



El Rodeo



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Gear Up Hosts Career Coffee House



By DAVID OCHOA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Gear Up, in association with the PREP Program and the Hispanic Scholarship Fund, held another career night in the cafeteria this month.

Monica Chavez, the Gear Up site coordinator, was in charge of setting up the career night with the theme this year being, "Career Coffee House."

The Career Coffee House intends to introduce students to different types of careers by allowing them to interact with professionals in different career fields.

"My goal is to make students aware of the different career opportunities that exist, and also some of the individuals that are here tonight actually graduated from El Rancho," said Chavez.

The Career Coffee House featured men and women involved in different professions.

"We have people who work in law enforcement, an individual who works for the FBI, the Executive Vice President/General Manager for FOX Deportes, a news reporter, the Super Intendant, and the Assistant Super Intendant for El Rancho Unified School District," said Chavez.

Chavez was optimistic of the turnout. "I am very excited...last year there were about 100 students. I'm hoping as many show up tonight."

After filling up on the complimentary food and drinks, students engaged the individuals who were seated throughout the cafeteria and asked them questions.

Senior David Maturino was curious as to "What makes them seem different, how did they get to that profession, and what kind of struggles did they face?"

Students were able to talk with El Rancho alumnus Michael Almanza. Almanza graduated from the Ranch in 2003 and attended the University of Southern California. He has been working for the Grammys for the past three years. Along with meeting Paul McCartney [from The Beatles] he has also "met Ringo [also from The Beatles]... Arcade Fire...and I met Jay-Z and Beyonce my first year there."

The night started off slow. "We had a small turnout at first," said Chavez, but with time the crowd began to swarm into the cafeteria.

Michael Cervantes, the PREP Program Area Supervisor for Pico Rivera and El Monte, deemed the evening a success.

"Based on my observation this has been a success. I look and can tell it has been successful because I see students talking to and engaging with adults and adults engaging with students," said Cervantes.

Mother/Daughter Tea Continues Proud Tradition



Seniors Gabby De la Rosa, Emily Payton, Arlene Rodriguz, Evelyn Ramos enjoy their evening along with their mothers.

By MICHELLE CHAVEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

ASB held their annual Mother Daughter Tea in the El Rancho cafeteria on March 7. Mothers and daughters gathered for an evening of class and bonding time. This year's theme was the Victorian era.

"Mother Daughter has been a tradition since the 70s at El Rancho, and it's a tradition that I would like to keep on going," said Joseph Rene Pineda, 12th grader and ASB member of El Rancho. "The purpose of Mother Daughter is for students to appreciate their moms, and being invited to this event is like an honor for the mothers. They like to feel special."

Now in high school it is

sometimes difficult for teen girls to spend quality time with their mothers because of parties, hanging out with friends, and just being out all the time. This is one of the few days that mothers and daughters get to bond and just hang out.

"This has been an ongoing tradition that is highly participated in by El Rancho students," said Lill Gonzales, secretary of activities office. "And this year we wanted to make it more sophisticated, as opposed to last year's circus theme Greatest Mom on Earth." Most of the mothers and daughters came dressed formally, but there were an outstanding few that actually dressed the Victorian role.

"We both came to enjoy the last few months I have here

before I go to college," said Stacy Yakimowich, 12th grader and ASB member at El Rancho. Her mother agreed, "I always enjoy spending time with my daughter. We are like best friends."

The evening began with the first 15 pairs to arrive being awarded free silhouettes, and from there it kicked off with a delicious dinner provided for everyone by Geezers restaurant. ASB gentlemen in tuxes, which made the whole event even classier, served the food. After dinner it was a raffle of gift cards.

The entertainment for the night was the drama group that did improv for the audience. With all the laughs and cheers from the audience, you could tell there were a lot of good times being shared

by the mothers and daughters. Drama did a great job at connecting mother and daughter relationships with their hilarious improv that portrayed how daughters and mothers argue, share conversations and act on a daily basis.

After the improv there were more raffles and a game about how well they know each other. Although most pairs did horribly, they got a lot of laughs out of it, which was the whole point of the game. The grand finale of the night was a runway for the mothers and daughters, which was performed by the ASB gentlemen. The guys struck poses and walked in their tuxes along a red carpet; they easily wooed the ladies. It was a big treat for them and a great way to finish the event.

Oase's hard work and dedication make learning fun

By DES DEGADILLO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho's Academic Decathlon team has enjoyed much success over the past three seasons, reaching state competition for three consecutive years. But behind every good team there stands an equally good motivator; Kristen Oase is that motivator.

"If one were to conjure up the ideal teacher, Ms. Oase would definitely come to mind," said senior Rudy Chinchilla, who was lucky enough to have Oase as a teacher for AP European History during his sophomore year.

Oase, who has coached the Decathlon team for three years now, has pushed the team to new heights.

"I was asked by Mrs. Lam to help out when she had her first baby, and that's how my involvement occurred," Oase said. "It wasn't something I was seeking; it was happenstance, and I'm grateful that it happened."

Students around campus appreciate Oase's exciting teaching style, which consists of thorough instruction and review games designed specifically to help students retain information.

"She incorporated them into the lessons," Chinchilla said. "The repetition of all these games helped out a lot... Every time I needed to remember something, I would just think back to the class-



Oase all smiles after finishing strong in Sacramento.

room when we were playing the games, and whatever I needed would come back to my head."

Oase's popular games date back to her childhood. "In my family we would always play some type of game," Oase explained. "Whether it was driving to school or while my mom was making dinner, she would always play little games for us to learn our spelling words."

Oase's review games not only emphasize repetition, but they also give students the opportunity to "get out of [your] seats. I think [students] need to learn how to study, and I think it should be fun. I think learning is fun, and sometimes we forget that just by sitting there."

Oase's fellow teach-

ers and Decathlon coaches hold her in the highest regard.

"She puts in countless hours on these fantastic Prezis and any sort of technology presentation she's going to give," said honors English teacher Charissa Zeko, who has worked closely with Oase for seven years now. "She really works hard to make sure that [the presentations] are stimulating for her kids and that they're involved." "For Academic Decathlon she comes in on the weekends; she's here after school with them; and she's here at some god-awful hour in the morning. The amount of time she puts in shows what an amount of dedication she has," Zeko continued.

AP Biology teacher Claire Katsumura echoes that senti-

ment. "I know that her expectations are very high, and students try and live up to them," she said. "Where you set the bar is where the kids rise to, and that's what you need in a teacher."

"She always seems to go above and beyond for her kids, and I think for the most part her kids recognize that," said honors teacher Jazmin Chavez-Diaz. "With Decathlon she's here with them all of the time. She never asks them to put in more time than she does."

For Oase teaching and coaching Decathlon is more than jobs. "This is basically free college for me," she said. "I get to learn more and more things, and the subject always changes so it's always fresh and new. I'm a major nerd, and I enjoy learning new things."

Aside from learning new things, Oase has a legitimate passion for watching her students develop as scholars. Oase's main goal for the decathletes is "to support them effectively, to help them grow--academically, emotionally, and socially."

As a teacher, Oase's hard work does not go unnoticed. Students and teachers alike need look no further than the countless students who have benefited from Oase's phenomenal instruction. El Rancho is lucky to have a teacher as dedicated and as hard working as Oase.

OPINION

To beef or not to beef: more vegetarian!

BY LIZETTE RAMIREZ
& SAMANTHA RUIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITERS

There should be enough vegetarian friendly foods that students can choose from during lunch in the cafeteria. The meals that are always served at the Dining Hall are meaty dishes.

The meal that is hardly ever served is the meatless spaghetti with the buttery bread.

According to the El Rancho Food Policy, every person who does not want the meat served is allowed an alternative. Also, according to Jane Lopez, the manager of El Rancho's cafeteria, every person is "always, always, always given an alternative."

The alternatives are peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, cheese sandwiches, and bean and cheese burritos, which are provided in the Fast Lane adjacent to the Don's Dining Hall.

Therefore, in order to receive



the alternatives, students must get out of the Dining Hall line and wait in the Fast Lane line or hope for the lunch ladies in the Dining Hall to have alternatives already made, which is very unlikely.

Billy Savedra, the director of school cafeterias in Pico Rivera, said she tried to incorporate vegetarian foods at some of the schools, but kids weren't eating the meals.

She also stated that she tried to add vegetarian friendly

sides, such as veggie egg rolls, but found that the "sides cost seventy cents for each roll."

Although it would be nice to see these new food options, it must be stated that we are not asking for the school to pay more for these veggie meals.

To ensure that there are enough veggie-friendly meals, we are asking for the lunch ladies to let us have the decision to refuse meaty meals.

For example, when spaghetti is served, the lunch ladies should have the meat on the side and not mixed in with the noodles and sauce.

If this cannot be implemented, a cheese sandwich, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and a bean burrito will become redundant.

A couple of months have passed by since we asked the managers about the alternatives and we have noticed that there are vegetarian-friendly meals, but there isn't a balance between veggie meals and non-veggie meals; there is either one or the other.

We have also noticed that since Lent had begun, the veggie-friendly meals were being served more than often and always on Fridays.

It's not fair to vegetarians and others who want veggie-foods to wait until Lent begins to receive veggie friendly meals. Supporters must speak out for a new change in the cafeteria's system.

The truth about KONY

BY MARK CHACON
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Kony 2012 is a viral Internet sensation that swept through the entire world within 24 hours.

Its main subject is the African rebel leader in charge of the Lord's Resistance Army (L.R.A), Joseph Kony.

The video depicts his war crimes and the "movement" to stop him. But what people don't realize is that this video is a clever rouse to get Americans riled up to invade different African countries to take all their resources.

Now I know that sounds farfetched, but you have to think outside the box. First let's talk about the people behind this movement, Invisible Children.

These "Invisible Children" are a non-profit, Non Governmental Organization (N.G.O), but they are being endorsed by many government officials and countless other celebrities.

They have received millions in donations, but it seems like they have only used a very small portion of it to help their cause. Not to mention that the founder, Jason Russell, was arrested for public nudity & masturbating in public.

To me they're just using the American people to make a profit, and are using the wristbands they are selling as a use of identification for every person that buys one.

Since the wristbands have an I.D number on them & require you to submit that I.D along with your personal information on the Kony 2012 website, this brings along an easy way for the government to monitor the individual's every move.

The real reason for the government wanting to get involved in Africa's problem is for its resources.

Africa is full of natural resources on which the U.S. can thrive. That is the ONLY reason

for the U.S to even consider something that its people are calling for.

But the problem with invading Africa is that China has already set up shop there, with many factories and warehouses to mine and gather all these resources.

So that means if we invade these parts of Africa that China has control of, we would essentially go to war with China to take over what they have.

This movement is false advertising and the media is being used to turn your mind around on the situation, making it seem like invading a country is a good thing. Which is never the case.

There are many aspects of this topic that need to be discussed within a much wider audience all over the United States.

Although many people may do not agree with what I am saying, we need to do something about this right away, or it may lead to many bad things for the American people in the future.



The bird is the word!

LIZETTE RAMIREZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The seagulls are the pests of El Rancho. The underlying issue is: why are seagulls flying all the way to the El Rancho Campus? The answer is clear; the main reason why the birds come is to eat all the food the students leave trashed out on campus.

As the "scavengers" infest the quad during lunch, students run, duck, and scream fearing that the birds will attack. Listening to the students' reactions as the seagulls hover above the quad, the answer is clear: nobody likes the seagull invasion.

The biggest fear the students have is that a seagull will plop poop on the top of their heads. Since there is a "lucky" person that is victimized by the bird droppings nearly every day, everyone tries to find shelter before being the next bird-dropping-victim.

The birds are El Rancho's infamous threat. Mr. Meza shared his opinion about the seagulls when he described them as "a nuisance, a health hazard, and at times they splatter on people!"

As much as the students despise the seagulls, the students do not do anything to prevent the bird disturbances. During lunch, students do not throw away trash; they treat the grass as

a giant trash can. In other words, the campus has so much left over food (which should be thrown into the trash) that the birds come with empty stomachs to feast on.

Vilma Villalobos, senior, agreed that "El Rancho is so, so dirty! The school gives free food to the birds!" The seagulls are clearly not to blame for their intrusion. The students are to blame. Leaving all the trash on the ground is like an open invitation for them to enter and indulge.

After observing the seagulls for about three years, the birds have adapted more to the El Rancho schedule as each year progressed. As the time gets closer to lunch, more and more birds begin to gather around the perimeter of the quad. Finally as the bell rings and students rush to the lunch lines, the birds take off knowing that the buffet is about to begin. The lunch bell not only serves for the students, but also for the birds.

In order for the seagulls to leave the campus, the students must all take responsibility and throw away trash. The more students throw away trash means the seagulls will finally surrender their invasion. If the students continue being trashy, the birds will always be here to poop on them. The seagulls need to be sent back to the ocean!

El Rodeo



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CAMPUS

Keeping the campus clean: searching for solutions

BY DES DELGADILLO AND
JORDAN MAGANA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITERS

A commentary by Jordan Magana in last month's El Rodeo criticizing the lack of available bathrooms on campus resulted in an outpouring of feedback not just from El Rancho students, but from the custodial staff as well. The custodians felt that the article overlooked all of the time and effort put into this campus' upkeep. In the interest of fairness we've decided to allow the staff an opportunity to express its own side of the issue.

"I think since I've gotten here, I've been making the improvement, but it's not something that comes overnight," said head custodian, Jerry Gaona, who spoke to us while cleaning up the quad (the current condition of which would leave one to believe that the area had recently been hit head-on by a lunch-time tornado). "I try to hit the bathrooms about four times a day, and my schedule only says three. I added another round. If I have to I'll even do five for those that really need it."

Gaona and the rest of the custodial staff's hard work around campus does not go unnoticed. Principal Sam Genis was the first to admit "there's been a big improvement in bathrooms now that we have Jerry."

Students have taken notice as well, with some going out of their way to thank Gaona and other members of the custodial staff for all of their hard work. Senior, Valerie Conde, has watched the custodians work and can attest to the efforts they put forward. "The janitor [Gaona] actually gets on his knees and makes the bathrooms sparkle," Conde said.

Yet with all the work being done to maintain the campus, the first thing junior Osiris Arteaga sees upon walking into a girls' restroom is "paper towels all over the floor"; Rubi Macias and Susan Aparicio, both sophomores, still find "water all over the floor"; and graffiti is appearing faster than the



Principal Sam Genis discusses the complexities of campus cleanliness with El Rodeo reporters

custodians can paint over it all.

Perhaps it's time to turn the lens inward and focus on a group that realistically speaking wields more influence than anyone else on campus: the students themselves.

"I think sometimes they walk in with friends and they're trying to impress them, so they decide to vandalize something. The easiest thing to vandalize are the bathrooms," said senior, Rudy Chinchilla. "I think a lot of students litter just to be a nuisance to the janitors. I walked into the restroom today, and there was a perfectly clean toilet, but someone had grabbed a wad of paper towels and thrown it into the toilet to try to flood the thing."

"I think they've lost respect for the campus," Gaona said. "When I came here we didn't do this, but that was back in the 70's."

Can a collective mind-set really change so drastically over a forty-year period, and what are the forces shaping this downward spiral? Are they strictly budgetary, or are they cultural? More likely it's a combination of the two, believes Rachel Canchola, a member of the El Rancho Unified School District's Board of Education.

"The district doesn't have the staff to maintain the

school's property like it used to because we just don't have the money," Canchola said. "As a district we have a responsibility to maintain our campus. Our high school is not well maintained as it pertains to the overall maintenance of the school."

Others, such as Gaona, feel that the causes for this prevalent student mentality extend beyond strictly economic circumstances. Gaona mentioned overhearing students who were unwilling to pick up their trash, claiming that "that's the janitor's job, not mine."

Like Gaona, Canchola graduated from El Rancho in the 70's, but she had a very different theory on why students disregard cleanliness on the campus. She subscribes to the "broken window" theory, which asserts that if students see that the school is "run down" or "dirty," they'll treat the campus accordingly. Unfortunately with the current lack of funds from the state, it's becoming harder to clean and make repairs in a timely manner.

Factor in the school's significantly more promising financial situation in the 1970s, as well as El Rancho's status as a three-year high school, and the cultural argument appears statistically unfair,

though still a distinct possibility.

Canchola brought up some of El Rancho's top programs, like soccer and the Academic Decathlon. "The students who participate in those activities are always respectful, and they are polite," Canchola said. "They're very conscientious of other people. They don't litter in other people's communities, ... They're very well-behaved."

This leaves one to wonder what unspoken rule in the student community deems it permissible to disrespect one's own campus while preserving that of another school. A school's appearance is very much a part of the first impression it leaves on visitors, and a quad littered with half-empty food containers and bottles lends itself to the wrong kind of first impression.

Last month's article sparked a lively dialogue between students and administrators with respect to proposing ways to alleviate the problems. One of the main topics in that discussion was a system of consequences for littering or vandalizing. "Some schools give citations, and that could jeopardize your graduation," Gaona said.

Of course the biggest issue with this theory is actu-

ally catching students in the act, since most littering or graffiti is discovered long after the fact.

One idea that a number of students suggested was to punish offending students by having them clean the campus in order to instill a sense of understanding as it pertains to the mess that they're creating. That same idea could benefit from a positive spin; creating a volunteer group to work with Gaona and provide some much needed manpower around campus. Students' time in this program could potentially count as community service hours. Gaona seemed very open to this idea, but it has yet to be put through any of the appropriate channels, so the logistics are still to be determined.

Of course, the idea of offering an incentive as opposed to a punishment sounds promising on the surface, but Principal Genis seemed averse to essentially rewarding students for doing something that should be done reflexively. "I just don't feel that others should pick up for others," Genis said.

When considering the root of this student behavior, Genis traces back to where it all starts: the home. "They need to look at home and school like they're not any different when it comes to demonstrating respect," he said. "I can assure you that if we go to most of the students' homes, you're not going to find a mess in the front yard. Why? Because the parents are on them, or because they have to pick it up."

Though a solution has not been implemented at this time, Gaona wants to see a greater sense of solidarity develop throughout El Rancho. "It's a whole team effort, from staff to SSO's, and if we don't have that then it's not going to work," he said.

Gaona wants students to play a more vital role in keeping this school clean and beautiful. "If anyone has something that they want to add, they can even stop and talk to me. Feel free! My name is Jerry Gaona, and I'm here to hear any and all suggestions."

Word on the Street

**Do you think students should be punished for vandalizing and littering the campus?
What kinds of punishments would be most helpful?**



"No. Everyone does it so everyone would be getting in trouble, there punishment though should be lunch detention so they cant be outside to liter and they will learn their lesson." -Jackie Reyes 9th



"Yes because students should have pride for their school, the punishment should be cleaning up their vandailization plus the works of other vandalizes." -Angel Quezada 10th



"Yes. Because the students should represent the campus, not destroy it, the punishments should be to clean up the vandalism they did, and have Saturday school." - Matthew Casing 10th



"Yes. I think students should get in trouble for vandalizing and littering because this is like everyone's second home, they should pick up more trash and take off the vandalizing they done." -Christina Lara 11th



"Yes. Why vandalize? that's why there is paper, and why liter there is so many trash cans that they can use. All they have to do is put it in the trash can, the punishment that they should get for vandalizing school property is taking it off and students that litter should pick up there trash and other students." -Joyce Lopez 12th

CAMPUS

Musical abilities shown at Songwriters Club showcase

By DAVID OCHOA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

This past month the Songwriters Club, led by Mr. Parra, held another one of its Songwriters Showcases, in order to raise money to purchase a new drum kit for the Songwriters Club.

These showcases display students' musical abilities and allow the club members an opportunity to play in front of a crowd.

This past show featured performances by the band BS, Chris Rivera, Randy Ramirez, Ernie Padilla, Michael Ochoa featuring Sarah Cruz, Anthony Aguilar & Kaelin Miller, and Robert Mercado, with Mr. Parra even playing a few original numbers.

The history of the Songwriters Club is brief, it began "Three years ago as part of the Gear Up after school program. I just wanted to start a club where students who play guitar can have somewhere they can come to," said Parra.

The Songwriters Club is an open environment where musicians of all styles and genres can come and express themselves. "When I was in high school there was no club like this," said Parra. "I feel it is a comfortable environment and it's good that we have it here because there's not a lot of programs for musicians out there," said junior Chris Rivera.

The Songwriters Club sets up these showcases for the up and com-



sophomore Robert Mercado performing on stage in the Little Theatre for the Songwriters Club Showcase

ing performer who often has yet to perform an actual show. "The students can do their thing and have an opportunity to play for the first time in front of an actual crowd, it's like a first gig," said Parra. Indeed for many of the performers it was their first time playing in front of a crowd.

The show commenced with Mr. Parra playing a few tracks on the guitar, followed by several other guitar acts. Two bands played with Kaelin Miller providing soul-

ful vocals on her song and Anthony Aguilar, closing out the show, with his Bluesy vocals and stellar guitar work playing covers of Jimi Hendrix, Cream, and Stevie Ray Vaughn. Rivera said of his pre-show jitters, "I was nervous at first, but as soon as I got up stage and started playing I went into automatic drive and started doing my own thing."

He later commented on his performance and the other performers, "I didn't feel like I

was amazing, but I'm glad I performed because I'm getting more used to playing in front of people and I feel more confident now."

I think everyone was great, everyone put in a lot of soul into their music." The Songwriters Club remains active and its presence will be seen in the following month, "After this we're going to have a band play in the quad next month" said Parra.

Alliance to Keep Youth Tobacco Free



Pico Rivera Alliance to Keep Youth Tobacco Free (AKT) is an alliance of high school students, organizations, and city officials who are willing to set restrictions on tobacco sales to youths. Advisors Kristine Glaze, Carmela Capinpin and Tracy Moronatty had decided to choose Pico Rivera when given the opportunity to create the coalition.

"We picked Pico Rivera because we were shocked at how there are fifty-nine stores that sell tobacco in such a small city," Glaze said. The advisors attracted students to join the organizations when they visited El Rancho's ASB class, City Hall's Energy Saving event, and other schools in Pico Rivera.

"The meetings are designed around helping [the members] learn more about the bad side effects of tobacco use," Lynette Haro said. The meetings are also set to train members on how to become AKTivists. Recently, the coalition performed stings on stores that sold tobacco to minors.

Minors older than fourteen visited all the tobacco-selling stores in Pico Rivera and tried to provoke the cashiers to sell either cigarillos or cigarettes to them. The minors were accompanied by an adult in the stores, but acted as if they were strangers. Also, minors did not actually buy the products when given the right away; they tended to act as if they did not have enough money to buy the products.

"Based on all the fifty-nine stores in Pico Rivera, we ended up receiving about 14% of stores that sold the tobacco products," Glaze said. This figure is high enough for the group to actually move forward in stopping the tobacco sales to minors.

The coalition is readying to fly to Sacramento soon with four delegates, Samantha Ruiz, Ashley Martinez, Thomas Smith, and Jesus Avila to attend Youth Quest 2012; marching to the Capitol and meeting with other AKTivists are meant to be the highlights of the day. The delegates and the advisors are planning to meet with Pico Rivera's city officials at the State Capitol to speak about the tobacco sales in the city.

Pico Rivera AKT visited El Rancho on Kick-Butts Day during lunch to raise awareness about the effects of tobacco. The group consisted of four El Rancho students from the organization, seniors Lynette Haro, Jessica Moreno, Samantha Ruiz and junior Emily Peyton. SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) members also helped the coalition lure students to trace their hands to sign the "Tobacco-Free pledge."

The group is planning to conduct more trips to different areas that host tobacco-free events. The trips are meant to help the members gain more knowledge about tobacco effects and meet more people committed to this cause. "We're doing whatever we can to help this organization reach its goal to make a change in this community for the better," Capinpin said.

Sadies Pep Rally Flashback



Principal Sam Genis and two students in morph suits helped excite the crowd at last Friday's pep rally for Sadies.

Left to Right: Angelica Alondra Torres, Veronica Scianni, and Jeana Hernandez all participated in the Sadies Pep Rally during lunch to inform students of how they could dress for Sadie Hawkins Dance.

While at the Sadies pep rally, senior Anayeli Lopez surprised senior Juan Jose Aguilar by asking him to Sadies with the help of some friends.

FEATURES

Thirty eight years later and still going strong

BY SAMANTHA GURROLA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

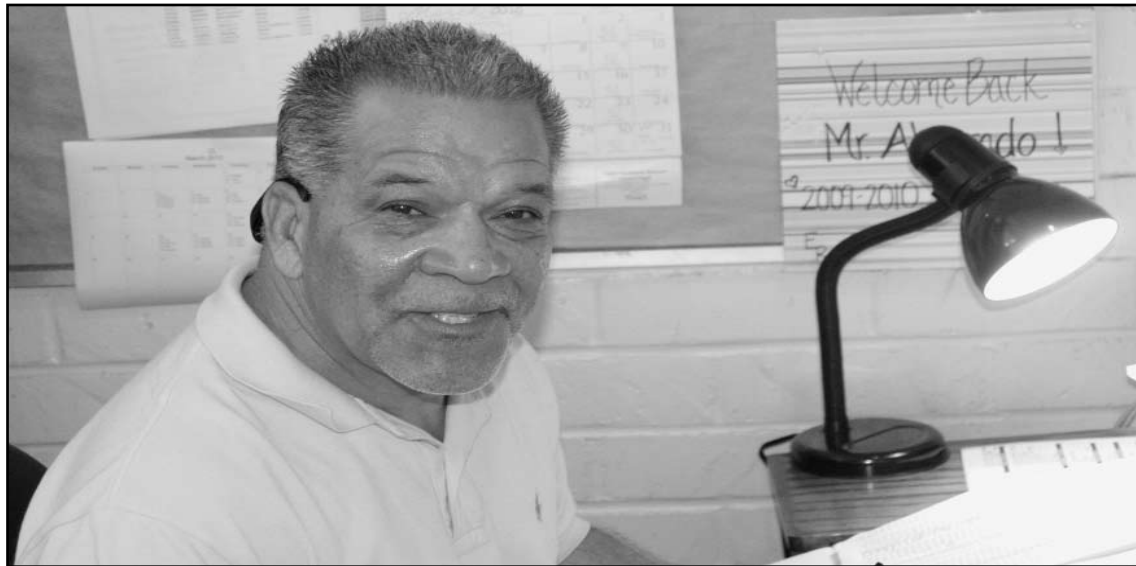
Joe Alvarado, also known as Alvy, has been teaching here at El Rancho for thirty-eight years.

"I graduated from El Rancho at the turn of a century ago, in 1968," said Alvarado. While Alvarado was getting his education here at El Rancho, he played football, basketball, baseball, and participated in wrestling.

He then attended Sonoma State University and Azusa Pacific University. "While I was at Sonoma, I got my BA in athletic trainers skills, and then I went to Azusa Pacific and got two masters, one in physical education and the other in counseling," he said.

During his years at Sonoma, he was announced athlete of the year for wrestling and then put into the hall of fame years later.

"I was inspired by Ernie Johnson to become an athletic trainer my sophomore year in high school, but it was not just him that helped me out in life. My teachers from Rivera and El Rancho really helped guide me through life. It is as if they were my guardian angels." He finally made his way up the ladder to fulfill his dreams



Mr. Alvarado sits and recalls fond memories of his life that led to his career here at El Rancho.

in becoming an athletic trainer.

"I got the job as a special education teacher here with Mr. Turner, and I did that for six years," says Alvarado.

He has had many experiences here, such as coaching varsity tennis and becoming the head coach for wrestling. He is also the athletic trainer. "It is a great experience because I am giving back to the community. Whether it is boys or girls, varsity or freshman, it doesn't matter. As one gets older and maybe a few gray hairs, it's the wisdom that I

share with others. It doesn't mean that your smarter or better, it just means you care," said Alvarado.

To end his list of jobs he has experienced here, he is also a P.E. teacher. "In P.E I used to tell people 'I hate you' because a P.E. teacher doesn't want to be liked by the students because they would think of me as a soft teacher."

Alvarado has been working at El Rancho for thirty-eight years so far. "As I reflect, it does not seem like all those years. It doesn't seem like 38; it feels like more than a year though."

But he does not just devote his time to the school. He also helps a lot at his church. During his free time he goes to Church. "I used to be St. Elizabeth Ann Seton's head usher for seventeen years. I did that not only for the community, but for my wife. I now changed shifts to Eucharist master and have been that for two years."

He also has three children-- Joseph, who graduated from Syracuse, Elizabeth at San Bernardino, and Zachary, who is a senior here at El Rancho and is planning to attend Dominguez Hills.

"I believe that the journey of our life has a lot of twists and turns, ups and downs, and we start out in life thinking that we are on a straight path, but the lord may have a different direction."

Alvarado is extremely devoted to his job and wouldn't trade it for anything. "I keep coming back to this for the love of the job. To have a job in what one loves to do is a blessing, and it is as if I am a robber since I am getting paid for what I love to do." When he talks to the students he hopes that he is helping them out, leading them to the right path just as his teachers did for him.

Alvarado explains how "students sometimes give you gray hair...sometimes, but there is a reward at the end of the rainbow, a pot of gold, a diploma, a smile." When the day comes that Alvarado will retire he is not sure what he will do with his life.

"It is going to be sad leaving El Rancho when that day comes. I would picture myself riding off on a horse like John Wayne, going over a hill and never coming back. I would just want to move on with my life."

Student Profile: Noelle Gonzalez



Junior Noelle Gonzalez stands (holding flowers) with members of the Lions Club of Pico Rivera and El Rancho's own Leos Club.

BY DESTINEE ORTIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

As a student's high school life progresses, he tends to involve himself more with school activities. Students such as junior Noelle Gonzalez do all they can before their time here at the ranch expires.

"To me, high school goes by too quick. Too many people are worried about the future and are dwelling on the past. I'm for today," said Gonzalez.

During her junior year, Gonzalez spends days drinking tea with milk and as well participates in AP and honors classes, swimming, CSF, Social Justice, and Advanced Art. Apart from everything else, Noelle Gonzalez is also part of the Leos club, which is a club dedicated to community service. She is the president and puts a lot of time and effort into the club.

This past month, Gonzalez participated in a speech contest that the Lions International sponsored. Round one was simple for her, and she won a prize of seventy five dollars. Round two took

place against other schools. Once again, she succeeded, beating her other competitors. This time she received a prize of one hundred dollars.

Her final round took place in round three. With her winnings, Gonzalez bought herself a harp.

Although she is no longer able to compete in the later rounds of the competition, she had a great experience participating.

"It was really rewarding. I didn't expect anything out of this, but at the end of it, I gained so much," said Gonzalez.

Being able to experience an event like this and being President of Leos club has had a great affect on Gonzalez.

Along with friends, Gonzalez is planning to establish a Rotary club here at the ranch. Its purpose is the same as the purpose of Leos club: helping the community.

Her goal is to provide as much as she possibly can for her school.

Don't be afraid to push your comfort level. Don't cut yourself short."

Her senior year will be her best, and everyone that knows her knows she will make a difference.

Misunderstood

*My peers say they are misunderstood, unhappy, wannabees
Blah, blah, blah*

*Grow up! Get over yourself! "Real?" NOT!
I'm real, I'm here, I hear you, I see you.*

*I feel everything you do to try to make me less than.
I'm the one with the scars*

*I'm the outcast of your circle of friends
So tight, we both know you'd never let me in*

*I'm the one you joke about
I'm the one you won't sit next to for fear I'd embarrass you.*

*I'm here right now
I'm hurting inside*

*But I've learned to tolerate looks, stares, rude remarks and isolation.
I've mainly learned to tolerate your ignorance.*

I'm the survivor, I'm real, I'm so real you can't even understand because you're so wrapped up in yourself.

*Do you hear me?
Look, look around, I'm here, right now!*

*I'm that Special Ed student that you're not sitting next to.
Misunderstood...get real!*

-Anonymous

SPORTS

Martell looks to finish strong after health scare

By SAMANTHA RUIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The varsity boys' tennis team welcomed back their formerly injured teammate, Federico Martell, after he failed to return to practice for three weeks.

Senior Martell was hospitalized for four days. "It was after we scrimmaged with Santa Fe that I felt chest pains," Martell said. He said the pain felt as if someone were "stabbing" him.

"I found out that I had an air pocket close to my heart, which was scary at first, but I felt bummed after I found out that I couldn't play tennis for three weeks," said Martell. The varsity player cannot lift weights, travel by plane, or hike to high altitudes.

The pressure of the air would exert pressure on the air bubble, which could possibly block the blood leading to Martell's heart, but Martell isn't exactly worried. "I'll find out what exactly caused this bubble in a month, but until then I'm focused on improving in tennis."

Martell started playing tennis when his friend urged him to try out for the team during his sophomore year. Martell played well in JV, where he became number one in doubles. "I was surprised at first because I thought I wasn't good enough." Martell played on the JV team during his junior year, but played singles and ranked number three.

"Now, after this injury, I feel like I should play better. This injury shouldn't stop me," Martell



Federico Martinelli pushes through health issues to finish season.

said with a smile. The player is currently ranked number two in doubles with his partner Erik Olvera.

"Federico is super passionate, and I expect him to do well this season," Lippstreu said. Martell's teammates, such as Anthony Serrano and Frank Benitez, describe Martell as "a great player willing to sacrifice for others," and "definitely hard working."

"We're insanely optimistic to become champions this year," Ms. Lippstreu said. The varsity coach said that the team is the strongest ever and that there is a good chance "they will win

League." The coach is excited for her players to become champions. "The [varsity] team has improved and there is a good chance that we will go to CIF," Martell stated.

Currently, Martell is back on the courts practicing and getting in the rhythm to become number one in doubles. Although the boys were excited for Martell's return, "some players," Martell quietly said, "are competitive towards me now. I think."

Nevertheless, Martell stated that the competition between the players "is good because in the end we will all improve to win League."



Peter Cuellar, Michael Garcia, and Berlin Diaz prepare for next meet.

Track and Field focuses on upcoming season

By ANDREA MUNOZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho's track and field had a good start in pre-season with a record of 2-0-0. However, they were not able to hold that through to their first season meet against La Serna.

Coach Sylvia Elliot says, "we started okay. We have a lot of new kids and were trying to figure out who should be placed in what event, and for the most part well."

Although they have had a good start Elliot says, "we need to improve as a team our work ethic."

Elliot says that they cannot be satisfied and need to continue to strive through the season to accomplish their goals.

"I am nervous yet excited

about this season," says junior Bailee Henry. Henry participates in the distance, 800, mile, two mile, and four by four. "My main event is the two mile, and I want to qualify for Arcadia in the two mile," says Henry.

Henry likes that more people participated in track this year. "Our teammates are always there for you," says Henry. "Track is fun but strict, and it is an outlet for myself and other people."

Like Henry senior Pedro Herrera says, "being in track is fun, and the coaches are helpful on and off the track."

"The team is strong, and there are a lot of returners," says Herrera. Although one of their athletes is hurt, they have come together and are expecting a good season.

Ortiz ready to kick off college life



Senior Joanna Ortiz enjoys her last year at El Rancho.

By ANDREA MUNOZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Senior Joanna Ortiz has been in several programs here at El Rancho including Link Crew, California Scholarship Fund, and the girls' soccer team.

Ortiz has attended El Rancho all four years after coming from Rivera Middle School and has really enjoyed her time here.

Ortiz excels in both academics and athletics. It isn't handed to her, rather she works towards achieving her best every day.

The love that Ortiz has

for soccer has come from the many years that she has dedicated to the sport. "When I was younger I practically lived at the park over the weekends," says Ortiz. She has been playing soccer since she can remember. She began at Smith Park playing AYSO, and is now playing premier level at Beach FC.

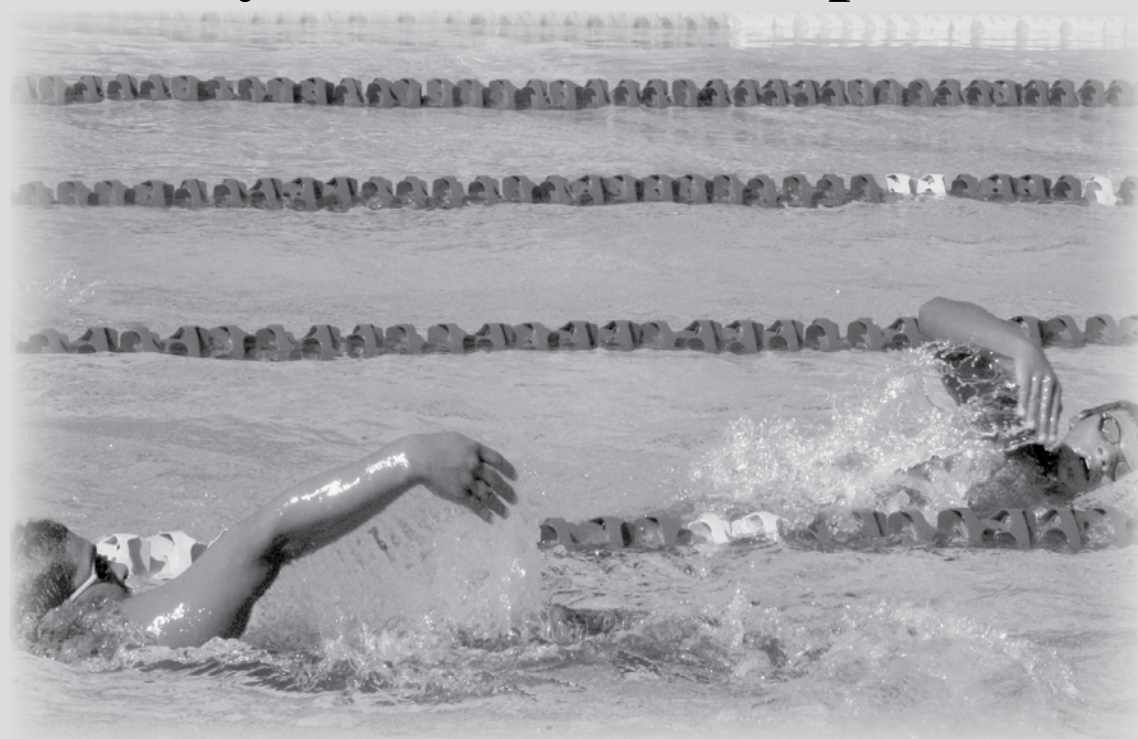
All the hard work that Ortiz has put into soccer is evident to her teammates. "Joanna never gave up throughout our season. She went all out every game, and as captain, she always tried to keep us together as a family and never gave up on us," said sophomore Angelica Gamez.

Ortiz has visited many campuses including Loyola Marymount University, Biola University, and Chico State University. She plans on attending the college where she sees that she will have a good education along with a lot of playing time on the soccer team.

Ortiz does not plan to go far from home because she wants to be able to come back and see her family as well as help out with El Rancho's girls soccer team, especially because her younger sister Julia Ortiz will be playing for the team her next three years.

"We all wish her the best of luck in her future college years and would love to have her back to hear all about her new experiences as a college student and athlete," says Gamez.

Varsity swim remains optimistic



By SAMANTHA GURROLA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Even though our boys swimming team has lost three of their pre-season games to strong competitors, they see it as a chance to challenge themselves and become a better team.

"La Serna is probably the fastest team in our league, so sadly we are racing for second place," said head coach Samuel Wright.

The new team this year

consists of many fresh swimmers. "There are eight sophomores, all of which were on the frosh/soph., but are now on varsity," said Wright. There are a variety of events in which our swim team tries to place first in. Luis Torres is the swim team's sprinter; Ricardo Chavez is the long distance; and Thomas Duenez does the hundred yards backstroke and hundred yards breaststroke.

Wright is pleased to have such devoted and hard working

players this year. "It is nice to have players that are committed. They are always willing to help teach the sophomores new things because there are not yet used to the pace in swimming," said Wright.

Hoping for the best for the team, Luis Torres said, "We have a strong team, but I really hope that we can make it to finals and go to CIF this season."

"I believe we will succeed in this because mentally we are wise, and are very focused," said Torres.

ENTERTAINMENT



All American Rejects take it to an intimate level in their new album 'Kids In The Street'

GABBY GARCIA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

American Rock band All American Rejects arose in the little town of Stillwater, Oklahoma in 1999. Lead vocalist and bass guitarist Tyson Ritter, lead guitarist Nick Wheeler, drummer Chris Gaylor, and rhythm guitarist Mike Kennerly make up the band. Although they reached mainstream success in 2003 with their songs "Swing Swing" and "The Last Song", their first single "Gives you Hell" became their first song to be successful internationally.

Now the Rejects are back with their new album, Kids In The Street, released March 27. The story behind this new album goes back to the story of Tyson Ritter. Even though his band had a self-titled debut album in 2003 and a double-platinum album, Move Along, Ritter felt lost.

"I basically crawled into a bottle of Jameson's and didn't come out," he said. "The worst part was me lying on the floor talking to myself and knowing it was morning and not caring."

On Kids In The Street, Ritter portrays his past two years expe-

riencing regret, nostalgia, and excess. He confesses that although people may not like who he was or what he has done, it is important for him to be truthful and reveal what he has been through.

This album starts off with the extraordinary song "Someday's Gone," which Ritter says is about someone who has tried to destroy him, and is followed by his other new song "Beekeeper's Daughter," which is about a guy who thinks he can get away with bad behavior and get the girl he wants.

"As we were making Kids in The Street, I went from that to being a complete humbled guy who's looking at his reflection saying "wow! What have I done?" says Ritter. This new album demonstrates how the band has grown musically to form its own sound, adopting new instruments like horns and synthesizers. "That's what we've been doing for the last ten years-growing up," concludes Ritter.

With Kids in the Street, the All American Rejects definitely bring out their unique, true side by bringing lively and relatable music to their fans and anyone else who is open to hearing a new sound.

American Idiot Far From Idiotic



BY DESTINEE ORTIZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Fresh off Broadway, Green Day's American Idiot proves to be something distinctly different from other musicals.

Adapted from the lyrics of Billie Joe Armstrong, the musical tells the story of three teen friends who must choose between following their life long dreams or staying within the walls of suburbia.

There is a great intensity and high energy throughout the play. The cast is phenomenal and puts its entire soul into performing.

Featured music comes from Green Day's Grammy winning albums, American Idiot and 21st Century Breakdown. From these albums, characters such as St. Jimmy, Jesus of Suburbia, Whatsername, and Extraordinary Girl turn into characters for the musical.

Apart from the bands number one hits, unheard song such as "When it's time" and "Favorite Son" are brought into the spotlight for the dynamic play.

Although the music is not performed by Green Day, the

musical's cast does an amazing job presenting the songs in their own individual ways. Each character takes a song and makes it his or her own.

Some may think that this is a performance only for "rockers"; that is, however, not the case.

The story's plot alone is something that many can relate to. Aside from teens struggling to follow their dreams, a character named Tunny joins the military and is sent off to war. While serving his country, Tunny sustains injuries that cause him to lose his leg.

Many Americans can relate to the deployment, injury, and death of friends and family due to the Iraq war.

There are also characters that must fight internal conflicts, such as the infamous clash of right from wrong.

With its eclectic cast of relatable characters and progressive storyline, American Idiot the musical provides a tremendous theater-going experience for both Green Day fans and audiences of traditional musicals the world over.



Awake and torn between two realities

BY KARINA CERDAS
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The new hit drama television show *Awake* is "The best new show of the season" the Chicago Tribune says. The show is about Detective Michael Britten (Jason Issacs) who gets in a severe car accident, losing his wife and son. Now he is stuck between two different realities. One in which his wife, Hannah Britten (Laura Allen) is still alive and they are trying to cope with the loss of their son, Rex Britten (Dylan Minnetter). The second reality Michael is living in is one where Rex is still alive and they are trying to deal with their loss of the mother. Now Michael is seeing a therapist to try and figure it all out. He thinks this is all real, but truth is he just can't handle the fact that he lost the two most important people in his life.

Created by the *Lone Star* creator Kyle Killen, the show first aired on March 1, 2012, having more than 6.2 million viewers. Jason Issacs is a perfect match to play Detective Britten. The show will keep you on the edge of your seat, trying to solve the puzzles. If you enjoy drama series with mind twisting events, then this is the show to watch. *Awake* airs on Thursdays at 10:00pm on NBC.

Word on the street

What are your plans for spring break?



"During spring break I am going to go to Knotts, hang-out with my friends and go on an Easter egg hunt, and then go to the movies with my cousins." - **Angelina Carrasco 9th**



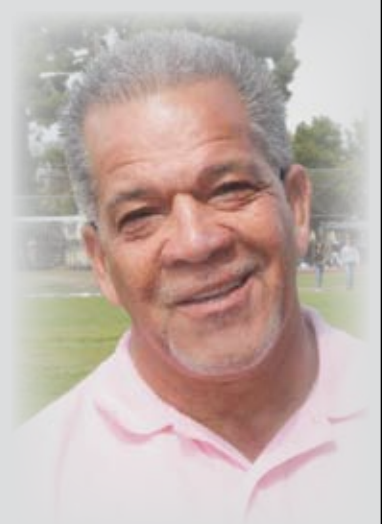
"My spring break is to go to church with my family." - **Luis Tony Medina 10th**



"My spring is spending my time at El Rancho at track practice and going to Long Beach." - **Nicholas Galvan 11th**



"Just having fun, and spending time with my family and with my girlfriend." - **Gabriel Chandler 12th**



"Well, working on my house, cleaning up the garage, work on the yard like men are supposed to, and if I get everything done like a good boy I'm gonna go up to Santa Barbara." - **Joe Alvarado**