Jose State University's Event Center, featured Polynesian dance competitions.

Dean Ka'ahuanui is proud of his Polynesian heritage. He displays it by adorning his body with tattoos that have their own cultural

stories. He is quick to explain that his tattoos tell his story. Each one is a symbol for his life and the people he loves. Hina, the moon, on his right hand, represents his wife. La'a, the sun, also on his right hand, portrays himself. Ka'ahuanui explains that they stand proudly alone.

But together, they stand taller and create one light that becomes his son. Adorning his body are not only symbols of his family, but also the things he holds sacred.

Kealuala, which looks like the sun rising on the horizon, amplifies his love of the first light of day.

Ka'ahuanui reminds himself to stay focused in his cultural, physical and spiritual lives with Piko—a symbol of a man, woman and child, all connected.

Another tattoo, a sun symbol, is a way for Ka'ahuanui to honor his ancestors. Every day, Ka'ahuanui prays to them, asking that they keep all the generations of his family—both now and in the future—protected.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT BY GABRIELLE FINCUOTTER



The symbols in Ka'ahuanui's tattoos tell the story of his loved ones and culture.



Ka'ahuanui demonstrates tattooing techniques at the festival. His tattoos incorporate images of suns, moons and symbols of a man, woman and child.

# FINDING AN OUTLET FOR STRESS

## HOBBIES HELP TAKE MINDS OFF TEENS' EVERYDAY TROUBLES

**By Ronnie Choi**  
**MOBIAC STAFF WRITER**  
 Sometimes it's an argument with a parent over chores, homework or choice in friends that makes a teen's blood boil. Other times, it's the pressures of body image, athletic abilities or wearing the right clothes that can cause a teen to lash out. It's no secret that some young people vent their frustrations in a negative way. Teenage alcoholism, vandalism and violence are signs that outraged kids are venting harmfully. But not all teens are getting

into trouble when they want to release their frustrations. Some are turning to poetry, music, sports and art as forms of expressing themselves, and the feelings they have bottled up inside. When Sofia Urrutia Lopez, a student at Fruit Hill College, began to feel dismal, she reached for a pen and a piece of paper. Writing and reciting poetry are her ways of forgetting about life's problems. "It's the calming effect of being angry and sad," says Lopez, 19. "I started with

rhyming poetry, and then slam poetry. I guess writing it down on paper and seeing it helps me cope with it. It gets my feelings and emotions known." A sure sign that Angela Liao has been working through her feelings is the cool colors that dominate her paintings. "I like water colors because they're relaxing, and I like the way paint flows," says Angela, 17, a student at Mountain View High School. "Cool colors like blues and greens soothe me. Complementary colors can even relieve me, sometimes, like oranges and yellows." It's the calming effect that allows Angela to clear her mind. But for siblings Ryan and

Corenea Coleman of Lodi, stress relief sometimes comes in the form of traditional Polynesian dances, which rely on the banging of the drum to keep the beat. "It relieves stress because you're doing something," says Ryan, 16, as he and his sister Fete at San Jose State University earlier this week. For two years, Ryan and Corenea have been competing with Anapa Nui, a Polynesian dance group. Corenea, 16, says they continue to participate in the dance group because it's a fun outlet. "Basically, it's something I do for fun, and I like to share the

culture with other people," she says. "We're doing this for fun. Fun — and a way to drop a few pounds — was the reason Mike Ho first started skateboarding. Now, the 17-year-old Milpitas High School student likes to jump on his skateboard and ride when life gets stressful. He doesn't buy the argument that some kids are damaging property or abusing their own bodies just for the sake of relieving tension. "They use stress as an excuse to do stuff like that," he says. "I'm having problems at school, I skate anywhere to keep my mind off it. Everything is gone. There are no troubles going on in your head."

**Karina Huerta**  
**Alcohol won't solve your problems**

"I'm an alcoholic." My friends would always make me say it. But I didn't care what they thought. As long as I had a Jack Daniel's bottle next to me, it was all good. I was wrong.

My friends knew I had a problem. They would tell me so constantly, but I ignored them. They got tired of lecturing me about the danger I was putting myself in by drinking.

Many young people drink because of peer and school pressures, and family problems. I drink for the same reasons. Alcohol, for me, was like a gateway to a happy place. It helped me get away from it all — abuse, harassment and family members who also drank.

I was 11 when I had my first drink. I still remember the setting: a family wedding. Everyone was drinking, and my teen-age cousins offered me a shot of 70 proof.

"Come on, try it," they said. "Wow! I thought I was strong, but I liked the taste. It burned my throat like rubbing alcohol on a new wound, but the aftertaste was as sweet as candy. It made me feel good, relaxed and confident. I drank more, got a buzz, and relaxed enough to feel good about myself.

My cousins and friends would take me to parties. I got to do things I thought all cool teens did. I got invited to a lot of parties and met new people. This was the life, I thought.

Every sip boosted my self-esteem. I felt I could do anything — let alone have fun, not worry about what others said. I never missed a party. Getting drunk with my friends was my life, and I thought that was the greatest thing in the world.

It wasn't until I turned 15, four years after I took my first shot, that I realized I had a drinking problem. At my 15th birthday party, I was happy, surrounded by friends and family. There was no reason to drink, but I did. And I got drunk.

My parents found out I was drinking and scolded me. I didn't care. They would tell me to be careful and they would worry about me, but they were busy, and as immigrants, maybe they weren't too sure about what they should have done.

I took advantage of that. I was having fun and I blamed my parents for most of my problems anyway. In reality, I was the one with issues.

Getting alcohol was easy. I would find older friends and strangers to buy it for me. I would save my allowance and use half my paycheck from working at a theme park to satisfy my craving. I would get alcohol from friends. I did whatever it took for a taste of that bitter-sweet liquor.

By the time I was 17, I was coming home drunk almost every day. My grades were dropping. My life was falling apart. I was unattractive and losing touch with friends and family.

I had to stop before I ended up on the streets like the bums in my neighborhood. More importantly, I was not being a good role model for my younger sister, who is now 11. I did not want her to follow in my path.

So, one winter day after a weekend of drinking and hangovers when everything seemed to be going wrong, I woke up and said, "I have to stop this." I have not taken a drink since then. But, damn, it's hard. There were days I missed the feeling, the taste, the people, the bottles, the life. But I never gave in.

I avoided my friends who were a bad influence, making up excuses not to go out with them and drink. It was one of the hardest things I did, because they were my friends and they were like me. They drank to get away from their problems.

Eventually, my old friends returned and my life was back on track. I thought drinking would make my problems go away, but it didn't. I only hurt myself and those I cared about. I don't drink anymore. I haven't had a sip of alcohol for more than a year.

Alcohol should not be part of a teen's life. I look back and realize I missed out on many things because of my drinking. I choose my friends and friends choose me better decisions and solve problems without drinking.

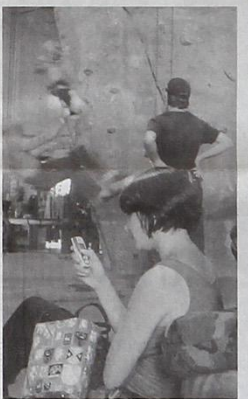
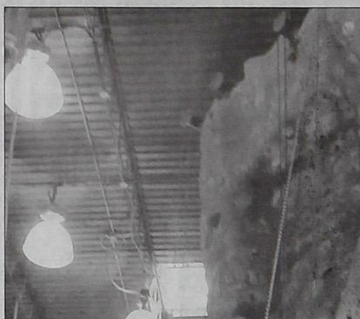
I got my life back. I learned from my mistakes.

**IF YOU'RE INTERESTED:** There is always someone willing to help. Sometimes the hardest part of recovery is recognizing there is a problem, but after that you will find a solution through support groups. There are many places teens can seek help, such as Alcoholics Anonymous in Santa Clara County. For more information, call the 24-hour hot line at (408) 374-8511.

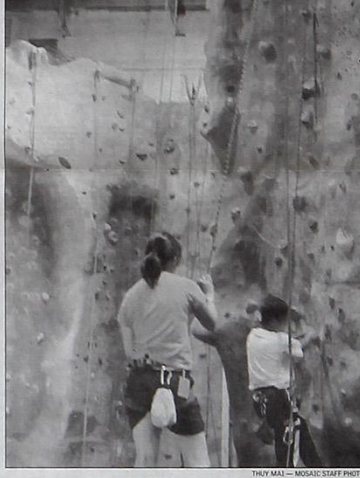
# HITTING THE WALL



**FINDING A FOOTHOLD:** Angela Estrella-Lemos of Santa Clara climbs one of the rock walls at Planet Granite. About 75 to 100 people visit the indoor rock climbing center each day.

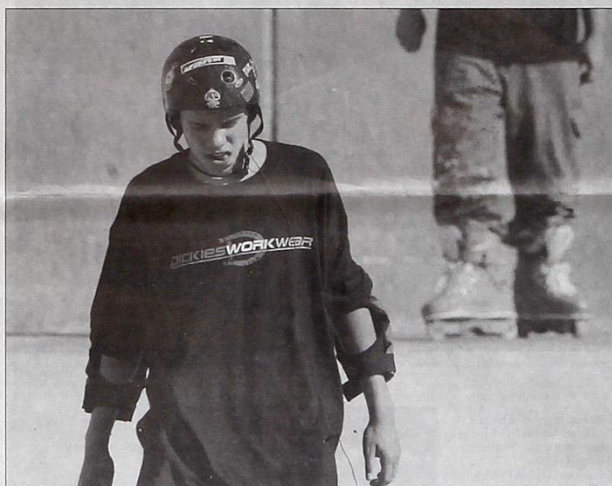


**LOOKING CHALLENGE FOR CLIMBERS:** Edith Hon, right, belays the rope for another climber as he begins climbing a rock wall at the Planet Granite rock climbing center in Santa Clara. The center, which has several sizes of rock walls for adults and children, costs \$16 a day, and \$5 to rent climbing equipment.



THUY MAI — MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHS

# A RUSH ON WHEELS



A frustrated skater takes a break at Vans Skate Park in Milpitas on July 5. Skating is legal at the park, but public places in San Jose are off limits, so skaters, who are often there anyway, take a break when the police cruise by.

## Skaters grind their wheels where they can

There's a rush that goes through someone like teen Ernie Guerrero when he glides high above the ground. But Ernie isn't floating in mid-air like a skydiver or a hang glider. He's a skateboarder. And the tricks he performed on his board near Plaza de Cesar Chavez on a recent Saturday afternoon are against the law.

Skateboarders aren't allowed to ride in public places in San Jose. Like most of them, like Ernie, do it anyway — not because he's trying to be a criminal, but because he loves grinding the miles whenever he can. Just after he finished "kick-flipping" that six-star, he realized something was wrong.

The sale on his board had snagged. But Ernie is always ready for an emergency. With the spare parts and tools he had with him, he had his board moving again within minutes.

The only time Ernie stopped was when the occasional police officer drove by.

This is the life of an illegal skateboarder in San Jose. Ernie is living it.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND TEXT BY MIKE REIS



Ernie Guerrero flips his board as he jumps off a set of steps at Plaza de Cesar Chavez in San Jose.

## HIP-HOP | Artists struggle to make it in tough market of the South Bay

Continued from Page 5

to look for the next big music sensation? Eighteen-year-old Cuban Yu, who recently graduated from Harter Academy in Saratoga, took it upon himself to promote his own success in the game. He and 17-year-old Jeffrey Thao of Fremont arrived up enough money through their part-time jobs to turn a room in Cupertino into a music studio.

Calvin said they built the studio because they "wanted to help out talent locally" and get the Bay Area on the map as a hip-hop hub.

They later hooked up with 18-year-old Dan Hernandez, who, like Tan, attended Mission San Jose High School in Fremont. Hernandez first started flirting with hip-hop in the eighth grade and has sold more than 100 copies of a nine-track demo CD for \$8 each.

"Every teen has passion and hobbies, and we should put our minds to it," said Yu, who believes that young people often concentrate so much on school that their "passion is forgotten."

Yu also believes that if an artist really wants to get somewhere in the game, he must collaborate with other artists. Oakland rapper and singer Jonah and his

manager, Malachi, could not agree more. "Do whatever it takes" to make it, Malachi says. He has gone so far as to sack backstage and into hotels, trying to get Jonah's demo into the right hands. Jonah sees his collaboration with other artists and managers as building his resume.

Through the struggle to make it in the hip-hop business in the South Bay is a difficult one, artists must remember to always "focus on the music," said Dan Hernandez. And Malachi's best advice is to "conduct yourself as a professional artist at all times."

In the basement level of a 11-story building on the Santa Clara University campus, Nobit radio show takes place in a tiny room in the KSCU offices from midnight to 2 a.m. every Sunday. With no ventilation, the room is stuffy — almost unbearable at times — but Nobit has no complaints.

As long as he is surrounded by music he loves, and has a shot someday making it in the game, he couldn't be happier.



## All-American looks disguise Russian roots

If I showed you a picture of me with my friends at school, you would see me as a Caucasian girl, in the midst of four Asian girls.

If I asked you to guess which one of us was born and raised in California, chances are, you would pick me.

But that would be wrong. The fact is, it's one of the Asian girls in the picture who is the San Jose native. I was born in another country.

Just because I have what are called European features — light skin, light brown hair, eyes that sometimes look green, brown or blue — I'm the one who would be labeled the stereotypical Californian girl.

My background comes as a surprise to many people. My family immigrated from Minsk, Belarus, when I was about 2 years old. We moved first to Maryland, then to San Jose.

Being a Russian immigrant, I have more in common with some of my Asian-American immigrant friends than you would guess by looking at me.

Like my friend Emily Chan, who came from Taiwan, I speak a foreign language at home, eat ethnic foods that my grandma cooks and host tea parties in my house that you wouldn't find in most American homes.

For instance, at my home we have many items that are traditionally very Russian. Matryoshka dolls are displayed on shelves, hand-painted oil-on-metal trays hang on the walls and Khokhlova wooden spoons are in the kitchen.

When friends come over, they see these uncommon items from my culture and wonder what they are.

In the same way, when friends gather at Emily's house, some of them have been derided about the Chinese decorations in her house. The Chans, who all speak Chinese, have wood carvings of animals in their living rooms, which are from the Chinese zodiac family.

These cultural links create a bond between Emily and me.

Kristen Yankawa, another friend who is a fifth-generation Japanese-American, says people always expect her to know how to speak Japanese, even though she doesn't know more than a few words.

She considers herself entirely Americanized and finds it odd when people sometimes are surprised by her family's American customs. Because there's still such a stereotype that an American is white, it will always be harder for her to be first considered American before Asian-American.

The irony is that because of the way I look, I will never be labeled an "immigrant," even though I am. I will always have an easier time fitting and blending in, being in a country where Caucasian people are the majority, my ethnicity and race will probably never be an issue.

If I wanted to lose my "foreign-ness," I could. But Emily and Kristen would have a much more difficult time.

We're all living in America, yet our appearance makes all the difference.

## ONLINE | Teens hit Web for digital dates

Continued from Page 5

people meet other people that they might develop a romantic interest in.

"It was this one guy, I believe his screen-name was ladies-trucks-or-something-like-that. He was really nice, and when we started to talk we found out that we had a lot of things in common."

It's those opportunities that have made online dating so popular among teens and young adults. Many say they are tired of the club and bar scene for teens. It's harder to determine who is telling the truth and if the person behind the screen-name is going to be the person you expect to meet.

"I don't give out my phone, e-mail or address information until I get to know the person really good, which is usually in about three weeks at least," said Maggie. "If they really interest me and they give me that tiny little picture, then I give them my number, and when they call me I begin to determine if they are a good match or not. But I am careful about it."

Chat rooms allow users to "meet" new people, open their minds to different, bigger perspectives, as well as find where the parties are at, all time and have a good time, says Nadia Malina, 16, a University of California-Santa Cruz student. And while chatting online,



# Age to believe

## TEENS FIND SOLACE FROM TRYING TIMES IN COMFORT OF RELIGION

**By Terra Perez**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

As president of the Western Young Buddhists League, Stuart Jones sees a lot of young people who have embraced religion.

Maybe it's the events of Sept. 11. Maybe it's the war in Iraq. Or maybe it's just normal for teenagers to search for answers.

"Because the times have changed a lot, teens are not afraid of being religious," said Jones, who works with high school- and college-age Buddhists throughout California. Young people are "looking for answers and comfort in religion."

It's not clear whether more teens are seeking out religion as a way to find answers or deal with teen angst. But many say it is helpful to have something to believe in, especially during times of uncertainty and war.

"I don't think it's an easy job of being a teenager today," said Rev. Jerry Fox of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in San Jose. Fox said the world is complicated, and he believes teens are trying to find meaning through different avenues.

Anneria has been a haven for pursuing religion, because people here are questioned that freedom.

For many teens, searching for answers is a constant in their lives. Some teens say that believing in something helps get them through the rough times, or because they face. In a world of turmoil, religion can be comforting.

"Tens go through rough times and they need a constant," said Meredith Jones, 15, of Los Gatos. "Teens find religion to have something to do."

Some teenagers form groups and clubs that support their beliefs - and recruit others to join them. Many teens find religion through friends, or because they want to be a part of something they haven't yet experienced, or because they want to be left

alone and lives in East Palo Alto.

Young people say the main reason they turn to religion is that they are searching for something - an understanding of life, meaning and purpose. "There's a feeling of chaos, terrorism and war, in addition to the stresses of day-to-day teenage life," said Barrett, 19, said he enjoys the values and community of his Jewish faith. Both of his parents are Jewish, and Barrett said he likes "feeling part of something."

He describes himself as "very comfortable about religion; it has always been a part of me but especially during the war time and after 9/11 - it brought them to religion."

Many teens, like Barrett, say they tend to practice the religion in which they were raised. Culture also plays a strong role in religion. A lot of teens say they are introduced to religion through their family's cultural background and traditions.

Fifteen-year-old Addie McClure, who goes to Notre Dame High School in San Jose, said she was brought into Buddhism as a child by her mother. Buddhism is "not so strict," she said. "It's very lenient as a comparison to other religions."

And as Addie grew up, she began to agree with the doctrine more.

But some say that when they reach their teens, they begin to question a lot of things about life - and religion is just one of those things.

Christian Kosowicz, 13, from Piedmont Middle School, said it's normal for teens to try to "find other religions," besides the one they were raised with, "to suit their beliefs." Christian is Hindu, though he only goes to temple about once a year, he said.

Christian said young people are generally not judgmental if their peers or friends are questioning their own beliefs.

"More people are laid back," he said. "So it's not a problem for teens to have a problem with their religion."

Some teens say that expressing their beliefs can be hard sometimes because they are afraid of being teased or making fun of - especially if their religion is not mainstream religion, like Christianity or Catholicism.

Other teenagers have found their religion, embraced it with confidence and strength and are not afraid to express their spiritual views. These teens still need to force their beliefs on others, but are open to answering questions. In time, that exposes people to their friends' religions, and opens up pathways to learning.

"They know what they believe in," Addie said, "and it's theirs."

THE REV. JERRY FOX OF ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH says that while his San Jose church, at top, doesn't have many teen parishioners, he feels a lot of young people are seeking out religion for answers.

SOBIE REIS - MOSAIC PHOTOGRAPHER

The Rev. Jerry Fox of St. Paul's United Methodist Church says that while his San Jose church, at top, doesn't have many teen parishioners, he feels a lot of young people are seeking out religion for answers.

GABRIELLE FLINGUITTER - MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of the San Jose Buddhist Church Buddhist Center group and club that support their beliefs - and recruit others to join them. Many teens find religion through friends, or because they want to be a part of something they haven't yet experienced, or because they want to be left

alone and lives in East Palo Alto.

Young people say the main reason they turn to religion is that they are searching for something - an understanding of life, meaning and purpose. "There's a feeling of chaos, terrorism and war, in addition to the stresses of day-to-day teenage life," said Barrett, 19, said he enjoys the values and community of his Jewish faith. Both of his parents are Jewish, and Barrett said he likes "feeling part of something."

He describes himself as "very comfortable about religion; it has always been a part of me but especially during the war time and after 9/11 - it brought them to religion."

THE REV. JERRY FOX OF ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH says that while his San Jose church, at top, doesn't have many teen parishioners, he feels a lot of young people are seeking out religion for answers.

SOBIE REIS - MOSAIC PHOTOGRAPHER

The Rev. Jerry Fox of St. Paul's United Methodist Church says that while his San Jose church, at top, doesn't have many teen parishioners, he feels a lot of young people are seeking out religion for answers.

GABRIELLE FLINGUITTER - MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Members of the San Jose Buddhist Church Buddhist Center group and club that support their beliefs - and recruit others to join them. Many teens find religion through friends, or because they want to be a part of something they haven't yet experienced, or because they want to be left

# Education

GETTING INTO COLLEGE

## Clearing financial, fashion hurdles

**Rupa Dev**

*Find your passion, prove your worth*

People say it's hard to be a teenager. They're right. People also think that because I live in an affluent city - attending a public school that makes among the top 100 in the nation - that I have a 4.0 grade-point average and a 1600-plus SAT score.

People assume a lot. And that's where they are wrong.

I'm not a 4.0 student; my grades are mostly a mixture of As and B's. They're good grades. But at my high school, Mont Vista, they're nothing to write home about.

At Mont Vista, it's always been a struggle to deal with my academic weakness. For example, because I'm Asian, people assume I should be on the accelerated math track, but I'm not. When I tell people, their reactions range from condescending: "Oh, that's OK," to perplexed: "How is that possible?"

When people from your like that, you start to feel bad about yourself. If you have it enough, you start to believe it. Because of that, I lost my self-confidence.

I had other things weighing me down. For the majority of my school years, I've been known as "Ravi's sister." Ravi is my twin brother. That's Ravi, as in Ravi Kulkarni, school president/sports-editor/school-mascot.

There is a 125 percent chance of being twin. So unless you are a part of that 125 percent, it's hard to live with him like I do.

For most of my life, I've felt like I stand in my brother's shadow. He was smart and popular, a class clown who excels in sports. And I was just Rupa.

If I had actually counted the number of times people asked me, "Who is smarter, you or your twin?" the number would blow you away. Simply speaking, that's the first thing everyone at school asked me when they found out I was a twin. And I always replied, "Ravi." And I always said it with such nonchalance, like I didn't even want to prove people wrong. I just accepted that I would forever be the failure twin.

My parents always supported me and told me to stop comparing myself to them. Ravi never tried to steal my thunder or intentionally make me feel inferior. My low self-esteem was simply because I wasn't the typical overachiever. Mont Vista student that I wanted to be at one point.

Then I got into Journalism in my sophomore year. I had always gotten an A in English and challenged myself by taking accelerated English classes. I guess you could say that was my strong point.

Nevertheless, I had always dismissed my literary achievements.

But I became very active in my Journalism class. I looked forward to spending late nights getting the paper together. I spent hours perfecting my articles so I would be proud to receive an award in print. Fellow staff members became my closest friends.

I had finally found my niche. In Journalism, it didn't matter that I couldn't do calculus or hadn't memorized the periodic table in my spare time. I developed a passion for newspapers and writing. I actually let myself catch without automatically getting mad because I wasn't being important at something again.

My twin brother was the first. I was editor-in-chief of my newspaper. At sports, I was reporter. But people who would comment on my articles and think he was better. It wasn't because there was a better writer, but because I had given used to thinking he was better than me in anything we both did.

But not a keyboarder.

This fall, when I'm a senior, I will be co-editor-in-chief of the paper.

I've learned that despite the fact that Ravi and I were born in the same hour, we are not the same. I'm not Ravi. And I'm OK with that.

In fact, we're like partners. We constantly help and support each other. And that's one of the best parts of being a twin.

I always used to hear those motivational speakers that talked kids to "be themselves" and not succumb to peer pressure and expectations. And I thought, "Hey, I don't drink. I don't smoke. Peer pressure doesn't affect me. But if I don't attend sideshows now would still go if the event were supervised and regulated."

It was a relief to believe her idea will not only save the city money and time, but it could also save lives.

People say it's hard to be a teenager. They're right. People also think that because I live in an affluent city - attending a public school that makes among the top 100 in the nation - that I have a 4.0 grade-point average and a 1600-plus SAT score.

People assume a lot. And that's where they are wrong.

I'm not a 4.0 student; my grades are mostly a mixture of As and B's. They're good grades. But at my high school, Mont Vista, they're nothing to write home about.

At Mont Vista, it's always been a struggle to deal with my academic weakness. For example, because I'm Asian, people assume I should be on the accelerated math track, but I'm not. When I tell people, their reactions range from condescending: "Oh, that's OK," to perplexed: "How is that possible?"

When people from your like that, you start to feel bad about yourself. If you have it enough, you start to believe it. Because of that, I lost my self-confidence.

I had other things weighing me down. For the majority of my school years, I've been known as "Ravi's sister." Ravi is my twin brother. That's Ravi, as in Ravi Kulkarni, school president/sports-editor/school-mascot.

There is a 125 percent chance of being twin. So unless you are a part of that 125 percent, it's hard to live with him like I do.

For most of my life, I've felt like I stand in my brother's shadow. He was smart and popular, a class clown who excels in sports. And I was just Rupa.

If I had actually counted the number of times people asked me, "Who is smarter, you or your twin?" the number would blow you away. Simply speaking, that's the first thing everyone at school asked me when they found out I was a twin. And I always replied, "Ravi." And I always said it with such nonchalance, like I didn't even want to prove people wrong. I just accepted that I would forever be the failure twin.

My parents always supported me and told me to stop comparing myself to them. Ravi never tried to steal my thunder or intentionally make me feel inferior. My low self-esteem was simply because I wasn't the typical overachiever. Mont Vista student that I wanted to be at one point.

Then I got into Journalism in my sophomore year. I had always gotten an A in English and challenged myself by taking accelerated English classes. I guess you could say that was my strong point.

Nevertheless, I had always dismissed my literary achievements.

But I became very active in my Journalism class. I looked forward to spending late nights getting the paper together. I spent hours perfecting my articles so I would be proud to receive an award in print. Fellow staff members became my closest friends.

I had finally found my niche. In Journalism, it didn't matter that I couldn't do calculus or hadn't memorized the periodic table in my spare time. I developed a passion for newspapers and writing. I actually let myself catch without automatically getting mad because I wasn't being important at something again.

My twin brother was the first. I was editor-in-chief of my newspaper. At sports, I was reporter. But people who would comment on my articles and think he was better. It wasn't because there was a better writer, but because I had given used to thinking he was better than me in anything we both did.

But not a keyboarder.

This fall, when I'm a senior, I will be co-editor-in-chief of the paper.

I've learned that despite the fact that Ravi and I were born in the same hour, we are not the same. I'm not Ravi. And I'm OK with that.

In fact, we're like partners. We constantly help and support each other. And that's one of the best parts of being a twin.

I always used to hear those motivational speakers that talked kids to "be themselves" and not succumb to peer pressure and expectations. And I thought, "Hey, I don't drink. I don't smoke. Peer pressure doesn't affect me. But if I don't attend sideshows now would still go if the event were supervised and regulated."

It was a relief to believe her idea will not only save the city money and time, but it could also save lives.

People say it's hard to be a teenager. They're right. People also think that because I live in an affluent city - attending a public school that makes among the top 100 in the nation - that I have a 4.0 grade-point average and a 1600-plus SAT score.

People assume a lot. And that's where they are wrong.

I'm not a 4.0 student; my grades are mostly a mixture of As and B's. They're good grades. But at my high school, Mont Vista, they're nothing to write home about.

At Mont Vista, it's always been a struggle to deal with my academic weakness. For example, because I'm Asian, people assume I should be on the accelerated math track, but I'm not. When I tell people, their reactions range from condescending: "Oh, that's OK," to perplexed: "How is that possible?"

When people from your like that, you start to feel bad about yourself. If you have it enough, you start to believe it. Because of that, I lost my self-confidence.

I had other things weighing me down. For the majority of my school years, I've been known as "Ravi's sister." Ravi is my twin brother. That's Ravi, as in Ravi Kulkarni, school president/sports-editor/school-mascot.

There is a 125 percent chance of being twin. So unless you are a part of that 125 percent, it's hard to live with him like I do.

For most of my life, I've felt like I stand in my brother's shadow. He was smart and popular, a class clown who excels in sports. And I was just Rupa.

If I had actually counted the number of times people asked me, "Who is smarter, you or your twin?" the number would blow you away. Simply speaking, that's the first thing everyone at school asked me when they found out I was a twin. And I always replied, "Ravi." And I always said it with such nonchalance, like I didn't even want to prove people wrong. I just accepted that I would forever be the failure twin.

My parents always supported me and told me to stop comparing myself to them. Ravi never tried to steal my thunder or intentionally make me feel inferior. My low self-esteem was simply because I wasn't the typical overachiever. Mont Vista student that I wanted to be at one point.

Then I got into Journalism in my sophomore year. I had always gotten an A in English and challenged myself by taking accelerated English classes. I guess you could say that was my strong point.

Nevertheless, I had always dismissed my literary achievements.

But I became very active in my Journalism class. I looked forward to spending late nights getting the paper together. I spent hours perfecting my articles so I would be proud to receive an award in print. Fellow staff members became my closest friends.

I had finally found my niche. In Journalism, it didn't matter that I couldn't do calculus or hadn't memorized the periodic table in my spare time. I developed a passion for newspapers and writing. I actually let myself catch without automatically getting mad because I wasn't being important at something again.

My twin brother was the first. I was editor-in-chief of my newspaper. At sports, I was reporter. But people who would comment on my articles and think he was better. It wasn't because there was a better writer, but because I had given used to thinking he was better than me in anything we both did.

But not a keyboarder.

This fall, when I'm a senior, I will be co-editor-in-chief of the paper.

I've learned that despite the fact that Ravi and I were born in the same hour, we are not the same. I'm not Ravi. And I'm OK with that.

In fact, we're like partners. We constantly help and support each other. And that's one of the best parts of being a twin.

I always used to hear those motivational speakers that talked kids to "be themselves" and not succumb to peer pressure and expectations. And I thought, "Hey, I don't drink. I don't smoke. Peer pressure doesn't affect me. But if I don't attend sideshows now would still go if the event were supervised and regulated."

It was a relief to believe her idea will not only save the city money and time, but it could also save lives.

THE MOSAIC - MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

READY FOR AN INTERVIEW: Mosaic staff writers Olga Levin and Yasser Elussal model clothing appropriate for a college entrance interview. Olga wears a skirt, \$579 and blouse (\$59) both by INC. Her shoes (\$69) are by Nine West and her bracelet by Liz Claiborne (\$18). Yasser wears a classic polo shirt (\$22.50), khaki pants (\$58.50) and belt (\$32), all by Ralph Lauren. His shoes (\$80) are by Skechers. Both outfits are from Macy's.

THE MOSAIC - MOSAIC STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

READY FOR AN INTERVIEW: Mosaic staff writers Olga Levin and Yasser Elussal model clothing appropriate for a college entrance interview. Olga wears a skirt, \$579 and blouse (\$59) both by INC. Her shoes (\$69) are by Nine West and her bracelet by Liz Claiborne (\$18). Yasser wears a classic polo shirt (\$22.50), khaki pants (\$58.50) and belt (\$32), all by Ralph Lauren. His shoes (\$80) are by Skechers. Both outfits are from Macy's.



READY FOR AN INTERVIEW: Mosaic staff writers Olga Levin and Yasser Elussal model clothing appropriate for a college entrance interview. Olga wears a skirt, \$579 and blouse (\$59) both by INC. Her shoes (\$69) are by Nine West and her bracelet by Liz Claiborne (\$18). Yasser wears a classic polo shirt (\$22.50), khaki pants (\$58.50) and belt (\$32), all by Ralph Lauren. His shoes (\$80) are by Skechers. Both outfits are from Macy's.

## Finances: Tough times for new graduates

**By Alay Krishnamoorthy**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Josh Blinhardt had been preparing for college for years. The Gilroy High School junior started taking advanced classes at Gavilan Community College when he was in the seventh grade, in hope of getting into a big-name university after graduation.

But rising tuition and a plunging Silicon Valley economy has suddenly left Blinhardt and his parents in a tough financial situation. Now, instead of looking at college brochures, he's looking at opportunities in the United States military. The dangers that come with military service worry him, he said, but not as much as the uncertainties of finding money for college.

"I think I'm just not going to go to college because I think it's so expensive," Josh, 15, said. "I'll rather just join the armed forces because the military will pay for college after that."

In a tough economy, paying for a college education

## Clothes: Right outfit can help ace interview

**By Olga Levin**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

We've all heard that first impressions make a difference, and part of making a good first impression is based on what you wear. To make a positive impact during your college entrance interview, it's important to put some thought into the right outfit.

Although your clothes will never be the deciding factor for your acceptance, looking nice will always be appreciated, according to admissions officers who interview prospective students for private colleges. State schools don't require interviews.

"When a student is dressed nicely, they seem to carry themselves differently," said Chris Dallas, an admissions officer at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. "They have more confidence and are more in tune with the community."

Most admissions officers recommend that students

# The serious side of sideshows

## Popularity of events in Oakland bursting

**By Ryan Bell**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Brilliant headlights flash over the faces of a cheering crowd, and the scream of spinning tires pierces the night. A ring of spectators encircles a car that is performing donuts. Some dare to jump into the middle and tap the bumper of the spinning vehicle.

A flicker of blue lights on the horizon is enough to spook the participants, and the crowd makes a mass exodus to the next empty intersection or parking lot.

In a bath of fire smoke and rearview mirrors, the sideshow has dissipated as quickly as it materialized.

For more than 10 years, sideshows - spontaneous gatherings of cars performing stunts and the crowds who watch them - have been a frequent occurrence in Oakland. Typically, a few cars will appear on any deserted expanse of pavement.

But the spot doesn't remain quiet for long.

With the help of cell phones and pagers, word travels quickly, and soon as many as 500 people may flock to the area. Drivers bring their vehicles and range from everyday commuter cars to heavily modified sports cars. They throw their machines into shocking maneuvers such as locking their wheels and spinning in tight circles, or doing donuts, or driving on two or three wheels at a time.

A rising number of dangerous incidents have caused the city of Oakland, as well as the media, to focus attention on sideshows. Last month, a 17-year-old boy had his leg amputated after he was run over by a big rig fleeing a multi-subscriber participants. The same weekend, two people were killed by a drunk driver who allegedly had been involved in a sideshow.

But sideshow participants say these negative events are the exception. Most of the fun, the gatherings are peaceful and fun. Drivers and spectators represent a wide variety of ages and races, and they are drawn to the spectacles for various reasons.

Julio Fede of Oakland likes to "sit

and watch how people perform," and says many people go to sideshows because they cannot afford other forms of entertainment. "A lot of people don't go to clubs," Fede said. "A lot of people don't have money."

There is, of course, the rebellious incentive as well. "When you say 'hey,' Fede said, "it makes them want to do it more." Some thrill-seekers even join in specifically because there is a risk.

For 17-year-old Bryant Rodriguez, sideshow is a tradition. Rodriguez, who lives in Manteca but regularly travels to Oakland for the sideshows, explains that "it's not a showoff thing - it's an occasion." And, he adds, police are usually nearby. But they "just watch," as long as there is no trouble.

On some nights, there is trouble. During the last few months, many deaths and injuries have been attributed to sideshows. "A lot of people do get injured. This girl got hit and got backed into," Rodriguez said. "They took her to the hospital."

There is always a risk of accidents, but when violence occurs at sideshows, Rodriguez often says it's not preventable by random.

"There are a lot of gangs there," he said, explaining that the atmosphere of a sideshow is dependent on who is there. Often, a gang oversees the event, and if rival gang members show up, the sideshow can turn violent. "I've seen people get shot. I've seen drive-by before. It's not a good feeling," Rodriguez said. "You've got to watch who you're hanging with."

Rodriguez has been arrested for illegal car racing and has to perform community service. "My car got towed," he said. "That was it for me. But one night, I was arrested because a Buick drove into his house, so he was arrested because his house, who continue to participate in dangerous street races."

The city of Oakland has cracked down on sideshows after the death of UPKendrick Johnson in December 2001.

There is some controversy surrounding the accident, in which 22-year-old Johnson was killed when a Buick slammed into the passenger side of the

## Councilwoman seeks alternatives to dangerous street rallies

**By Derek Bryant**  
MOSAIC STAFF WRITER

Oakland City Councilwoman Desley Brooks knows: teens went away from spontaneous street rallies, or sideshows, just because police told them to.

So she is trying to come up with alternatives. Brooks would like the city to create a safe place for the roving groups of young people who turn residential streets into showplaces, where drivers perform donuts and other stunts while passersby hang out of their windows and crowds cheer from the sidewalks.

Police say sideshows are dangerous events that terrify citizens and have cost several people their lives in Oakland this year alone.

But Brooks has talked to people who attend sideshows and has discussed the problem with her peers. She said that if the Oakland Police Department was to use in sideshow activities for 30 the city, it would save a fine of up to \$1,500 for the owner.

Citizens say the law is not effective because it does not prevent sideshow participants from getting their vehicles back, and some say the city is only punishing the owners.

The Oakland Police Department has been battling sideshows with law enforcement, community involvement and legislation. Other enforcement agencies from the Bay Area, including the Fremont Police Department, have partnered with Oakland police to hinder the spread of sideshows.

"Law enforcement is not enough," Brooks said, adding that the city has already spent \$1.5 million on police overtime. That translates to \$30,000 to \$60,000 a weekend, which is an expense that Oakland cannot afford.

Part of her proposal is to allow nightclubs and bars in Oakland to stay open later to meet in the late-night hours. Brooks said that many of the sideshow participants are not teenagers with nothing to do, but

CHRYL GAVILIER was in Police say the driver of the Buick, 27-year-old Eric Crawford, had been involved in a sideshow earlier that night, and he recklessly endangered the lives of bystanders while spinning his car.

However, video shot by an amateur photographer showed that the area police said was packed with people and cars was deserted when Crawford was performing the stunts.

The footage also showed that during a pursuit of Crawford, police did not use sirens or flashing lights. Attorney John Burris is suing the Oakland Police Department on behalf of Johnson's family, claiming that her death was the result of negligence by officers in the pursuit.

Even though discrepancies plague the case, the city passed the U-Kendrick Johnson Memorial Act last summer. The law allows for the seizure and impoundment of a vehicle reported to be used in sideshow activities for 30 the city, it would save a fine of up to \$1,500 for the owner.

Citizens say the law is not effective because it does not prevent sideshow participants from getting their vehicles back, and some say the city is only punishing the owners.

The Oakland Police Department has been battling sideshows with law enforcement, community involvement and legislation. Other enforcement agencies from the Bay Area, including the Fremont Police Department, have partnered with Oakland police to hinder the spread of sideshows.

"Law enforcement is not enough," Brooks said, adding that the city has already spent \$1.5 million on police overtime. That translates to \$30,000 to \$60,000 a weekend, which is an expense that Oakland cannot afford.

"It's important to work on world peace. It's important for the future leaders of this country to have the intelligence and resources to ensure peace and make the United States one of the greatest places to live."

—YASSER ELASSAL



ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL: Presidential candidate Bilal Ahmed addresses an audience at a conference of the Talugu Association of North America at the San Jose Hilton in July.

### Where's the focus on education?

QUESTION ON EDUCATION GOES UNANSWERED AT CANDIDATE'S CONVENTION APPEARANCE

Congressman Dennis Kucinich came to town recently to talk about his bid for the 2004 presidential election. The Ohio Democrat thinks he can be proud by promising to make the world a better place. He stood in front of a podium at the San Jose Hilton, talking about peace, innocence and better health care for Americans. His words were met with a round of applause by the audience, people attending a conference sponsored by the Talugu Association of North America, an Indian-American group. They shared his quest for peace and welcomed this presidential candidate—and his message—with open arms. People attending the convention, most of them with ties to southern India, told me they want a president whose primary mission is to avoid war and to focus on making America a better place to live. In all, he spoke 11 minutes. It's important that we work to solve international problems without killing other human beings. I'm glad to hear that a candidate out there who shares my sentiment. But as a teenager in California, which is feeling the effects of a sluggish economy more than any other state in the union, I'm really concerned about what's happening to education.



By Yasser Ellassal

...in this country as well. I asked the question: "Congressman, what role do you feel the federal government should play in expanding creativity and individuality in an increasingly standardized, size-fit-all educational system?" He thanked me for including the words "creativity" and "innovation" in the same sentence. But he didn't really answer my question. I really didn't expect to get a solid answer. Politicians rarely do that. But he did use my question as a springboard to talk about what was wrong with the educational system in America. He talked about standardized tests and how they are unfair. He said that children who can't pass standardized tests have fewer opportunities than children who are good at memorization. Just because they can't pass the test, he said, doesn't mean they're not qualified to go to college. I think it's important that we work to solve international problems without killing other human beings. I'm glad to hear that a candidate out there who shares my sentiment. But as a teenager in California, which is feeling the effects of a sluggish economy more than any other state in the union, I'm really concerned about what's happening to education.

### FILE SHARING It could cost you

MAKING SENSE OF THE FILE-SHARING BATTLE

grants and almost during the RIAA to file the music. In the end, they say, the music industry could end up alienating itself from its own lifeline. CD-buying customers who say it's time for the industry to get with the times and start working with the technology instead of fighting it. Still, the idea of being slapped with a lawsuit is scary, especially to some teenagers who don't have the money it takes to hire a lawyer or pay those kind of fines. In the end, parents of those teenagers would be responsible for the fines and the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a San Francisco advocacy group that is working to protect the rights of individuals, is worried that this could lead to some people losing their homes. Leo Hightington is a recent graduate of Silver Creek High School, said he isn't necessarily scared of the lawsuit threats but has definitely allowed his use of peer-to-peer networks. He is taking a wellness approach with the RIAA lawsuits before logging on again. "I don't think it's possible to get everybody," he said. Neither does Raymond Wu, a Montevideo, Minn., resident. He has no plans to stop using the Internet file-sharing programs. "Realistically, do you think they're going to arrest 10 million people?" he asked. "If that was true, then every college student would be arrested. And that would go to jail. It's more like a scare tactic." Wu also agreed that they can't get everyone. For example, the RIAA is only pursuing charges against users who share their own music files. They're not interested in users who are logging on to their computers and downloading files. Even then, he said, the settlement amounts could be devastating.

### FINANCES Economy makes new grads rethink college

Continued from Page 11

becomes more of a challenge. Not only are cash-strapped universities increasing their fees but some parents, who were once earning large paychecks, have found themselves searching for jobs and pinching pennies to put food on the table. In those cases, students are forced to re-evaluate their options after graduation. Even financial aid programs have had trouble keeping up with the demand. Since the economy began its downward spiral, students have flocked to financial aid offices in droves. Cindy Castillo, director of financial aid at De Anza Community College in Cupertino, said her office has noticed the jump in applications last year. "It rose about 30 percent from 2001 to 2002 and has stayed constant since," she said. One of the misconceptions about financial aid is that it's available to only low-income students. That's not necessarily the case, Castillo said. Financial aid is available to students from all income classes, but the type and amount of financial aid they receive can vary. For example, students whose parents earn above-average income may not be eligible for state or federal grants but might qualify for student loans. However, even with thousands of dollars in government assistance available to a student, problems still exist. The application for financial aid asks for the previous year's household income. That makes it especially tough for students whose parents have been laid off in the past few months. Morgan Hill, wasn't worried about the RIAA lawsuit, but he did apply last year. His father had laid off his job at a computer store, and his income was going to put him through school. But Cotta's father has since become one of Silicon Valley's unemployed. So Cotta wasn't starting classes in San Diego in the fall. His only option was a state scholarship that also requires to be paid back with interest. Instead of jumping into that kind of debt, Cotta packed his bags and moved to Michigan, where he started working with his uncle, a machine parts manufacturer. "I considered staying around here and going to a junior college or joining the NROTC, but I was just tired of trying to pay off," Cotta said. Cotta's problem has been especially prevalent in Silicon Valley, where many high-tech incomes have declined but the cost of living has not.

### FIND AID ONLINE

Students planning on attending college should look no further than the Internet for information about financial aid, application deadlines and more.

The electronic version of the Free Application for Financial Student Aid can be found at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov). FAFSA, a student guide about most financial aid programs, including loans, military aid and scholarships, can be found at [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org). The Web contains several scholarship search engines sites, which allow registered users to search a database of available scholarships through a search engine. The sites include [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and [www.college-scholarships.com](http://www.college-scholarships.com). Visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) for information about college loans, planning for college life, comparing different colleges and information about financial aid programs.

### SPORTS Non-traditional games gain popularity

Continued from Page 1

such as badminton and tennis may come at the expense of more well-established sports. Mission San Jose High School in Fremont was not even able to field a varsity football team in 2002 because of a lack of interest. Monta Vista High School in Cupertino — another school in a very diverse community — has also experienced a decline in participation in its football and baseball programs, as students have opted for other sports. "Most Asians don't play football because their parents don't want them to play," said 17-year-old Han Dai, a senior at Monta Vista High. "They haven't been brought up playing Caucasian sports." Our players discuss their strategies before a match at the Binyang Badminton Academy in Mountain View.



Badminton players discuss their strategies before a match at the Binyang Badminton Academy in Mountain View.

Matthews, of Northeastern University, said the growth in certain sports will continue to change as a child. "I played because my mom made me," said Ankit, who was also interested in playing basketball, but was unable to because he was just "too short." Robert Yee, a 2002 Monta Vista High graduate, was introduced to tennis by his parents. "My dad liked it and thought it would be fun," said Yee, who has been an instructor at the Cupertino Tennis Center for the past three years. Like Ankit, size was also a factor in Yee's decision to play tennis. "If you look at Asians, we're not that big," he said. Matthews, of Northeastern University, said the growth in certain sports will continue to change as a child. "I played because my mom made me," said Ankit, who was also interested in playing basketball, but was unable to because he was just "too short." Robert Yee, a 2002 Monta Vista High graduate, was introduced to tennis by his parents. "My dad liked it and thought it would be fun," said Yee, who has been an instructor at the Cupertino Tennis Center for the past three years. Like Ankit, size was also a factor in Yee's decision to play tennis. "If you look at Asians, we're not that big," he said.

### RIGHTS Don't let patriotism blind you

Continued from Page 1

oped to seek safety in numbers — among his equally compliant peers — rather than face a backlash for breathing a word of protest. What is especially worrisome is that this bandwagon mentality is prevalent among our generation. As 16-year-old Monse Rodriguez of East Palo Alto put it: "Everybody is afraid of being shut out or shut down" for voicing their opinions. Jaspreet Johal of Santa Clara was even further. "A lot of teens are scared of the government," the 17-year-old said. He says his peers would be put down if they shared beliefs that differed from government rhetoric. But is this right? Will we one day look back to the year 2003 and be shocked by our own indifference? It wouldn't be the first time. During the 1950s, countless innocent citizens were grilled mercilessly during congressional hearings investigating their alleged communist ties. All it took was the unchecked political ambition of one senator, Joseph McCarthy, to destroy the lives and careers of those caught in the witch-hunt. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941, thousands of Japanese-Americans in internment camps. Once again, the American people stood idly by while their neighbors were robbed of their homes and businesses. These civil atrocities are now viewed with a kind of detachment, as history. Everyone takes credit for "things like that" cannot happen again. In October, people are unaware of the USA Patriot Act. Passed in August 2001, it allows the government to place surveillance on any citizen, as well as hold prisoners for indefinite periods of time without charging their charges or allowing them access to lawyers. Many young people feel that current issues do not affect them directly or that they cannot make a difference. The key is to stay informed and not to be afraid to contribute opinions. An important part of this is voting. Despite being the largest age demographic, 16- to 14-year-olds have consistently had low voter turnout. Our generation must adopt a radically different attitude. Patriotism is noble, but embracing it does not mean to be complacent while our freedoms are being taken from us, because once they are gone, they seldom return. Perhaps President Alexander Hamilton said it best more than a century ago: "Those who stand for nothing are for anything."



demographic makeup of the Bay Area evolves.

"What we're seeing in the Silicon Valley is driven by an immigration trend," he said. "There's been a very obvious change due to Asian immigration. They're going to bring their sports along with them." Terry Ward, athletic director of Bellarmine College Preparatory in San Jose, hasn't seen that happen at his school. Ward says the weakening athletic traditions across the Bay Area — not the changing demographics — are to blame for the turn from traditional high school sports. "Because we have strong tradition, people come in and continue to participate in sports," said Ward of sports at Bellarmine. "We have changed along with the rest of Silicon Valley but our programs remain the same." Bellarmine, however, is an exception in the Bay Area. The prevailing consensus is that the diversity has changed the face of high school sports forever. "All of the diversity — that's what makes it interesting," said Eric Laascher, Silver Creek High School athletic director. "The more opportunities we give our kids to play non-traditional sports, the better it is."

### BUDGET Favorite school programs take hardest hit

By David Dew

When Gov. Gray Davis announced budget cuts to schools over the last year, students and parents trembled to fight the reductions. In late January, students from nine Bay Area schools formed the California Student Coalition (CSC) to fight the cuts. "CSC" was formed because students were so concerned about the proposed cuts and wanted to do something about it," said Vook Shah, 18, of Cupertino. Gov. Gray Davis' "03 budget was to prevent budget cuts, preserve education and promote student welfare." They knew they needed to mobilize quickly. On Super Bowl Sunday, 400 students met to strategize. They laid out a plan. Make noise. Let legislators know they're angry about the cuts. First step: Gather students at a public forum. They decided the worst threat was the loss of their school. Their hard work paid off. More than 200 students attended the forum that also attracted the attention of local television and newspapers. "They'd never done that before," said Shah. The day before the legislature voted on a preliminary budget, more than 200 students staged a demonstration at Plaza de Cesar Chavez in San Jose featuring Assemblywoman Sally Lerner and Steve Rowles, superintendent of the Fremont Union High School District, which will have to cut \$5 million from its budget. As a result, the district will no longer offer some advanced-placement courses such as statistics and psychology. "We've also done away with the cheerleader program and the district's highly regarded peer-counseling program, which trains students to help students. "It's been difficult, but we have tried to cut from programs or places that didn't affect the students the most," said Bob Peterson, chief business officer of the San Mateo Unified School District. "We aimed to keep the cuts as far away from the classroom as possible." San Jose Unified School District was forced to cut \$8.3 million from its budget. To cope, the district won't be hiring new teachers and offering for the coming school year. "What's most important is how they carry themselves," said Bob Peterson, superintendent at Santa Clara University.

### Clothes Right outfit can help in interview

Continued from Page 11

As long as the student wasn't wearing a suit, most admissions officers won't care. Jennifer Wong, director of admissions, at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, Calif., said she doesn't care if a student is wearing a suit or a t-shirt. "The attire 'will never break or make the decision,' she said. "It's about how you carry yourself." As long as the student wasn't wearing a suit, most admissions officers won't care. Jennifer Wong, director of admissions, at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, Calif., said she doesn't care if a student is wearing a suit or a t-shirt. "The attire 'will never break or make the decision,' she said. "It's about how you carry yourself." As long as the student wasn't wearing a suit, most admissions officers won't care. Jennifer Wong, director of admissions, at Claremont McKenna College in Claremont, Calif., said she doesn't care if a student is wearing a suit or a t-shirt. "The attire 'will never break or make the decision,' she said. "It's about how you carry yourself."

### Campaign hopes to stop school cuts

By David Dew

When Gov. Gray Davis announced budget cuts to schools over the last year, students and parents trembled to fight the reductions. In late January, students from nine Bay Area schools formed the California Student Coalition (CSC) to fight the cuts. "CSC" was formed because students were so concerned about the proposed cuts and wanted to do something about it," said Vook Shah, 18, of Cupertino. Gov. Gray Davis' "03 budget was to prevent budget cuts, preserve education and promote student welfare." They knew they needed to mobilize quickly. On Super Bowl Sunday, 400 students met to strategize. They laid out a plan. Make noise. Let legislators know they're angry about the cuts. First step: Gather students at a public forum. They decided the worst threat was the loss of their school. Their hard work paid off. More than 200 students attended the forum that also attracted the attention of local television and newspapers. "They'd never done that before," said Shah. The day before the legislature voted on a preliminary budget, more than 200 students staged a demonstration at Plaza de Cesar Chavez in San Jose featuring Assemblywoman Sally Lerner and Steve Rowles, superintendent of the Fremont Union High School District, which will have to cut \$5 million from its budget. As a result, the district will no longer offer some advanced-placement courses such as statistics and psychology. "We've also done away with the cheerleader program and the district's highly regarded peer-counseling program, which trains students to help students. "It's been difficult, but we have tried to cut from programs or places that didn't affect the students the most," said Bob Peterson, chief business officer of the San Mateo Unified School District. "We aimed to keep the cuts as far away from the classroom as possible." San Jose Unified School District was forced to cut \$8.3 million from its budget. To cope, the district won't be hiring new teachers and offering for the coming school year. "What's most important is how they carry themselves," said Bob Peterson, superintendent at Santa Clara University.

# Buses may become longer, more expensive

## AGENCY PROPOSES ROUTE CUTBACKS, FARE INCREASES TO EASE RISING COSTS

By Stacy Lopez  
MASCOT STAFF WRITER

When July 10th heads off to visit his grandfather it's always an adventure in timing. At least three times a week, Stacy jumps on the No. 81 bus and then transfers to the No. 72 bus to get from West San Jose to Santa Clara, where his grandfather, Elia Lopez, lives. A one-way trip takes 90 minutes — it makes the connection. Otherwise the trip could take even longer.

That's why the proposed cutbacks and fare increases being proposed by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has him concerned. The VTA, like many other agencies that rely on government funds to operate, are feeling the pinch of a struggling economy, says Lopez.

That's why the proposed cutbacks and fare increases being proposed by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has him concerned. The VTA, like many other agencies that rely on government funds to operate, are feeling the pinch of a struggling economy, says Lopez.

"The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through the county. Trains may no longer run in the late-night and early morning hours. Buses could arrive every 20 minutes instead of 15. The price of a transit day pass could jump by \$1."

"Not that I make it harder," said Lopez, 15, a student at Yerba Buena High School. He tries to visit his grandfather at least three times a week. "It's too much. But the day pass back to \$1.00."

Whether they're heading to Santa Clara or to school, to work, to work, teenagers throughout Santa Clara County depend on the public transit system to get them to work.

Abigail Roman, 17, uses it to get to her job at Outdoor Mall. "The trip takes less than 30 minutes, but would take well over an hour if they were to work. By working and riding the bus, Abigail hopes to save enough money for a car. But for now, she's at the mercy of the VTA, which says if they go working to the prices," Peters said.

"The light rail is my main transportation," she said. "My trips are okay, but I can't see myself without them."

VTA spokeswoman Lope Solis realizes that people in the county are upset by the proposed cutbacks but says the agency's hands are tied when it comes to running the transit system.

"Most people are just worried about getting on the bus and arriving on time at their destinations," Solis said. "They don't realize all of the maintenance that goes into keeping buses running."

Even keeping the buses clean is a major expense, she said. Graffiti remains a problem and handling it can be expensive. Several graffiti removal, the VTA is installing camera systems to crack down on graffiti taggers. New technology sometimes can be expensive.

"Just keeping the bus clean takes about \$3 million to \$5 million a year," Solis said. "That's \$3 million to \$5 million we could be spending elsewhere."

Solis said the agency is trying to get into funds from Measure 5, the sales-tax extension approved by voters in 2000 to fund the BART extension into Santa Clara County. The tax, which is scheduled to go into effect in 2006, would give the agency \$1.6 billion over a nine-year period.

Whether they're heading to Santa Clara or to school, to work, teenagers throughout Santa Clara County depend on the public transit system to get them to work.

Abigail Roman, 17, uses it to get to her job at Outdoor Mall. "The trip takes less than 30 minutes, but would take well over an hour if they were to work. By working and riding the bus, Abigail hopes to save enough money for a car. But for now, she's at the mercy of the VTA, which says if they go working to the prices," Peters said.

"The light rail is my main transportation," she said. "My trips are okay, but I can't see myself without them."

VTA spokeswoman Lope Solis realizes that people in the county are upset by the proposed cutbacks but says the agency's hands are tied when it comes to running the transit system.

"Most people are just worried about getting on the bus and arriving on time at their destinations," Solis said. "They don't realize all of the maintenance that goes into keeping buses running."

Even keeping the buses clean is a major expense, she said. Graffiti remains a problem and handling it can be expensive. Several graffiti removal, the VTA is installing camera systems to crack down on graffiti taggers. New technology sometimes can be expensive.



A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A teenager waits on the VTA light rail platform at Paseo de San Antonio Station in downtown San Jose. The VTA is proposing reducing the number of buses and light-rail trains moving through Santa Clara county to cut down on expenses.

MIKE REIS - MASCOT STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

# SURF Girls making waves on their boards

Continued From Page 16

Cruz, was a junior life guard when she decided to buy boards and teach her self how to surf. She has been more young women take up surfing after seeing "The Crush," last year's hit movie about young female surfers in Hawaii.

"It's the feeling of being free, like when you have a hard day at work and you can just go out there and let it all vent," said Tucker, who has competed in the Cold Water Classic, an amateur surfing contest in Santa Cruz, for the last two years. "It's like you have an outlet, and nothing matters anymore."

Dylan Greener, owner and lead instructor of the Santa Cruz Surf School, has noticed that more girls are taking lessons. They may not be die-hard surfers interested in pursuing a career in the sport, but they are at least interested, he said.

"The girls who start it end up sticking with it. More girls are on the path to going pro," said Morgan Hill, said. "More girls are surfing, knowing that they have a chance and a place on the water."

On a recent day in Santa Cruz, the small wet sand and seaweed was in the air and the water was cold, but the conditions didn't stop more than 50 surfers, half of them teenage girls, from trying to ride whatever they could get behind their boards. Some were locals, but others such as Jasmine Smith and her teenage daughter, Jackie, came from as far as Slingshot, Wis.

The younger Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.



Silver Creek High School graduate Marilou Bibat, 16, dribbles a basketball under her legs at her Santa Jose residence. Bibat is recovering from knee surgery after an injury that caused her to sit out her last high school varsity season. Before her injury, Bibat used to ball on the streets. But she discovered she did not garner the same respect on the pavement that she commanded on the girls varsity court.

# STREETBALL Women busting into flashy game

Continued From Page 16

plans to play basketball for San Jose City College this winter. "A lot of girls would be thinking, 'What are you doing out here?' Not all girls have that courage. I love them going for it."

The appeal of the power, size and strength of the NBA game seems to be fading while the popularity of streetball is growing.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.



Silver Creek High School graduate Marilou Bibat, 16, dribbles a basketball under her legs at her Santa Jose residence. Bibat is recovering from knee surgery after an injury that caused her to sit out her last high school varsity season. Before her injury, Bibat used to ball on the streets. But she discovered she did not garner the same respect on the pavement that she commanded on the girls varsity court.

# STREETBALL Women busting into flashy game

Continued From Page 16

plans to play basketball for San Jose City College this winter. "A lot of girls would be thinking, 'What are you doing out here?' Not all girls have that courage. I love them going for it."

The appeal of the power, size and strength of the NBA game seems to be fading while the popularity of streetball is growing.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.



Justin Mickelson, 19, plays with a friend's brother's drum set in San Jose. Mickelson is enjoying remission after his diagnosis of cancer at age 17. He looks forward to returning to school after a year hiatus.

# CANCER Young victims learn difficult lessons

Continued From Page 1

don't feel sorry. Get mad and fight the cancer," Hokee, 100, says. "I raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society by running benefit marathons. She does it, she said, because being a witness is scary, and she wants to do what she can to make that experience easier for other young people."

"I was 18 and I understood everything I had to go through," she said. "But what about the children who can't understand that the chemo that makes them feel horrible is for their own good? By taking part in raising money for research, I am hoping that some children's cancer cases that they will go home and live with their families, and we promise the cancer will never come back."

Experts say researchers are working hard to find better treatments and a cure for childhood cancers. And they acknowledge that young people with cancer face special challenges.

Andrew Hokee, of San Jose, was three weeks shy of his 19th birthday when he was diagnosed with leukemia in 1988. She has been in remission for almost 14 years. "I know what it's like to be a kid with cancer, and what it's like to be a young person who gets sick."

"Never, ever, sick, why me? There is no answer to that question when diagnosed with cancer," she said. "And feeling sorry for yourself is bad on your body, physically, so."

He suffered back pain from the type of bone cancer he had. Now 19, Mickelson struggled most with trying to stay strong when he was cancer-free. Even though he was shaking to take a few minutes to answer an instantaneous conversation, happening in real-time on the Internet.

These chats are usually not deep philosophical discussions, but rather a way for people to get the heaviest way for teens to communicate, and that abundance in real-time personal forms of interaction can be harmful later in life.

Repetitious, students are likely to give up instant messaging, because of its convenience.

Fifteen-year-old Sergey Geler, for one, describes himself as an online gamer, but he says he can't talk to a man who he can't see. "I don't have a computer, so I can't see him," he said. "I can be beneficial, as long as they're not behind the computer screen, which is usually unhealthy."

Life goes on," she said.

# IM More teens going online to keep in touch

Continued From Page 1

And when given a choice among television, telephone, instant messaging and radio, and text messaging, teens chose instant messaging as their favorite way to communicate. In a survey of 1,000 teens, 81 percent of teens chose television, 33 percent chose instant messaging and just 17 percent chose the phone.

"Tens love IM because it allows them to talk to all their friends at once. That said, 'We've never heard who they call their friends to say, 'Go online!'"

Young people today say there are many advantages to chatting online. They can be more confident they wouldn't offend anyone. They can be more confident they wouldn't offend anyone. They can be more confident they wouldn't offend anyone.

Justin Mickelson, 19, plays with a friend's brother's drum set in San Jose. Mickelson is enjoying remission after his diagnosis of cancer at age 17. He looks forward to returning to school after a year hiatus.

# IM More teens going online to keep in touch

And when given a choice among television, telephone, instant messaging and radio, and text messaging, teens chose instant messaging as their favorite way to communicate. In a survey of 1,000 teens, 81 percent of teens chose television, 33 percent chose instant messaging and just 17 percent chose the phone.

"Tens love IM because it allows them to talk to all their friends at once. That said, 'We've never heard who they call their friends to say, 'Go online!'"

Young people today say there are many advantages to chatting online. They can be more confident they wouldn't offend anyone. They can be more confident they wouldn't offend anyone.

Fifteen-year-old Sergey Geler, for one, describes himself as an online gamer, but he says he can't talk to a man who he can't see. "I don't have a computer, so I can't see him," he said. "I can be beneficial, as long as they're not behind the computer screen, which is usually unhealthy."

Life goes on," she said.

# WRESTLERS Making the cut

Continued From Page 16

in wrestling. The number of girls in wrestling has increased steadily, according to the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF). A CIF survey found that the number of high school female wrestlers increased from 404 in 1998 to 987 in 2002.

Most high schools don't have enough female competitors in male-dominated sports to create girls' football or wrestling teams, for example, so girls have to compete on boys' teams. But Don Deal, CIF sports information director, said that may change in the future — if schools aren't forced to cut back on sports programs because of budget cuts.

There are also more opportunities today for women to compete beyond high school and college. The Oakland Beavers, an all-female football team, is one example of the opportunities available to women.

These days, boys are more open to the idea of girls competing in male-dominated sports. It's not just about the sport, but about the person who plays it.

Justin Mickelson, 19, plays with a friend's brother's drum set in San Jose. Mickelson is enjoying remission after his diagnosis of cancer at age 17. He looks forward to returning to school after a year hiatus.

# PITCHER From the Giants bullpen

Continued From Page 16

"It's great because I don't have to take crap from my friends," he said. "I'm just enjoying playing in San Francisco because he feels confident in the Bay Area."

"It's really fun," he said, "because I know how to get around. It's also really nice to be able to see my family."

Famly is extremely important. "They have always been behind in everything," he said.

Foppert said he got him interested in baseball in the first place. In fact, his dad taught him to play — he was Foppert's Little League coach.

After jacking and throwing balls at an invariable opponent, Ward stepped out of the ring and started hitting a bag with 15-year-old Damon, who lives down the street from Ward. Cole, who just won his first boxing match, said Ward was one of his main motivations. Ward welcomed the chance to be a role model for young kids. He carried himself in a way that he thinks is best, both for himself and those looking up to him.

"I really want to be known as a God-fearing man and a good dad. I had my foot out there and I'm not for anything. I just want to live my life and be a good man."

Best summer, Ward will still be the same confident, yet humble man that neighborhood kids like. He's still the man floating in the ring, throwing jabs and hooks. Except next summer, the Tom Hanks of the Giants and the Adam Carlin of the ring, if everything goes right, he'll be stepping out of the ring with a gold medal around his neck.

# STREETBALL Women busting into flashy game

Continued From Page 16

plans to play basketball for San Jose City College this winter. "A lot of girls would be thinking, 'What are you doing out here?' Not all girls have that courage. I love them going for it."

The appeal of the power, size and strength of the NBA game seems to be fading while the popularity of streetball is growing.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

She hopes more girls will continue to start surfing because of its appeal.

"The women Schwanz, who was taking lessons at the Santa Cruz school, was inspired to surf by "The Crush," and shows such as MTV's "Surf Girls."

"We don't get many waves in Watsonville," Jasmine Schwanz said. "I love them the option of coming here or going on a vacation, and they said 'here.'"

California is the perfect place for beginners because many surf schools in Santa Cruz and Southern California will teach year-round. And Morgan Hill King is attracted to surfing because of the freedom when you're out there," she said. "You forget about everything but your friends in the water."

# BOXER Athlete sets sights on gold medal

Continued From Page 16

Ward won the Everlast Boxing Championship in March, which qualified him for the Olympic Trials in February 2004.

"People say I probably have the best chance of winning the gold medal and I believe them," said Donald James, Ward's assistant trainer. "When he was about 14, I believed that he was going to be an Olympian."

Ward's accomplishments in the ring include winning the Junior Olympic Championship in 1999, the Caribbean Tournament, Eastern U.S. Chess and Champion in 2001 and the Everlast Fran Jones Under-19 National Championships in 2002.

Ward has been boxing since he was 9. His father, Frank, got him into it by hitting Ward and his brother, Joshua, stories about for almost 30 years, and he saw boxing game for the first time when he was 11. "I was working out in the gym one day on my own. I happened to see this little boy looking at the gym equipment and he said, 'I'd like to see you. I would turn around and look at me. I'd nod my head, but he'd turn around, punch the bag and look at me, and I'd nod at him again.'"

A week or two later, Hunter saw them again. Ward father said Hunter saw them again. Ward father said Hunter saw them again. Ward father said Hunter saw them again.

Those who follow boxing say many fans have put Ward above other boxers. "He has courage, technique and a competitive drive," Lopez said. "He has an inner drive that sets him one notch above everybody else."



## GIRLS IN SPORTS

# BARRIER BREAKERS

## FEMALE ATHLETES HOLD THEIR OWN

### Women boarders make waves

By Stephen Gonzales

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER  
Inspired by surf-themed movies and television programs showcasing women boarders, a new wave of surfer girls can be found everywhere from New Jersey to California, catching waves and ripping a curl.

Santa Cruz and other popular surfing areas are seeing a huge increase in the number of young female surfers interested in learning the sport.

Last year, 8,000 people enrolled at Santa Cruz Surf School, where they paid \$70 dollars an hour for private two-hour lessons. About 65 percent were girls. This year, female enrollment is expected to double.

On the pro level, about 100 women, more than double five years ago, participate in professional competitions.

By comparison, about 800 men compete in pro surfing.

Introduced to surfing when she was 7, Jody Tucker, now 21, of Santa

See SURF, Page 15

### Flashy game drawing new players

By Nicole Mehta

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER  
The fast-paced game of streetball, with never-before-seen passes, thunderous dunks and flashy dribbling skills, has been attracting youths and young adults all over the world during the last few years. With shows such as ESPN's "Streetball," MTV's "Who's Got Game" and the And1 Mixtapes series, the game's exposure is at an all-time high.

The majority of the players are men. However, there's an increase in the number of women who are showing off their streetball skills on the court alongside boys and men. "And1 Mixtape Vol. 5" features a woman, and "Who's Got Game" features 10 men and two women known as Sherrise, 25, from Los Angeles, and LaToya, 22, from Houston.

"They're tight. They're representing the girls out there," said Juvy Manzano, who graduated from Silver Creek High in San Jose and

See STREETBALL, Page 15



READY TO CATCH SOME WAVES: Two teens head out to the surf at the beach in Santa Cruz. More girls are picking up the sport as its popularity increases.

### Girls hit the mat

By Stephen Gonzales

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER  
Kassie Cook is one of a new breed of female athletes: a cheerleader who also wrestled on the boys team at Fremont's American High School.

Almost three decades after the passage of Title IX, the gender equality law that opened locker rooms to females, more girls than ever are playing high school sports — and more girls are competing in sports traditionally dominated by boys.

Cook, 19, grew up around wrestling. Her dad was a wrestling coach at nearby Washington High School and her older brother was a wrestler. She thought she'd be good at the sport and wanted to make her dad proud. Before Cook tried out, no girls were on the wrestling team at American High. In previous years, girls tried out but didn't make the cut. But three girls, including Cook, made the team this time around.

"It was a cool feeling to be the first girls on the wrestling team," she said.

When she first joined the team as a sophomore, her mother was hesitant, but Cook said her mom realized her daughter had talent.

Her mom wasn't the only one with doubts. Cook said most male opponents were somewhat hesitant to compete against her, and some of her guy friends on the team felt weird. But they got used to having her around.

And while she was on the wrestling team, she was still on the cheering squad. She said her experience as a cheerleader helped her in wrestling because it made her more flexible. She was able to bend and move her body, which gave her an advantage over other wrestlers.

Cook, who graduated in June, was so successful as a wrestler, she said, she was offered a \$20,000 scholarship from Menlo College in Menlo Park. But she decided to go to Sacramento State University for cheerleading.

Cook is one of a growing number of girls in California competing

See WRESTLERS, Page 15

### Young Giants pitcher is living his dream

By Manu Jain

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER  
Thousands of kids dream of playing major league baseball when they grow up. Few are fortunate enough to make it to the minor leagues, let alone the majors.

And only a handful are lucky enough to play for the team they grew up idolizing.

This dream came true for 23-year-old Jesse Foppert, starting pitcher for the San Francisco Giants.

Even more remarkable than being a starting pitcher for the Giants is the fact that Foppert got his shot at age 22.

"It's hard to break into the league so early," said J.T. Snow, the Giants' starting first base-

man and a six-time Gold Glove winner. "He's young and has a really bright future."

Ironically, Foppert had a hard time making the team at San Rafael High School. But once he did, he became a stand-out shortstop. It wasn't until college that he made the transition to pitching.

It was a difficult change, he said, but he was "talked into pitching" by his baseball coaches at the University of San Francisco. Foppert welcomed the challenge and not only excelled at it, but said he "had fun with it, although it was a fast transition."

See PITCHER, Page 15

### Boxer sets sights on Olympic gold

#### OAKLAND ATHLETE LEARNS TO BALANCE CAREER, FAMILY

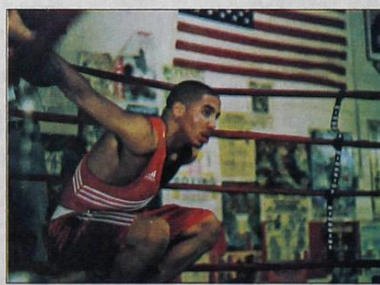
By Nicole Mehta

MOSAIC STAFF WRITER  
The air is filled with the smell of sweat and the sound of fists hitting punching bags. The white brick walls are adorned with posters from fights and autographed pictures of famous boxers. A man floats alone in the ring, jabbing and throwing hooks at an invisible opponent.

He is a man who lives by this philosophy: "I'm a man about my business now, so I can be a kid about my fun later." He is a man who is a role model to numerous young children in his hometown

of Oakland. He is 19-year-old Andre Ward, and many believe he is the man with the best chance at bringing home a gold medal at the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece.

"He has the perfect style, poise and temperament," said Candy Lopez, a veteran boxing coach who teaches at the Police Activities League gym in San Jose. "Right now in the U.S., nobody can take him in terms of boxing ability. He's the best the U.S. has to offer in that weight class."



HOPING FOR A MEDAL: Andre Ward, 19, of Oakland stretches before a practice fight at King's Gym in East Oakland. Ward will compete in the Olympic trials in February.

See BOXER, Page 15