



# EL RODEO



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## El Rancho to Investigate Intervention Programs Modeled after Whittier Schools

By KAYLA HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The El Rancho administration has found a new way to boost academic standards and student morale. The administration is considering an academic intervention period available for all students. This intervention period is for those students who are barely beginning their high school careers and especially for those who have fallen behind in their studies. But what is this academic intervention period and where did the idea originate?

The idea for an academic intervention period came from the Whittier Union School District. This "intervention period" or "study period" has been implemented in several ways throughout many of Whittier's high schools and has proven to be effective for both the schools and the students.

"This program is something the school is considering to help better service the students in need," said Mrs. Linares, assistant principal of curriculum.

The academic intervention period will change the bell schedule, but will have no effect on the trimester system. "Classes would be cut about five to six minutes shorter to make room for the tutorial period, but it is a decision that must be made by the teachers as well as the administration," said Mr. Genis.



*El Rancho may consider implementing an intervention program as a service to freshmen and sophomores.*

The program would be mandatory for all freshmen and sophomores. Juniors and seniors must meet certain guidelines to bypass this tutorial period. Guidelines are to be determined by GPA, credits, tardies, absences, CAHSEE and CST scores. An incentive for juniors and seniors

is that of an extended lunch period for those who meet the criteria.

"What we're trying to do is give the students a bit more motivation to do well on tests because most students feel that if it doesn't affect their grades, they don't have to do well," said Genis, "The Whittier Union

School District is growing academically, at El Rancho we've reached a plateau, we've grown a bit, but we need to grow more."

The tutorial period must first be submitted as a proposal to Board of Education and if passed, the proposal will then be voted upon by the

administration and teachers.

If implemented, the academic intervention period will be scheduled Tuesday through Friday after third period. Teachers will be visiting some of Whittier's high schools today to observe and see how the tutorial period and scheduling system work.

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## Flores Brothers Reunite in St. Louis



*Randy Flores, 32, now in his fifth year in the St. Louis Cardinals.*

By JAVIER GARCIA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

It is said that baseball brings families together. From the father-and-son duo between Ken Griffey Sr. and Jr., to the modern day brotherly bond between the Molina brothers (Bengie Molina, Jose Molina, and Yadier Molina), America's pastime has united loved ones. This year, the familial trend follows suit as the St. Louis Cardinals bring Randy and Ron Flores together as teammates.

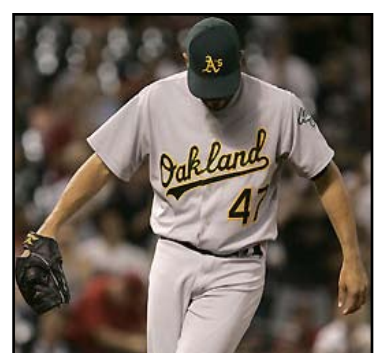
Both Randy and Ron are El Rancho alumni (Randy graduated

in 1992 and Ron in 1996). Both attended the University of Southern California and both participated in the College World Series while at USC. But because of the 4-year age difference, neither Randy nor Ron played with or against each other in the sport they both excelled. Then in 2003, when both had been pitching for different teams in the major leagues (Randy played for the Cardinals and Ron with the Oakland Athletics), they finally met each other in the great diamond of baseball.

Now that Ron has joined the Cardinals, both brothers will put on the same red-and-white uniform for the first time in their lives. When Sports Illustrated interviewed Ron soon after he signed his contract, Ron began describing his childhood and youth with his older brother. "With Randy setting high goals for himself in high school, college, and the pros, I was destined to follow in the same footsteps. If he found a way to better himself in baseball, I was expected to do

the same." This mentality certainly helped both Flores' while they attended El Rancho. Randy had the opportunity to play as a left-handed pitcher on the Varsity Baseball team while rigorously studying as a Scholastic student in the Academic Decathlon. Once Randy graduated and played college ball, Ron had just begun his freshman year at El Rancho. His accomplishments were just as impressive: a left-hand pitcher in Varsity Baseball while studying in the Academic Decathlon.

Randy was drafted into the major leagues in 1997 soon after graduating with a degree in Finance from USC. He bounced around from the Texas Rangers to the Colorado Rockies before finally arriving to Busch Stadium with the St. Louis Cardinals. He soon rose to prominence when he pitched as a reliever in the 2006 postseason. Throughout that postseason, Randy pitched seven innings, allowing no runs to score, and was credited with winning Game Seven of the World Series.



*Ron Flores, 28, prepares for his first year as a St. Louis Cardinal.*

Although Ron has not pitched in the postseason, he will at least begin the upcoming season with his brother at his side. Ron had been bouncing back and forth between the minor leagues and the Athletics, and never established himself as an eminent southpaw. When news of the trade hit Randy, he soon replied to the media, "I am sure that would do wonders for our parents' stomachs, seeing us both warm up to come into games." These two will share a same bond of brotherhood that has penetrated the heart of Major League Baseball.

## Word on the Street

### El Rodeo Asks:

### What is your favorite Christmas memory?

BY ANABEL SANTILLAN  
EL RANCHO STAFF WRITER



"I love star wars. So my favorite Christmas was when I received my first Star Wars gift." - freshman Alex Benitez



"Tamales and beans." - junior, Joseph Martinez



"At the age of 6, I stayed up late with my brothers and we opened one of my presents-a Gameboy. We played with it for a while then wrapped it up again. Next morning I was 'surprised.'" - junior, Hernan Reza



"Well my family and I are used to staying up until 12am each Christmas, but one year I fell asleep and when I awoke they had opened up all my presents." -senior, Andy Rizo

## Teachers Cast Their Votes



Yesterday morning teachers voted on whether or not they will be returning to the bargaining table or if they will accept the 5% salary pay raise that is being offered by the district.

## Sophomore Shows the Way to Success

BY ASHLEY ORTIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Guys, if you're looking for a woman who is involved in school and is extremely smart, your girl is Michelle Luna. With a 4.56 GPA, Luna is a well-rounded student who juggles numerous responsibilities.

Luna is in honors and AP classes, is the Sophomore Class president, and is also involved in band. Her classes consist of Pre-Calculus honors, Sophomore Team, and AP Biology; she also takes an Algebra course at Rio Hondo.

On a regular day, Luna wakes up before the sun. First up is band practice or "0" period where she plays the flute. After taking all of her regular classes here at the Ranch, Luna somehow finds time to study even harder at home.

By taking more classes now, Luna will be able to have 'more open classes for senior year. The more classes I take at Rio, the less I have to take at the university. I'm saving time and money."

If Luna had to put her activities on a priority list, ASB would be first, followed



Sophomore class president Michelle Luna focuses on academics.

by band. College is last "but I still try to do my best in it."

But don't be fooled, Michelle Luna isn't as studious as you'd think. She has a fun side. When she has free time she goes out with friends, sees a movie, or tries to relax as much as she can. But, weekends are strictly

for team homework, and projects

If Luna could say one thing to El Rancho students she'd advise them to "get your priorities straight because we only have 4 years in high school. This determines the rest of our lives. We can have fun, but right now school should be our main focus."

## Coronado Supplies the Caffeine

BY KAYLA HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

A caffeine fix doesn't really do it these days for senior, Laura Coronado; she's all about getting behind the counter and fixing the drinks herself.

Four out of five days during the school week you can catch Coronado as the local Barista for Starbucks Coffee at the Montebello Town Center. Coronado has been working at Starbucks for over a year and she loves that her job lets her meet new people everyday.

"It was really hard when I started because there was always so much going on," said Coronado, "But I'm so used to the environment now that I even invent my own drinks!"

Working for \$8.81 an hour hasn't been all that easy for Coronado; she's also one of the few students who has learned to balance AP and honors courses while maintaining her first job.

"I like my job because it gives me something to do so that I just

school schedule and work schedule do not interfere.

"They work around my school schedule,

which makes getting school work done easier during the week," said Coronado, "It gives me time to have a social life too."

One of the Starbucks perks, other than free drinks, is that after working at a Starbucks for over a year the company pays for part of your college education by giving student employees money

for text books.

"Starbucks is a really cool place to work because you get to interact with so many different people and sometimes you even have a few regulars," said Coronado, "It's really fun, once you're done memorizing the menu."

don't sit around the house," said Coronado, "Starbucks is really great to their first time employees and it's great work experience."

Coronado works about four hours during the week and six to seven hours during the weekends. Coronado is glad that her



# A Dream Shattered

BY MARTHA FRANCO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On October 24, 2007 the U.S. Senate failed to pass the Dream Act which would have granted illegal immigrant students an easier path towards citizenship.

Senator Richard J. Durbin of Illinois introduced the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act earlier this year. Durbin sponsored the act because it was specifically made for successful high school graduates who immigrated before the age of 16, have lived in the U.S. for a minimum of 5 years, and are under 30 when the act is passed. By facilitating the citizenship process for illegal immigrant students, the Dream Act would broaden these students' access to college.

Those who oppose the act believe that such act would be a reward to thousands of people who have broken the law. Clearly the Dream Act would do no such thing, unless of course these students are to blame for their parents' acts of despair. The Dream Act would give hard working and deserving students a chance of obtaining a higher education.

The Dream Act would not be a free pass to citizenship because there are requirements that must be met in order to be



eligible. Those who want to benefit from the act would be given a six-year residency period in which they must enroll in a college and complete an associates degree or serve in the military for a minimum of two years. After such requirements are met these students can apply for citizenship.

Giving these students an opportunity for citizenship is not the same as giving them citizenship directly. These students are asking for an opportunity to succeed-an opportunity that if denied could bring dire consequences, consequences that can take the

form of anger, desperation, and crimes. Granting the students an opportunity for success would allow them to take a positive and active part in improving the nation.

Education is a right that should never be denied and although these students have access to higher education their chances are slim because they do not meet eligibility requirements needed for most financial aid and scholarship applications. Equality is the key word in describing the Dream Act. Permitting these dedicated students an equal opportunity to obtaining a college degree would most likely decrease the number of them who would become dependent on welfare and such government programs.

Americans are always complaining about illegal immigrants taking advantage of the welfare and Medicaid programs yet nothing is done to minimize this so called threat. By taking these threats off the street and giving them something to build upon the issue would slowly diminish. The Dream Act is not an act of kindness but an act of intelligence.

Unfortunately, the Senate seems to lack such intelligence because the Dream Act was crushed by a 52 to 44 vote coming 8 votes short of the 60 votes needed to continue on as a debate on the Senate floor.

## You Say You Want a Revolution

BY JAVIER GARCIA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER



Children's puzzles appeal to audiences worldwide. From the days of Tic-Tac-Toe to modern games like Sudoku and Pokemon, these games have left audiences astonished. Since its invention in 1980, the Rubik's Cube has by far attracted the greatest number of spectators, from infants to adolescents to even the elderly. This cube is once again in the spotlight, still leaving the public both stunned and frustrated. Even after twenty-five years some still struggle to try and solve it. But this is exactly why the Rubik's Cube is gaining popularity in the twenty first century. The thought of deciphering the cube's confusing patterns seems almost like a cultural event. Some take days, weeks, or even months attempting to solve it before completely understanding the cube's design before. For others, merely watching someone else solve the Rubik's Cube satisfies them perfectly.

The most dedicated "cubers" are also known as "speedcubers;" they attempt to solve the cube as quickly as possible. The records are quite phenomenal: the current world record for solving the standard 3x3x3 Rubik's Cube is 9.55 seconds! These super-devoted speedcubers have even discovered ways to solve the cube with one hand, and even blindfolded. Some even flock to speedcubing competitions held all over the world, with the sole pur-

pose of watching other men and women unravel the Rubik's Cube.

At a recent World Rubik's Cube Competition at the California Institute of Technology, children as young as seven and eight years old competed fiercely for eight hours. Twenty-three-year-old Tyson Mao (star of the hit television series *Beauty and the Geek*) judged the competition and also showed an attentive audience how to solve the Rubik's Cube blindfolded. After the competition, one eager youngster asked, "How long did you take solving your first Rubik's Cube?" Mao responded, "A few days, actually." Among Mao that day were Shotaro Makisumi and Leyan Lo, notable speedcubing world champions.

This popular, portable puzzle has resulted in clubs and teams springing up in high schools and universities nationwide. Rubik's cubes have invaded virtually every form of media, too. From movies like *Pursuit of Happyness* to Rubik's forums to even radio talk shows, Rubik's Cubes will undoubtedly remain a cultural event for decades to come. With the release of the new *Rubik's Revolution*, five-year-olds and mathematicians alike will once again fall victim to the mystery and wonder this small puzzle possesses. The end result is a unique harmony among people, rarely seen in most of the world.

## Word On The Street

El Rodeo asks  
seniors:

Who Will You Vote for  
This Presidential Election?

BY ASHLEY ORTIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER



"Clinton because she is female." -Richard Franco



"I think I would like to see Barack Obama win." -Alice Perez



"I would like Hilary Clinton to be president because it's time that a woman won!!!" -Melisa Hernandez



"I would like Hilary Clinton to be president because she's awesome!" -Marisol Cabral



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# Girls' Varsity Waterpolo Makes a Big Splash

BY MARITZA PADILLA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With their 16-5 victory on Tuesday, December 4, the girls' Varsity Waterpolo team is looking promising this season.

"This season started off well. I am happy with the girls; they are a good team. But we are honest enough to know that there is room for improvement," says coach John Pringle.

Pringle plans to use the offense technique this season to win all games possible. In order to do so, Pringle insists that all girls must participate in playing toughly, and there should be no girl whom the whole team can rely on. "All girls must be well rounded in the game," says Pringle.

Some of the best players from this season are goalie Anaisa Aguirre, Sharon Pedregon, utility player, Adriana Rodriguez, and Sabrina Bowling.

One of the toughest competitors, according to Pringle, is Whittier; however, the Arlington Tournament in January is more of a challenge. Pringle knows the girls must put in a lot of time and effort to be among the top.

Nevertheless, Pringle says he sees positive changes occurring in the team. Pringle says, "There is a positive enthusiasm from the girls and from me. We are finally fulfilling the expectations we had."



Senior "Vickie" faces Downey's goalie, making one of the sixteen points that gave the girls another win.



Senior Jasmine Marquez practicing with the rest of the varsity girls

## Girls' Varsity Basketball Team off to Strong Start

BY SAMANTHA DURON, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Lady Dons start off the basketball season strong and charging. The team has won a solid four games to two since the start of the season.

"We started off strong and we're going to dominate this year," said senior varsity player Desiree Lona. "We've bonded as a team and that's a really big help when it comes to working together," added varsity player Jasmin Marquez.

"The girls are playing well as a team," said coach Lawson, "The opening of this season has really met my expectations." "Our biggest competition this season is definitely going to be Cal High," said varsity captain and senior Adrianna Favela.

"I really believe we'll be going to CIF this year," said varsity player Breanna Lopez. "Yeah, we're going to win league too!" added an enthusiastic Vanessa "G" Nicholes.

This week the Lady Dons are competing in the Arroyo Basketball Tournament.

## Boys' Look to Rebound After Tough Tournament



BY KIANA JUAREZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

December 3-8 marked the beginning of the Boys Varsity Basketball season.

Opening with the Blue Pride Tournament, the boys hoped to take it all. But, unfortunately, that was not the case. The Boys lost by an average of

twenty points per game to teams like Serrano and La Habra.

The varsity boys played as hard as they could against each team, but walked away with a record of 0-3 after the first three games.

"Even though they were getting killed, they stuck in it and ran up and down the court as fast as they could," said Senior Melisa Hernandez.

Although they started off on the wrong foot, the boys are looking forward to the rest of the season. The team will practice over winter vacation in an attempt to improve the team camaraderie and earn a better overall record.

If you would like to see the Dons in action, they will be playing at Sonora High School on December 14th and 15th.

## Word on the Street

### El Rodeo Asks:

Who would you rather spend Christmas with: Barry Bonds or Michael Vick?



### Freshman Gabriel Rojas-

"Barry Bonds because he likes dogs, and he got one for his birthday."



### Senior Adrianna Favela-

"Barry Bonds because he is cool."



### Mr. Alvarado-

"Michael Vick - 'Tally Ho' to the hounds."

# Boys Soccer Team Kicks off Season



Soccer boys practice their soccer skills for their next game.

BY ALEJANDRA OCHOA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Expectations are high for this year's boy's soccer team. After having dominated the Del Rio League last year, they are expecting to extend their season well into the CIF playoffs.

"This year's team has gained a lot of new and experienced players who will strive

to make a big difference and bring more success," said head Soccer Coach Gerardo Correa.

Correa believes no soccer player is better than the others; "our team is one unit, not a collection of individuals," said Coach Correa.

So far the season is going "pretty well, but there is a lot of room to improve," added Correa.

Last year's team

had less success than this year's, but yet exceeded all expectations.

"The team is more focused and there is better team chemistry than last year," added Correa.

Even though the team is more focused than last year, Correa said, "teams like Cal High and Santa Fe should give us tough games."

"Players have dedicated

themselves to working out and training for the eight months," said Correa. So far, Correa is "ok with the progress, but not satisfied; there is still room for improvement."

Yet, Correa said he is "real proud of the work put in and hopes [they] get awarded with great success in the playoffs."

## Classes Duke it out at Christmas Competition

Seniors Adriana Favela, Garrett Carrillo and Senior Vice President, Mario Berny, work hard as a team to trim the Senior Christmas tree in red and gold.



## Girls Varsity Soccer Season Begins with a Bang

BY MARTHA FRANCO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

"This season has been going very well" were the first words uttered by senior Esther Santa Ana who is in the girls varsity soccer team. Santa Ana believes that "this season is better than last years" because out of the six games that the team has played it has only lost one and they have placed in 2<sup>nd</sup> place in a recent Western Christian Tournament. When asked about any challenging games the team might face Santa Ana responded by saying that "every game is challenging because all the teams we play are good, however La



Varsity soccer girls take a small break after a tough practice.

Serna is always a challenge." Although La Serna might be a tough match Santa Ana believes

that the team can persevere because "throughout the season [the team] has trained really hard."

She adds that the girls were noted to be "the hardest working girls in all the girls teams at school."

Overall Santa Ana feels that the "team will do well this season because [the girls] have trained harder than they have done in past years." She also points out that this year "the team is really bonding because everyone has one thing in common: to win League." Even though Santa Ana feels "really sad" that this is her last year playing soccer she advises "the new girls to be really committed, to take any advice the coaches give, and to most importantly have fun."

# A Mexican Fiesta this Christmas

BY MARITZA PADILLA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

While many of El Rancho students and teachers will be sitting at home and watching TV over winter break, 18 students (along with three supervising teachers) from the Ranch will travel to some of Mexico's most popular and historical sites. Daniel Diaz (U.S History teacher), Jazmin Chavez (Freshmen English teacher), and Alejandra Rosales (Intro to World History teacher) will supervise the nine-day (December 14 through the 22) tour across Mexico.

Although Ms. Chavez and Mr. Diaz previously traveled in 2006 to Paris and London, they decided to take a different route and try some of the Latin spice Mexico has to offer.

"The Gulf of Campeche trip will allow students to

explore their heritage. They will view Aztec and Mayan ruins, as well as tour some of the most important historic site in various Mexican cities," says Chavez.

Not only is the trip just an ordinary adventure to Mexico, but many of the students traveling are part of the M.E.Ch.A club and they are looking forward to learn about what they discuss in their meetings every week.

After their arrival in Mexico City, the students and teachers will spend the first two days, Friday and Saturday, in Mexico City. On Sunday, they will travel by bus to the city of Puebla; Palenque and Uxmal will follow. The last two days will be spent in beautiful Cancun. All the cities visited are going to be reached by bus.

Senior Izamar Herrera says, "I am excited and looking forward to the pyramids. I can't wait to learn about my culture. I also



Cancun, one of the many stops on M.E.Ch.A.'s Mexican odyssey.

want to meet cute guys!"

Some of the special attractions include the Temple Mayor, Basilica of Our Lady Guadalupe, the Teotihuacán Pyramids, Chichen Itza and the Cholula Pyra-

mid. Since the number of travelers is so small, nine other students from New Mexico will join the trip.

Seniors Saul Cervantes and Marilyn Ramos are two other students on the trip.

Cervantes says, "I'm going to see a girl on one of those bull-rides. Yeah!" Ramos, however, says, "I really want to go to Cancun because I want to see clams on the beach. I can't wait!"

## Toys for Tijuana



BY KIANA JUAREZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Do you remember the last time you crossed the border going into Mexico? Do you recall those little boys and girls, attempting to sell you chicklets. Their bodies were covered with dirt and they had the saddest look on their faces. Well you now have the opportunity to give them a happy holiday.

Known for their political activism, the Social Justice Club is collecting toys to give to needy children in Tijuana, Mexico. The toys will be distributed to children of all ages.

This is the first time advisor Theodore Hartman (Sophomore Team, wrestling coach) and the club will attempt the large task of bringing joy to the faces of the children who deserve it the most.

"We're hoping to tap in on the good spirit of El Rancho students," said Senior Diego Rubalcava.

Students are encouraged to bring unwrapped toys. If you would like to donate to this great cause, toys are being collected in A-209 and H-3.

## Gay Straight Alliance Attracts New Members

BY MADELINE RODRIGUEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Since the club's inception three years ago, under the tutelage of Senior English teacher Nadine Segal, the Gay Straight Alliance Club has watched its membership ebb and flow. Because the group was mainly comprised of graduating seniors, the club lost all but three of its members. One of them, current president senior Oscar Ortiz, helped revive the club by recruiting friends. "I told my friends about the club and they told their friends and that made a big chain reaction." This year the club has approximately 20 members.

The GSA meets during lunch every Wednesday to discuss homophobia. "There is a lot of homophobia in school and in our society; what we do is try to explain that homosexuals are normal people and should be treated as anyone else would be treated," said Ortiz.

"We try to create a comfortable space for those who are confused, or who know they are homosexuals—to make them feel secure," said Segal.

Not everyone on campus has a positive perception of

the club. Junior Charticia Paxton, a self-proclaimed Biblical apprentice, does not believe that the high school should have a Gay Straight Alliance club. "I think that because of my Bible-trained conscience, I do not support homosexuality. Having a club dedicated to homosexuality and being a part of it is on your end, but then again, we are teenagers and we make hasty decisions."

Ortiz is quick to point out, "For those who have their religious beliefs we want you to understand that we are not trying to make you believe in what we believe is right. The only thing we want is to be accepted and looked as equals."

A freshman, speaking on the condition of anonymity, admitted, "Due to my religious beliefs and knowing that God does not approve of homosexuality, it would be hypocritical of me to say that I am okay with having the Gay Straight Alliance club."

"Those who do not approve of our club have the right to feel that way but if they have never participated in any of our meetings then they

really do not know anything about what we really discuss. We are just trying to make a difference in the way people are treated because of their sexual preferences," said Ortiz.

The people who join the club are not necessarily gay or lesbian; some are there simply to support those who are having trouble adapting to high school and or thinking he or she might not be accepted because of his or her sexual preferences. "It is not required to say if you are gay or lesbian," said Segal.

Junior Natalie Contreras a "straight ally" has been a part of GSA for two years. "I have a lot of friends who are either lesbians or gay. Even though I am straight, the things that we discuss here in the club have helped me understand my friends and not stereotype."

Senior Chrystal Ontiveros has been a part of GSA for a year. "At El Rancho people are labeled as different things all the time. Having this club is nice because it is difficult to be a part of a group at this school, and here we find people with whom we share similar interests."

## Are You Opposed to the GSA on Campus?



"I'm glad there is a club on campus that celebrates diversity. El Rancho should be a place where people are accepted no matter what their sexual preference."

-Senior Joseph Lapierre



"I think it is okay to have it on campus. We are eventually going to be exposed to homosexuality, so having it on campus help."

-Junior Marisela Ribeling

# License to Thrill

BY MARISSA GALLEGOS  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Many students at the ranch have seen an outstanding black 2002 S-Type Jaguar rolling around the parking lot. The only question is :who does this beautiful car belong to? The owner is one of our very own varsity football players, Ray Madrid.

When Madrid had just turned 16, his father purchased the Jaguar at the Ford dealer in Montebello. Why would his father purchase this 40,000-dollar car?

According to Madrid, his father was in such a good mood after watching the Lakers win their 3<sup>rd</sup> Championship, they both took a walk around their block discussing their favorite cars. Well as you may now know, Ray Madrid did indeed get his one in a million car.

Ray Madrid is happy to say he is a very lucky guy to own his car. He can't think of any other high school student who drives a Jaguar to school everyday.

One of his favorite things about his car is the little Jaguar on



Senior Ray Madrid standing proud next to his \$40,000 Jaguar.

the front of his hood. He says that he likes the way that it stands out.

He describes his car with the words: black, shiny, and 20-inch rims. He says that the most

unique part of his car isn't the body type or how fast it travels but his key, because it's shaped like a screwdriver. If Madrid could change one thing about

his car it would be the back. He isn't a big fan of the style of the back of his car. Other than that he is very satisfied. He also says that his car is good for cruis-

ing on nice Sunday afternoons. He feels very lucky to have a father who would spend so much money on their son's first car.

## Battle of the Classes: Powderpuff Game Tonight!



Senior boys get ready to cheer for today's big night by practicing their girly moves. Don't miss out on the exciting powderpuff game!



**Freshman**

**Carolina Herrera:**

"We usually go to mass, then we go to one of my family member's house to chill, open presents, eat, play games, and watch Christmas movies."



**Junior**

**Anthony Palacios:**

"We gather the whole family at my house or we go to my cousin's house and eat Tamales like there's no tomorrow. My uncle and aunt always attempt to take my brother and I to church."

## Word on the Street



**El Rodeo Asks:**

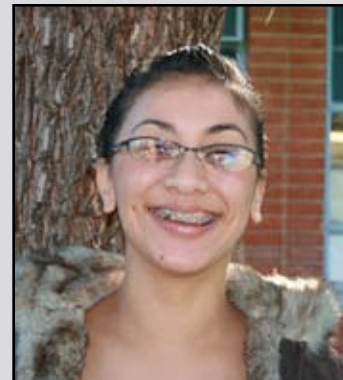
**What are *Your* Family's Traditions during Christmas?**



**Sophomore**

**Luis Sanchez:**

"We go to church at 12am and we eat tamales with champurrado... mmm... yum."



**Senior**

**Melisa Hernandez:**

"We get together on Christmas Eve, eat and open presents at twelve midnight."



## The Dark at the Top of the Stairs

By KAYLA HERRERA, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

This past week marked the beginning of the Drama Club's fall production, *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs* by William Inge.

Set in the 1920s, Inge's semi-autobiographical play takes place in a small town outside Oklahoma City and centers around the family of a common salesman. The main character, Rubin Flood, played by senior Ricardo Prieto, struggles to manage his temper and drinking as his problems threaten his marriage.

As the love between Rubin and his wife Cora, played by senior Melissa Legaspi, dwindles, she suspects him of cheating with the town widow, Mavis Pruitt (Damary Rodriguez). Tension in the family only worsens with the comical opinions of Cora's sister Lottie Lacey, played by senior Angelica Figueroa.

Meanwhile, the Flood children, Reenie (Bianca Leon) and Sonny (Mando Leon), are fighting their own battles in love and self-confidence.

With a bittersweet ending, *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs* leaves the audience with a feeling of hope and the courage to conquer even the darkest of fears.

This multi-faceted play explores the concept that change, although at times difficult, is necessary for a person to grow.

## Evanovich is Plum Crazy

By KIANA JUAREZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

If you thought your grandma was crazy, think again. "Lean Mean Thirteen," the latest installment in the hilarious Stephanie Plum series, follows the same action packed formula that made the previous twelve novels New York Times Best Sellers. Set in the not-so glamorous Trenton, New Jersey, "Lean Mean Thirteen" depicts the life of a woman who is perhaps the nation's worst bounty hunter.

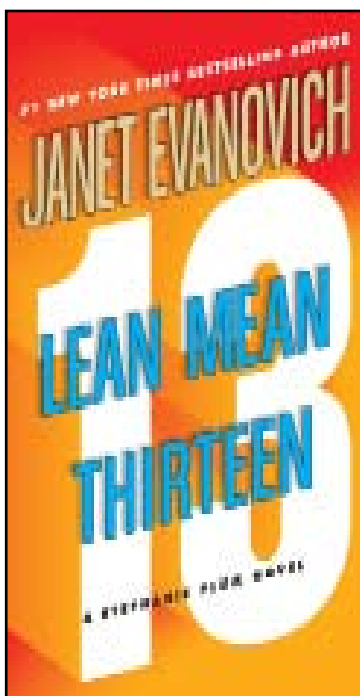
Entangled in a nasty legal dispute, Stephanie Plum

is the prime suspect in her former husband Dickie Orr's disappearance. With the help of her friend Lula, an ex-prostitute, Stephanie scrambles to clear her name and avenge her adulterous ex-husband. But that's not her only problem, two extremely hot men are yearnin' for her lovin'.

Janet Evanovich, the author of the comedic series, creates humor through not only her hilarious one-liners, but also through character names. Really, who would ever name their son Dickie? Well, unless you're Dick Cheney's mother; and everyone knows how well that's turned out.

Overall, the book will keep readers turning the page until the wee hours of the night. With a crazy grandma who keeps a sawed-off shotgun in her purse and attends funeral viewings for fun, who wouldn't be intrigued? But for long time readers of the series, "Lean Mean Thirteen's" plot line is a mere repetition of the previous twelve novels. Indulgent readers can only hope Evanovich's next adventure recaptures the inspiration and entertainment that made America fall in love with Stephanie Plum.

**Overall Grade: B**



## Enchanting America

By KAYLA HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Disney's newest feature film *Enchanted* has won the hearts of Americans.

This feature film allows Disney Animated Classics to meet the urban life of New York City.

When a frightened Princess Giselle, played by Amy Adams, is banished from her animated homeland she's thrown into the reality that is New York. With only a few of her critter friends to stick by her side, Princess Giselle must face the cold, cruel realization that not everything ends with a "happily ever after."

Falling victim to the big city is the least of Giselle's problems when she falls in love with a local divorce lawyer, Robert Phillip (Patrick Dempsey).

Phillip shows her the ropes on New York life when Giselle's promised Prince Edward (James Madsen), shows up to save his damsel in distress from the real world.

As the story unfolds, Giselle is left to wonder whether the perfect fairytale romance can survive the real world.

This Disney romantic comedy is heartfelt and perfect for the entire family. With laughs in every scene and romance to fill your hearts, *Enchanted* is sure to be one of the next Disney classics to be talked about for years.

## Suspenseful Thriller Keeps You Awake

By KAYLA HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The most common human fear is losing control of the body. The movie *Awake*, starring Hayden Christiansen and Jessica Alba captivates precisely what it feels like to be losing control of your body at the absolute worst moment.

This suspense thriller revolves around a surgical comanality called "anesthetic awareness." "Anesthetic awareness is when a patient's anesthesia fails to work, leaving the patient conscious and paralyzed.



Actor Hayden Christianson plays Clayton Beresford Jr. in *Awake*

Clay and Sam (Christiansen and Alba) a young couple in the midst of their new marriage when Clay gets the call that changes

his life. With his new wife by his side, Clay goes under the knife to receive a heart transplant. As the surgery begins,

Clay's anesthesia begins to wear off, leaving him aware of everything and incapable of anything.

While the surgery progresses, Clay's consciousness allows him to discover that his new wife hasn't been honest with him about her past.

The invigorating drama unfolds around a series of twists and turns that lead to a very unexpected ending.

The actors chosen for the roles give a very realistic feel to the movie; Alba and Christiansen capture the fear and deception that lies beneath the realities of love and the many motives of greed.

I gave this movie an "A" for suspense and plot sequence. *Awake* is a movie I recommend for anyone looking for a quick thrill.

## Word On The Street

El Rodeo asks:

### What's Your Favorite Christmas song?



Albert Arias - Junior

"My favorite Christmas song is 'Jingle Bell Rock'."



Edwin Sanchez - Junior

"'Silent Night' it's a classic."



Elia Garcia - Sophomore

"I really like 'Feliz Navidad'."



Irene Cortez - Junior

"'Rocking Around the Christmas Tree' is really good."