



# EL RODEO



El Rancho High School - Volume 59- Issue 7  
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## Every 15 Minutes Brings Intense Emotions

By ROSAURA MONTES  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

In an intense, emotional two-day simulation called "Every Fifteen Minutes," students participated and experienced the consequences of driving while under the influence of alcohol.

A two-car collision crash was simulated in front of El Rancho as the Pico Rivera Sheriff's department, along with the LA County Fire Department treated this demonstration as if it was a real accident. "This was so realistic that even though it was fake I couldn't help but think what if I was actually part of an accident like that," said senior Lizette Contretas.

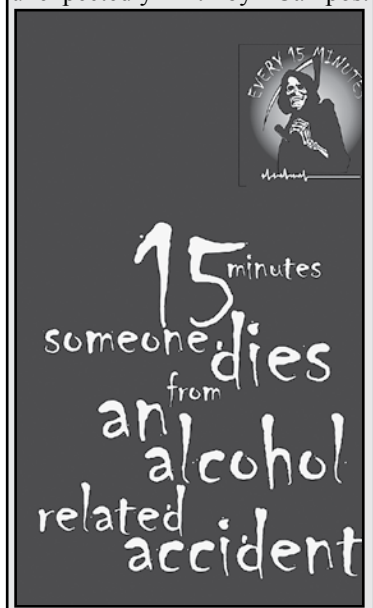
Drunk driver, senior Troy Campos, was responsible for the collision that killed junior Nathaniel Zaragoza, senior Ruby Garcia, and senior Alisia Proo.

Twenty-four of El Rancho's students all played the role of The Walking Dead. The Grim Reaper removed the students out of class and the students were forbidden to speak to their parents or anybody else for one whole day.

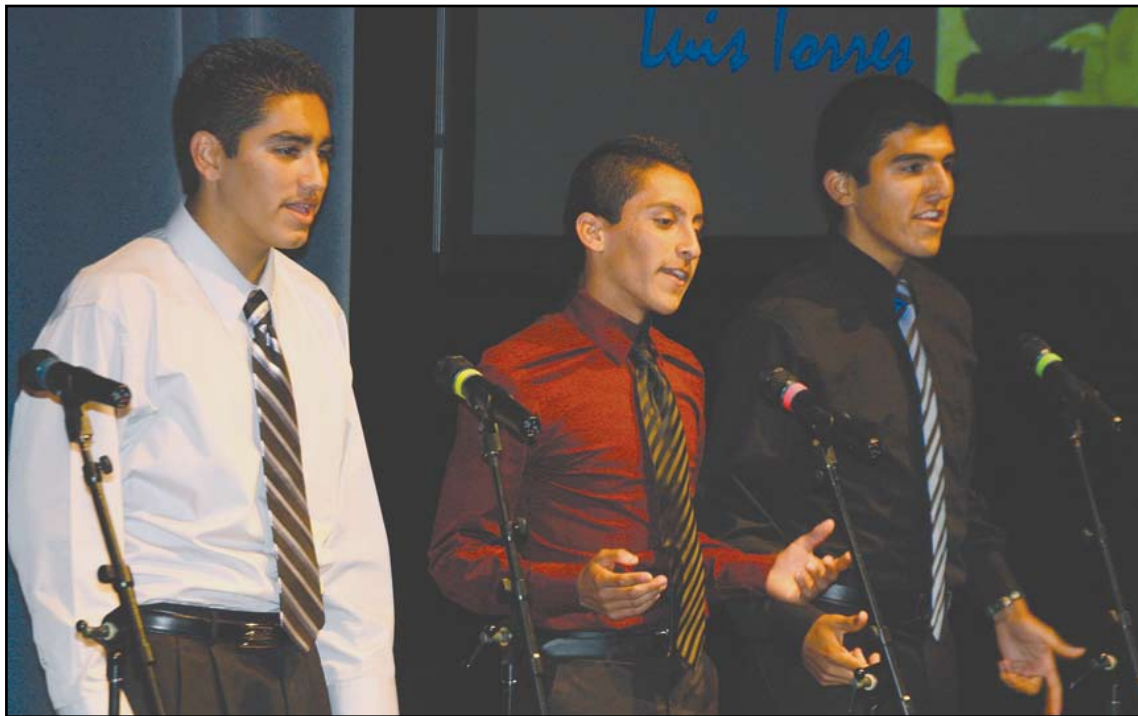
All of the students involved in this event went to an overnight retreat at the Radisson hotel at Whittier. "We all went to a conference at the hotel and listened to Jason Barber and then we participated in some activities. All of our parents wrote us letters and we wrote back to them, too," said senior Angelique Leos.

Jason Barber, a guest speaker, was one of many who spoke during an emotional memorial service during fifth period on Thursday. The participants and their parents gave each other heart-warming hugs during the intense ceremony.

A video presentation summarized the events before and after the accident. The day of the accident, it had been Zaragoza's birthday. He had refused to drink the liquor that Campos offered him, and watched as Campos drank alone. Ruby Garcia and Alisia Proo were driving along the road when they were unexpectedly hit by Campos.



## "A Night of Spoken WORD" Inspires Students



Sophomores Antonio Moya, Miguel Vilchis, and Andy Aria present their poetry to a captivated audience.

By ABEL MARTINEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

For the sophomores of Mrs. Zeko's class, the evening of April 11<sup>th</sup> was very special to say the least. After weeks and weeks of preparation, the students took to the stage at Whittier College and recited their poetry in a showcase entitled, "A Night of Spoken WORD."

"It was an amazing experience," says sophomore Antonio Moya. "I'd like to do it again. After doing it with my friends, we learned more about each other through writing poetry."

The students had been working under the guidance of Professor Tony Barnstone. Barnstone worked with the students for a series of ten weeks, with

each session ranging about fifty minutes. Over the course of the two months, the students received a crash course in poetry, then focused on writing and re-writing their poetry, and finally worked on performing their poetry.

"My favorite part was how much the kids appreciated it," says Barnstone. "These kids enjoyed the process. Resistance disappeared within a day. It all came down to their voices, their stories, and finding their own form of expression. It was very moving how powerful the poems were, and how hard the students worked and memorized the poems."

The students departed El Rancho a little after one o'clock Monday afternoon. Following their arrival at Whittier College, they settled into the theater, get-

ting a feel for what was to take place later in the evening. Each student recited a bit of their poetry on stage as a warm up, getting familiar with the microphones and where they would be standing. In addition, there was artwork (done by students in El Rancho's art classes) displayed via PowerPoint to accompany the poetry.

After they were all done, the students were treated to a tour of the campus, followed by dinner. As 6 p.m. began to near, Mrs. Zeko delivered a final pep talk to the students, expressing how proud she was of them, and urging each and every one of them to "leave everything on the stage."

"It was an honor to work with these kids," says Mrs. Zeko. "And it was a privilege to watch

them grow into their own voice."

Barnstone could not lessen his emphasize on how crucial Mrs. Zeko and Mrs. Chodos were to the creation of the event, going as far to say "it would not have been possible without them." The two women got a grant that made it all happen, and worked hard to ensure that the students would receive their time to shine.

Another person who was essential to the process was Shane Cadman, the director of the Shannon Center where the students performed. He helped pay for one of the buses, provided the food for the students, and of course, helped establish the setting.

"It was a really good experience with Professor Barnstone," says sophomore Yarity Villarreal. "The performance was really fun and unique."

After the performance was finished, Mrs. Zeko took to the stage along with Professor Barnstone, and each of them received a surprise gift from the students. What followed was a series of expressed gratitude from the students to both Mrs. Zeko and Professor Barnstone.

"Professor Barnstone has inspired me to love poetry," says Mrs. Chodos. "I confess that I didn't like poetry before this project."

"A Night of Spoken WORD" was a triumph, or as Barnstone simply put it, "a great community event." "Another great thing was how the poetry kids worked together with the art kids, that was really great," says Barnstone, "music, poetry and art; it was a great disciplinary collaboration working together."

## Choral Department Travels to New York for Spring Break

By MARIAH LEOS  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On the week of Spring Break, the Choral Department embarked on a trip to New York City to get the Broadway experience.

"I was very excited about them having the opportunity to travel as a choir. I loved that they experienced the city themselves, and the sites NYC had to offer," says Ms. Dodd. This has been the Choraleers' second visit to the Big Apple since their 2006 visit with the previous choir director, Mrs. Espinosa.

For many of the students, this was their first time experiencing a whole new city. "I think it was a great opportunity for us to see what other schools in another state are doing musically," says senior Jaclyn Esqueda.

Ms. Dodd and the students have been working hard by fundraising and singing for many events such as the Senior Center and City Hall's Tree Lighting last winter. "I believe we worked extremely hard. We have been overwhelmed with many changes this year and it's gratifying to be able



Left Top: Seniors Kystal Cortez, Maryssa Silva, Lauren Ramos  
Left Bottom: Seniors Esteni Munguia and Lanette Perez.

to show our hard work by going to New York this spring break," says sophomore Joshua Fornis.

The students sang at the Statue of Liberty, watched the Broadway musical, *Mary Poppins*, and worked backstage with the cast and crew. "I was excited to get out of town and go away for a few days. I believe it was a great way to spend spring break," says junior Tenaya Armijo, "I was most excited to see the Broadway show and sing at the Statue of Liberty."

In addition to their itinerary, the Choraleers had the privilege to sing at one of Downtown Manhattan's historical Church, St.

Patrick's Cathedral. "It was really exciting and a great opportunity for the Choraleers to be experiencing this," says sophomore, Esteni Munguia. Esteni looked forward to singing at one of Manhattan's oldest churches because she "has always wanted to sing in a Cathedral." Another student, senior, Vincent Tapia, expressed the same excitement about singing in one of New York's finest landmarks. "It was a wonderful chance for the Choral Department. Being in Choraleers for four years, I was very excited to be singing in the Cathedral and to be singing for our most beloved nation's monu-

ment, The Statue of Liberty."

In terms of learning life experiences from this trip, Ms. Dodd encouraged the students to be humble and to be aware of their surroundings. "I hope the students understand how important it is to travel and see the world through their own eyes, as well as to always be interested in music. Personally, all the touring I took with my choir encouraged me to pursue a career in teaching choral music and methods, which I hope to give to them."

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# OPINION

## When it Comes to Politics, Less is More

BY PATRICK RUBALCAVA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

I remember 2008, when Barack Obama was campaigning to become President of the United States. Many people around school were wearing T-shirts with the man's face on them and had stickers on their binders promoting the future President. When I asked one of these T-shirt wearers what he thought of Obama's health care policy, I always received a blank stare.

This confused me. "How could you wear that shirt without really even knowing anything about the politics behind the man?" I thought.

Such seems to be the case among many of we high school teens. Too often are teens so pre-occupied with what certain political inclinations will portray of their characters, that they forget to consider the politics itself.

Wearing clothing to promote a presidential candidate is a good thing, sure. It shows support and helps to express one's political efficacy. But wearing a shirt about a politician one knows nothing about is akin to wearing a shirt from a band one has never heard a song by.

This isn't the worst offense, either. By far the worst is when one seems to be disgusted by another's lack of care for a specific political issue, yet is guilty of ig-



*"The more involved we are as a generation, the greater the future we create shall be."*

noring such action themselves.

Being pro-environment is a good thing, generally. What I fail to see is how one can be so pretentious as to tell others to love the trees and protect the forest, yet one can't properly dispose of one's bag of Hot Cheetos properly during lunchtime.

One can hate "corporate America" and truly believe it to be the root of all evil, but doing such while wearing a fresh pair of Nikes is nothing short of hypocritical.

Saying what we believe isn't the problem for us, for

we are all eager to *say*. It is the necessary action that we lack.

Not wearing shoes to support people who can't afford shoes in Africa? How about actually giving money to get shoes for those without them? Putting up posters to show how disadvantaged women are in our current society is much easier than attempting to have legislation passed that actually helps, after all.

Maybe instead of putting recycle bins randomly about, we should actually go to Community Pride Day and assure that more

than a dozen people clean the neighborhood in which we live.

Do not allow my arguments to be so schewed as to suggest that teens should stop doing anything political. On the contrary, I'm arguing that we need to do *more*.

Politics is a great thing. The more involved we are as a generation, the greater the future we create shall be. The key is validity.

At the very least, remember that we live in a country great enough to give us such liberty as to guarantee that our actions will have some kind of impact.

## Baseball Brawl Turns Tragic

BY DAVID OCHOA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

"It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt." Well, the fun and games have ended as three San Francisco Giants fans were assaulted by two Dodger "fans" at the Opening Day game. Of the three victims, Bryan Stow suffered the worst injuries, as an April sixth article of the *Los Angeles Times* said, "he suffered a severely fractured skull and

damage to the frontal lobe of his brain... The left side of his skull has been removed to allow his swollen brain to decompress."

Rivalry is a normal part of life, and very common in sports, but this attack has no place in sporting events or society. This innocent man, a firefighter and father, was just trying to have a good time and attend a baseball game, but these lowlife "wannabe" baseball fans felt the need to attack him. Having previously

attended Dodger home games, I am aware of how rowdy and crazy the fans can become, especially the drunkards, heckling opponent team's fans, with Giants' fans being the most hated. This was always one of the worst parts of attending the games, I go to enjoy the game, not to be in a hostile violent environment.

America's Pasttime has always been a family fun event, with children always enjoying a day at the ball park, so with

children being present it should mean that all adults behave themselves, but this unfortunately is not the case. These kinds of "fans" have tarnished the reputation of several sports franchises, including some of my favorites such as: The Los Angeles Dodgers and Oakland Raiders.

Myself being a former sports fanatic, I realize how passionate a person can be for their team, but if one really ponders they will realize that it is just a GAME! A game in which these adults, so many look up to and admire, get paid millions of dollars to play, but what do the fans receive? Not a single cent. I cannot recall any team ever thanking me or paying me for supporting them, in fact sports often brought much anger in loss, and yes, joy in victory.

Sports are enjoyable to watch, but to let it control your life is just insane. Did those two men who attacked the Giant's fans think they were doing good for the Dodger organization, well these posers most likely don't think at all, they have just made the city and the fans look like degenerates, hooligans, and criminals. I hope these cowards, or anyone else, have the moxy to turn them in.

As this man, Bryan Stow, lays in a coma, I hope he makes a full recovery, his family is aware that he will never be the same physically and mentally, all because he attended a baseball game.



## El Rodeo



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# TEEN READ WEEK



## El Rancho High School Hosts Teen Read Week

*A celebration of reading hosted by the ERHS library  
April 11-April 14, 2011*

This year's teen read week encompassed everything from a book fair held in the library to read-alouds by administrators and counselors to catering by Chef Luna and the culinary arts program. Reading competitions were also held amongst the freshman English classes and culinary arts classes.





## CAMPUS

## Talent Show Wows Audience with Exciting Performances

BY ROSAURA MONTES  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Talent Show introduced new dances, music, and singing styles that exposed many of El Rancho's students' hidden talents.

The show started off with senior Briza Madueno, who sang for the original band, A Heart Well Ending. This was the first time Briza Madueno and senior Henry Ramos did not perform an acoustic duo.

This was also the first time that Madueno sang a solo song "If I Ain't Got You," by Alicia Keys. "I barely started practicing singing the song because I was concentrating more on my band," said Madueno with a chuckle.

Junior, Diane Barriertos, who brought the audience in awe, performed a new and fresh performance of tap dancing. "I've been tap dancing for about two years now. I take lessons at Dance Connection at Whittier," said Barriertos.

Singer of hardcore/screamo band, Killgary, Jon Garcia, a senior, was not in town to take part in the bands performance. Instead, lead singer and guitarist, junior Anthony Robles sang for the band.

"Jon was at spring orientation at Humboldt University," said senior, rhythm guitarist, Jonathan "Johnny Boii" Ozeta. "Ivan Sanchez was our singer while Jon was away."

El Rancho was introduced to a new style of dancing by a Native American "Grass Dance" performed by sophomore, Michael Jimenez, who won his title for Best Dancer. "This dance is from another tribe, but I wanted to show people about my people from the Apache tribe," said Jimenez.

This year's talent show was a first time a teach-

er performed with a band.

Digital photography teacher, Mr. Parra, sang "Where the Streets Have No Names" by U2 with seniors Nash Rivas, Sean Duron, and Eli Alarcon.

Rivas wanted Mr. Parra to be part of the band. "My first reaction when I heard him sing was that he had talent. He said I was crazy because I asked him to sing for us, and he went along with it anyway," said Rivas.

Senior Emma Leal won Best Singer for performing "Ain't no Sunshine" by Bill Withers with her acoustic guitar and her lucky blue chair.

"I was always taught to be humble with any award I received, whether it is second place, or last place. And as for winning a trophy at the E.R. Talent show, I just have to say, it did give some boost," said Leal.

"It somehow gave me a inch of motivation to follow some dreams of mine," said Leal.

Performing as a drummer, senior David Ochoa, along with guitarist and raspy vocalist, his brother Paul Ochoa won Best Band for performing Bob Dylans "Froggie Went A-Courtin'" and "Baby Blue." "I feel pretty good about winning. I did it because I love to play," said Ochoa, "I know it's just rock n' roll, but I like it."

Senior Troy Campos, senior Phil Navarro, and senior Jesse Cabrera collaborated together to form rap group "The Realness" and performed an original freestyle song "The Living Truth."

"We're just trying to reach out to our generation and turn the tables so everyone can join the right path," said Campos. "We trusted God through out this whole time."

"A lot of people around here freestyle about fake stuff



Sophomore, Michael Jimenez performs his unique "Grass Dance" at El Rancho's Talent Show.

during lunch, we're doing this so we can speak out about real situations," said Navarro.

"We gave our heart out for this track. Sometimes we won't even work in the studio. We'll help each other out and pray," Navarro continued.

The song was cut early on purpose so that the rest of the song can be more of a freestyle and gave Campos a chance to show off his beat boxing skills.

Junior vocalist, Tenaya Armijo, performed an original acoustic song, "I'm Up For It," with Emilio Tello. The song, which is about a cou-

ple getting back together after having a second chance, won the Most Creative trophy.

"I didn't expect to win," said Armijo. "When we performed a song last year, we wanted to write another song to play this year," said Tello.

The last performance was by The Flores Experience, with senior Eric Rivera, Devin Welsh, senior Mark Moreno and, Robert "Bobby" Fontana, who played a cover of "Six Days at the Bottom of the Ocean," by an instrumental post-rock band, Explosions in the Sky.

"We chose that song because we all thought it was a

really great and different song to play. There's a lot going on with the three guitars playing and when it all comes together it sounds incredible," said Moreno,

"We didn't want to sound like every other band out there," Moreno continued.

It was not easy for the judges to choose a winner. "It was interesting to have all these categories. That is why it took the judges so long to figure out which performers should win a trophy," said Mr. McMullen. "There were about three or four performances that didn't happen. That made it a bit easier for the judges."



Senior, Freddy Barajas mimics the striking pose in his art piece at "Compositions: an El Rancho High School Art Exhibition."

## Compositions Draws out New Flairs

BY NAOMI ORTEGA, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Pico Rivera's Centre for the Arts was filled shoulder to shoulder with students, parents, teachers, and faculty members all eager to see the works of art El Rancho's finest students created. The artists held their reception Saturday, April 9th at the Pico River Centre for the Arts.

The gallery is entitled "Compositions: an El Rancho High School Art Exhibition," and it includes an assortment of graphic designs, sculptures, photography, as well as the refreshments provided by Chef Luna's culinary arts program. There was also live entertainment from the drama department and the song writers club.

"It was amazing!" said junior Tammy Nguyen, who was there to support her fellow classmates. From floor to ceiling, wall to wall, and even on small screens, the art pieces captivated the gallery's guests. Seniors Teresa La Brecque, Richard Rios, and Aurora Perez each had their work displayed. "I feel like it's a great honor," said La Brecque.

For most students this was a first time to have their work on display. Perez added, "It's a good feeling I didn't expect this at all, so I'm happy to that I have my work up."

Dozens of pieces were submitted, and according to Mr. Diaz, "It was difficult not getting to include everybody because that is what you want; you want to be able to see everybody's work up." Mrs. Leal added, "I would have wanted everything to be displayed!" The art department teachers submitted the best of their classes, but ultimately, it was the Centre for the Arts made the final decision.

Mr. Diaz then went on to say, "We were looking for a way to get our classes and students' work a little more out there because for the most part unless you go into our classrooms, nobody really gets to see the work."

The idea for the exhibit stemmed from the department meetings and resulted with Mr. Diaz getting in contact with the centre in October.

It was a unanimous decision among the faculty members and administrators that it was great to see the entirety of the art department come together and put together a show.

"The fact that so many disciplines are represented such as sculptures, graphic art, and digital video, that's pretty tremendous and the work is excellent," said Mr. McMullen. "Combining all the artistic elements El Rancho has to offer is great," added Mr. Lara.

At the end of the opening day, the gallery was deemed to be a success. Within the first half hour, Chef Luna's team plated enough food for over two hundred people and as the day went on, more and more people crowded to see the live performances.

The exhibit will be open until tomorrow, so if you haven't yet checked it out, there is still time to do so.



## CAMPUS

## Dons Raise Awareness One Barefoot at a Time

BY ROSAURA MONTES  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho students took off their shoes for a day on April 5<sup>th</sup> for TOMS "One Day Without Shoes" to raise awareness of millions of children growing up barefooted who are at risk for diseases.

"I thought it was weird to see people walking barefoot in school. People told me that they were walking barefoot because people in Africa didn't have shoes so they wanted to feel like them. That didn't make any sense to me; no one told me TOMS shoes was behind it," said senior Christian Calzada, "I would have respected people more if they told me it was for a cause."

TOMS is a shoe company founded by Blake Mycoskie, who was inspired to help children in need of shoes after befriending children in Argentina. He found that they had no shoes to protect their feet. For every pair of TOMS purchased, a matching new pair will be given to a child in need of shoes, one for one.

TOMS shoes are currently distributed in 23 countries, such as Argentina, China, Zambia, South Africa, Honduras, Armenia and the United States for those children in need.

"People shouldn't have said it was only for kids in Africa. There are other places where the shoes are handed out," said senior Oscar Navarrete, "I walked around barefoot as a promotion for TOMS so that people



El Rancho students go one day without wearing a pair of shoes to raise awareness for the children growing up barefooted around the world.

can help out and buy their own pair of shoes. It was more of an advertisement for the cause."

Teachers and administrators in El Rancho raised eyebrows wondering why students were walking around campus barefooted. Once informed, they knew that this was an important statement to be part of.

"I like the fact that students are participating and I applaud them for doing this," said Mr. Rodriguez. "This is school, and

we ask students to wear shoes for safety reasons. There is an appropriate time and place for students to walk barefoot outside of school, but other than that, there is no problem about it."

Walking barefooted for such a cause did not discourage students to make a statement. "I'm comfortable with my feet and I wasn't afraid to show them," said senior Bonita Estrada. "Other people were doing it, so I wasn't bothered of be-

ing the only one. I'm even getting a pair of TOMS for Easter."

Millions of needy children are at risk of soil-transmitted diseases, painful injuries and cuts that are caused by glass and metal scattered on streets. These needy families cannot afford treatment and prevent these incidents.

"TOMS is doing is a great job. The shoes aren't sturdy, but it does help the kids from getting cuts and burns," said junior Gabby De La Rosa. "I know that kids have

to walk from miles on them, so the shoes are a plus one for them."

"I was very excited when I bought my first pair of TOMS sophomore year. I knew I was making a difference," said senior, Andrea Cruz. Many of El Rancho students today have one or more pair of TOMS to help out in such an important cause that gives them the power to benefit children in need.

## Judge Wesley Gives Approval for Teen Court



Judge Wesley answers questions during the Q & A portion of his presentation in the faculty center.

BY KAREN B. CARRILLO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho received authorization from Judge Wesley to

begin the Teen Court program for El Rancho High School students.

Faculty, officers, Mr. Elias, and Mr. Picon attended the meeting in the faculty center. The meet-

ing to discuss the future for a teen court began with Mr. Genis, who introduced the honorable Judge Wesley. Judge Wesley proceeded to discuss the statistics and the

advantages of adopting the Teen Court system as opposed to using the Juvenile Courts. He proceeded to discuss that students who go to Juvenile Courts are more

likely to commit crimes compared to the students who went through the Teen Court system.

"El Rancho will be the eighteenth teen court in the state of California," said Judge Wesley. Students would be able to participate and serve as jurors, and receive service credits. "This is a chance for the students to become involved in our community and to solve problems."

"The teen courts would only take first offenders, if the parents and probation officers feel appropriate. The offenders can be from eleven to seventeen years of age," says Judge Wesley. He described the benefits of having a teen court as opposed to automatically sending offenders to juvenile courts. "One million juvenile court cases were tried, and most of the offenders were likely to commit a crime on school days," explains Judge Wesley.

The teen courts handle about 100,000 cases, but this new program would only apply to students who have never committed a crime before. It would be a second opportunity to avoid having a criminal record for the rest of their lives.

El Rancho would have teen court cases two times a month, and the first case for El Rancho is expected to begin in June.



# Every 15





DRIAL

# Minutes

*Photographs by Rosaura Montes*





# FEATURES

## Don Bots Enter the Long Beach Arena for Robotics Competition



The Don Bots proudly entered Consuela, the name of the robot they had built, in their first robotics competition against 63 other schools.

By PHILLIP FARIAS  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

an incursion of robots from 63 schools at the Long Beach Arena for a robotics competition, presented by For Inspiration

The robotics club joined

and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST), on March 24 through March 27. The Don Bots entered their robot, code-named "Consuela," in a team competition consisting of putting air filled shapes on an elevated peg and getting a mini-bot to the top of a pole.

"Right before the competition, we were meeting Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday after school, and on Saturday," club advisor Mr. Halverson said. "That was brutal," Halverson joked.

"I started the robotics club last year," Halverson said, "but the 'robotics' part of the club was started this year thanks to Mr. Morales, who was the one who found you can get some money for a robotics competition, and he is

the one who went out and got a couple of grants." The robotics club got grants from JC Penney and NASA, which funded the building of their robot.

One of the things that the club had to get ready for, Halverson said, was, "passing all the inspections because there were a thousand rules that were mainly safety related."

Safety is a big concern when it comes to these robots. "These Robots have a tremendous amount of energy in them, so if something goes wrong, its pretty spectacular with all the fire and smoke coming out of them," Halverson added. For this reason, every robot comes with a panic button built in that would automatically shut it down.

"To survive and to

score was enough of a reward for us," Halverson said.

"It felt good to attend the competition because it took a lot of hard work and a lot of time spent watching the kids work. The fact that the robot actually worked felt really good," club advisor Mr. Zook added.

In regard to future plans for the club, "We've ordered kits for two robots to be made out of Legos and one of the things I want to have is have teams in the school building robots out of Legos and to have a competition within the school," Halverson said. "If there are people who are interested out there feel free to talk to Mr. Halverson or myself," Zook said. The robotics club meets Tuesdays and Wednesdays after school in room M-1.

## Jessica and Michelle: Two is Better Than One

By LIZETTE MELENDREZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Everyone knows them as the twins who dress alike, 24/7, or you may know them as "thing one" and "thing two." At times, you might think you are seeing double when you spot them around campus, but don't be discouraged. They are no Olsen twins. These two sisters are known as Jessica and Michelle Hernandez. The twins were born February 12, 1992 in the city of Pasadena.

They have the appearance of one person, but their personalities are complete opposites. Jessica is more of a rocker type of chick and Michelle is a preppy girl who is not afraid to be sweet to everyone. Though the twins are totally opposite, they have a



Twin sisters, Jessica and Michelle Hernandez, are the girls known for dressing alike everyday.

connection that most people wouldn't understand. "We've been dressing the same since we were in elementary, and we got used to it. It is also

lots of fun," said the seniors.

"As we grew older we noticed that we weren't the same. We liked different things and had different personali-

ties. Having a twin is like having a friend who is always by your side. We don't feel complete without each other," said Jessica. These two ladies

have a very special bond that no one will be able to break.

The girls' connection is so strong that they even say and think the same things sometimes. "One time we said the same thing five times!" laughed Michelle. Jessica and Michelle enjoy being twins. Although they have the free-will to dress differently, they choose to dress alike. They could not care less about other people's judgments; life is too short to care about little things. Why not dress exactly like someone else for a change and stop trying to be so unique? These twins truly have shown the definition of uniqueness. People can definitely say that these twins will be one of many that will leave a mark at El Rancho High School.

## Trendsetters of the Month



Model: Angel Perez 11<sup>th</sup>

Jeans: Hot Topic \$29  
Shirt: Free  
Glasses: Ray Bans \$300  
Shoes: Burlington Coat Factory \$24  
Watch: Target \$15  
Bag: Amazon \$14



Model: Elise Contreras 12<sup>th</sup>

Dress: Hot Topic \$40  
High heels: Payless \$30  
Flower clip: Pico Rivera Indoor Swap-meet \$1  
Necklace: Spitfire Interior \$12



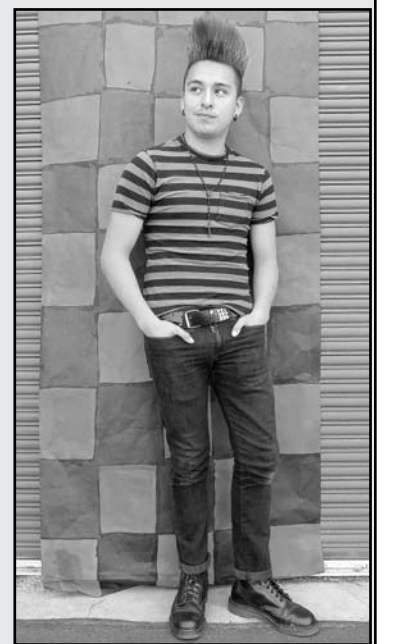
Model: Junior Isais 9<sup>th</sup>

Jeans: Swap-meet \$25  
Shirt: Skate shop \$5  
Shoes: Citadel Outlets \$65



Model: Julie Acosta 12<sup>th</sup>

Shirt: Thrift Store \$1  
Sweater: 99 Cents Store \$1  
Shorts: Gift  
Flats: Payless \$15  
Necklace: Homemade (Beads 15 cents)  
Flower: Charlotte Russe \$5



Model: Edgar Reynoso 10<sup>th</sup>

Shirt: Angry Young & Poor \$28  
Jeans: Angry Young & Poor \$20  
Boots: Uncle  
Belt: Gift

By: LIZETTE MELENDREZ



## FEATURES

## Students Protest in Silence to Expose Bullying



Ms. Segal and her G.S.A. members, wore masks marked with a red x over their mouth, helped to spread awareness for anyone who has been bullied or harrassed by devoting a day to silence.

BY ROSAURA MONTES  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

More than seventy students joined El Rancho's G.S.A. (Gay Straight Alliance) in part of the annual Day of Silence to protest the bullying, harassment and deaths of homosexual people.

Participating students handed out printed cards explaining the reason for the protest.

"The Day of Silence is a symbolic day to make people aware of the abuses people have to endure, the justification of being their sexual orientation, to help defend those who are helpless against bul-

lying and the pressure and turn to self destruction. Silence is golden when words aren't being used to hurt people," said senior Lydia Raya

Students took a school day vow of silence to symbolize the silence that homosexual people kept within themselves because of the fear

of how they live their lives with their sexual orientation.

Many of the silent protestors wore certain colors or items to help make their statement. The color red was used to symbolize the Day of Silence; red beads were worn and some chose to either wear medical masks marked with an X or hold up a long stick stuck with a piece of paper that had a marked down X.

Staying silent was no hassle for students. "Wearing the mask influenced me not to talk; this is my commitment to be silent," said senior Joseph Alvarez.

"People need to be aware of homosexual deaths that could have been prevented," said senior Rebecca Espinoza.

From recent suicides due to cyber bullying to homosexuals being bullied, the Day of Silence makes some people pause for a second to think if what they are saying is causing some mental harm.

"The suicide is messed up; homosexuals have been bullied so much that they couldn't handle it anymore

and decided to take their lives," continued Espinoza.

Other schools and colleges across California are also taking the day to bring silence into schools to speak up for such awareness.

"I'm not scared to be silent today," said junior Miguel Gutierrez, "the GSA in my old school [Alhambra] was bigger and more people participated, that is why El Rancho's GSA has to work harder to get the word out."

"My friends inspired me to support for the fight of gay rights," said senior Alex Simenta.

Students are participating today especially for their homosexual friends and family to show that they care about and are fighting for better treatment and acceptance for them.

"It hurts my feelings when my gay friends are pushed around," said senior Vanessa Banuelos, "I know people have their beliefs of not accepting them but they should keep to themselves and not beat up gay people – live and let live!"

## Simply Irresistible: "Good Vibes, Good Times" with Michelle Barnes

BY PATRICK RUBALCAVA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The world is definitely a stressful place. As people we are constantly bombarded with technology and other such markings of urban life. Some days one just needs to tone it down and revert back to the more simple things in life.

If one is to make that trip and go back to the forest, amongst the brush and wildflowers, one is likely to find the subject of this month's *Simply Irresistible*.

She is Michelle Barnes, senior, and she's as down to Earth as they come. At school, Michelle is involved in the Leos Club and the Yearbook Staff, but it is outside of the confines of establishment and the man that Michelle finds her true self.

Michelle has a fascination with nature. She loves how nature cannot be controlled by man, and it is perfectly representative of her own rebellious nature. She also enjoys rides on her bike (more efficient forms of transportation are too mainstream) and "catching the breeze." When not pedaling, Michelle walks her dogs, Kyran and Kobe.

Michelle doesn't agree with this current generation. She's "not really involved" with technology, and isn't too fond of it. More important to Michelle are the person-to-per-

son relations of every day life.

Michelle is not so selfish as to keep such amazing qualities to herself, though. She gives "off positive vibes" to the people around her, so they, too, can experience what Michelle does.

But the forest isn't the only "green" thing about Michelle. When one looks at Michelle, her first noticeable feature is her "green emeralds." That is not to be confused with regular emeralds, which just aren't green enough to describe her eyes. Indeed, her eyes warrant nearly redundant adjectives.

Michelle looks for someone who can join in her rabid love-fest with nature. She finds good company in fellow adventurous souls. She seeks someone that can try out new things and "go on a crazy hike with [her], climbing the biggest waterfalls there."

As Michelle loves the Earth and its beauty so, it is only fitting that she find a friend in someone she considers to be "down to Earth." Someone that can be easy-going and have a good sense of humor will always get the plants in Michelle's garden growing.

Beyond this, Michelle seeks qualities that come only at birth. "Good face and bone structure is important," she says.

It's also important that he have the intellectual capacity to keep up with Michelle,

and maybe even challenge her views. "I like someone I can learn from and teach," she says.

An extremely key feature to Michelle is a person's ability to be honest and not "fake."

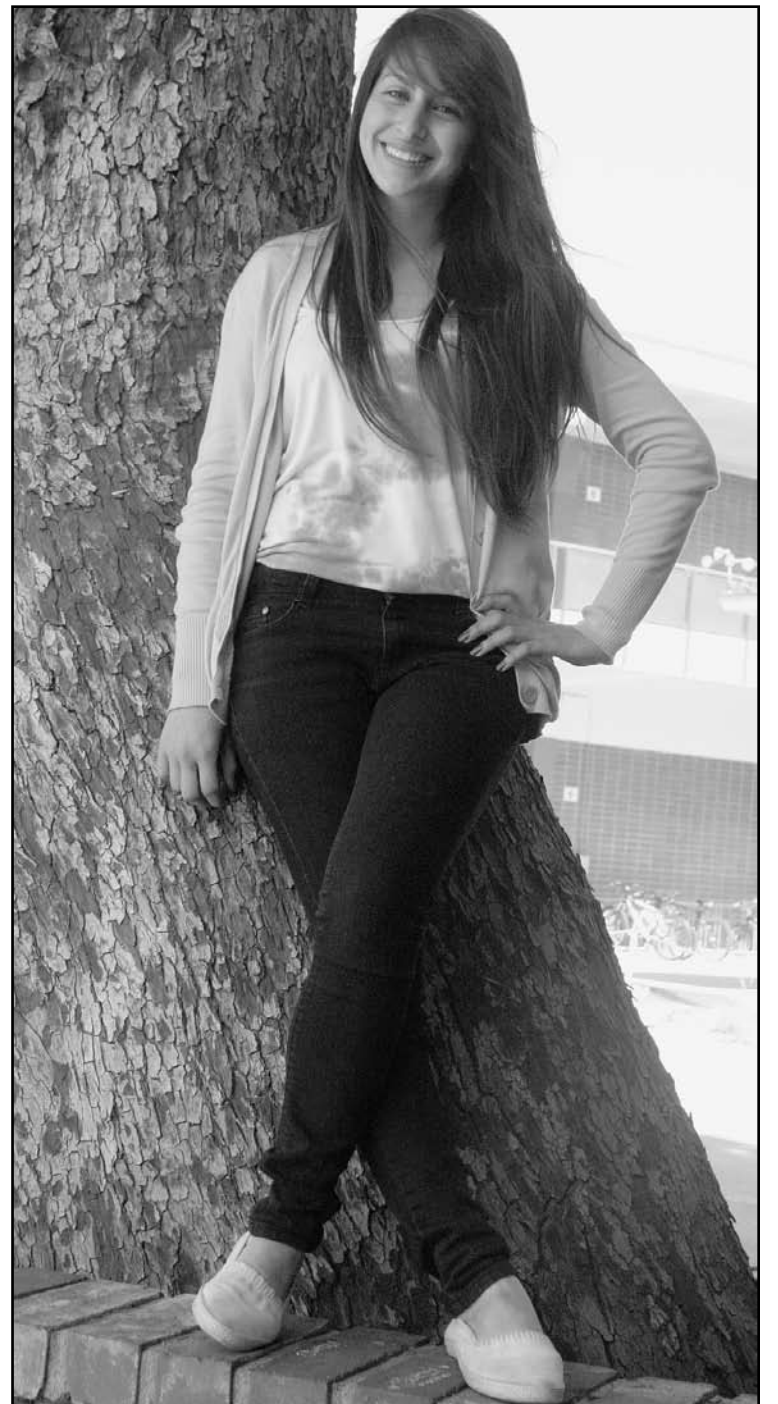
This is also extremely key for anyone looking to build a friendship with Michelle.

In a friend, Michelle looks for someone similar to herself. Her ideal friend likes the music as her: Indie. (Her favorite band is Dr. Dog...but it's not mainstream. You've probably never heard of them).

The best person for Michelle is someone she can "share the pleasure of doing nothing with."

On her perfect day, Michelle would be with friends like these, and together they would "watch the sun fall through the leaves of the trees" on a cloudy day. Sure, this perfect day may be paradoxical, but that's just the kind of thing that happens when you hang out with Michelle.

So if you're looking for that person to be there and understanding at all times, you'll find a friend in Michelle. Even if it's just for a good laugh or a nice conversation, Michelle is your girl. Her favorite phrase is "good vibes, good times," and this is quite fitting, as Michelle can be just the person to guarantee a good day.



This month's *Simply Irresistible* features Michelle Barnes, the down to earth girl with a love for all things nature has to offer.



# WORD!

## CANDYLAND

Poet: Kamille Mancina

Illustrator: Tuan Nguyen

The peppermint scent rises into my nose as I step into  
my candy paradise.  
Looking at the village of colorful bears  
stuffed in the jar  
Reaching my hand in i pick up the squishy fruity bears  
As they cry out "please don't eat me".  
Walking passed the mooned shaped sour jawbreakers,  
I smell the cinnamon smelling, throat clenching  
Fire red balls.  
I pick one up and place it in my mouth to feel  
My tongue doing flips from the tiny piece of candy.  
Walking to the register i place the mouth drooling,  
Scrumdelious  
Candy filled bag on the metal platform as I hear  
The Ding! of the cash register.  
Walking out I get the last hot whiff of peppermint,  
Close the door as the chimes cling goodbye.

## Spotless Mind

The oak bench

that has been help captive

by the screeching weeds

lures me in with it's sweet lullabies.

So I sit,

beneath the tangoing winds

as they liberate the yellowing leaves.

As the sun sinks deeper west

the birds flap their wings south.

The sun ignites my sight with pink

but by my hearts will

I don't turn my head

nor blink my eyes,

In hopes that some of it's eternal shine will linger.

-Noelle Gonzalez

## I won't Murder you

We're new to this website for online dating called  
Cupid's Arrow

For the next 30 minutes, we read peoples profiles  
We found this really peculiar one that caught our interest  
His default name:

*IwontMurderyou*

According to his profile he is a 30 year old, straight, single male who  
lives in Boston, Massachusetts

His "self summary" drew our attention

*I am a fun loving guy who has absolutely no interest in committing  
murder, just looking for that one lovely evening and rest assure that,  
that one lovely evening will absolutely end with you back at home,  
safe and sound*

His favorite movie:

*Silence of the lambs*

Favorite book:

*As I lay dying*

Favorite band:

*The murderers, Note: I only like these IRONICALLY*

According to him the first thing people notice about

*Me is my lacking of threatening cues, people are like 'I feel  
so safe and comfortable around you, I really couldn't imagine you  
ever murdering me', at which I then tell them they are one hundred  
percent right*

On a typical Friday night he reassures his readers that  
*I have been seen by plenty of people in plenty of different places, such  
that I always have an alibi in the INCREDIBLE UNLIKELY event  
that I come up as a suspect in a murder trial... Which WILL/HAS  
NEVER HAPPEN[ED]!*

The most private thing he is willing to admit is that  
*I once picked up a female hitchhiker off of I-95 handcuffed her, beat  
her, strangled her in my murder shack, and fed her to my dogs...*

*SYKE!*

*I sometimes wet the bed*

Things that he can't live without

*My Freezer, for keeping my fresh goods from spoiling*

*My Shovel, for Gardening*

*My Chainsaw, for Maintenance around my House*

*And of course my Meat hooks make my cooking more convenient and  
hassle free*

And at the very end of this indirect confession it said

*You should message me if you want a fun, loving guy who **WON'T**  
murder you.*

*Becca Amavizca, Zane Frey, Carolina Gomez, Yarityz Villareal*

## Dreams

Poet: Samantha Cabañas

Illustrator: Daniel Echevarria

I wonder why I vividly remember so vividly that time when  
It was just me. All alone at night in the middle of the street with just  
one flickering light post guiding my staggering steps.

Where one shuffle of a bush causes my body to become paralyzed in  
the shadows of death

Knowing that

She is looking for me

Knowing that that woman I barely even know is willing to stop my  
heart just because she is not MY mother.

And then to finally get home after thinking she was captured without  
anyone getting hurt and see my friend of ten years on Channel 11

Both parents dead. Twenty year old son dead. Sixteen year old  
daughter dead. Five year old daughter missing.

What a night

Or why I remember the time when I was trapped in what looked like  
a cheap motel

With the furniture thrown around, spider black drapes, the rope burns  
on my wrists and ankles, marks from head to toe, swellings on my  
eyes, and my almost raw body drowned in my own red pool

You would think I would have heard the police banging on the door  
the way hammers do to steel to rescue me by then

But as always

It never works that way for me

I wonder why I clearly remember all of that

And not the day of my fifteenth birthday

All I remember are people standing, my kitchen, and me taking  
pictures with my ENTIRE family.





## WORD!

## WHERE IS MY DOLLAR?

Poet: Yarityz Villarreal Illustrator: Nina Sierra

It was a series of 2009  
 Identification number: L06420142C  
 And on the top right hand corner  
 I wrote my name,  
 Yarityz

February 26, 2011 the day I put my name on a  
 dollar

I spent it the next day on a crisp chocolate bar  
 Where would my dollar go? Would it be used  
 to buy more food like a towering ice cream? Or  
 would Osama Bin Laden light it up to destroy a  
 boat filled with oil recently imported from Saudi  
 Arabia?

What if a careless person would toss it away  
 with some old receipts and become submerged  
 gradually forgotten until a transient would come  
 and rescue my dollar, or what if my dollar were to  
 dance with the trees as the wind blew through the  
 cold streets of Chicago

Maybe my dollar would go through the hands  
 of Barack Obama, or perhaps be part of a child's  
 allowance

Would these people look at the back of my dollar  
 and wonder what "yarityz" means?

Would they know it's a name?

But then again my name doesn't exist according  
 to the internet

But what if doesn't destroy the boat, or dances  
 with the trees, or meets the transient?

If not them who? My English Teacher? An  
 exchange student who would keep it as a souvenir  
 and pass it on to his decadents?

What if my dollar were to come back to me?

When would it?

If not now when?

Tomorrow? 10 years from now? When I'm on my  
 death bed?

Its serial number is L06420142C

Have you seen my dollar?

## She Sips

The blaring sun peers through bent, dusty white blinds-  
 Curious rays seeping into the grime, cluttered kitchen,  
 casting faint light upon the dirty, crusty forgotten pile of dishes.  
 Slender, nimble fingers dance their way from the granite counter to  
 the humming silver fridge-an orange juice carton stolen from it's  
 contents in seconds.

And down it flows passed dry, cracked thin lips.

Ding.

Toast.

The scent of charred bread permeates the air.

Burnt toast.

Smoky-denim blue eyes glance to the left.

A tall figure clad in a crinkled white shirt, absent of its usual maroon  
 tie, and navy blue slacks- stands hunched over the sink-gradually  
 shaving away the burnt layer of bread with a slick butter knife.

A kick and the fridge slides closed.

She sits down at the table, her back ramrod straight, her shoulders  
 slack, the carton clutched in her right hand.

He merely bites into his breakfast-  
 his mind projecting the coffee he desires at hand.

A sip-to purge the silence.

Her eyes flutter open.

He is there-opposite her-a stack of papers magically manifested in his  
 hand.

She tucks a few stray scraggly hair strands behind her ear.

A shuffle of papers.

A sip of juice.

And finally their eyes clash.

Exhaustion lines his face-empty of its once hearty youth. Swirling  
 greens peer at her-uncertainty lying within its depths.

A sweep.

A scan.

Black-shadows fall beneath each of her eyes, lines mar her forehead  
 as her brows crease--- a pale comparison to her once alluring beauty.

Chirp. Chirp. Chirp.

And he is gone-

his chair left pulled out, bits and pieces of toast scattered on the  
 unpolished table.

She had since looked away.

She sips---

her thoughts replaying their ghost of a past.

His silver chain and shackle quietly lies on the counter-forsaken.

Her silver promise remains locked away---stuffed in an overly  
 cramped baby-blue box of photos shoved recklessly under their bed.

She sips.

## Waiting Hopefully

Poet: Dana Gallegos  
 Illustrator: Jocelyn Huerta

I once wrote you the both of you a letter

Mom and Dad,

I poured my clouded gray emotions into every lead-filled ABC that flowed onto the  
 paper.

I left the tear-soaked note on your unmade bed

Waiting for you both to make up and see the enchanted burning love that still lies within  
 you,

Wanting you to feel the romance and the feeling of a rollercoaster speeding away in your  
 stomach when you hear the footsteps clacking right into the door.

Instead,

Hatred has taken over you both.

I once gave you the one cherished item that reminded me of my Nino and Nina.

My Air Force Pin

The one they gave me before they flew over the oceans.

Before I knew I was not going to see them again until I was sixteen.

I once wrote you the both of you a letter, with my only beloved item.

I wrote, "Give me my pin back when you two stop fighting, be in love again."

It's been six years

I'm still waiting



## SPORTS

## Track Team Takes Del Rio League Championship!

BY JACKIE MONTEON  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The El Rancho High School Track team ended with a league record of 6-0. Their last two track meets were against Santa Fe High School and La Serna High School. The Dons defeated both teams in all levels.

All events contribute to the victory the Dons have had but perhaps, "the distance runners are the biggest contributors to the track team," said Coach Edwin Batres, throwers. The Dons have accomplished a lot including breaking personal records such as the case of sophomore Bailee Henry, distance runner who broke a record from the eighties for the mile.

"This is the best season ever because not only do we have good returning athletes from previous years, but also we have a lot of newcomers that are good." Said



Junior, Steven Gomez, competing in hurdles against California High School.

sophomore, Andre Hernandez, captain of the sprinters. The Dons have a lot of good athletes that

will be leaving them this year but the Del Rio league champions will continue to try and do their best.

"It's been fun these four years. I'm really going to miss it. Throwers!" said Senior, Tina

Castellanos, captain of the throwers. The Dons are now focused on preliminaries and league finals, which will both be held at Whittier College. "This year was fun I enjoyed competing all three events and I'm excited for preliminaries and league finals," said senior, Yvette Bastidas, thrower.

Track league finals will take place today at Whittier College and the Dons are feeling very confident since they did well during their season. "Being undefeated back to back champions for all four levels has definitely been our mission. Mission accomplished! We've worked so hard and we showed it on the track. Going to preliminaries is a privilege I've earned and I'm excited to do my best. I love this track and field program and I know were going to beat it at preliminaries and finals." said senior and captain of the team Blanca Gutierrez.

## Boys Volleyball Takes it One Step at a Time

BY JOSHUA MAGANA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho guys' volleyball loses against Cal High on Wednesday April 29, 2011 making their overall score 12-3 and their league score 6-2. The volleyball team is ecstatic and ready to take on league this year. Edgar Estrada, an astute senior, says, "We want to win league undefeated."

Also, Robert Fuentes, the senior who brings the manpower to the team says, "I have love for volleyball and I am here to play, and I am here to win." Troy Campos who is a senior declares, "We are going to tag 'em and bag 'em."

The guys' volleyball team means business judging from the

countenances. Especially, the look on Thomas Jimenez, senior that is spirited and compassionate for his team, who says, "We want to leave our foot print in El Rancho's history." Tony Conde, senior captain, says confidently, "The championship spirit from soccer is still in me and I want it to keep on going." Even the coach Ms. Picon joins in the action by saying very sternly, "I am optimistic."

Improvement is also in the hearts of the volleyball team. Israel Lara, who is a senior with a mission, says, "To be the best we must compete with the best." Kevin Walley, senior, agrees by saying, "I want to compete against the best of the best." Mathew Mayoral who is a junior says, "playing volleyball with the seniors gets me excited for next year."



Boys' volleyball works on "taking CIF...one step at a time."

Not only does guys' volleyball want to do well this season, but also they want to have fun. Michael Gonzalez senior captain

says, "We are just psyched to play, have fun, and represent our school." The Team desires to set a good example for the school.

The whole boys' volleyball team had agreed upon four main goals for this season. First in the list is communication. Second is to keep their opponents under 10 points. Third is to play to their tempo. Lastly, the fourth goal is to make a statement.

The guys' volleyball team clearly makes a big statement through their teamwork. Steve Ramirez who is a senior says, "We are a brotherhood." Furthermore, Eddie Bobadilla, senior, says, "We have an advantage because we have been through a lot with each other these past years."

The encouragement and vigor radiate from all the volleyball members, which is clearly seen from any of the guys' volleyball games. The team quote is, "We are taking CIF...One step at a time."

## Baseball Team Back in Full Swing!

BY PATRICK RUBALCAVA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Ameretwelvegamesago, the Dons held a record of 1-6 overall.

Though the team was disappointed by the season so far, they felt confident that future games would hold promising results.

From the looks of the games that have elapsed since, it looks like the boys have delivered. Their successes have surpassed far beyond what many could have hoped to achieve.

The comeback started with a big win against Pioneer in an away game. The Dons absolutely crushed the Titans, with a score of 13-0. The big win was an indicator of the good to come.

Their most recent victory was against the Pioneer Titans. The Dons were able to once again dominate the game, winning with a score of 15-1, with the help of a good hitting day by senior Richard Rios. With the team's last win against Pioneer on May 4th, the Dons now stand at 11-9 overall, with a record of 8-4 in the Del Rio League. Indeed, the



El Rancho's baseball player is ready to swing, and "play better baseball," according to Coach Meza.

Dons have a very good chance to capture the Del Rio League title.

The team has truly been

playing better baseball, and one wonders how they were able to accomplish such a feat. "The

team is really starting to come together," says captain, Richard Rios. "Everybody understands

their role and everybody is focused on getting their job done."

Reflecting on the team's turn around, Coach Meza says that the team has "turned a new corner." The statement is very easy to believe, as in only a few games, the Dons have risen from seeming obscurity, to an elusive winning record. "We're playing much better baseball," says Meza. "We know how to win."

Though the team has definitely improved as a whole, this is not without stellar individual performances as well. Strong pitching from sophomore Julian Vizcarra has been absolutely instrumental to the team's success, says Meza.

Senior Leo De la Rosa has stepped up on the offensive side, with a Double, RBI, and Home Run on April 21st's game against Pioneer Valley.

Though the team has come roaring back, Coach Meza is confident that the team can continue to play better baseball. If this is true, then there is much more good to come from Dons Baseball in the future.