



El Rodeo



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Notable Alumni Gloria Molina Visits El Rancho

BY BRIANNA MORALES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Gloria Molina, an El Rancho graduate of 1966 and the first Latina in history to be elected to California State Legislature, the Los Angeles City Council, and the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, visited Chef Luna's culinary arts class on December 8th.

After being invited to Chef Luna's class, Molina was immediately intrigued, for the program did not exist when she attended El Rancho; the nearest equivalent to culinary arts was home economics.

"The culinary program is something we didn't have when I was here, and I understand that it is a very successful and award-winning program," said Molina.

During her visit, Molina was flooded with memories, particularly of her shy nature; she would hang her head low and walk alongside the walls to avoid being noticed. Most of Molina's moments during her visit, however, were spent interacting with students.

"I told her that she was going to have to jump in the kitchen. I put an apron on her, and she got to work. She made her own plate, and I told her she had to present to me just like everyone else," said Chef.

While participating, Molina took note of Chef's positive connection with his students.

"Just listening to Chef Luna, [I can tell that] he really is the kind of teacher that is in touch with the kids. Sometimes the teachers are just like walking textbooks; they don't relate to students, and we really need that. Plus, he's very conscientious about health issues



Alongside seniors Jessie Salazar and Alexis Ruelas, Gloria Molina, an El Rancho graduate of 1966 and a powerful politician, prepares a dish to present to Chef Luna during culinary arts.

and good nutrition," said Molina.

Moreover, Molina believes that Chef's continuous connection with his students allows students to see that culinary arts is a field which they can pursue.

"The opportunity to have [the culinary arts program] and learn different types of things other than academics is a good thing. It gives students some insights into other career paths they can take," Molina continued, "Not everyone is going to

choose the academic route, and [culinary arts is] a career path that can work in many ways."

Also, culinary arts, as Molina perceives, serves as a means a diminishing deep-set notions that only women are to meant be in the kitchen.

"[Culinary arts] takes away the whole belief about women always doing the cooking, and it breaks down a lot of barriers," said Molina.

Furthermore, Molina,

as the first Latina in history to be so highly ranked on the political spectrum, holds her paramount political position with pride and responsibility.

"[Being the only woman is] something I wear with a lot of pride, but also a lot a responsibility. Since I'm the only woman, I stand out. Unfortunately, even though it is said that we're all equal, women are still not equal. Everyone's looking to see if I'm going to mess up, so

I really have to be smarter and work harder than everyone else does just to be equal, which I don't mind doing," said Molina.

Despite the dismal fact that Molina is not seen equally to her male counterparts, Chef believes that food serves as a universal way of making everyone the same.

Chef said, "Age and gender don't matter; someone is going to be interested in food. Everybody wants to know about food, and she's no different."

Ms. Carreon Bids Farewell to The Ranch After 22 Years of Dedication

BY ABEL MARTINEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

November 16th saw the departure of one of El Rancho's most beloved teachers. After 22 years at The Ranch, history teacher Ms. Carreon has left the classroom to become a District History Coach.

"I'm really enjoying my new position," says Carreon. "I love it. The people I've met are great. It's been a great experience so far, and it's re-booting my creativeness."

"We're excited for her," says Counselor Olga Espinoza. "We wish her luck, and we wish her well."

The position presented itself when the district received a grant called "Teaching American History." The job's goals aim to make history more fun and enjoyable for students.

"I lead discussions on historical information," explains Carreon. "My job is to help teachers teach history. I present lessons at the Hun-



After 22 years in the classroom, Carreon leaves the classroom to become a District History Coach.

tington Library in Pasadena."

"Ms. Carreon was one of the best teachers at El Rancho," says senior, Michelle Barnes. "Government class is not the same

without her. I miss her already."

Ms. Carreon's new position hasn't launched her into another place. She still works for the El Rancho Unified School District in

the Categorical Program Office.

"The position seemed like an interesting job, so I applied," says Carreon. "It was a rare opportunity that I couldn't pass up. Working with scholars and professors--it's a really neat experience."

Although her new position has provided her with much enjoyment, dealing with her departure from El Rancho has not been easy.

"The hardest part of this job is not working with my students," said Carreon. "I miss my students. I miss the interaction and the humor. It's the most difficult part of it all."

"Mrs. Carreon was a cool teacher," says senior Ernesto Gonzalez. "She really cared about [her students]."

One question still looms over the minds of many: Is this the last that El Rancho has seen of Ms. Carreon? The answer is no. The grant will last for about 3-5 years, and if able to, Carreon has deemed that her return after that time is "most likely."

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OPINION

A Coffee Drinker's Chronicle: UN Votes Against Protecting Gays from Execution

BY BRIANNA MORALES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

As terrifying as it may seem, the UN has voted to remove a reference to sexual orientation from a resolution condemning arbitrary and unjustified executions in a narrow 79-70 vote.

In 2008, the same resolution contained a reference to homosexuals, so the execution of one based on his/her sexual orientation was expressly forbidden. Now, since 79 countries voted to remove the reference, the malicious persecution and murdering of individuals based on their sexual orientation is, sadly, not prohibited.

Mostly Asian and African countries voted to remove the reference, including: Jamaica, China, Cuba, North Korea, Iraq, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahamas, and Egypt. Most Western countries, including the United States, voted in favor of keeping the reference to sexual orientation in place. The US abstained from the final vote to approve the resolution; American diplomats told the UN that the US was "dismayed" at the decision.

The UN, however, is in direct defiance of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted in 1948. This declaration states that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that all are guaranteed non-discrimination and the right to life. How is it that the UN can directly defy



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a declaration that it previously set in place? What is the point of the UN if it does not uphold its own humanitarian values?

In a world where 76 countries criminalize homosexuality, five consider it a capital crime, and countries such as Uganda are considering adding the death penalty to their laws criminalizing homosexuality, times are dire. Uganda introduced a bill that would allow the death penalty to be used for any acts of

homosexuality or cases of HIV. Despite international outrage, the bill will soon become law, according to Ugandan officials.

American or African, Christian or Wiccan, pro-gay or anti-gay humans need to realize that human lives are being taken—lives that did not wish for anything other than the right to love who they were born to love. To be gay is not a choice; why would one choose to live a life that can potentially cause them to be ex-

ecuted, or in the US, bullied to the point of ultimate despair: suicide?

As unfathomable as it may seem, the malignant attitude towards homosexuals is based, for the most part, on dismal disgust and deep-set disagreement of a lifestyle that seems too "alternative" for some to handle. Although I cannot easily change opinions, I can say that these executions will cause nations to disregard life, families to be torn apart, and most prominently, lives to be lost.

President Obama Takes Action Against Genocide

BY ALEXIS RAMIREZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Every day fragile children cry themselves to sleep in fear of separation from their families. Young girls cry at the thought of being raped while getting fire-

wood in their refugee camps. Tears swim in a young boy's eyes after he realizes his mother was shot to death. This treacherous nightmare is the reality of genocide stricken Darfur, Sudan, a region in the flames of death, starvation, rape, and corruption. Why

is society allowing these devastating acts of barbarianism to occur?

Every day the world waits, and 500 people die in Darfur. In this civil war, people are either starved, tortured, beaten or shot. Every single death rips more hope from the native's hearts. To date, over 1,000,000 innocent civilians have been murdered. After being forced out of their villages by Sudan's Janjaweed Militia (armed men) and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the people of Darfur retreated to refugee camps. More than three million people face malnutrition, and almost a quarter of them starve to death. Boys and men must enlist in the rebel army that, sadly, will be defeated by its own government. And still these young men are sent away to die for the sake of the people.

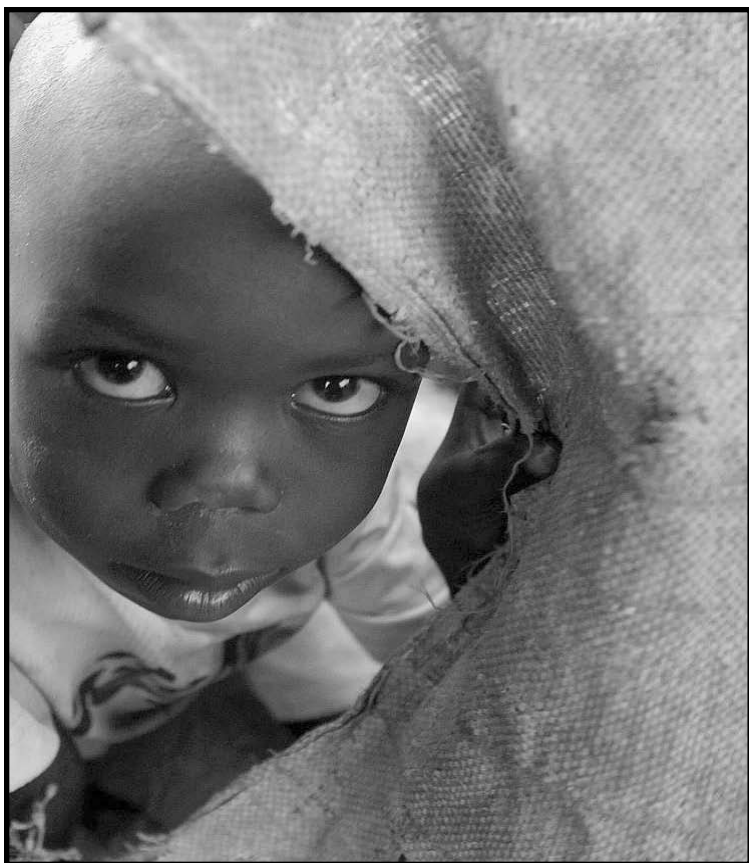
On November 24, 2010, in response to the war in Sudan, President Barack Obama released an expansive plan to help stop the nefarious acts and rebuild communities across central Africa devastated by the violence. He describes his plan as "a strategy to guide United States support across the region for viable multilateral efforts to mitigate and eliminate the threat to civilians and regional stability posed

by the Lord's Resistance Army."

His letter gives strategies and new initiatives such as: "(a.) increase protection of civilians, (b.) apprehend or remove from the battlefield Joseph Kony and senior commanders, (c.) promote the defection, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters, and (d.) increase humanitarian access and provide continued relief to affected communities."

President Obama is the first world leader of any kind to take action; he and his administration hope the United States Congress to be supportive of his plan and look forward to dispose of this matter. Choosing to ignore this issue will allow these killings to continue. Stopping these acts of war should be a priority. The war in central Africa has greatly impacted Sudan's indigenous people. It must be stopped now.

Each and every person has equal human dignity and any contribution can make a difference for these helpless victims. Remembering the words of Gandhi, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." Visit www.savedarfur.org to learn more on this topic or to help stop this inhumane bloodshed.



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Don't Ask, Don't Tell, & Don't Change



BY LYDIA RAYA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

In relation to the GSA's debate, the question is yet again asked: Is the military's *Don't Ask Don't Tell* (DADT) policy at all moral?

Many people believe that this is a type of discrimination toward the LGBTQ community. I honestly believe that the rule under which people must not tell or ask anyone about their sexuality or intimate life is necessary to protect the soldiers' rights to confidentiality and even their lives.

Soldiers are not allowed to come out as open homosexuals, nor are any soldiers permitted to give any information about their intimate life. If any soldier is caught doing either of the two, they are immediately dismissed from serving in the military.

The primary controversy that is brought up within a discussion of DADT is interpreting whether it is immediate discharge for coming out of the closet to coworkers who are recruited to serve as an American defense system (keep this, with the idea of different interpretations by different people, in mind) or a ban on any homosexual with plans to join the military armed force.

According to the history of the DADT Policy found on Service members Legal Defense Network, "Petty Officer Allen R. Schindler was brutally murdered in Japan by shipmates in an anti-gay hate crime" the October of 1992.

I honestly believe that there couldn't be anything worse for an American soldier than to be slaughtered by his or her own comrades, who fight for the same country, out of an act of discrimination.

With this mentioned, Congress has found that, "The conduct of military operations requires members of the armed forces to make extraordinary sacrifices, including the ultimate sacrifice, in order to provide for the common defense."

The common defense, the right to someone's privacy and life, can be protected by simply not coming out as an open homosexual. No, I don't feel that it is right for people to have to hide themselves, but I don't think it's any better to allow those people to risk being killed by their own comrades in a prejudice world.

"One of the most critical elements in combat capability," Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution of the United States reads, "is unit cohesion, that is, the bonds of trust among individual service members that make the combat effectiveness of a military unit greater than the sum of the combat effectiveness of the individual unit members."

CAMPUS

De La Loza Sculpture Reflects Struggles of Humanity

BY KAREN CARRILLO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Advanced Art teacher, Mr. De La Loza, not only does an exceptional job inspiring students to enhance their artistic talents, but he also created a symbolic art piece located in the Mariachi Plaza Boyle Heights Metro Station.

"El Nino Perdido" or "Prodical Child," one of the many art works located in the Mariachi Plaza, is located below a multi-colored roof illuminating the sculpture with soft colors of yellow, red, and blue.

Descending down into the station, one can't help but wonder what the sculpture of the woman and her child represent. The mesmerizing colors emphasize the sculpture's deep symbolic meaning, the importance of children around the world. He entered in a nationwide competition and became a finalist. He was chosen to help design the Mariachi Plaza.

"All children are a product of the universe. Each and every one of them is a prodigy, in fact, the universe would be incomplete



Courtesy of De La Loza

if one of them is missing," says Mr. De La Loza. The title of his artwork, which he took from a song called "El Nino Perdido," portrays the importance of children and their welfare. "My artwork is always reflective of the personal political struggles of humanity," says De La Loza. "When I'm working I'm connected." His inspiration originally comes from the struggles that people in the world go through.

Originally from Mexico City, Mr. De La Loza grew up in

Boyle Heights, but he attended a private high school in Montebello. Since the students came from wealthy families, De La Loza did not let money interfere with his high school experience. "I came from a poor family however it helped me realize that wealth did not make someone better than me," explains De La Loza with a smile.

He goes on to explain that he never intended to become a teacher, but he started off as a substitute teacher while he was attending UCLA as a graduate. "I

wanted to do something meaningful with my life," he says passionately. "[I wanted to] become a better person and artist from working with the youth. Youth in general are endless river of life which is connecting us to the future."

He shares the same passion for what he hopes to see in the future. "I want to see our country transformed to emphasize the importance of its people. Additionally I would love to see real commitment to addressing environmental dilemma." He explains. As a proud husband and father, his family is an important part of his life, but he still finds the time to grow and collect rare trees. He has around 300, trees most of which are endangered. He has one tree in which there are only 200 left in the world! He sold it for \$25,000 and with the seeds he collected, he hopes to grow a lot of them.

"I am an avid reader, I enjoy reading books on philosophy and psychology," he adds with a laugh. "And I can proudly say that I have not owned a television for over 25 years!"

Club Updates

Gay Straight Alliance Club:

Going ice-skating during winter break. Some members participating for the basket give away.

Song Writers Club:

Show on Saturday, December 11 at Veterans Hall

Culinary Arts Club:

Planning on going to the Ronald McDonald House. Bring blankets and jackets to the homeless during Winter break.

Leos Club:

Participating in toy drives, also participating in the ongoing Rio Hondo Symphony, Christmas caroling and baking during Winter break at senior centers and hospitals.

Key Club:

Attended the Pico Rivera Christmas Basket event on Saturday, December 11.

Also participated in the Baja for Navidad program.

Chef Luna's Students Serve Feast to the Homeless



BY AMANDA HERNANDEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On Wednesday, November 24th, Chef Luna and thirty students made food to feed 300 people. The majority of students who attended participated from 10:30 am-2:30 pm, while other devoted students stayed until 6:00 pm.

For the last two years, Chef and the Culinary Arts Club have cooked for the homeless. All of his students participated one way or the other either by prepping the food or donating an item.

Dedicated contributor, senior Maria Lopez, donated \$280 worth of food.

"I feel proud of myself because I'm helping those that are less fortunate," says Lopez, "The experience made me realize how grateful I am for what I have."

Students that cooked made food such as: pies, rice, soup, grilled cheese sandwiches, cornbread etc., all of which was homemade.

Senior, Erik Cortez was one of the more dedicated students who helped cook.

"Just the fact that Chef Luna spends his whole weekend with the homeless made me want to spend time helping cook the food," says Cortez, "I didn't even realize how much time went by because I was having fun."

Though cooking was fun, passing out the food was a more serious task. Since the number of homeless people on the streets this year is greater than last year's number, Chef and students passed out more than 250 bags of food, as opposed to last years 100.

Not everyone accepted the food because they wanted blankets, shoes, shirts or a jacket instead. The students passed out food at Skid Row in Downtown Los Angeles beside Chef.

"There were a lot of children this year. These kids (ages four-eight) were carrying around their clothes in a bag, and that's all they have," Chef continued, "When I asked these three boys where they

stayed, they said down the street; they sleep on the sidewalk."

With fewer jobs in the state this year more families are being forced to live on the streets, leaving innocent children to think the lives they are living is okay.

"It was really sad to see all the children on the streets, especially the ones without a mother or father," says senior, Ernesto Perez, "I wish there was more I could do for them."

Chef credits his generous nature to the way his mother raised him.

"My mother is the reason I want to help people that are less fortunate; she's the reason I have a heart," says Chef.

In hopes of helping more people, the Culinary Arts Club and chef will continue to help the less fortunate and try to aid them in their hard times.

"The next time you see a homeless person treat them like they are someone and say hello; it makes them feel like

Dons Help Those Less Fortunate

BY ROSAURA MONTES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Pico Rivera's Christmas Baskets Committee and the City of Pico Rivera Department of Parks and Recreation held their Christmas Basket Giveaway on Saturday December 11 at Rivera Park.

The Sheriff Station of Pico Rivera also held their annual toy distribution that same day.

Volunteers of all ages and students of El Rancho came to support the city by pushing carts filled with boxes of food to families.

"I helped to fill in the boxes with food; I wanted to do this because I got the chance to help people out," said junior, Natalie Apalategui.

Lines were being filled by men and women of families who attended to receive their Christmas boxes.

Everyone who had the chance to receive a box filled with food were very grateful.

"This really helps my family and I because of the difficulties we are having with our jobs. I thank God and the people of Pico Rivera for helping us," said grandmother, Antonia Aguirre.

The current recession has a huge impact on these

families; so any bit of help brings joy to the families.

Since Christmas is near, the city is glad to support those who are struggling. "Many people who live off minimum wage have trouble buying food at times. Most of these families only have one person in their family who works," said mother, Dora Rodriguez.

Many mothers and fathers were happy that their children were able to get a toy of their choice free of charge. The Sheriff Station collected toys from generous donors.

"Children see us taking mommy or daddy to jail, but here they see us giving out toys and giving back to the community," said Lieutenant Steve Sanchez of the Pico Rivera Sheriff Station.

Volunteers of the toy distribution were called "runners". They each had a child to assist and walk them to a specific toy area of their age.

Children picked out any toy of their choice that they saw on display and got the chance to meet Santa.

The kids who received a toy were not the only ones satisfied, but the volunteers were glad that they had to opportunity to put a smile on children's faces.



SPORTS

Girls' Waterpolo Ready to Make a Splash

BY AMANDA LARA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Girls' varsity waterpolo team is back in business with their new coaches. Even though the season has just started, the girls are very enthusiastic about this season.

"We've been working hard during practices and games. We've had a few tough games with competitive teams. These games are preparing us for league and the tougher they are the better we get! It's my senior year, meaning, that I need to give it my all," said goalie Kimberly Pedregon.

The varsity team feels that this season is going to be one of the best they've ever had.

"Because of our new coach, who has pushed us to the fullest, the season has been tough and strong and it's getting better with the determination the team has. This year, which is my



last, will be a strong finish with winning league and, hopefully, CIF," said senior Vivian Cazares.

The coaches have been conditioning the girls as much as they can to bring

about one of the best teams.

"Our season just started and I'm super excited! I love our team and how we work together. Our new coach is great! It's been tough, but I know it will pay off,"

said junior, Ana Flores. The girls are like a family that sticks together to achieve their highest goals.

"We are working hard and putting a lot of time in trying to win," said junior Angelica Her-

nandez. Our season, so far, is going pretty well. We have had some hard losses but we also have had some good wins. I expect that we will do good this season."

Even though there have been some losses, the girls are still keeping their heads held high. The girls have much confidence in each other.

"This season just started. I feel that we are growing as a team and as individuals. In order to succeed we need more girls to step up. I know we are going to win league this year," said senior Sam Perez.

Boys' Waterpolo Team Stays Positive After Tough Season

BY AMANDA HERNANDEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

A season of strenuous training and hard work for boys' varsity waterpolo ended with a respectable finish.

"We trained very hard for CIF," said sophomore Bryen Flores. "We bettered ourselves as a team because Coach Wright tells us what mistakes we make and how to improve them."

Not only did the boys learn useful things for waterpolo, but they also learned how to stay positive on and off the playing field.



"We had our ups and downs, and we went through a lot," said senior Leonardo Ramirez. "The team had to adapt and we were proud of how we played in the end."

"The season ended on a

good note and I feel proud to have been the captain of this remarkable team," said Ramirez.

The team feels like they owe their season to their new coach. "Coach Wright has been our new

coach since Coach Pringle left, he gives us long talks to pump us up and prepare us," said Flores.

"The biggest thing for me is that anyone can talk to my guys and they will say it was a success," said Coach Wright. "They're happy with the direction we are headed and they can say they trust me and I believe in them."

Though the boys lost a lot of games, they showed the most spirit by not feeling unaccomplished by the end of their season.

"All the guys are close and they are looking forward to an off season of hard work," said Wright.

They can all say they won, no matter what the score of their games. "This is coming from a team who lost twenty games," said Wright. "We did the best we could by keeping a positive attitude."



Girls' Volleyball End Season 6-4

BY DANIELA AGUILAR
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The girls' volleyball team ended the season with a league record of 6-4 and a disillusionment of not making it into CIF.

Starting off the season in a tough spot, the girls managed to win some games but not enough to make it into finals. "It was a disappointing season," says captain Aleksandra Ramos. "Working four years [to CIF championship] and not getting what you want was disappointing." Although the girls' main

goal was to win league and get past third round of CIF, the team tried their best throughout the entire season. "I feel that my girls had a lot of potential; it's just that we didn't follow through," says Ramos.

Ramos expressed great disappointment to know that after such hard work and dedication, they were unable to compete in CIF. "Since freshman year, we've been working everyday after school, preparing, but not everyone in the team wanted that," says Ramos.

Despite this year's defeat, the volleyball team continues to remain optimistic and enthusiastic about next year's season.

Girls' Basketball Look Forward to Season

BY ASHLIE VALENCIA, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho's girls' varsity basketball has finally started their season with twenty-six games to go. "I'm looking forward to improve and push the varsity girls to conquer the finals," said Coach Shigezane. "My two main goals this year is to win league finals and CIF finals."

This year's captains, Doreen Lopez and Leahny Avena, are looking forward to a positive season. "When our teammates are all united we give the opposing team all we got," said Lopez. "We all have to play our hearts out and make the best of this season. I hope we have great season," says Avena.

Along with the team's captains, the players also have positive outlooks for the rest of the season, granted that the team works to its full potential. "The way everyone works together is going to be the way we perceive ourselves, and in the outcome we will succeed," says Cielo Gomez.

"If we attempt to show our hard work in the court, then we will execute our attempt by winning and making it to the finals," says Patricia Ayala. The girls ultimate goal for the season is to "change the legacy of El Rancho."



El Rodeo



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SPORTS

Soccer Spotlight Shines on Gutierrez

BY BRIANNA MORALES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On the soccer field and in the classroom, senior, Bianca Gutierrez excels beyond others. Since her sophomore year, Bianca has been ranked number one in her class, along with holding a spot on the girls' varsity soccer team.

The positions that Gutierrez holds were not acquired by luck, for she always strives to remain at her full potential.

"Bianca is very dependable and dedicated and a very hard worker who always tries her best no matter what the circumstances are," said girls' varsity soccer coach, Coach Kerr.

With early beginnings, Gutierrez's love for soccer grew from many years of playing the sport.

"I've been playing soccer since I was ten, well since I was six. But during my first years, I would just sit there and pick flowers, so I don't think those years count," Gutierrez continued, "My parents made me try everything when I was young: karate, baseball, softball, basketball, and I hated it all—except soccer."

Her love for soccer is evident, for her teammates deem her as an exceptional player and an excellent leader.

"Bianca is a very good soccer player; she never gives up. She'll always fight for the ball, and she'll do whatever to get to the ball first. She's a good leader be-



cause she helps and directs other players to see where the plays are," said team captain, Monica Ochoa.

Continually playing the same sport may be tiring for some, but for Gutierrez, soccer provides an escape from her day-to-day routine.

"When I'm on the field, it's just me and the goal, and eleven other strangers. After

the game, I'm never going to see them again, so I just leave it all on the field. It's a good way to let emotions out whether it's happiness or sadness. It provides an escape," said Gutierrez.

Gutierrez's impressive wit does not stay in the classroom, and her positive demeanor is not left on the field; she willingly helps others on her soc-

cer team and guides her teammates in the proper directions.

"I wish all my girls were like Bianca in their attitude and how they view practice, games, dedication, and their overall character," Kerr continued, "Bianca is very mature, and she helps the girls realize what is important both on and off the soccer field."



Cross Country Season a Success

BY ABEL MARTINEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

From having two coaches receive "Coach of the Year" to having the girls varsity unit reign as co-league champions, the cross country team's success has been superb.

"I'm happy with our success," says Coach Wynn. "Boys team went from finishing 4th in our 1st league cluster to finishing 17 points short in CIF, and they were 2nd overall in league. Girls started out with an invitational against Don Bosco, something we've never done before, to becoming co-league champs."

Both Coach Wynn and Coach Salway were awarded with the prestigious titles of "Coach of the Year" at Mount Sac as well as the Girls' Varsity "Coach of the Year" in league.

The varsity boys placed 2nd overall in league, narrowly topping Santa Fe by one point. The varsity girls tied with Whittier with a total of eighteen points, thus being crowned co-league champions.

As for next year, the fire of the cross country team's spirit shows no signs of weakening.

"I don't lose a whole lot of seniors," says Wynn. "We'll be missing their leadership but I got our two top returning freshmen. For the girls we have sophomore, Bailee Henry, who did outstanding this year, so I think our girls' team will be really strong. We have a lot to build on, really got a really young team. We just have to move forward, get better, and come back stronger for next year."

Girls Tennis Team Takes Second Place in League

BY ABEL MARTINEZ; EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The season for the girls' varsity tennis team came to an end when the girls were defeated by Cate High School in the 2nd round of the CIF playoffs. However, their progress was anything but overlooked.

"Our season was awesome," says Head Coach Ms. Lippstreu. "We did so much better than we expected. This was our first time making it to the 2nd round of CIF."

The girls clinched their spot in the playoffs by defeating Norwalk in the wild card game. From there the girls traveled to Riverside where they defeated Patriot High School in the 1st round of CIF.

"Everyone has made a huge improvement this year!" says senior Captain Linda Galindo. "Even with a few challenges along the way, we still worked our way into 2nd place in league. We knew it was going to be tough to win CIF, but we still gave it our best. I'm proud of our girls for making it such a great season!"

The girls placed 2nd place in league, ending their season with an overall record of 7-3 (9-4 including the playoff games).

As this season comes to a close, focus is now turned to the next season. "I feel good about next season," says Lippstreu. "We will be losing six seniors but half of the varsity will be returning along with the junior varsity that's coming. We're just as hopeful for next season."



Boys Basketball Team Battles in Blue Pride Tournament

BY KAREN CARRILLO; EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Starting off the season with a few setbacks, the boys' varsity basketball team recently hosted the Blue Pride Tournament.

The Blue Pride Classic is a 17th annual boys' varsity tournament where 24 basketball teams compete from December 6 through December 11. With a couple of setbacks due to injuries of two key players, Daniel Becerra and Albert Torres, the team now continues to train hard for the regular season.

"We have a lot of varsity players coming back from last year," says Daniel Becerra, a sophomore. He describes his team as "a lot more experienced and taller." Anthony Pacheco, a senior, explains, "we are getting better day by day... we are a lot better, more vocal and more experienced."

Although the team has temporarily lost some players, the boys continue to remain optimistic about the team and the season. With this in mind, their goal—aside from winning games—is to beat Whittier after last year's close defeat.

FEATURES

Brittney "All Day Madrid" Set to Take on Juniors in Tonight's Game!

BY YADIRA RAMOS
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Following a family tradition, senior Brittney Madrid prepares herself for tonight's Powder Puff game by practicing and learning her plays, determined to win the scrimmage.

Brittney is captain of the seniors and she is undoubtedly living up to the title. Not only does Madrid enjoy playing sports, but she also describes them as a lifestyle.

Since she was young she has actively played sports with her family. "Growing up watching my brother Ray Madrid or as we call him 'All Day Ray', play inspired me to play the game." says Madrid.

Football has always been a sport interest of hers, and she loves playing and practicing. "I normally practice during school and again with my brother once I get home, we have fun throwing the ball back and forth." says Madrid.

Madrid is excited to show her family what she's got on game day and will be sure to not disappoint them.

"My family is my main support and I know I can count on them whether we win or lose," says Madrid. "I can't wait until game day to see them all in the bleachers with signs saying 'All Day Madrid #42' and chanting my name."

Nothing would please her more than to do better than

her brother. "This is my second year doing Powder Puff, and I'm looking forward to scoring more touchdowns than 'All Day.' This is our year!"

Not only is Madrid anxious to get out on the field, but the rest of El Rancho has also been counting down the days and have been rooting for her.

Coach Diaz is looking forward to seeing Madrid out on the field himself. "It's always exciting to see Brittney play," says Diaz. "I'm assuming she will be getting the ball a lot because she's a great athlete and works very hard."

Everyone is thrilled for the game day and they are curious as to who will take the win- the juniors or the seniors.



Wow! The Strinden You Didn't Know



BY ROSAURA MONTES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Mrs. Strinden in room J-6 not only has been a teacher at The Ranch for 31 years, but she was also a model and played trombone for a band.

"When I was around nineteen I was backpacking in Yosemite mountains, and I met this woman who just graduated from photography school," says Strinden, "She needed to hire some people who were willing to model for a low price and I thought it

was a good idea so I went for it."

Most people believe that someone has to go to a photo shoot by themselves in order to get a job, in most cases that is not entirely true.

"It is really up to the models photographer in order for their

pictures to be used in company's advertising," says Strinden. "A photographer knows what companies are looking for in their ad, and really that is how a model's picture gets sold," added Strinden.

Strinden's photographer had signed contracts with various company's and got her many modeling opportunities. The two major companies that Striden modeled for were Speedo and Danskin.

"I had so much fun working with my photographer and doing all different kinds of modeling, and I still hold on to some of my modeling pictures," says Strinden. "There are a few pictures hanging on my hallway, even in my mothers hallway as well."

That perfect, skinny model with a cute face has been imprinted in the minds of many different people. But someone does not have to be a size one to make themselves shine in front of the camera.

"A person does not have to be skinny or have to become anorexic to be a model," says Strinden. "There are different types of modeling that can be done with all kinds of advertising."

Mrs. Strinden was not only a model, but she also played the trombone in a band for many years.

She was in the band called Maiden Voyage and was even in the 1983 film *The Sting II* with three members of the band. Strinden was also in *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson.

Strinden played in various music events in jazz festivals as well as school events, thanks to a signed contract with the Musicians Union that gave Strinden job opportunities to play her trombone.

While being part of the Musicians Union, Strinden became a substitute teacher. Because of her love of teaching math, Strinden soon became a math teacher here at The Ranch.

Strinden still played in gigs if they didn't interfere with her school hours. But back when she would play late gigs, she would have that coffee in her hand, drive from North Hollywood to El Rancho and had to stay awake to teach her students.

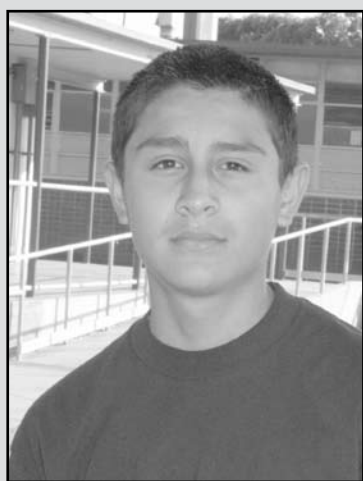
"I became a teacher because I love teaching math; I don't really miss playing shows, because I could go back to play shows if I wanted to," says Strinden. "Now I have different friends that I do different activities with and there are many new things that I love to do, including yoga with my daughter."

WORD ON THE STREET

Who do you think will win the Powder Puff game?



"Juniors are going to win because my sister is one."
-Valerie Villalpando 9th



"I think seniors are going to win because they have more experience."
-Alfonso Ramirez 9th



"I think juniors are going to win because they have a lot of talent."
-Joey Sanchez 10th



"Seniors, they have more experience than the juniors."
-Frank Vargas 10th



"Seniors are going to win because they have done it before and know what they're doing."
-Justin Gonzales 9th

ENTERTAINMENT

System of a Down Ends Hiatus



Left to right: Dolmayan, Malakian, Tankian, and Odadjian.

By ROSAURA MONTES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Grammy award winning band System Of A Down has finally ended their four-year hiatus!

S.O.A.D wanted their loyal fans to be the first to know that the band was going to get back together to play some shows just to show how much they appreciate them. Hundreds of fans all over the world were not surprised but yet relieved that the rumors about the band getting back together were true.

The band left a statement on their website: "We are excited to announce that System will be playing some dates together in 2011. We also want to thank you for your loyalty and support, not only to System Of A Down, but to all of our solo ef-

forts as well. We have no master plan of sorts -we are playing these shows simply because we want to play together again as a band and for you, our amazing fans."

There was a wide spread of rumors over the internet ever since bassist Shavo Odadjian tweeted, "Are u guys ready for System?" on January 11th.

Since the hiatus announcement in May of 2006 at Ozzfest by S.O.A.D, fans have been a upset that the band was going on a long break and had no plans to get back together so soon. So much confusion was going on with fans, some thought that the hiatus was a simple way to break-up because it was unknown how long it would last but committed fans knew that the band was simply taking a break, some even argued over the fact that

this was not the end of S.O.A.D due to their separate projects.

"I'm gonna go off and do something on my own, just like Serj. And no, System of a Down is not breaking up. We're just gonna do like KISS and put out our own solo records," said Malakian in an interview.

System Of A Down shows have already been confirmed, they are going to rock out Europe in June; lists of dates are posted up on their website.

The four-year hiatus is over! Rise up your horns, System fans! Let us hope that they will come and rock out shows here in America. There are hundreds of System fans in our nation that would love to see them play in Ozzfest or play concerts anywhere! Let us hope that System will stay together and produce a new CD.

Nicki Minaj Making the World See Pink

DESIREE DELIRA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Known for her crazy faces, colorful hair, unique look and most importantly, writing her own lyrics, Nicki Minaj has graced the rap scene and has annihilated every rap artist below her quickly making it to the top and being noted as one of today's top female rap artists.

Onika Maraj who later gave herself the name Nicki Minaj, is from Southside Jamaica where she made her way into the music scene by doing background vocals when she was noticed and signed by Dirty Money. After her first big break, Minaj was put on The Carter Edition DVD series where she was then noticed by rapper Lil' Wayne who immediately set up with her giving Minaj her second big break where she then appeared on Wayne's track "Can't Stop, Won't Stop". Nicki Minaj started working on her own independent work and after long anticipation her debut album "Pink Friday" recently hit stores and gave her a place at number 2 on Billboards 200 within the first week of it's release making Pink Friday the second highest debut album in the history of female rap.

At first sight you might say Minaj is too different, but despite her look, it is clear that this rapper is very genuine and passionate about her work and this is even more apparent if you've seen her recently featured special on MTV called "Nicki Minaj: My Time Now" where viewers



were able to see and be more in tune with her story through an interview and scenes from her journey up until now.

The special can be viewed online if you've missed it and I think it's evidently safe to say that whether you love her or hate her, Nicki Minaj is all over the media and you definitely can't help but notice what she's brought to the music industry.

Kaprelian's Second Chance

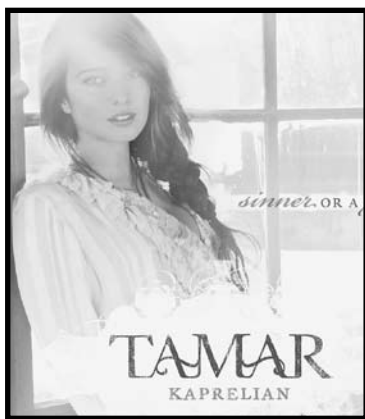
By JACQUELINE MARTINEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Each month a new artist makes their debut adding to the numerous already well-known artists. This month's featured artist is Tamar Kaprelian, who deems her self as an "old soul." "I'm definitely an old soul when it comes to music," says Kaprelian.

Growing up, Kaprelian's father would play rock classics "everything from Queen to Paul McCartney," says Kaprelian. So music was a given for she knew what she wanted in music and in school. In high school, Tamar only focused on her AP classes, ballet, and of course, spending time in the studio. "I'm proud to say I wasn't one of the cool kids," says Kaprelian.

Kaprelian has been singing since age one, and at age 15 was discovered for the first time by a talent scout at the mall. That scout let to many more until she was right about to go off to UC Berkeley at age 18. It was then she got her first break through in the music industry. She was personally signed instantly to a very famous record company.

Unfortunately, that wasn't her path so Kaprelian parted ways with her first label company. For-



unately for Kaprelian, luck struck twice, and she was discovered again on the streets. Producers suggested that she film her self singing OneRepublic's "Apologize" and post it up on you tube for a contest that the band was sponsoring to see who could sing it the best. Weeks later she got two messages from Interscope informing her that she had not only won the contest but inviting her in for a meeting that would change her life. "Honestly, I feel so lucky, because Interscope let me make the record I wanted to make."

Kaprelian has a contemporary sound to her music. Her debut song "Sinner or a Saint" has a soft but fast beat sound to it. It describes the mind and heart of a girl, but also describes to a guy the kind of girl any girl can be.

To listen to Tamar Kaprelian you can visit her official site www.tmarkaprelianmusic.com

Little Fockers Expected to Be a Box Office Hit

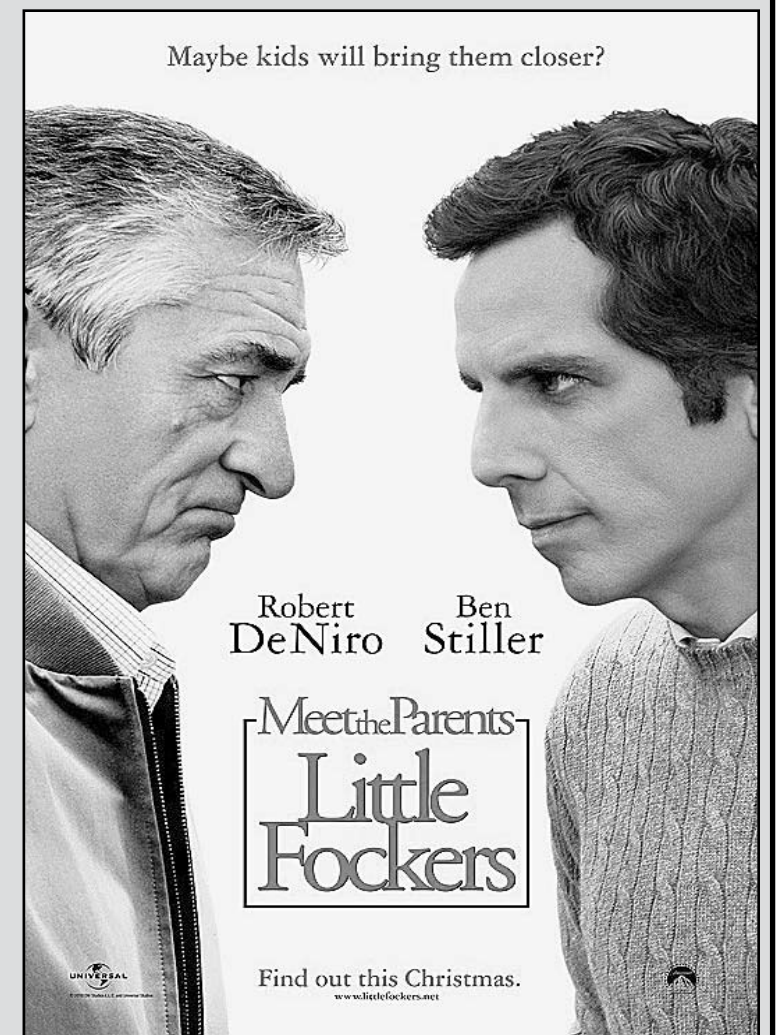
By CHRISTY ORTIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The comedy film and sequel to well known movies, *Meet the Parents* and *Meet the Fockers*, has had people curious if the film *Little Fockers* is worth the praise it has been given. Besides the original cast, the film stars Jessica Alba, Laura Dern and Harvey Keitel in the role of the children and a housemistress.

But Dustin Hoffman will reprise his role as Greg's father, Bernie Focker. It is also going to be the first film in the series not to be directed by Jay Roach but instead by Paul Weitz. However, the film was produced by Roach.

After marrying Pam, the daughter of a retired CIA agent, Gaylord "Greg" Focker now has five-year old twins named Henry and Samantha Focker. The film revolves around the couple trying to cope with raising their children.

It's said, that there will be a fight scene between Greg and Jack because of suspicion he harbors towards Greg



when he starts worry about being a good father and obtaining a stable job earning money for his family.

It is a good idea to continue the series based on this plot, it sounds interesting and might make a lasting impression.

HOLIDAY SPECIAL

Alumnus Home for the Holidays

BY JACQUELINE MARTINEZ
E RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho graduate Tony Fernandez, a past wrestling captain, a devoted family member, and a soldier on duty in the army, comes home to celebrate a belated birthday and Christmas with his family who missed him dearly.

Tony balanced football and wrestling for three years of his life, and during his senior year, made captain of the wrestling team and dropped Football. "He fought hard every second, won medals and placed at CIF his senior year," said Tony's former wrestling coach, Mr. Hartman. He dedicated his life to sports and to El Rancho, making his team a number one priority, as every captain should do. "He had a big teddy bear heart that was combined with discipline and toughness which made him a perfect captain," said Hartman.

Along with helping out the others, Tony ensured that he was the best he could be. "He took the time to get to know each freshman and was an inspiration to them, along with setting and achieving goals for himself," said Hartman.

Tony was also hardworking in the classroom. "I remember Tony being a good student and he always did his work," said Ms. Castagna. Although he was smart and worked hard, he was more interested in sports than academics. "He was a brilliant student and a very hard worker," said Ms. Qureshi.

In the time that Tony was in school he was lucky enough to have teachers that influenced him. "It makes me feel great knowing that I made an impression on him," said Hartman. "Tony is one of the kids that I will remember." Sometimes, Tony can leave an impression on others without in-



tending to do so. "He impacted me and he helped me stay calm in stressful times. He was a person people could talk to," said Hartman. Fernandez easily inspired everyone that was around him.

As graduation approached, like most seniors, Tony asked himself: what's next? "He graduated when the economy was dropping and the job market was low," said his grandmother, Emily Martinez, "which drove him to the path of the military." The news of this decision provoked his father

to think back to his son's previous years in high school. "To see my son do better than I did and graduate, unlike myself, makes me feel so proud of my son," says his father, Tony Fernandez. Knowing that his son accomplished more than his father, filled Mr. Fernandez with joy. So when the news of his decision to join the military was announced, it made his father worry about his son's future.

For his family to watch him grow up dedicating himself to sports, the decision to join the

military brought great shock to them. "I'm proud of the decisions he made," said his uncle, Jessie Martinez. "But I never thought he would choose the military as his career path." Tony enlisted and that was his final decision. "There were many reasons for me to join the army," said Tony. "The biggest reason was because of my grandfather, who was in the Korean War and Desert Storm."

All Tony wanted to do was make everyone happy, especially his grandfather. By joining the military, he and his family went months without seeing each other, something his family was not accustomed to. "We're so used to seeing him on holidays and for me, every other weekend. So when he was gone it was upsetting for us," said Mr. Fernandez. "But we knew what he was doing was good for him and his country."

Tony has missed so much in the time he was gone. This year alone, he has missed celebrating his 21st birthday with his family; including Thanksgiving, which he spent with other soldiers that weren't able to return home for the holiday. He is lucky to be coming home for Christmas because not every soldier gets to come home.

"I feel so lucky to be coming home after such a long period of time away," said Tony. "I'm leaving brothers and sisters behind, but coming home to spend time with the family that made me who I am." Tony Fernandez is scheduled to be home December 15.

"When my son gets home I plan to spend as much time with him as possible," said his father. It is all such a great relief for his family, especially his great grandmother. "Knowing he will be on his way makes me happy, but it will be a huge relief when I see him and get one of his great hugs."

Gadgets That Make Great Gifts

DESIREE DELIRA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Microsoft Kinect

The Microsoft Kinect takes video games and motion sensing to a whole new level, it's remote free making it simple to play without having to juggle around controllers as opposed to the Wii. This allows players to use themselves and their voice as the controller for their avatar who responds by doing exactly what you do on screen. This gadget is available for the Xbox 360 and can be used with over 3,000 video games for all age groups.



Archos 101

For those of you who love the idea of Apple's iPad and iPhone, but are more adapted to the

software from Android, Google has created a tablet that's a cross between the two except the entire system is for Android. The tablet can be used just as a laptop and has a software that allows you to view your pictures, movies, notes, documents and everything on your computer without having to actually transfer it. It has a 10" screen and includes WiFi, HD video and webcam, 3D high definition graphics and a market of free apps that can be for both fun and work.



3D TV
The trend continues and 3D TVs have hit the market bringing the same experience in the theatre to your own living room. Samsung, Sony, LG, Panasonic and Toshiba have all jumped aboard

and have developed their own 3D TVs that can also be viewed as the traditional high definition 2D. For those who hate wearing those dorky plastic glasses, a new sleeker modern design has been brought to the special glasses that make them more comfortable and fashionable.



Nikon Coolpix S1100pj

Bringing something unique to digital cameras, Nikon has created a second innovated camera that has a built in brighter compact projector and larger touch panel than it's first design. The bright projector allows pixels to be seen on a wall, ceiling or anywhere with a flat surrounding in a clear high resolution image. The camera comes in

black, silver, violet and green and has 14.1 pixels for images.



Nintendo 3DS

While everything in the movie theater has become 3D, game systems are catching up as well and Nintendo has found a way to bring this concept to you without having to wear special glasses. The Nintendo 3DS will be available in three colors: blue, red, black and the system look hasn't been announced yet, but it is expected to have the same design with a few minor changes including the new "slide pad" which allows 360 degree analog input.

Christmas Playlist

- Glee Cast** - *Last Christmas (I gave you my heart)*
- John Lennon** - *Happy Christmas (War is over)*
- The Killers** - *A Great Big Sled*
- Julian Casablancas** - *I Wish It Was Christmas Today*
- Paul McCartney** - *Wonderful Christmas Time*
- Mariah Carey** - *All I Want For Christmas Is You*
- Beach Boys** - *Little Saint Nick*
- Madonna** - *Santa Baby*
- The Maine** - *Ho Ho Hopefully*
- Vince Guaraldi Trio** - *Christmas Time Is Here*
- The Beatles** - *The Beatles' Christmas Record*
- Brenda Lee** - *Rocking Around The Christmas Tree*
- Taylor Swift** - *Christmas Must Be Something More*
- The Pretenders** - *Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas*
- Jose Feliciano** - *Feliz Navidad*
- Tegan and Sara** - *Christmas Don't Be Late*
- Elvis Presley** - *Blue Christmas*
- Vince Guaraldi Trio** - *Linus & Lucy*
- Dean Martin** - *Baby Its Cold Outside*
- Frank Sinatra** - *White Christmas*