



El Rodeo



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Drama Serves a Tasty Treat in *A Catered Affair*

BY REBECCA ROBLES
EL RODEO NEWS STAFF WRITER

On December 4th, 5th, and 6th Mr. Stan Wlasick directed the play *A Catered Affair*. The actors were strictly from the Advanced Drama class which included eight Thespians from Troupe #2164.

A Catered Affair is about a lower middle class family who lives in the Bronx. Jane, Consuelo Rivera, announces that she and Ralph, Jeremy Zazueta-Ruiz, are getting married. All the two want is to have a small and quick wedding so that they can go on their honeymoon.

Soon Ralph's parents meet Jane's. At dinner Ralph's parents, Osmin Riperto and Sarah Sanchez, (Mr. and Mrs. Halloran) go on and on about big weddings with lots of people, and money.

Aggie Hurley, Chantel Moreno, realizes that she wants her daughter Jane to have a grand wedding with traditional items. However, the problem is that Aggie and her husband Tom Hurley, David Hernandez, have been saving for several years. Tom has been saving for a cab with a medallion, but now with the wedding he is obligated to spend the money on his daughter.

At the end Aggie Hurley learns that there is always something new to learn and love about a relationship over a lifetime.

The play integrated kitchen sink realism. Kitchen sink realism means that the play deals



REBECCA ROBLES

The Right Mood: A few of the star actors begin to get into character before a scene presentation.

with common class people who struggle with common problems.

The cast hoped to sell all of the printed tickets so that they could have a full theater to perform in front of. Friday night the theater seemed to be quite full, as did all of the other nights of performances. As the audience took their seats there did not seem to be any need for seat fillers.

Before the play began I had a chance to speak to Jane, Consuelo Rivera. She said, "I hope the play is a success because all of the actors deserve it. We have been prepping for this play for ten weeks

and I hope our hard work shines through." The audience agreed.

The star of the play Chantel Santos said, "My favorite line of the play is when Pasha, Diana Jimenez, said, 'You didn't see by any chance my cat...Angelo...you know the pink one.'"

Along with the cast the audience found this humorous line full of entertainment.

On Friday night, about midway through the play, a stage prop, a changing screen hit the floor. Casual and cool the actors continued the scene. The bridal saleswoman, Emily Wold-Sal-

cido, pulled the scene together by keenly speaking a line about the silly blunder. Hence the audience believed the fallen prop was just a normal part of the play.

The tone of the play was optimistic, and the play had a characteristic of comedy that shone through whenever Uncle Jack Colon, played by Carlos Figueroa, appeared in the play.

Carlos was happy to say, "My inspiration is comedy, I just feel comfortable in a comedic situation. For my part in

[See **Theatre**, Pg. 5]



Wlasick Receives Teacher of the Tri Award

REBECCA ROBLES
EL RODEO NEWS STAFF

Mr. Wlasick, the Senior Team and Drama teacher, was presented with the Teacher of the Trimester award. He said, "The award honored him because by being chosen by the students this shows that he has made an impact in the lives of students."

Students voted by logging on to the Don Page, selecting a teacher, and writing their reason for their vote. A student, Consuelo Rivera, has known Mr. Wlasick for many years and voted for him for Teacher of the Tri. Miss. Rivera said, "Mr. Wlasick is a great role model. I would like to thank him for all he does and more."

Mr. Wlasick began his career as an actor, but becoming bored with this occupation came across a friend that taught at the Ranch. Later, his friend Mr. Rigg, the drama teacher at the time, offered him the opportunity to take his place. Mr. Wlasick took the position and started at El Rancho in October of 1980.

El Rancho High School is Mr. Wlasick's first and only teaching job. He said, "El Rancho is my home." His favorite aspect in an everyday school day is "Senior team because it inspires my mind and Advanced and Beginning Drama because it brings out my artistic yearnings."

Mr. Wlasick has taught the Senior Team class alongside Mr. Meza since 1981. Mr. Meza said, "Teaching with Mr. Wlasick has been the highlight of my teaching career because he is funny, witty, extremely well-read, talented, and a dynamic teacher of English and Drama. His intelligence and sense of humor never fails to amaze me and I look forward to more years of working with him."



DON PAGE

Four Christmas Wishes: Gadabouts will travel to Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, and Hungary.

Gadabouts Head Out for Europe Trip this Saturday

BY MADELINE RODRIGUEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

While everyone sleeps in on the first morning of Christmas break, El Rancho's travel club, the Gadabouts, will be flying to Central Europe. The club, which plans low cost trips to Eu-

rope, will take more than forty people to Germany, Austria, Hungary, and the Czech Republic.

"We leave LAX at 6:00 AM on Saturday the 13th, change planes in Atlanta, and land in Munich, Germany at 8 AM on Sunday," said club advisor Charissa Zeko.

Although much of the 26

hour travel period is due to the time difference and change of planes, it is still a long flight. "The plane ride will take...um...A LOT of hours, enough to watch a movie or three," said Zeko.

"While on the plane, I plan to talk to the person next to me, listen to my music, and sleep. As for reading material I'm thinking of taking my old 'Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?' Book," said fellow traveler Jose Tapia.

"I plan to sleep a lot and I am taking *Twelfth Night, 1984*, or Emily Dickinson to read on the plane," said senior Angie Molina.

This will be the Gadabouts' third trip to Europe. "Our first trip was to London and Paris during the 2006 spring break. During the summer of 2007 we visited Italy, Greece and Turkey, and now, during the 2008 winter break, we are going to Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Czech Republic," said Zeko.

The tour will start as soon as they step off the plane.

"We will head straight to Dachau, a concentration camp," said Zeko. The students have high hopes for what they will experience. "I hope

to experience the German lifestyle, just for a day," said Tapia.

"I am looking forward to going the Holocaust museums and the BMW museum. I really want to see the cars. Most of all I am really looking forward to tasting the food from Germany," said Molina.

Senior Jose Tapia, who is not a stranger to Europe, will be traveling with the Gadabouts for the first time. "I have been to Italy. I went with my cousin and brother. I didn't know what the Gadabouts were at the time," said Tapia.

With the trip less than two days away, the Gadabouts have to think of packing and money plans. "I used to travel with the band from North Park, so I know how much to pack," said Senior Angelica Molina. I think I'm going to take like \$500," said Abril Perez.

This trip will not be the last one, according to Zeko. "I have a book of destinations, and the kids are currently marking the places they want to go. When this trip is over, we'll see where the kids want to go next by narrowing the choices to the top three, and then voting. There's some talk of Japan"

End of the Year Begins the Senior Year

BY MARICRUZ CASTRO-SPENCER
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

While everyone is preparing for the New Year, seniors all across the nation are filling out financial aid and college applications. The pressure to fill out and turn in all applications having to do with college is showing on the faces of seniors. From the twitch in the eye to the hair that is messy and uncombed to the bags under the eyes, a senior's face is an open book that reveals just a glimpse of their journey into the real world.

There is no denying the fact that some students have yet to fill out a college application. School counselors have been trying with all their might to get students into college, but there is only so much they can do. Students are expected to know deadlines such as college cutoffs, Free Application for Federal Student Aid also known as FAFSA, Cal grants, and other important documents.

The college application cut-off date was November 30, 2008 for students wanting to attend during the fall of 2009. Students still have an opportunity to submit an application, but it becomes difficult as most colleges begin their classes in the fall.

While applying for colleges, students can see if they qualify for a fee waiver. A fee waiver allows a student to apply to four colleges without having to pay fifty-five dollars continuously for each application.

FAFSA is Federal Application for Financial Aid. It is an application that determines an applicant's eligibility for federal money. Eligibility differs from college to college. Your family income and cost of attending the college of one's choice plays a big part in your eligibility.

Cal grants are a great advantage if a person chooses to go to college. It is money that the state gives students to attend college. Unlike student loans that you have to pay back, Cal grants are free State money. Each state differs in the amount given. For example, if a student wanted to attend a college outside their home state, the amount given to him/her would be different if they would attend a college in their home state. In that case they would also pay out-of-state tuition, which is much higher.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. There is much more to learn before an applicant venture out into the world. For more information on FAFSA visit their website at www.FAFSA.com. For college applications go to www.csumentor.com. Fee waivers can be done online. If you need further information ask your counselor or visit your career center. A new year and a time for change are just around the corner.

Environmental Science Learn's that Watsewater can be Reused

BY REBECCA ROBLES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Last Friday Mr. Leonardi's AP Environmental Science Class took a field trip to the Wastewater Management Facility and the Whittier Narrows Nature Center in South El Monte.

At the Wastewater Management Facility the students were shown a movie about how people waste water and the amount of freshwater on earth.

Then the students were taken on a walking tour of the facility. This walk through consisted of a tour of the special low flow toilets, the communication building, the wastewater treatment areas, and the riparian zone located by the facility.

The wastewater treatment area was a vast area that contained pools of raw material being treated with chemicals and bacteria. As the tour contin-



The AP Environmental Science class takes a trip to the Wastewater Management Facility an the Whittier Narrows Nature Center in South El Monte, to learn about the recycling of water.

ued the students were exposed to rancid smells. Nearing the end of the tour the students were shown the final product of the treatment. The Mr. Moss, the tour guide, said, "In about five years with water drinking treatment this wastewater will be drinkable."

Wendy Reyes, Senior, said, "I was shocked when I found out that my drinking water was consumed by people be-

fore me and I was drinking recycled water."

After this tour the students were driven to the Whittier Narrows Nature Center. There they had the chance to view live animals such as the Red Tail Hawk, the Owl, and the Gopher Snake.

The students were taken on a sight seeing tour at in the Nature Center where they were given binoculars. Throughout

the tour the guides advised them to be aware of their surroundings because of the wild animals.

Overall Mr. Leonardi, the AP teacher, said, "I thought the field trip was great because it provided the students with real life experiences and it made them appreciate how vulnerable their water source is. It did a nice job of tying in with the curriculum the students are learning."

Powder Puff Traditions Continue Tonight

BY GENESSE CARRILLO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

In its forty second year at the Ranch, the annual powder puff game will be played at the Don Memorial Stadium at 7:00 pm tonight. Along with the Night Pep Rally, the powder puff game is one of the few traditions that has survived throughout the decades. Although it is flag football, ERHS is the only school known to allow their girls to wear full tackle gear. "You can't tackle or wrap, but you still sure can hit," the senior

coaches constantly remind their players. But, sorry girls, no butt pads. December after December, the Junior and Senior girls who participate put on the pads that the boys used that very fall. "That's grosssss. They're going to smell and probably be heavy, so I'm most likely going to fall. A lot." Senior Grey Team Receiver, Victoria Serrano says. Despite the scents involved, "(Powder puff) is the biggest money-maker here at El Rancho," says Lil Gonzales, and it's no wonder why...

The first powder puff

game was played in 1966, although the notion of "transvestite cheerleaders" wasn't introduced until after 1973. Today, the aspiring boy cheerleaders really get into their role as the Pepsters of El Rancho, using the opportunity to hike up their skirts and finally put on that cherry lip gloss they've been curious to taste. "All I have to say is that last year we out-cheered the Seniors and this year we will do the same to the Junior cheerleaders!" says cheerleader Michael Becerra, alter ego: Jamikey (in honor of his

best friend/Varsity Pepster Janine Vazquez). But will the cheerleaders' confidence be enough to earn a victory on either side? Senior Coach Albert Arias says, "I think the Seniors are going to win because they want it more. They're gonna play hard and win big. It's our last year and they wanna go out on top: Victorious." Only one team will be able to call themselves the victors and champions after tonight's game. But who will it be? Find out tonight as the defending champions, the Senior Class of 2009, take on the contenders, the Juniors.

Can Food Drive



The ERHS canfood drive met a goal of 7,887 pounds. The Seniors got 1st place. Ms. Carreon's class got 666.76pounds. Ms. Lugo came in 2nd with 596.92 pounds. Ms. Quresji followed 3rd with 539.14.



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ABS Spirit Week Comes to an End

BY GENESSE CARRILLO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

In commemoration of the upcoming holidays, El Rancho's ASB decided to take a different approach on Hanukkah and bring the holiday spirit to El Rancho for five consecutive days. "Spirit Week" is being held throughout this last week of school before vacation, sending off students into the three-week break with an enjoyable school experience.

On Monday, students were encouraged to wear red and green clothes to maintain traditional Christmas garment colors. Senior Lucy Vargas dressed for the occasion in green, knee-high socks (which lit up with each step, no less) and matching jingle bell earrings. Other students, like Senior Jefferson Colindres, decided to go for a more low-key look, simply wearing a shirt with green and red graphics.

Tuesdays was Red Nose day, in honor of Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, who

saved Christmas one foggy night. Some students and teachers painted or otherwise applied red noses, while others refused to "risk clogging their pores."

The very same day, the annual Christmas Tree Decorating Contest took place in the Quad during lunch. The Freshmen took first place, channeling a gingerbread/Candyland theme with homemade ornaments.

Wednesday will give the students an opportunity to roll out of bed and walk into El Rancho. Although this is highly unlikely, considering that most girls will take longer to dress up in pajamas than normal clothing.

Today, Spirit Week will take a short hiatus in order to celebrate Powderpuff. Join the Juniors and the Seniors during lunch in the gym and watch performances by the Junior and Senior cheerleaders.

Friday, the final day of Spirit Week, will be Santa Hat Day, honoring the fat man in the red suit who will stop by on the 25th and leave students either a nice present or a lump of coal.

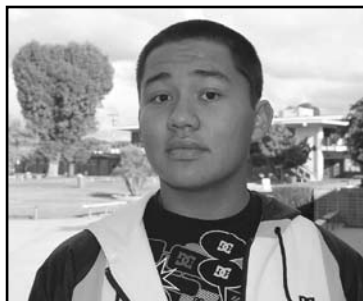
Word on the Street

El Rodeo Asks:
What changes do you hope to see in the world in 2009?



Teacher, Mr. Diaz

"I expect the war in Iraq to end, I hope that the economy improves, and I hope our global standing will improve because of our new president."



Senior, Michael Wong

"Better presidency, no more racist judgements, a better economy because I hope we get back on our feet and resolve the health issues and I hope that the Dodgers win the World Series."



Senior, Jennifer Franco

"I hope our new president will stop the economic crisis and hopefully end the war that is dramatically crippling our country."



Freshman, Daniel Martinez

"There is going to be a new president from a minority group so hopefully he can make a difference for the United States"

Retraction

The *El Rodeo* staff would like to apologize to the history department for printing information about a teacher offering extra credit to protest lunch policies (Planned Student Protest Fails, By Ryan Rojas, November 21, 2008). Since then we have learned that the source had provided false information and that there was no truth to this statement.

Letter to the Editor

All Aboard?

Letter Published in the Whittier Daily News Saturday, Nov. 28, 2008.

A train was about to leave the station. On board were white people. Just before it left, a group of blacks and Hispanics came running over to the platform. "Please don't leave. Let us on board!" they shouted.

The liberals on board the train persuaded the engineer to let them ride.

The black and Hispanic people boarded. Just before the train left, this time, a group of gays and lesbians came running over to the platform. "Please don't

leave. Let us on board!" They shouted.

Again, the white liberals argued with the engineer to let these people on board also. But, most of the Hispanics and blacks, as well as a few whites, said no: the train should leave without them. So, the gay and lesbian people were left at the station and the train departed.

It was the civil rights train to equality. I wonder, will it one day return to pick them up?

[Note: Both blacks and Hispanic California voters voted overwhelmingly—at least 67%--in favor of Proposition 8.]

Wes White
Whittier



Great Christmas Gifts Under \$25

By IRENE CORTEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The best Christmas gifts under 25 dollars can be found anywhere. Either going to Wal-Mart or going to the mall, you can get a gift for \$25 and it will have a lot of meaning to the person you give it to.

If you are a person that does not care what he or she gets for Christmas but worries what to give your girlfriend or boyfriend, you can easily use your creativity or just hit the stores.

Some good gifts you can give your girlfriend are some accessories from Forever 21 or a couple of CD's of her favorite bands or singers. You can also get something for your girlfriend for under \$25 at the mall and it can either be a nice shirt from Macy's or a shirt of her favorite band from Hot Topic.

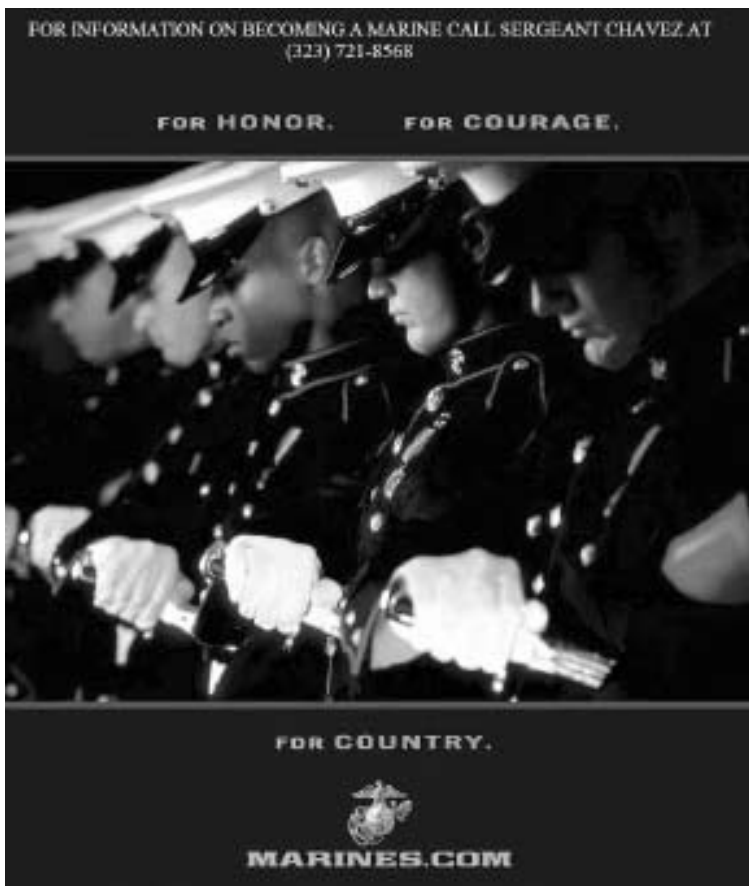
Some good gifts for your boyfriend would either be a shirt of his favorite band or with a funny saying or a simple gift card. CD's are also good for your boyfriend or an I-tunes card would be perfectly fine.

Guys and girls do not stress over what to get your boyfriend or girlfriend if money is the issue, then that is when your creativity kicks in. A simple card saying how much you love him or her will make Christmas a day he or she would not forget. Decorate the card to your choice and as a finishing touch a picture of you two in the middle with a heart surrounding it will be wonderful.

Girls if you do not know what kind of gift to get your best friend, I believe that a scrapbook filled with photos of you and your best friend would be great, if your best friend were a girl. If your best friend were a guy then a shirt or a gift card would be perfect.

Guys, a good gift for your best guy friend will be a gift card worth \$25, and he can use the money for anything he wants to. For your best girl friend it would be a gift card also but from a store that is in the mall.

You do not have to spend so much money on Christmas gifts. Just make something special that your boyfriend or girlfriend or best friends would not ever forget.



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El Rodeo is published once a month, except during vacations, by the journalism class of El Rancho High School, 6501 S. Passons Blvd., Pico Rivera, CA 90660.

Christmas Basket Committee



By JONATHAN RUIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

It's the time of year again when the Christmas Basket Committee is offering students under the age of eighteen a chance to volunteer. The Christmas Basket Committee is an organization made up of elderly people that helps the needy by providing a box full of food for their Holiday meal. If the family has kids they get a bag of toys if they have kids.

Usually the committee gets together in the gym at Rivera Park, where volunteers get together with a partner and a shopping cart and start filling up boxes with the rest of the food that could not be put in at the beginning. Volunteers must be willing to carry heavy things out of the gym and to the person's car.

The boxes are numbered, because they usually have one thousand boxes to

give out to people who qualified. Volunteers receive a number and they have to look for the box with their number then it's carried out and given to the deserving family.

It may all seem that the volunteers are working non stop, but they get a free breakfast and a homemade lunch that is made every day. The event is usually about eight to nine hours and all day the volunteers must be carrying out the heavy boxes to get their community service hours.

The event provides the opportunity for all high school students and parents. Every year Key Club and Leos Club participate in the event because they are all about community service. It is not only about getting the community service hours, but the students also have the opportunity to gain an experience from the event and they get the chance to meet new people.

People who usually volunteer are high school students that are doing it to get the community service hours. The event has an application that the students must fill out if they are under the age of eighteen, and the event will be tomorrow.

Word on the Street



El Rodeo Asks:
What are your plans for this winter break?



Sophomore, Julie Nunez

"My family and I plan to go to San Francisco then to the mountains to snowboard."



Junior, Bobby Torres

"My family and I are going to Utah to my cousins to sled in the snow. Then we were going to my uncle's house to play video games."



Junior, Jacob Gonzales

"I'm going to Big Bear with my family, I'll be really excited to wake up and see snow on Christmas morning."



Teacher, Ms. Figueroa

"I plan to go to San Diego with my brother for a week, then go to Vegas, and then spend time with my many animals (on my mini-farm)."



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Top Jamz for this Season



BY CHANTEL MORENO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

A large part of the American tradition of Christmas, besides mass consumerism, is the Christmas music. Around this time you can't go shopping or turn on the radio without hearing the festive, sometimes irritating, holiday music. The classics are good, but often the covers some current artists do are mediocre at best. If you're tired of the same old holiday music every year, check out the following untraditional Christmas albums that bring some edge to those much-loved classics

1) *The Ventures Christmas*

(The Ventures): One of the 1960's greatest surf rock bands, The Ventures do Christmas songs like no one else. This awesome album actually no words, just a lot of driving guitar, and the classic surf rock sound. They do a good amount of the classics on this 12-track album, from "Jingle Bell Rock" to "White Christmas". This creative, entertaining, and unique album is definitely one of the best Christmas albums out there.

2) *Brian Setzer Orchestra's Boogie Woogie Christmas* (The Brian Setzer Orchestra): You may recognize Brian Setzer as the front man of rockabilly

band the Stray Cats; Setzer now works with his orchestra on this exciting Christmas album filled with classics, as well as creative originals, that have a rockabilly/big band twist that is signature Setzer. Originals on the album such as "Boogie Woogie Santa" and "Cactus Christmas" are humorous and fun. Setzer's take on the classics are my favorite; his versions of "Baby, it's Cold Outside" and "The Nutcracker Suite" are some of the best covers of the songs I've heard. This album originally came out in 2002, and BSO has since put out another Christmas album, but *Boogie*

Woogie Christmas is their best.

3) *Tis' the Season for Los Straitjackets* (Los Straitjackets): Los Straitjackets are an instrumental rock-n-roll band with surf rock influence that bring a lot of energy and excellent guitar skills to some otherwise lackluster originals. Again, because they are an instrumental band, there are no words, but it really doesn't matter because the excellent musicianship through the album makes up for it entirely. Los Straitjackets definitely put their own spin on songs like "Christmas in Las Vegas" and "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" which is played to the surf rock classic, "Pipeline".

4) *Reggae Christmas From Studio One* (Various Artists): This album has a good collection of early reggae/"rock steady" artists such as Bob Marley and the Wailers, the Heptones, Alton Ellis, and Freddie McGregor. Bob Marley and the Wailers' version of "Sound the Trumpet" is excellent and includes "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town" in the bridge. Other enjoyable tracks are Tennessee Brown and the Silver-

tones versions of "Jingle Bells" and "The Little Drummer Boy".

5) *Sleighed: The Other Side of Christmas* (Various Artists): The title says it all; this is definitely not your mom's classic Christmas album. Talented bands such as The Mighty Mighty Boss-tones, Beck, Less Than Jake, Sonic Youth, and Local H, make this unconventional holiday album exciting and clever. Some tracks like "You Ain't Getting S*** For Christmas" by the Red Peters, and "I Farted on Santa's Lap (Now Christmas is Gonna Stink for Me)" by The Little Stinker, are somewhat childish, but still very funny. A majority of the bands on the album are of the ska and/or punk persuasion, but if you're not into that, Beck, Sonic Youth, and Spinal Tap hold their own with tracks "Santa Doesn't Cop Out on Dope" (Sonic Youth) and "Christmas with the Devil" (Spinal Tap). Overall this is one of the funniest and unconventional collections of holiday music out there; check it out.



Rebecca Robles
Cast of and crew of *A Catered Affair* hams during dress rehearsal.

Theater

(Continuation from Page 1)

The play I viewed my Grandpa's movement so I could get into character. Also, I gave the play a 110% because Mr. Wlasick has done so much for me that I feel like I owe him."

Dilprit Singh and Jose Tapia, seniors at ERHS, both agreed that Bianca Leon's acting as Alice Scanlon stirred emotions. Dilprit Singh said, "Miss Leon's small yet significant role was very memorable. Her ability to bring tears to her eyes and breaks in her voice displayed pure professionalism."

All of the actors possessed a sense of professionalism as they took the stage speaking with appropriate accents. The costumes fit the era and the stage was beautifully constructed.

The lighting helped set the mood, as did the musical interludes between scenes.

After speaking to others

who viewed the play, I discovered all said good things about the performance. Sarah Medina, senior at ERHS, said, "I thought the lighting was really good. It seemed like the lighting gave the effect of a different room every time the light changed."

There was even a little romance throughout the play that made the younger part of the audience giggle. Consuelo Rivera, as Jane, and Jeremy Zazueta-Ruiz, as Ralph, shared a few blissful kisses that stirred the crowd to the edge of their seats. Also, at the end of the play, Chantel Santos and David Hernandez, as Mr. and Mrs. Hurley, shared a jaw-dropping smooch.

The play seemed to be a hit with the El Rancho audience along with several people from the community. El Rancho Thespians can put another feather in their cap.

Band gets a new Band Director for...the third time.

MARICRUZ CASTRO-SPENCER
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

In marching band, it only takes one person to throw off a rank. That same rank will mess up a diagonal. That diagonal will mess up a file, and all of that will result in the entire band being thrown off because of that one person. With the help of new band director Reggie Cordero the band no longer faces that problem.

"The Band and Colorguard has consistently exceeded my expectations," says Cordero.

After having three different band directors in three years, the Marching Dons were beginning to lose hope in finding a band director that "knew us, our band and our learning style," said Senior Genevieve Dominguez, Band President.

"I've always known El Rancho had lots of potential. Jose Diaz was a college colleague of mine and, so, since he started working here I have followed the band and what they've been doing." Cordero said of why he decided to work at El Rancho.

With a change of three directors the band has been reclassified three times. This year the band and colorguard have received awards at all the events that they've competed in.

"In the summer time we had a very small program and the first two weeks of school it began to grow. The band and colorguard members both worked extremely hard," says Cordero.

Along with a new band director came fresh new faces. This year the band consists mainly of freshmen, and that seems to empower the band to raise the bar.



Bottom row: Matthew Crocito, Benjamin Cobain, Shane Green. Middle Row Genevieve Dominguez, and Maricruz Castro-Spencer. Top row: Dara Belarmino, (not in picture Erika Rodriguez) are the last remaining Seniors in the Marching Band.

Cordero says, "I think it's great. With a lot of freshmen they learn from the examples of the upperclassmen, so I think it's been great because they've done well with what we do here."

"They're a really good bunch of kids and they are all very talented. They made the band better and for that I'm thankful," said Dominguez.

Freshman John Barrios said, "It's been challenging because there are so many limitations, but at the same time there is so much potential and everyone works hard."

With marching season coming to an end the Marching Dons are getting ready for concert season, but their band director is looking even further.

"What I'm hoping [for next year] is that the band grows and that we build the size of the band," said Cordero.

Students have learned and

changed a lot because of band.

"It has changed me because I have become more open to music and I've become more responsible and a more dependable person," said Drum major, Ivan Briseno.

"It's taught me the value of friendship, because band people are some of the best people and they will teach you things about music, life, and yourself," said Dominguez.

The Marching Dons have overcome many obstacles and have still been able to go out and impress others.

Dominguez summed up her feelings by saying, "I would describe the Mighty Marching Dons as brilliant, fun, competitive, and surprising. We've surprised people who once thought we were nothing special. We proved them wrong and showed how we can persevere and strive to become what people didn't think we would be again, the pride of Pico Rivera."

Independent New Beginning for Lady Dons

BY MATTHEW CORCITTO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Lady Dons varsity basketball team begins this season away at the Fullerton tournament looking to improve on their 8-18 record last year.

Coach Shigezane explains that the team's main goals this year is to improve on their record from last year and to contend for a league title. He also adds that returning four-year point guard Tatiana Gomez and the play of the post is going to be a big strength with the team.

On the other hand, since there are only three returning varsity players, the team is going to have to be more independent which will be a weakness for the Lady Dons.

"I hope to be in the hunt to win an league title and get into the playoffs," says Shigezane. The players that will lead the Lady Dons this year are the three captains: point guard Tatiana

Gomez, forward/ guard Miriam Espinoza, guard Gabriella Villalobos, and guard Joanna Villa.

Senior captain Tatiana Gomez says, "I feel anxious for this season even though it is going to be a challenge. She also explains that though the team is not a very experienced, the commitment level and work ethic are exceptional.

Senior captain Miriam Espinoza says, "this year means a lot especially to the seniors because we really want to make this year the most memorable as a Lady Don.

Senior Gabriella Villalobos talks about her role as a captain, "to make the team better I will do whatever it takes to accomplish our goals meaning getting everyone to stay focused, practicing hard and being punctual. We have to play as a team, 'we not me.'"

There seems to be a common trend this year for the Lady Dons; work together and play hard in order to change the 1992 league banner into 2009.

Ganesha High Down's Dons 2-1, In Boys Soccer

BY VICTORIA SERRANO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

This past Monday, boy's soccer played against Ganesha High School and reached a very close score of 1-2.

El Rancho had a dominating beginning. They had plenty of chances for goals, but they didn't finish.

They then committed a foul that resulted in a penalty, but hen the penalty kick was a miss. So El Rancho had a chance to get the ball with a corner kick and Senior Ceasar Roldan, last years goalie converted to forward, got the ball and scored a header in the 31st minute.

When the second half came along, El Rancho was not

as pumped up as they were in the first. Second year starting defense, Dorian Puentes, committed a foul which resulted in penalty where Ganesha made a goal. They were now neck and neck.

Finally, at the last 10 minutes of the game, Ganesha managed to slip by the defense and made a final goal.

Senior Ceasar Roldan was asked what could have been done to improve El Rancho's tactics, he said, "Forward needs to finish. (We need to) play together." While Senior Marvin Valenzuela simply said, "We have to play better as a team."

Despite the loss, the team will still rise above and win their future games.

Blue Pride Classic Tournament Continues Through Saturday



The boy's basketball team launched the Blue Pride Classic with a score of 49-38 against Rosemead High.

BY MATTHEW CORCITTO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On Dec. 5th the boy's varsity basketball teams launched into their regular season with a 49-38 win over Rosemead High School. Despite the victory, the Dons fell to Narbonne High School in the first game of the fifteenth annual Blue Pride Classic ; a Tournament hosted by El Rancho in which fifteen teams from around the area go head to head and compete for the championship.

Led by Captain Jeremiah Salcedo's fifteen points and eight rebounds, the Dons fell short with

a three point third quarter putting them behind the eight ball and finishing with twenty turnovers. El Rancho battled back in the fourth quarter but was not enough to stop the Gaucho's 63-40 victory.

Brandon Rodriguez, captain and point guard, says, "It was a tough lost but I still have high hopes for the rest of our games." Forward Ishmael Santa Cruz adds, "The game was like sand in our hands, it slipped right through our fingers."

The Dons, now 1-1 in season, look forward to the rest of the tournament which will contin-

"The game was like sand in our hands, it slipped right through our fingers"

ue through December thirteenth.

As the boy's varsity basketball team begins their journey towards league, a hint of determination besieges them.

"I feel great because we

have a lot of returners and everyone is hungry for a league championship," says Jefferson Colindres senior forward. He adds, "It's important because most of us have been on varsity since sophomore year and it is finally time to see all that work pay off."

Carlos Estrada senior small forward says, "This year's team has a certain type of swagger and we know what we are capable of. It's as simple as redemption; a chance to make up for all the years prior. Anything less than a championship is a failure."

For the seniors that have been in the program since freshman year, it is their last year to show the true potential of El Rancho basketball.

Senior Ricardo Gutierrez says, "It is our last year and we have to leave everything on the floor and have no regrets."

This senior oriented team looks very promising for this season and in the end they look to make history by adding a class of '09 on the league championship banner which has been untouched since 1962.

Girls Water polo Team Start Season Strong



Coach Pringle helps the Waterpolo team to win tournament. The ERHS Waterpolo team starts season with a record of 5-2.

BY JOSEPH MARTINEZ
EL RODEO STAFF MEMBER

The Girls Varsity water polo team is starting the season off with a successful re-

cord of 5-2. After winning the El Rancho tournament title last weekend, the team feels positive about the rest of the season.

Head Coach Pringle felt

winning the games against Burbank High School, (12-5) and Temple City (10-4), were key games in preparing them for the rest of the upcoming season. Senior Meghan Carbajal, and Junior Isela Aguirre were key players in those victories against Temple City and Burbank.

The water polo team or D.W.P (Dons Water Polo), has suffered close losses to La Canada, (11-9) who were division 4 and ranked fourth in league. The other close loss was to St. Lucy's (14-10) who is ranked second in division 3.

While the rest of El Rancho is vacationing and eating lots of tamales, the DWP team will continue to train hard and play one of their toughest games of the season, against Martin Luther King Jr. High School.

"The girls are playing hard and showing improvements, and we look to be in a very good spot at the end of the season." "We plan to be in the hunt for the league title," said Coach Pringle

Girls Soccer Enters Successful Pre-Season



BY GENESEE CARRILLO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On Monday, the girl's soccer team defeated Hesperia High School in the title game of the West-

ern Christian Soccer Tournament.

It was a hard fought battle, with the Lady Dons prevailing in penalty kills in overtime. Senior Johanna Interiano scored the final goal to break the tie.

The entire team was thrilled to come out as tournament champs. "I feel very overjoyed and excited that we made school history," Captain Vanessa Torres says about the victory.

This is the first time the Dons have placed first in a tournament of this caliber, and this victory helps the Lady Dons feel confident about their upcoming season.

The Lady Dons finished the tournament with a record of 5-1-0.

Senior Tanya Moreno says, "I feel really happy; I hope that the season continues to be successful."

The girls played St. Paul on Wednesday afternoon. Results were unavailable at time of publication.

Metallica's New Tour Comes to California in Time for Christmas

BY JOSEPH MARTINEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

A Very Magnetic Christmas Metallica is currently touring the states on their "World Magnetic Tour" for the release of their new album "Death Magnetic," including three dates scheduled in Southern California that take place during the Christmas break.

Metallica is easily one of the biggest names in heavy metal with record sales peaking as high as the Beatles and Michael Jackson. On September 12, 2008 the band released their ninth studio album "Death Magnetic."



"Death Magnetic" is everything but a "Part II" of their 2003 release "St. Anger," which was filled with many different elements

added to the Metallica sound. For the past four long years, Metallica hasn't toured in Southern California since 2004, which was at the Arrowhead Pond in Anaheim, CA. For the many unfortunate people that missed the concert, it was not a show to be missed. Songs that haven't been played in countless years like "Disposable Heroes" were played that night.

During the winter break they will be playing shows in Fresno, San Diego, Ontario, and a two-night show in Los Angeles. Tickets sold out quick for the concerts in San Diego and Ontario, but there are tickets still available for the shows in Los Angeles. Just in time for Christmas!



Bitten by Twilight

BY VICTORIA SERRANO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The *Twilight* saga, a storm that has swept the nation, is adored by teens across the U.S.

Everywhere you go, you will see someone wearing a *Twilight* shirt or talking about the book. Senior Josh Munoz said, "At first I wasn't too fond of it; I figured it was just a teenage trend that everyone wanted to be involved in, just like any other...but after reading the books, I can see why so many people enjoy it."

The story is about a devilishly handsome vampire named Edward and the seemingly simple Bella and their unaccepted dangerous love. Edward does all he can to protect Bella from his world; Bella, on the other hand, attracts trouble.

From book to book their love grows, and the situations get more and more dangerous. But the Cullen family (Edward's vampire family) always sticks together and manages to make it in the end.

Then there are Quileute tribe (A group of descended from wolves) who, at first, are completely against the Cullen family and all vampires. Throughout the books they begin to work together to fight off rival vampires who seek to do them harm.

Jacob Black, an heir alpha dog, is completely in love with Bella and despises Edward. Until, *Breaking Dawn*, the last and final book in the saga, they seem to get along.

This love triangle divides *Twilight* fans into three groups: Team Edward, Team Jacob, or Team Switzerland.

Senior Genesse Carrillo said, "It will be impossible for me to ever find true love; unless of course, the boy is Edward Cullen...Team Edward!"

Cassandra Mendoza says, "Jacob and Edward are so in love with Bella that I just can't choose, so I'm Team Switzerland."

With its intriguing tale of romance that breaks past all possible and mythical barriers, *Twilight* allows readers to fantasize and dream that an impossible love can happen.

Twilight Fails to Shine



BY RYAN ROJAS
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Twilight, which was

supposed to be one of the greatest movies of the year, was very disappointing to both fans of the book and those who just enjoy good movies. *Twilight* failed to meet the basic standards of any good movie's structure.

As millions of people waited in lines at midnight showing, people's anticipation was starting to build. As I sat in the theatres hearing millions of people chat, most of them female, I thought a movie with this much fuss had to be at the very least decent.

Sadly I was mistaken. Watching the movie made me feel like I was back before Shakespeare's time, where in depth comedy did not exist. The acting was horrible and no one seemed to be playing the right part.

The special effects were horrid and belonged in the 90's.

Throughout the movie, romance in the air, or at least that was the feeling that was supposed to be there. The romance was too overdone and the dialogue seemed like something a child would say not a vampire who was well over a century old.

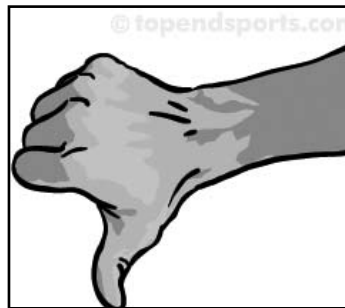
This book was aimed for teenage girls and even as I left the theatre number three I heard girls younger than I am saying, "Wow that movie sucked."

What seemed to be the biggest disappointment to the fans of the book was the amount of content left out.

The descriptive detail, which was one of the greater qualities of the book, was stripped

from the movie completely as well as other important content. This movie was a disaster and the only reason why people went back to watch the movie was for Edward, a boy with perhaps the largest forehead and the thickest eyebrows I've ever seen.

I give this movie a single star out of 5.



Twilight's Lights Up the Movie Screen's

STEPHANIE PENA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Since its movie release on November 21st, *Twilight* has been breaking box office records, making an estimated \$70.6 million on its opening weekend. The biggest opening sales for a female movie directed ever.

Although many say that the movie missed too many of the books more significant parts, it was refreshing to not have another Harry Potter wanna-be movie series.

Robert Pattison, who plays the role of Edward Cullen, and Kristen Stewart, who plays Isabella Swan, completely capture the chemistry from the book between Edward and Bella.

The bedroom scene could not have been more intense or sweet. Although that is the only scene where the intensity of Edward and Bella's relationship is seen, it is enough to keep the viewers wanting more. Who ever thought that Bella could be so aggressive!

Stewart is definitely clumsy and does look very uncomfortable when getting attention, especially when the attention is given by Edward (Pattison), giving the movie the same sort of

awkwardness that many hoped for. On the other hand, every time that Pattison looks at Bella, it looks so ridiculous that the viewer cannot help but laugh.

Thankfully Bella's monologues are kept to a minimum. Her sometimes impure and all too lovey-dovey thoughts are not said out loud through out the whole movie.

The movie is not just well done because of the love story between a hunky vampire and a teenage girl but Charlie Swan, Bella's father, will remind teenage girls of how their fathers reacted the first time they went out with a boy. Even if it doesn't, they'll remember what they thought their father would do!

Overall, the movie made record breaking sales and it kept true to Stephanie Meyer's book. It might not have perfectly captured every moment of the book but that is what made it so great, a lot of it was left to interpretation!



Walt Disney's Bolt, Televisions Super Dog Falls in Real Life

BY ANABEL SANTILLAN
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Reaching a moderate \$79.2M in the box office, Disney's *Bolt* is a fun and quirky film about a naïve television super dog (voiced by John Travolta) that accidentally gets shipped out of his show stage in Hollywood to New York City and tries to find his way back to his human and co-star Penny (Mylee Cyrus).

Accompanied by a sarcastic cat named Mittens (Susie Esman) and hilarious hamster named Rhino (Mark Walton), Bolt goes through a number of adventures in order to save Penny from the show's "green eyed" villain, who Bolt believes to be real. Along the way, Mittens continuously tries to

convince Bolt that his super powers are fictional and attempts on teaching him how to be a real dog, while Rhino preoccupies himself with trying to "fight off evil".

From simple-minded pigeons to whimsical cats, *Bolt* offers a vast amount of comedy (although mostly simple jokes) that can reach a variety of audiences. And just like many other animated films, it was the side-characters who stole the majority of the spotlight, Rhino being the funniest.

Having a main theme of devotion and friendship *Bolt* is a wonderful film for the family or even for a date. But enjoyable as it though, it isn't a film I would watch many times over.

Overall Grade: B+



Ariet Angeles
Senior
Beanie-Calvin Klein
Collar shirt-Kenneth Cole \$40
Vest-Jeffrey Beene \$50
Jacket-Claiborne \$75
Belt-Vans \$15
Shoes-Vans \$35



Melissa Carrillo
Sophomore
Shirt- Hollister \$26
Vest-Bloom \$35
Jeans-PacSun \$39.99
Boots- Ross \$20



Valerie Jimenez
Junior
Scarf- Charlotte Russe \$15
Long sleeve- Burlington \$16
Jeans- Anchor Blue \$25
Shoes- Vision \$15



Federico Bobadilla
Freshman
Shirt-Anchor Blue \$20
Sweater-Krew \$50
Vest-Calvin Klein \$45
Pants-Levis \$36
Shoes-Converse \$40

Simply Irresistible

BY: STEPHANIE CASTELLANOS
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Saray Sanchez is known by Babie.S. She's a junior and is simply irresistible with her smart, cute, funny personality. She would do anything to make you happy, and loves making everyone laugh. She also is Currently taking a dance class in West Covina, to stay in a good shape. She loves art, open to any music, and like to have good time.

What she like in a man, is really hard to find, she is difficult, and is picky about whom she lets in her life. Her dream boy has to be into art, open to music, open-minded, having a really funny personality, and knows how to move. She likes to be spoiled, and taking out once in a while. The main thing she wants in a relationship is true love, someone that shows that they really care.

The thing that bothers her the most is negative people, and just like everyone else she doesn't like liars. She believes that negativity makes this world a ugly place, and no one will be happy. Lying to her is like spitting in her, "there is no reason to lie about anything you insecure about your self" said Sanchez

Name: Saray Sanchez
Age: 16
Status: Single
Grade level: Junior

Trendsetters of the Month

Word On the street:

How is the economy going to affect your Christmas break?

BY: JESSE RIZO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER



Senior Gerardo Rosales said, "It will affect me like me not going to Mexico anymore, I'm really bummed out by that. And I'm not getting as much presents like last Christmas."



Sophomore Andrew Gamboa said, "This will either affect me or be in my favor. It can be in my favor because that will mean that I wont have to buy my family anything. It will affect me in a way that I will not get expensive presents."



Mr. Elliot math teacher/ basketball coach said, "I don't know if it is going to affect my winter break, because I spend most of my time here at El Rancho."



Senior Edgar Torres said, "It will affect me by my presents not being as expensive as the past years. And I wont get as much either."



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