



# El Rodeo



El Rancho High School - Volume 60- Issue 4  
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## El Rancho partners with Invisible Children



BY CLIFFORD BILLINGTON  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Teacher Megan Kerr and her students partner with the Invisible Children organization to help the youth in Africa gain a basic education. Kerr said, "I worked with them before, and I liked the idea that it's young people helping other young people." Since she has worked with them before, Kerr knows that this organization allows young people to help other young people overseas by donating their used books. Kerr said, "Yes, they were excited because they like the idea of having a tangible way to help others." By getting her class involved Kerr is showing that it's possible for students in high school to have the power to help young people around the world.

Victoria Blas, sophomore, is one of Kerr's students who is involved with this project since it began. Blas said, "Surprising, yes, but I was ready to help." Because of Blas's enthusiasm, Kerr gave her an important part to play in this project. Blas said, "I tell everybody about it, and I go from class to class talking about it." Blas is just one of many students who are involved in this project who have the task of spreading the word around the school.

John Ordaz, 12th grade, is another student of Kerr's who earned an important role in the project because of enthusiasm. Ordaz said, "I just spread out the word to see if anyone would donate their used books." Through his excitement Ordaz is quickly becoming a big part of this project. Ordaz said, "My response was that it should be a really good experience, by helping others overseas." Through this project Ordaz hopes to gain a unique experience by helping others gain a basic education.

## Juniors shock seniors in Mud Bowl!



The junior class powder puff team overpowered the seniors with an efficient running game and a stifling defense in a 22-14 upset played out on a soggy field. The seniors scored first in the second quarter with a "red zone" run by Sara Gonzalez. Then the juniors roared back with two touchdowns of their own getting on the scoreboard to finish the half, and then striking quickly in the opening minutes of the third. Maribel Gastelum tied it up for the seniors with a long run at the end of the third; however, it wasn't enough for the seniors as the juniors took the lead for good in the fourth quarter on Esteni Munguia's second touchdown run of the evening. In photo, #2 Munguia storms past senior defense.

## Paul Espitia wins back-to-back championships

BY DAVID OCHOA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Senior Paul Espitia has won second World Drum Major Association (WDMA) championship. This is the second consecutive year that Espitia has won the title. This championship makes Espitia the premier drum major to compete in the World Drum Major Association to ever win back-to-back championships.

Espitia was greeted with a warm welcome Monday morning by World Drum Major Association president, Rocky Ehrlich, and secretary, Christina Nguyen. The two World Drum Major Association officials presented Espitia with an extravagant championship ring.

Espitia was caught off guard by the presentation. "The whole ceremony was a surprise," said Espitia. He commented on his championship by saying, "It's nice to say that on that day I was the best." Espitia has been a Drum Major since the winter of 2008 and quickly began rising to more advanced levels winning several competitions along the way. He didn't become a drum major for the glory, but for a different reason. "I wanted to help and improve the band," said Espitia.

He takes his drum majoring everywhere he goes and it also takes him places. On a trip to New York City, he practiced in Central Park! His skills as a drum major have taken him all over the globe including "Nevada, Seattle, London, and Scotland." The United Kingdom, although a great place, was not Espitia's fa-



Paul Espitia receives second World Drum Major Association trophy. Image provided by Briana Jimenez.

vorite location. He enjoyed "Pleasanton, California over London and Scotland because [it was] calm[er] and [more] peaceful."

Although spinning (spinning is when the drum major, or band leader, twirls the mace or staff in front of the entire band) is the biggest part of being a drum major Espitia said "Leadership is the most important skill." He loves being a drum major and helping his fellow band mates. "Whatever you do always have fun," said Espitia.

The two World Drum Major Association members were as equally delighted as Espitia was with them and spoke very highly of him. "He displays a variety of flourish and from the very beginning he picked this up very quickly," Nguyen said of the champion. "Paul's been one of the most talented...and practice makes him more incredible." The two representatives of the World Drum Major Association have seen them all, as the WDMA covers competitions from as far

south as San Diego to up north in San Francisco and "to win back-to-back is just amazing," said Nguyen. Ehrlich added that "[Espitia] is close to being a master."

"He sets a great example for the band with all his work and dedication," band director Reggie Cordero said. Cordero is extremely proud of his drum major. "He makes the city, the school, and the band look good." On behalf of the city and school, "thank you" and congratulations Paul Espitia!



## OPINION

## School scandal starts controversy, ends careers

BY DAVID OCHOA

EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Penn State is beginning to look more like a State Penitentiary. Former Penn State assistant coach Jerry Sandusky has been arrested allegedly for molesting and engaging in sexual activities with multiple children.

This disgusting person has allegedly been forcing children to participate in these illicit acts for over fifteen years, 1994-2009, and also recently another alleged victim has come out and said that Sandusky was doing these sorts of thing back in the 1970s.

This individual is facing possible life in prison. Child molestation and rape are probably the worst crimes a person can commit in our society. There is no excuse to ever touch a child, not even if it is "horse



*Penn State Nittany Lions. Image provided by Google.*

play" as Sandusky stated it was.

I do not believe horseplay involves showering with little boys who are at least five times younger than you. Sandusky did not only violate children, but he violated institutions that we all believed we could trust.

Football is something Americans all love and feel comfortable watching and playing. When par-

ents watch their young boys and girls play football they do not ever think that they are putting their children in jeopardy of being hurt.

Coaches are role models, a second father to some, and people who can be trusted. They are not people who inflict harm on others. Sandusky also took advantage of young boys who were in his "The Second Mile" charity program.

This program assisted at risk youth and their parents. Charity is a noble deed to help people, not take advantage of them, but when charity is hurting and not helping then something is wrong.

The university, high school, college and just school in general are also an institution where we all feel safe. Gates, security guards, and police officers protect schools, but to think that Sandusky took advantage of the school system by performing acts on children at the school, under the noses of all the security, is just sickening.

It has been reported that many high-ranking members at Penn State were aware of their fellow companion's interest in young boys. Though no one at the university felt it necessary to report it to the proper authorities.

Even the former head coach, Joe Paterno, had been informed of an incident. Paterno, who had been coaching for over

forty years and is the all time win leader for college football coaches, reported it his superiors who never reported it to the police.

The university did not want to tarnish its reputation, and as for Sandusky, well the university punished him by denying him access to the shower and locker rooms. That is the most illogical punishment they could have enforced.

If you take away a heroin addict's needles and heroin, well he or she will just find some more heroin and needles.

A person who is committing these atrocious actions needs to be in prison and needs serious help. In Penn State failed to report it and as a result several high-ranking members and coach Paterno were fired.

It is understandable that Paterno did not want to send his friend, of over four decades, to prison, but sometimes the right thing is the hardest thing to.

## Juvenile delinquent courts open to public

BY GABBY GARCIA

EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Juvenile Dependency Courts exist to protect children and teenagers who have been abused or neglected from further emotional harm. By putting these trials to public, this protection is departed and makes public some of the most intimate details of the lives of abused and neglected youths.

This means that any foster child and youth in the Los Angeles area, that has been abused, neglected, or in any harm, will have court open to public, releasing all personal questions that the judge asks them open to any person and media who decides to attend these trials. Michael Nash, L.A.'s presiding juvenile judge is making this possible with the "Blanket Order", unless the affected youth can convince the judge otherwise.

Now, I thought to myself, how many teenagers in Pico Rivera are even in foster care that could be affected by this? Turns

out that approximately 700 teenagers and children are in foster care here in the Pico area.

Teenagers that are there for a number of reasons, either bad parenting, neglect and abuse, or maybe their parents died and have no other family member to take custody of them. Maybe they are runaway teens that are found by child services.

Well, with this "Blanket Order", that Nash is proposing, all courts that have been confidential, about the issues on abuse or neglect that these teens might have, are being open to the public. With this, emotional harm and further trauma could be done to these victims.

A judge can ask just about anything, for example, about home life, family relationships, behavior problems and medications, even sexual experiences.

A personal life is being asked about and case studied. It does not make it any better if the case is public. It simply exposes humiliation and traumatization all over again, and to make mat-



*Image provided by Google.*

ters worst, to public, to media, allowing fellow classmates and friends know about a personal life that might not want to be exposed in an openly manner.

Making these courts public, in Nash's eyes, will improve accountability and transparency in child abuse, neglect and foster care placement cases. In my eyes, further emotional trauma, public humiliation, and exposing to public the most horrifying

details of the lives of teenagers and children that future is to be studied for foster care placement.

This "Blanket Order", fails to follow the Invasion of Privacy Laws. Although the media is protected by the First Amendment of freedom of speech, its allowed only if the material that will be broadcasted or exposed does not violate the privacy policy.

So does this mean that the Blanket Order is technically illegal allowing media to broadcast a personal life? I believe so.

If the judge is not convinced that the case should be kept confidential and is released to public, this definitely sounds illegal to me. Not a good example from a juvenile judge to break the law.

Privacy is an important issue, and personal lives should be treated with delicacy. Deciding whether a life should be exposed or not should not have to be decided by another person, but by oneself.

Your life exposed. A decision you yourself should make, not Michael Nash and the line of judges that you are expected to convince.

## Don't believe all the 2012 hype

BY MARISSA AYALA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The start of a new year is often synonymous with a fresh start. People make New Year's Resolutions, enthusiastically vowing to change something about their life. This New Year's, however, is different. Although some disregard the rumors as false, many are dreading 2012 due to their belief that this year the world will somehow end. The date they are dreading is December 21, 2012.

Two main facts contribute to this 'end of the world' rumor. For one, the Mayan Long Count calendar, whose various astronomical predictions have been eerily accurate, supposedly ends in 2012. However, one must take into consideration that the Mayan

calendar is meant to be cyclical; therefore, 2012 merely signifies the end of one cycle and the start of a new one. Astronomers today know that it is possible to calculate certain astronomical occurrences- for example, the weather is predicted daily. The predictions that the Mayans made were based on mathematical calculations, so they were liable to be accurate. However, there is no way that they could have mathematically calculated the end of the world.

The second contributor is the fact that December 21<sup>st</sup> is the winter solstice. On this solstice, the sun will be aligned with the Milky Way. This, however, does not in any way suggest that the world will end. In fact, the sun crosses the Milky Way two times a year, without

any apparent malign effects on Earth. Therefore, there is no need to fear this rare alignment.

Songs (read: It's the end of the World As We Know It (And I Feel Fine)- REM) and movies (such as the 2009 film 2012) that focus on the end of the world, have fed people's imaginations. Religious denominations that predict the end of the world are also to blame.

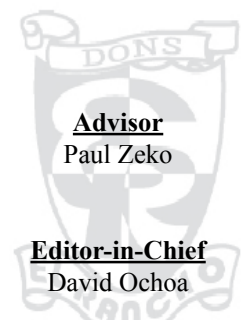
2012 may be a year of great change, but it is unlikely that it will end as a result of either of the aforementioned reasons. Therefore, there is no need to enter the New Year with anxiety. Instead, have fun and feel assured that the 2012 rumors are bound to be just like the myriad other rumors that have falsely predicted the end of the world- such as the

one that claimed the world was to end of May 21, 2011! If I'm correct, we are still living, which means that this prediction, like so many others, was incorrect.



*Cartoon by Dan Piraro.*

## El Rodeo



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## SPORTS

# New coach brings new hope to girl's soccer

BY ANDREA MUNOZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The ER girls' soccer team has begun their 2011-2012 season with new coach Richard Coria.

"I first heard about the coaching opportunity through the CIF website and also from the soccer coach at Firebaugh," said Coria. Hearing about the opportunity, he knew he had a chance in obtaining the coaching position.

Prior to coaching at El Rancho, Coria withheld a lot of experience that qualified him for the job. The most recent qualification is his coaching job at East Los Angeles College. "I began my coaching career right out of high school, at John F. Kennedy High as a junior varsity coach," said Coria.

Coria's other coaching experiences consist of being Co-head coach at South Gate and Lynwood High School and also a private goal keeper coach.



Coach Richard Coria optimistically begins season at the ranch.

Not only did Coria hold prior coaching experiences but he also held experience on the field. He played soccer his last two years of high school and was a varsity goal keeper. After high school in 2000, he enrolled at Cerritos College and played goal keeper there.

Once receiving the coaching opportunity here at El Ran-

cho, he went right to business and met with the team. "I didn't know what to expect, I had heard different things here and there," said Coria. Coria wasn't the only who didn't know what to expect, "We all didn't know what to expect we had googled his name as soon as we knew he would be our new coach but we couldn't

find much about him other than the fact that he was a coach at East Los Angeles College," said sophomore Leslie Chinchilla.

After meeting the girls and seeing all the potential they have, his expectations have changed for the team, "They know my philosophy and I expect hard work from all the girls

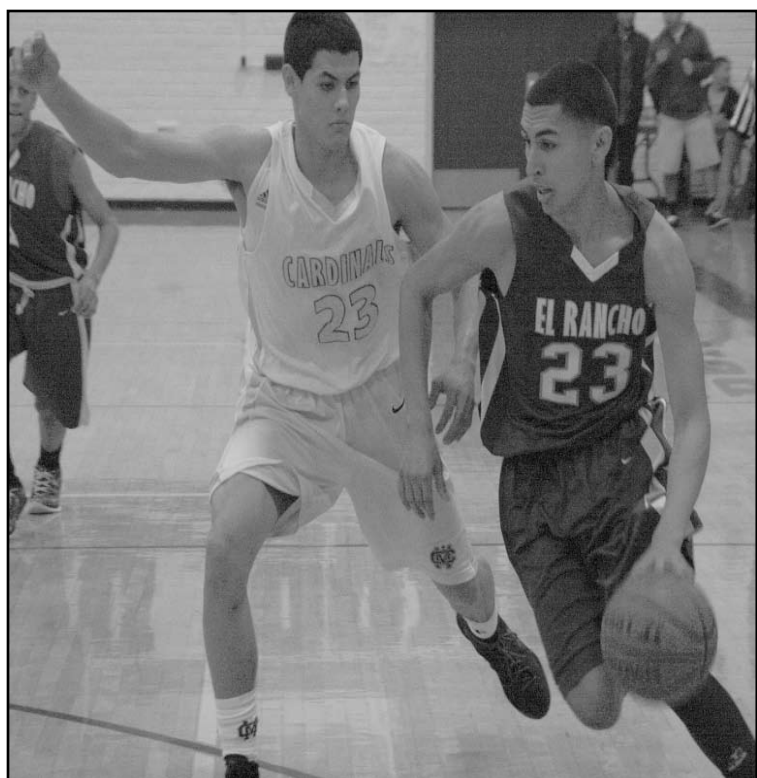
at all times, the same hard work I put into coaching," said Coria.

Coach Richard Coria has motivated the girls with speeches but especially with his phrase "hustle and heart". The girls are all well aware of this phrase "We play with heart and hustle to the end," said senior Joanna Ortiz.

The motivation and goals Coach Coria has for them has helped to inspire the girls. "My goals for the El Rancho girls' soccer team are to make playoffs and to at least win second in league and if available even take league," said Coria. The girls along with Coach Coria hold the same goals for themselves and are pumped for this year's season.

The El Rancho girls' soccer teams both junior varsity and varsity have started off well this season both with three wins and no losses.

Go support the new El Rancho girls' soccer team!



Senior Andrew Diaz fights his way to the basket during tournament.

## El Rancho takes eighth place in blue pride tournament

BY PEDRO HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Last week, with the help of Santa Fe High, El Rancho hosted the Blue Pride Classic. Unfortunately, El Rancho only placed eighth in the tournament, with Warner coming in first.

The tournament has been running for the past 18 years. It has displayed great players over the years such as Derek Williams, who is now with the Minnesota Timberwolves. It is an amazing experience watching great teams and players performing at this event.

Senior Captain, Nick Becerra, said, "We played well but could have done better, but I'm happy with our team effort." This year El Rancho improved their performance by finishing in eighth place out of twenty teams.

El Rancho has a lot of hope this season. The team believes they can make it to playoffs again and win league this season. They

have a very experienced team with a lot of returning players. Their main goal is to win league.

Becerra says that they made improvements by adding seniors Andrew Diaz and Andy Garcia. They are both great help at the center position.

With a lot of hype for the season, their biggest challenge will be staying focused. "We are a very close team. We have great team chemistry," says Becerra. The team needs to make sure they aren't distracted with outside problems than can affect the way they perform during the game. They can count on each other while going through hard times.

League doesn't start until January 11, but the guys are ready to go, waiting to play their first league game. For most of the team, it's going to be their final season. So go show your support this basketball season and cheer the guys on.

## Girls basketball very confident about upcoming Del Rio League play

BY PEDRO HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The girl's basketball team are off to a slow start with a record of 4-3. They are not worried because they expect to do well.

Senior captain Rachel Flores said, "We are ready for the new season. I think we can be one of the top teams of the Del Rio League."

They have a very good and close team. With many starters coming back and only a few new players, the team has good chemistry. Two of the new players are freshman who are very good at what they do.

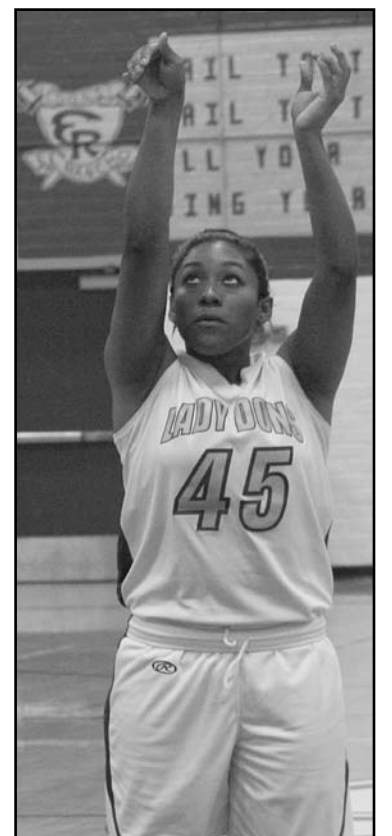
Coach Randy Shigezane believes that everyone has a role on the team and as they find it they will be ready to fill it. They just need a couple of games to get familiar with each other's style.

Shigezane and Flores think that the biggest challenge they will face during this season will be Whittier. Whittier is the favorite to win league this year because they have won for the past couple of years and have a good team again this year.

Shigezane believes that El Rancho could beat Whittier. El Rancho has a team that can compete with Whittier but it all comes down to actually doing it on the court. "We play hard every game so I don't see why we can't win," said Flores.

Even though one of their captains, Cielo Gomez, is out for the season due to injury, the team expects to do well and make it to playoffs.

Pre-season has already started but league doesn't start until January 11. So make sure to go support your team.



Senior Khadijah Ahmad shoots in hope to gain team advantage

## Boys soccer looks to repeat as CIF Champions

BY PEDRO HERRERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER



El Rancho's soccer team are the reigning CIF champions; they are off to a great 4-0 start. They are trying to repeat last season's success.

Head coach Dominic Picon says, "We are a little ahead of schedule. It feels good." "The boys have been playing good." "Our goal is to make farther than last year."

They have an older group of players that can really play and they are quicker as well. Picon believes that their biggest challenge will be staying level head and keep playing hard.

There is a lot of pressure on every game because they are the team to beat and every opponent gives 110% to try and beat them.

That doesn't stop senior captain, Francisco Lara; he has nine goals in four games so far

this season. Lara says, "We have a better team this year." He believes their biggest challenge will be to make it past the first round of state.

Lara can't take all the credit because there is a lot of talent on the team as well as a lot of returnees from the championship team.

Having a team of returnees helps, Lara says, "As we play our team chemistry goes up every game."

The team is very well coached with coach of the year Dominic Picon and assistants Gerardo Correa; the team is very well rounded.

Picon says, "We are very lucky to have a very good group of kids. They are intelligent and they come to play every game. It has very little to do with us."

They take the season game by game but their goal is to win it all again. So, go out to the games and support them. Show your blue pride.



# FEATURES

## The club created by gamers, for gamers

BY JORDAN MAGAÑA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The gamers club has been open to the public for two years and was created for students who have a passion for gaming. They meet before school on Mondays and Fridays and every day at lunch in the grey lab in the upstairs library.

The club was started in when an inspired "student, Julio Rangel, asked me to run the club and PREP funded it" said Tony Hernandez. He runs it because "he has personal interest in it and that the kids who want to come and have another place to go". In it Hernandez lets kids play games ranging from those on the Dell computers and those on the Internet, "strategy games and players must think in order to win," said Robert Hackworth.

They mostly "play strategy games like Starcraft, League of Legends, Crusaders and the wide variety of free on-line games" Hernandez said.

Another fun game usually played is a game called League of Legends in which you "fight with other players around the world and with friends" John Ordaz said. It was started as a "way for us kids to get together and have something to do in order to share a love for gaming and something to get the students out of trouble" said Hackworth.



The kids also learn from the games people may say hurt them, but when "playing the games you must pay attention and strategize what your next move will be. There are multiple ways to win the game, and this carries over to real life. There is multiple ways to go through life and the gaming club teaches us how to see the options in front of us," Hackworth said.

Hernandez believes that "a lot of kids learn how to be competitively social as in learning how to meet and become friends through challenging another, especially if you meet a new rival, while learning how to strategize and coordinate not just by themselves but others". He also thinks that "the games are team building activities

and through this they learn how to work with others," Not only do they play individually but also it's a great way to be in a club where it can be "fun to be with and easily connect with those around you. Its like a family," said Ordaz.

The many kids love the club and is "a nice way for all of its members to be able to be apart of something. We all help each other out, show mutual respect (for the most part), and have fun with what we do," said Hackworth. But also there are added benefits to being in the club since "there is lot more to these kids. They are able stay out of trouble while having fun. This gives them a place to go, and another reason to come to school," Hernandez said.



## Field trips are necessary for student learning

BY ANDREA MUNOZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On November thirtieth Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Lamar, and Mrs. Mata's eleventh grade English classes had a field trip to watch *The Crucible* at the La Mirada Theater for the Performing Arts.

The classes read the play in their classroom as their eleventh grade criteria. "I really enjoyed reading *The Crucible* in class and was really looking forward to watching the play live," said junior Monica Gamez.

The play gave the students a different perspective of *The Crucible*. "It allowed us to see if the pic-

ture we had in our head was right, and if it wasn't it allowed us to open up our minds," said Gamez.

The importance of field trips has been devalued by our budget. It has left insufficient funds to give the students an opportunity to go out and reflect upon what they have learned in the classrooms and connect it to the outside world. "Field trips allow us more opportunities in life by giving us the chance to see more of the world while learning at the same time," said Samantha Gurrola.

Field trips are a chance for students to get out of the everyday routine. "It gives us a change that is necessary once in a while," said Gamez. Field trips are a thing that

all students look forward to. "Field trips should be a reward given to the students for their hard work in the classrooms," said Gurrola.

Field trips not only provide students with an occasion to develop their mentality on a subject but also help them develop their social skills. "I was able to talk to other students who were not in my classroom and got to share my opinions on the play," said Gamez.

Field trips are a necessity that should not be devalued. They provide all students with a chance to show themselves outside of the classroom, as well as learn how to interact with others outside of the classroom. It grants the student a different learning place: the world.

## Important college reminders for the forgetful senior

BY DESTINEE ORTIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

As the first semester for the 2011-2012 school year comes to an end, there are many approaching deadlines of which seniors must be aware.

Cal Grant GPA forms must be turned in as soon as possible to the college and career center. If you have not received a form please see Mr. Ortiz.

By filling out one of these forms, a student may be eligible to receive free money for college.

There are three different types of Cal Grants. Money received from the Cal Grant A Entitlement may be used for tuition and fees.

Students that attend a UC or Cal State school may get \$4,429 to \$10,302 from the A Entitlement grant. In order to receive this grant, a student must be working toward a 2 or 4 year degree.

The next grant, Cal Grant B, provides students from low income families, with a living allowance and as well with tuition and fees.

Most college freshman receive up to \$1,551 for books and living expenses.

The final grant type, Cal Grant C, helps with tuition and training costs at occupational or career technical centers. To qualify for Cal Grant C, an individual must be enrolled in a vo-



ational program that is at least four months long in a California community college, private college, or a technical school.

Please be aware that seniors must also complete the FAFSA form. These two forms must be completed as soon as possible. Waiting until the last minute may jeopardize your chances of receiving free money from the government.

Apart from these two deadlines, seniors must also be aware of a Financial Aid workshop that will be held at El Rancho on January 11.

The workshop will take place both in English and Spanish. Both parents and students should attend the event. This workshop will give both parents and students insight on how and where to go to find aid in paying for college.

## Christmas tree decorating contest



First Place: Junior Class



Second Place: Senior Class



Third Place: Freshman Class



Fourth Place: Sophomore Class

First place went to the junior class with a Cat in the Hat/ How the Grinch Stole Christmas theme, second place went to the senior class with a Mardy Gras theme, third place went to the freshman class with a Charlie Brown Christmas theme, and fourth place went to the sophomore class with a blue christmas theme at Wednesday's Christmas tree decorating contest.



# CAMPUS

## Stranger Danger: a set of thrills comes to El Rancho

BY DES DELGADILLO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

After five rigorous weeks of meticulous preparation, El Rancho's drama department debuted its latest production *Strangers on a Train*.

Based on the popular Patricia Highsmith crime novel, the play tells the story of two complete strangers and their encounter on a train on a crash course with murder. "It's really a tale of tragedy and betrayal," explained senior Daniel Rickley, who recreated a tremendous death scene during the play.

"There's love, death, and all other things that all of the TV shows provide except better because it's live," added senior Elysse Mendoza.

Of course, organizing such an elaborate production comes with its own set of challenges. "It's tough because unlike a lot of the other plays we have four girls and we usually only have two or three," continued Mendoza, who is in charge of makeup for the entire cast. "It's so stressful because there's only one of me."

"We pulled it all together in about five weeks, so it meant that we had practice every day for about two hours," said senior Hazel Flores, whose psychopathic character--Sharlene Bruno--strikes fear into the hearts of even the most rigid of theatergoers.



Nina Marquez, who plays the character Gabriela Haines Morris, explained the difficulty an actor sometimes faces when trying to become an entirely new character. "It was really hard because Gabby is a very fragile person and I'm anything but fragile," Marquez said. "I knew I had to work extensively in showing that fragility. I just tapped into the emotions I had buried deep inside."

But Marquez and everyone else's work finally paid off on Wednesday during the dress rehearsal for *Strangers on a Train*. All parties involved succeeded in bringing their characters to life and in telling an incredible story.

"I was very happy because the actors rose to the occasion, their energy was good, and their performances met my expectations," said director Stanley Wla-

sick. "We got the proper audience reaction because the audience appeared, through their reactions, to be really involved in the storyline."

"I think it went really well," Marquez added. "I remember when we did our first run-through for Wlasick and it was horrible. Today I'm very proud of my classmates, friends, and family."

*Strangers on a Train* will run through Saturday night in the

little theater for only ten dollars per ticket. See Mr. Wlasick in the Little Theater to purchase tickets early, or purchase tickets at the door just before each showing.

As Wlasick so eloquently explained, students "can expect expert performances by my high school actors, and they can expect an evening that will have them on the edge of their seats and give them philosophical thought afterward."

## Miracles really do happen

BY DESMOND DELGADILLO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

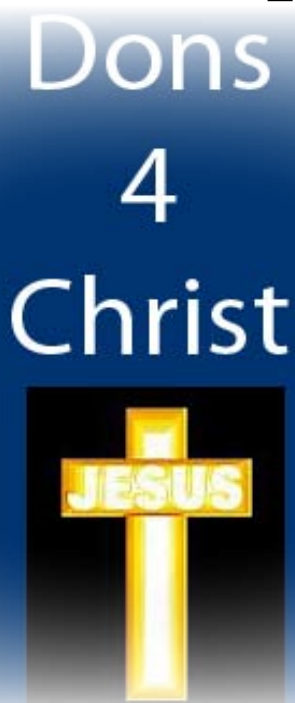
Have you ever questioned yourself about God? People come up with many questions such as: "why does God allow evil," "Why doesn't God answer my prayers," and "How can a person get into Heaven?" A lot of people have questioned God because they think that they can't feel God. Dons for Christ was created for many reasons. One of the reasons people join Dons for Christ is to learn and to share the truth about God. One of the many truths that the members in the club believe is that God's Love is unconditional and that no matter who anyone is, or what they have done, God still has unconditional Love for them. Many members of the club will testify that they have truly felt God's Love.

The Dons for Christ members are not religious, but they do base their beliefs on the Bible. Isaiah 53:5, a verse from the Bible, states, "By His stripes we are healed." The Dons for Christ members have seen physical healings occur during lunch in B104. Destiny Santos, a junior and a member of the club, testifies that she was healed from a cyst. Destiny expresses her healing from God by saying, "I felt amazed and that's when all my doubt went away. It was totally indescribable." Another healing that occurred was with a junior, Brandi

Wood. She had Scoliosis and she was healed on the eight day of December in the year 2011. She explains her story of how before she was healed she would have trouble sleeping because her back pains were so intense. When the club had a guest speaker, Chris Scoz, he prayed for her Scoliosis to be diminished. As he prayed for her, she felt warmth in her back. When she bent down to stretch her back, it did not hurt. Brandi Wood explains how she felt by saying, "I was in shock for about thirty seconds to a minute, then I realized what had happened. I was so happy I started to cry. I never thought something like that could happen, but God makes mira-

cles happen. I felt so relieved."

Dons for Christ is more than just about physical healings; the club focuses on healing people emotionally. Every human being goes through harsh times, but the club wants to let people know that they do not have to be hurt. The members of Dons for Christ believe that every human being can be happy every single day of their life with God's Love. The club members want everyone to know that they can go to Dons for Christ if they have any questions about God or just about life in general. Dons for Christ meets every Tuesday and Thursday during lunch in b104; everyone is welcome.



## The weather outside was frightful



*With a clear view of the Don Memorial Stadium, Monday's weather being wet and cold, with a 37 degree morning. In our little town of Pico Rivera, the students did not agree with what mother nature had to offer.*



*The pre-powderpuff game weather outside was frightful, the thunder roaring as loud as it could, the rain slamming against the ground creating a mist that would leave one with surprise. Along with the roaring, the lightning was as visible as a flicker of light, brief, but big.*



## FEATURES

## Schneidman speaks of science, school, and students

BY DAVID OCHOA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Google “Vic Schneidman” and you shall find a short biography of our very own biology teacher, Vic Schneidman. No really...its true. This New York native has literally been all around the world and has trekked a long and interesting path to wind up as a beloved science teacher here at El Rancho.

Schneidman was born in Manhattan (New York City) and thrived in the greatest city on earth. He attended an inner city high school, George Washington High School, which left an everlasting impact on him. “It was culturally diverse, and gave me a very liberal way of looking at and appreciating people.” Schneidman’s favorite subject in high school was science, “I like the kinesthetic hands on stuff, and I also did well. I had trouble with writing.”

After high school, Schneidman attended New York University. Schneidman wanted to be a doctor. “I wanted to be a dentist. I was in pre-med dental school. Then the war in Vietnam broke out.” Schneidman was sent a letter from the military to go take a physical. Rather than head for Canada, Schneidman opted for another route. “I switched my major to teaching because teachers did not need to enter the military.”



Mr. Schneidman has taken a “the road less traveled” to arrive at the ranch.

Then Schneidman was thrown another curve ball. “They upped teachers [for military service], but not people who were married”. Schneidman soon married and has been happily married ever since.

Schneidman then began teaching. He taught for about a year in New York, and then opportunity came knocking. “I received a scholarship from the National Science Foundation

to study at Long Beach State.” Schneidman changed coasts and moved to Long Beach in the early 1970s, where he has been since. While earning his masters degree at Long Beach State, at night, during the day Schneidman was teaching in the San Gabriel Valley. “I taught at Duarte High School for around twenty years until about the late 1990’s.”

After his tenure at Duarte,

he worked at the Sylvan Learning Institute. His duty there consisted of, “Training new teachers how to manage students.” Although the job paid well Schneidman began to feel sour about it, “The business world is too much about money. I didn’t feel like I was making a difference.” Schneidman’s next stop was at El Rancho High School. Schneidman landed a spot as a biology teacher and also a job be-

ing a mentor new teachers. He described the experience as “great.”

“I like El Rancho a lot. It’s close to home. It’s an awesome school.” Schneidman loves the students almost as much as they love him, “The students are respectful, positive, they have family values, and are accessible.” However, Schneidman adds that the students “Need to raise their expectations.”

Schneidman is the proud father of two children. His daughter is a successful lawyer and his son is a successful barber at an extremely elite Beverly Hills salon. Many of Hollywood’s elite flock to the salon, but much of the student body are unaware that Schneidman is a celebrity himself.

“In the 1980s I was on three different game shows.” Schneidman was featured on *Joker is Wild*, *Sale of the Century*, and *Tic Tac Toe*. He won a large sum of cash (around \$50,000) a Buick car, and a few other items. As for interest he enjoys, “music and traveling”. “Traveling is my passion...as long as I have money in my pocket.” He has been all over the world with one exception, “One place I have not been to is Antarctica.”

If you have had Schneidman before, well you know how great of a teacher he is. If you have never had him, go talk to you counselor I highly recommend his class.

## Pico Rivera gets into the season of giving



El Rancho students participate in Christmas basket giveaway.

DESTINEE ORTIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Residents and visitors of Pico Rivera worked together distributing food to individuals in need of holiday meals.

Every year in the month of December, members of Pico Rivera’s basket committee work diligently passing out food to needy

families during the holiday season.

This group is made up of volunteer senior citizens whose main focus is to raise money for the annual distribution of food and toys to needy families.

Since the 1970’s, this program has served countless needy families.

President of the Christmas Basket Committee, Virginia Aguirre, has worked hard keeping this program strong for the last 17 years.

“It makes me feel so good. This program is very rewarding,” said Aguirre.

Much of the committee’s achievements cannot proceed without the giving residents of this city.

Students of El Rancho, residents of the city and even residents of Montebello and other city’s contribute so much this time of year.

The Pico Rivera Sheriffs station serves as a main contributor to the committee. The Toys that are given away to the children are donated by these sheriffs.

“I am very proud of student and resident participation. I appreciate everyone that helps,” continues Aguirre.

As time progresses, the number of volunteers and people in need of the Christmas baskets increases.

In the 1970’s, the number of families that the program assisted was 400. Now the committee is endlessly serving over 1,100 families.

“I don’t want to hear that a family didn’t have any food and toys during Christmas because no one did anything to help,” explained Aguirre.

The Christmas basket distribution is greatly influenced by the city’s other annual event, Trick or Treat for hunger. During trick or treat for hunger, volunteers go door to door asking Pico residents for canned food donations. Food collected during this event is used for the basket distribution.

Students of El Rancho may wonder where the canned items from the canned food drive end up; they are used for the annual Christmas baskets.

Many of the committee’s events take place during the holiday season. Preparing for the distribution is an all year process. The Pico Rivera basket committee as well provides emergency food assistance throughout the year.

The Committee’s fund raising efforts include a thrift store operation located on Passons blvd. The shop takes clothing donations throughout the year. Money raised is used toward the efforts of the events that help the needy.

If you are an individual that has never participated in these event, it is highly recommended that you do.

Information about these efforts and other volunteer opportunities is available at Pico Rivera’s Parks and Recreation center located on Passons Boulevard.



Choraleers and Choralettes end their concert with a smile.

## ERHS Choir rises to the top

BRANDON MENDOZA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

This year, the Choraleers and their director Ms. Dodd, have been overwhelmed with many changes. Due to recent budget cuts, the once known show choir group, have become better known as a legitimate and more flexible choir.

Focusing on more of a Medieval, Renaissance, and Classical intake on Choral music, the Choraleers have been working incredibly hard by practicing and raising the bar extremely high for new comers interested in being part of the ‘top group.’

Choraleers from el rancho’s choir believes that both the Choraleers, and Choralettes have overcome challenges together as a group. “We work together as a team and we inspire each other to do better,” said senior Amanda Mariscal.

Having received awards

at performances from both Disneyland and New York City, the El Rancho choir has no need to prove to others what they can do.

They vindicate themselves with their voices to wow the crowds. “I believe we get better every day and we are doing great so far, and have nowhere else to go but up,” said sophomore Sara Dickinson.

This year, the choraleers are planning to perform at The Annual Heritage Festival down in San Diego. “We are working extremely hard to get there because we need to perform at our best and just practice on what can be improved,” said senior Felisa Ramos.

As they continue to work hard, and diligently sing, the Choraleers will aim for even better gigs to become widely known as one of the best that there is in the state of California. **Choraleers winter concert tonight at 7:30 des-**



# FEATURES

## Madasa makes hip hop mean more

BY DESMOND DELGADILLO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho students are constantly on the lookout for something new that they can gravitate toward, something fresh and authentic that will redefine the limits of what is and what isn't cool. Students take to various magazines and the internet to seek out this latest sensation, neglecting to consider that the next big phenomenon might be sitting right behind them in their English class.

Senior Andres Mata is such a phenomenon. Dissatisfied with the hip hop he heard on mainstream radio, Mata decided to write, record, and produce his own raps (under the name Madasa) in an attempt to bring some intellect back to the currently obtuse genre. "When you listen to hip hop on the radio," Mata said, "it's very braggadocio, just bragging about yourself. That appeals to many people on different levels because everyone needs to feel good about themselves. I didn't personally like it because it didn't feel real."

Through lyrics like "If Jar-Jar Binks is the Politician who doesn't review what he thinks,



then the congress is either full of taboo Naboo-ians or cynical Palpatines with ulterior motives," Mata has taken it upon himself to inject some much needed realism and creativity into the heart of the genre.

His first mixtape, "Simple Verses," which is available now via a free download at madasa.bandcamp.com, embodies the

hip hop genre in its rawest essence: commentary through poetry, which is in turn set to music. Perhaps most captivating of all is the sophistication with which Mata disperses powerful metaphors, similes, and other key elements of rhetoric throughout his lyrical content. "It's really inspiring because I've read about it in school and now I hear

it being applied to music," Mata said regarding his style of rap.

Like most artists of his generation, Mata capitalized on the availability of social media as a platform for his new music. "Through the internet I've gotten in touch with a few rappers and producers who have influenced me and my music," Mata said. Mata has taken this advice and diligently adapted it to improving his craft.

For readers interested in Mata's music, "Simple Verses" is available in its entirety for free online at madasa.bandcamp.com. "It's an eight-track mixtape of beats I've heard before from other producers," Mata said. But Mata has taken these beats and used them as a canvas on which he expresses a profound lyrical prowess.

At the moment, Mata's objective is to garner attention and expand on his fanbase before taking any further steps. But with the right amount of attention comes success, and Mata is bound to be a truly successful force in what he does. Perhaps in just a few short years, El Rancho students can proudly watch Mata take the underground hip hop scene by storm.

### Word on the Street: What is your fondest Holiday Memory?



"My fondest holiday memory is when my mom made tamales and my dad and I had a masa fight." **Senior Marisol Betancourt**



"I love Christmas. I love spending time with my family." **Freshman, Miranda Loza**



"My fondest memory was a series of years that extended over ten years. My friend Eddie and I entertained an Alzheimer's and retirement home. He played the saxophone and I played piano. We both dressed up as santa." **-Mr. White**



"Last year was the first year I was able to spend with my girlfriend Devan Leos. I also enjoyed playing white elephant with my family." **-Senior, Michael Valentine**

## Recipe for Christmas: Oatmeal Cookies

BY BRIANA RIVERA, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

### OATMEAL COOKIES

- 1/2 cup of butter
- 3/4 cup of brown sugar
- 1/2 cup of granulated sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp of vanilla
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1 1/2 cups of A.P. Flour
- 1 tsp of cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp of salt
- 3 cups of oats
- 1 cup of raisins



### DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 350 F. In large bowl, beat butter and sugars on medium speed of electric mixer until creamy
2. Add eggs and vanilla; beat well
3. Add combined flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; mix well.
4. Add oats and raisins; mix well
5. Drop dough by rounded tablespoonful onto ungreased cookie sheets.
6. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until light golden brown. Cool 1 minute on cookie sheets; remove to wire rack. Cool completely. Store tightly covered.

### A QUICK TIP FROM CHEF LUNA

Hey guys did you know that oats AND oatmeal are both equally good for you and your health? Oats is one of the top 10 brain foods coming in fifth place. Oatmeal is also and it boosts your energy up and is an excellent source of fiber. Oatmeal also contains vitamin B and E as well as potassium and zinc which makes our bodies and brains function on full capacity. Oatmeal even helps remove cholesterol and is also good for weight loss. It even helps diabetics being an ideal breakfast for them. If your tired in the morning, afternoon or night you should eat a bowl of oatmeal in the morning and you'll notice the difference in the next up coming days. You can even add it like a side dish for your meal to add in for your nutrition. Oats lower risk of a cardiovascular disease as well. They even help with your immune system when it takes in action to fight infection inside of you. Another reason is the fiber in the oats helps protect your body from breast cancer, benefit for everyone! There are so much more facts that help you with just this small oat (protective against childhood asthma, celiac disease, etc.) All these facts apply to help you with your health and you should take them seriously if you want a better and healthier life style.

Happy Holidays! Hope to hear if you make an oatmeal cookie for your holiday dinners! - El Rodeo Staff Writer Briana Rivera



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Five must-see movies for winter break

BY: KARINA CERDAS  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

FROM JOHN HUGHES  
**HOME ALONE**  
A FAMILY COMEDY WITHOUT THE FAMILY



### Home Alone (1990)

-It's almost Christmas and Kevin McCallister's (Macaulay Culkin) family is planning a vacation to Paris. As morning arrives, the McCallister's are in a rush to get to the airport, accidentally leaving Kevin behind, having the house all to himself. As much fun as Kevin is having being all by himself, he discovers that there are two burglars planning on robbing his house on Christmas Eve.

### The Grinch (2000)

-Based on the book by the famous Dr. Seuss, A movie about a creature that lives on Mt.Crumpit. As Christmas is coming, the Grinch (Jim Carrey) is getting annoyed with all the festival's that are going on in Whoville, the little town lying under his cave. He plots his way down to try and steal Christmas away from the Who's. But then comes a little girl named Cindy Lou Who and tries to be friend the nasty creature, hoping he will get into the Christmas spirit like the rest of the town. Starring Jim Carrey and Taylor Momsen.



### A Christmas Story (1983)

-A young boy named Ral- phie only wants one thing for Christmas, a Red Rider BB gun. He tries to convince his parents, his teacher, and even Santa Claus himself to let him have it, but for his safety they refuse to let him get it. With an adventurous funny story, he sets his mind on that gift and would do what he can to get it.

### Christmas Vacation (1989)

-The Griswolds family is celebrating Christmas at their house this year. As the in-laws come over, their crazy yet funny humor sets the Griswolds off, which might lead to ruining Christmas for everyone. Now the father, Clark Griswold, must get his family back on track so every- one can have a great Christmas.



### Elf (2003)

A young baby sneaks into Santa's toy sack and is taken to the North Pole to be raised as an Elf. As Buddy (Will Ferrell) gets older, he is sent on a quest to New York City to find his birth father, Walter Hobbs. But as he is there, he discovers that everyone has forgotten the true meaning of Christmas, including his father and his ten-year stepbrother. It is Buddy's job to use his elf ways to save Christmas in New York, and hoping to find his true place in the world.



Drawing by Michelle Chavez.

### Sick of the same old Christmas songs?

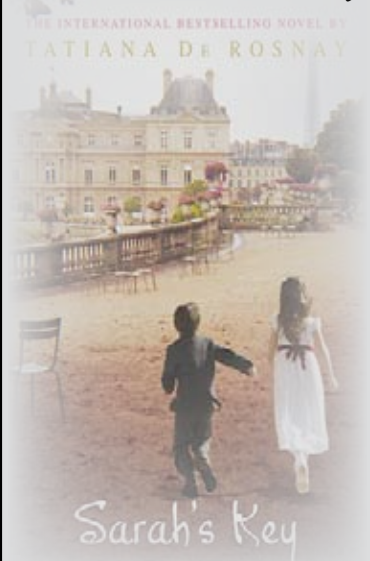


MICHELLE CHAVEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Now that Christmas is just a few weeks away, every- one is starting to prepare for the holiday season; whether it'd be Christmas tree shopping, 'Secret Santa' Exchanges or bringing out the old Christmas CDs, the season is here. We are all familiar with the traditional classic songs

for Christmas, such as 'Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer', 'Feliz Navidad', 'Jingle Bells' 'Frost the Snowman' 'Have Yourself a Very Merry Christmas' and more. But as children and teenagers get older, they begin to lose holiday spirit and interest. Teenagers see Christmas as a day when little children get toys and presents and learn cheesy Christmas songs for a Winter Recital. The same worn- out Christmas songs have been on repeat ever since we can remember; maybe we have all grown tired of the same preschool nursery rhyme songs. Christmas can be cool; it's just a matter of giving it an awesome soundtrack behind the scenes. There are many underrated-catchy Christmas songs that can uplift our spirits and re-spark that Christmas joy in everyone. A single from Saturday Night Live called 'I Wish It Was Christmas Today', is covered by Julian Casablancas. This dance-to song gives off great enthusiasm and anticipation for Christmas. It is all about Christmas joy and is very amusing at the same time! Another good song is 'Christmas Time Is Here Again.' This song is catchy and well composed; also, it's by The Beatles so you know its great and under listened to. The rest of the songs are: 'Father Christmas- by The Kinks,' 'Sleigh Ride- covered by The Ventures,' and 'Bet- ter You Than Me- by The Killers.' If you are tired of the same old kiddy Christmas tunes, and need a change in this years holiday season go ahead and check these out! Its never too late to listen and pop out new tunes while opening a few gifts from Santa!

### Sarah's Key Book Review



'Sarah's Key' a bestselling novel by Tatiana De Rosnay

MARISSA AYALA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On July 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of 1942, French police organized a roundup of Parisian Jews in an attempt to decrease their numbers. The inhumane treatment of these Jews similar to that inflicted by Nazis followed suit, in an event known as the Vel' d'Hiv.

Tatiana de Rosnay explores the horrors that the Jews of France experienced in this roundup in her novel Sarah's Key.

Two storylines, one taking place in 2002 and the other in 1942, are intertwined in this novel.

Julia Jarmond, an American journalist, is the main character of the story line set in modern day Paris (2002), and has been given the assignment to research the Vel' d'Hiv. She embarks on an emotional and enlightening journey to unlock the alarming secrets of one of the families involved.

As indicated by its title, ten- year- old Sarah Starzynski is a central character in this book. Her story begins on the day of the roundup, when she hastily locks her brother in a hidden cupboard in an attempt to save him from the French police. Although she promises to return for him, it is clear this will not be possible, as there is no way for her to safely escape from where she and her parents are being held.

A screen adaptation of Sarah's Key was released in America this past July 22 in select theatres. It was rated PG- 13 and starred Kristin Scott Thomas, Melusine Mayance, and Niels Arestrup.

Sarah's Key is very powerful and moving novel. You don't have to be a history buff to enjoy this story.