



El Rodeo



El Rancho High School - Volume 63- Issue 8
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Clash of the blue and the gray



BY ELIZABETH JACOME
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Students gathered glitter, balloons, foil balls, and streamers to sneak attack the opposing team's classroom. Practical jokes flooded the hallways of El Rancho High School. A night of friendly rivalry and "Blue Pride" are tied into a couple of hours – The Don Games.

Seniors and freshmen were part of the blue team; juniors and sophomores were part of the gray team. Before the night started, Dons had a variety of food options, including Boba Ni Taco, Paradise Cookie, and Rolling Burger Barn.

This year the score was a close call. The blue team scored 675 points and the gray team scored 660 points, ultimately making the blue team the victor. The main objective of the night was to win as many of the eight trivia, relay, and physical games as possible.

The overall score was based on a combination of team skits, "character counts," loudness, and bonus points. The blue team concluded the night by winning six out of the eight games.

Throughout the night, team leaders spun the wheel to determine what game would be played next. Along with the friendly competition, there were two skit performances from both teams. Just like the Night Pep Rally, this was an opportunity to earn more class points.

Senior Mia Castillo, says her favorite part of the Don Games is, "the games because it's great to see everyone cheer on [his/her] teammates." Senior Jasmine Armas adds, "I love how competitive the teams get."

Two years ago ASB members tried to find a way to recreate the popular Night Pep Rally. The "Gender Wars" were introduced during lunch and ended up being unsuccessful. A year later, another attempt was made and the Don Games were born. Armas says, "We were trying to get students to have more school pride by bringing them together outside of the actual school environment."

Senior Areanna Figueroa said, "The night was great. My favorite part was when they announced the blue team won because seniors finally won something." Junior Isiah Araujo adds, "[The Don Games] was a fun night filled with competition and laughs."

Every 15 Minutes makes an impact on students



Senior Diego Cervantes, drunk driver during simulation, being assessed for blood alcohol levels.

BY SAMANTHA MUNOZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

I'm laying down in the emergency room underneath a sheet. I'm supposed to be dead, but I can hear everything that is happening. Listening to my mom shrieking at the sight of my dead body was one of the most heart-wrenching moments of my life. I portrayed a person who had been texting and driving and had been hit by a drunk driver. Every 15 Minutes is a dramatization of a drunk driving and texting and driving collision that teaches students to be safe on the road and to make cautious decisions. Every fifteen minutes, someone is killed in a drunk-driving related car crash. Every fifteen min-

utes, lives are changed forever.

There were a total of 25 students who were a part of this event. Four students were involved in the crash scene, and the remainder of the students represented people who had died in an alcohol-related crash (they were called the "Living Dead"). Senior class president Mia Castillo says, "Being a part of this was a great experience, and it opened my eyes because I actually saw my friends 'die' because of drunk driving or texting."

The two-day event consisted of the car crash on the first day, and ended with a memorial service for the students who passed away on the next day. In between, we the students involved were taken to a retreat center to debrief

the car crash scene and take part in presentations and activities surrounding the theme of drunk driving. Mr. Brandt, also known as the grim reaper, said, "I really enjoyed getting to know El Rancho students outside of the academic environment. Our students are amazing people!" During the retreat, we were given the task of writing our parents goodbye letters as if we're going to really die the next day. These letters were in response to letters our parents had previously written for us. Junior Kevin Renteria, who played one of the accident victims, talks about how he felt writing the letter, "I felt nervous, like if I was taking a test and I felt like my mom was leaving me forever. I wasn't ready to feel all of those

emotions at once." Throughout this whole event, we were not allowed to have our phones to text or contact our friends and family for a whole twenty-four hours. This was to symbolize us actually being dead for an entire day. We were reunited with our families at the memorial service the day after the crash.

Senior Diego Cervantes, who portrayed the drunk driver, says about his experience, "[that] it was just a really big relief seeing my parents. I have this new appreciation for them and everything they do. Honestly, it's one of those moments I won't forget because I felt sad, happy, excited, and nervous all in a matter of minutes." It was such a heartfelt moment, not only to be reunited with my family, but also seeing everyone reunited with theirs. The memorial service included messages from district superintendent Mr. Galindo, a speaker from MADD, and a police officer who discussed the dangers of driving under the influence. It also included a film of the entire dramatization, which had the crowd in suspense and tears. Lastly, the memorial included Cervantes and Jaelene Rodriguez who read their letters and shared personal thoughts, and my mom, who also read her letter to me aloud. Don't drink and drive. Don't text and drive. Don't get in a car with a drunk driver. Every time you make those choices, you are playing a game of Russian roulette with yourself. Are you willing to take that risk?

Dedicated decathletes recognized by county of Los Angeles

BY ODALYS CHAVEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Leaving school before the sun sets is a rarity for members of the Academic Decathlon team. These students, however, do not mind the extended hours of extra learning in order to make their school stand out in the Los Angeles area, and stood out they have.

On April 14th, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors awarded El Rancho with an award for demonstrating a pattern of excellence for the last couple of years by competing in state competitions since 2012. For five years, they have been able to overcome obstacles such as living in a low socioeconomic area, having a majority of students receive free or reduced lunch at school, and being a part of a community with a large minority group. The honor of the award was bestowed upon them because despite all these obstacles, they continue to succeed.

"We have fun. We enjoy ourselves," says senior co-captain Emily James. "The team has a real connection that a lot of teams lack." They partake in more group sessions while other schools indulge in individual studies. "We study as family," adds James.



"I was in a small theater when I was first notified about the recognition. The show had stopped, and I casually checked the time on my phone. As I checked, I noticed an email by the Academic Decathlon coach, Mrs. Palomares, titled "Great News!" says senior Daniel Bautista. "As I read the email, I was filled with an overwhelming urge to yell 'We did it!' However, I did so in my mind because it's rude to yell in a theater," says Bautista.

Senior Alexandria Parra agrees that it was a great gift from the city of Los Angeles to honor the academic decathlon program. "It was great to experience the

city of Los Angeles recognize all the hard work and dedication current and past decathletes have put into the program that established El Rancho as a top competitor at the academic decathlon competition every year."

One thing that stood out to the decathletes was how prepared they were. "We were the best dressed. It was cool. The girls all had their skirts on, and everybody was wearing his or her sweater. Everything was ironed and in place. Seeing everybody in the same blue looked really professional and stellar," says James.

"I could not wait to hear 'El Rancho Academic Decath-

lon' and proudly stand up," says junior Chris Ramos. When the time came for the Dons to receive the award, he "immediately felt grateful for the opportunity [the] program had opened up for [him]." Ramos can proudly say that "while receiving recognition, [he] and [his] teammates stood together as one."

The hours of studying, laughing, and stressing paid off. Co-captain James wishes to continue this success by "constantly insisting that the best decathletes are not only great students, but people with integrity, and [she] thinks the future captains are going to handle that well."

CITY VIEW

Pico Rivera Walmart closes under suspicious circumstances

BY EMILY JAMES AND
RANDY LAZARO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITERS

A total of five Wal-Mart locations were shut down in states across the nation including Texas, Oklahoma, Florida and California on April 13. Each location was only given a five-hour closing notice. Although Wal-Mart claims that the reason for the shutdowns are due to plumbing issues, many have accused Wal-Mart of union busting.

The Mayor Pro Tem of Pico, David Armenta, stated that Wal-Mart needed to have permits from the city in order to accomplish any form of plumbing construction. However, the city did not receive any permit request from Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart's closure is one that has a large impact on Pico Rivera because this superstore is well placed and has immense income sales tax revenue that helps the city's economic growth. Wal-Mart alone brings in \$100,000 that goes towards funding city programs.

There is strong speculation that Wal-Mart is practicing union busting, or the shutting down of a business to disperse an upcoming union, since the Pico Rivera Wal-Mart was one of the first locations to exhibit employee gathering into a protest for better wages, benefits, and job security.

Since Wal-Mart is widely known for their low prices, con-



senting to labor unions would increase wage standards, resulting in an increase of prices for products. This potential increase in product price would lead to more customers being reluctant to shop at Wal-Mart, ultimately reducing business.

An estimated 500-800 jobs were at stake, but not all jobs were lost. It is highly probable that the employees who were active in unionizing were laid-off, while only 50 were transferred. These 50 workers remained for a few weeks in order to help clean up and package the remaining items. Those individuals that were laid-off were offered a severance package and a consistent pay for 60 days.

Both the manager and the

employees of the Pico Rivera branch are apprehensive to providing their opinions regarding the shutdown. Many employees refused interviews by stating, "I cannot answer these questions, but my manager can." The manager's response was hardly different, with her stating, "I cannot answer any questions," she then proceeded to walk into the establishment and lock the door.

As far as locals are concerned, many are extremely upset. Daughter of transferred Wal-Mart employees, Odalys Chavez claims, "While I am grateful that Wal-Mart made accommodations for my parents, I still disagree with their methods. I resent the manner in which the employees, who were fired, received a short five-

hour notice. I know these laid-off employees didn't lose a home or any type of property, but they lost something far worse: their source of economic stability."

Local shopper, Jay James, states, "The shutdown was definitely a retaliation against the employees protesting wages and trying to start a union. The plumbing statement was nonsense. Their shutdown had nothing to do with that."

The economic consequences which the city of Pico Rivera, along with other cities in the United States, face is a dramatic decrease in sales tax revenue. Although the Pico Rivera branch will reopen in 6 months, the city will most likely encounter harsh financial losses.

El Rodeo

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The Editorial Board, which consists of the editor-in-chief, section editors, and assistant editors, will determine the content of *El Rodeo*.

Student journalists on the *El Rodeo* staff will make every effort to publish following the legal definitions of libel, obscenity and invasion of privacy. Consistent with California Education Code section 48907, the staff will refrain from printing material that may incite students, be a violation of school regulations or disrupt school operations. At the beginning of each semester, journalism students will be reminded of the legal, financial and ethical implications of each article they write.

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CAMPUS

Marine biology students invent new sea creatures

By Emily James
El Rodeo Staff Writer

Art and science are rarely fused together. However, Mrs. Bauer's marine biology class along with her biology class have managed to fuse the two in a way," Bauer says, "[that] uses every part of the brain."

Bauer's second semester benchmark project is known simply as the "Fish Project" and has existed for five years in her marine biology class. Although the title may seem simple, the actual task is in no way simple. The project asks students to create a creature which has never existed before. The students must then write a one to one and a half page report about every aspect of their animal. Some of these intricacies involve eating habits, mating habits, survival instincts, and special adaptations to the animal's environment. After this write up, students are asked to create a three-dimensional model of their new creature.

After the models are turned in, Mrs. Bauer (along with a panel of judges) decide which creature is the best based on the creativity of the model and the creativity of the "write up". While the marine biology class is somewhat restricted to creating either a fish or a shark, the biology class is allowed



Eduardo Rodriguez, Alexandria Parra, Johnathan Hernandez, Christina Monoceros and Benjamin Padilla show case their authentic creations for their project.

to create any type of animal. This year's winners were Alexandria Parra with her Queen Fish, Eduardo Rodriguez with his Reptapus, Johnathan Hernandez with his Sublime, Christina Levee with her Subaquenis Monoceros, and Benjamin Padilla with his El Jefe.

Parra's Queen Fish is a rendition of the witch from Snow White. The model was composed of an extremely detailed drawing of both the Queen and the Evil Hag to make up the face. This beast "preys on the hearts of other fish who try to invade her cave."

Even though this fish appears merciless, she does have predators known as the "seven dwarf fish."

Rodriguez's Reptapus is "part reptilian and [part] octopus," and the model was composed of a 3D diorama. Although this fish is considered to be colossal, its main predators are "humans who try to capture this creature to prove this creature does exist and sharks because the Reptapus isn't able to wrap its tentacles around the Shark's throat." The relationship to the octopus is that when a Reptapus feels threatened, it can "let out

ink which burns predator's eyes."

Hernandez's Sublime is a combination of a fish and shark. The model consists of bright green fins and scales composed of elaborate tape. It can be found in "kelp forests because the color of the Sublime camouflages with the green color of the kelp." Hernandez's inspiration for the name of the fish is that the green color is very similar to the green color of a lime.

Levee's Subaquenis Monoceros has the simpler name of a "sea unicorn," and is made of clay. This water wonder eats an

estimated "80 to 90 times a day to keep up its energy." The sea unicorn's roles regarding gender are somewhat reversed. The "females go hunting for some kelp and use its long tail to bring back some kelp for the male."

Padilla's El Jefe is "one of the largest sharks in the history of sharks." This model is the largest model throughout Mrs. Bauer's class and is made out of metal which has been welded. El Jefe is such an extreme beast that it has "no predators, only prey." Scientists studying this fish are using it to research a new type of metal that is "stronger and would not have to be repaired so often."

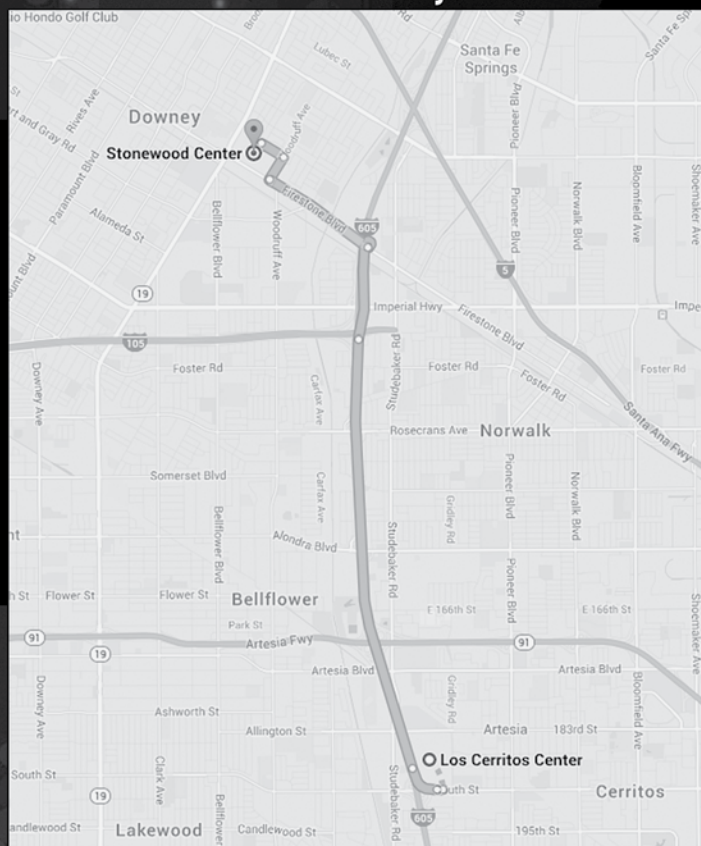
This year's students have defied odds by creating some intensely prepared creatures. Mrs. Bauer claims the hardest part of the overall project is "going from an idea into the design process and building the prototype," however, the winners along with many other students have managed to overcome this obstacle and design well thought-out models and intelligent write ups. Mrs. Bauer's ultimate message for the entirety of the "Fish Project" is to "[not] limit the students to only written assignments," and "give them choice and allow them to express themselves." Many students will agree that the Fish Project has allowed to showcase a whole new set of skills.

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FEATURES

Cesar Covarrubias is *Simply Irresistible*

Francisco and Brandt block a Power 106 player from shooting.

Teachers Power Past Power106

BY LAURA CASTRO-SPENCER
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On April 23rd, the old gym roared with cheers coming from El Rancho students and faculty as the Dons won the Power 106 game for the first time in 5 years with a final score of 71-68.

The team consisted of Mr. Elliot, Mr. Francisco, Mr. Brandt, Mr. Sanchez, Mr. Bacera, Mr. Donahue, and other El Rancho staff members.

"It was finally nice to beat those guys because in two of those games, we came really close but lost in the end; the other two we got blown out," said Elliot. "We played really well offensively and defensively. Defensively we stayed in the zone throughout the game because the other team was much bigger and they had two seven-footers. Offensively, we just shot the ball really well."

The teachers started off the game strong, the Dons only fell behind their opponent by no more than three points.

The opposing team had two players that were seven feet tall. Mr. Elliot says, "Our offense and defense were good because of [those players]. We never played against players who were that tall."

However, Mr. Elliot helped lead the El Rancho Dons to victory by making eight baskets.

The halftime show consisted of artists such as Anthony Lewis and others who performed their music in front the El Rancho students and faculty.

"They were pretty good, I'm not really into that type of music, but their energy when performing in front of an audience was awesome. It made the night even better," said senior Alejandra Limon. "They handed out Power 106 posters that were pretty nice."

The win against Power106 made the night successful. However, according to the teachers, the true win is being able to play basketball with one another.

"We never practiced, but the teachers play at lunchtime every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday," said Mr. Francisco. "We knew that we wanted to win, I mean we've been playing together for like 20 years, so we have good team chemistry."

The El Rancho teachers are proud of their win against the Power 106 players, and they will continue to play basketball during lunch because they enjoy each other's company and enjoy playing a sport that allows growth for their team and basketball skills.



Covarrubias enjoys lifting weights, riding his bike, and hanging out in the park scouting for some sweet hunnies to fit his awesome lifestyle.

BY DAVID HUGHES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Nobody has experienced genuine kindness until they have met Senior Cesar Covarrubias. Cesar is not hard to miss: with a tall six-foot frame and a plethora of brightly colored orange shirts, he is clearly distinguishable from everyone else. This and many other lovable qualities is what makes Cesar Covarrubias simply irresistible.

Cesar is the co-president of Math Club, as well as the friendliest face that an El Rancho Don can have. He is very commonly known throughout the school. By just walking down a hallway with him, one will see how people bend over backwards just to say "hello." Cesar's personality goes beyond students as well.

Often times, teachers and staff will talk about Cesar to see how his life is going, or what mathematical problem he is up too.

If you haven't noticed by now that Cesar is far different than any other person, please get a cat scan at your nearest hospital. The lovable qualities don't stop there. Cesar rides around Pico Rivera with a gigantic orange bike that rivals a Sunkist bottle on wheels. Cesar is the biggest fan of *The Walking Dead* with his room decorated with posters, shirts, video games, and memorabilia; one might say he has an obsession.

When Cesar is not riding his bike or waiting to watch an episode of *The Walking Dead*, he works out in his backyard. He will consistently push himself to his limit so he can get a little stronger and faster. Of course

Cesar works out fashionably to his favorite band *Los Lobos*.

Neighbors have reported that at night, they can hear Cesar singing the lyrics to *Los Lobos* and other bands. In fact, Cesar and his charming personality serenaded people lucky enough to attend El Rancho's karaoke night. "One of my favorite songs is *Cielito Lindo*, because they say "Canta y no llores porque cantando se alegran, Cielito Lindo, los corazones," says Cesar. Roughly translated, those lyrics mean "Sing and don't cry because singing cheers up, lovely sky, the hearts."

Cesar truly has a big heart, especially with his family. "I believe that family should bring about a sense of togetherness and joy for each other's well-being," says Cesar. The biggest woman in Cesar's life is his

little sister Lily. Of course that doesn't mean that some lucky ladies won't have a chance.

Cesar wants a woman who is caring, positive, supportive, and most importantly happy. He also does not care about appearance, so Kim Kardashians and creatures from the black lagoon are all welcome.

When Cesar grows up he wants to be "someone that brings a positive change to this world, such as an environmental engineer to help conserve resources for the future.

With a heart as big as the world, it's nice to know that someone like Cesar Covarrubias is out there helping others, and that makes him just plain simply irresistible.

Math Club gets positive recognition

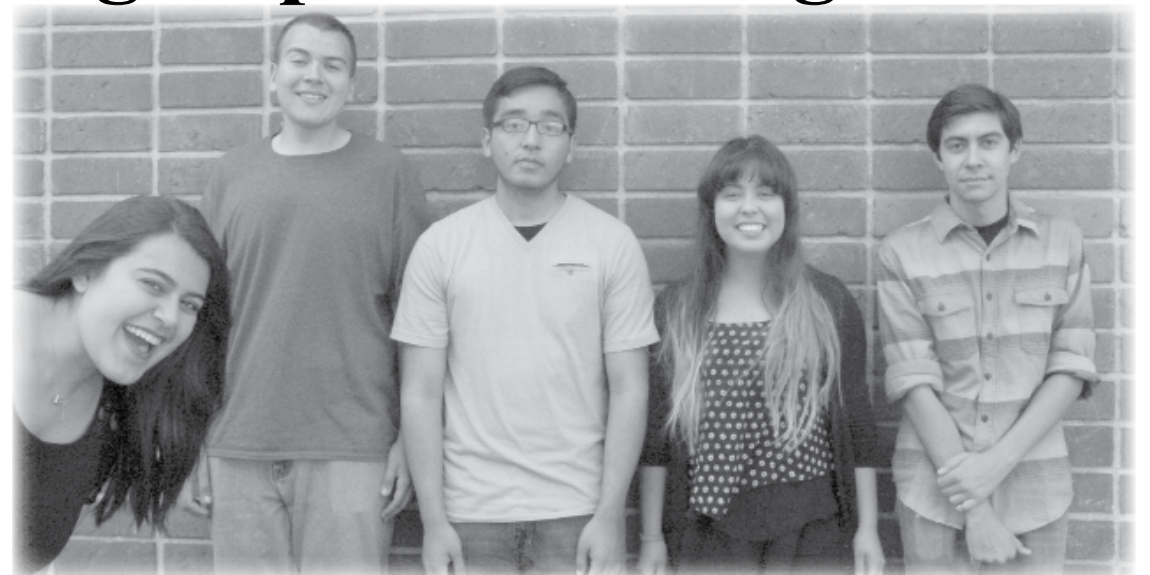
BY MATTHEW AGUILAR
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

If you need help on difficult math homework, or simply just have a passion for arithmetic, Math club is here for you. Meetings for math club are held in I-8 on Tuesdays and Thursdays during lunch.

The club functions as a tutoring service exclusively for math. Club member Brianna Olivares says "There are many different purposes, like enhancing and developing [students'] math skills." Any student, experienced or not, can join and participate.

Aside from the math support, the meetings could also be used as an opportunity to meet new relatable friends. The club has a large pool of members that attend the meetings. On average, there are around 40 members.

More advanced students have an opportunity to tutor oth-



Math Club members pose for a photo supporting their love for any and all things math and Mr. Francis.

ers in need. Brianna Olivares explains the tutoring system. "We think it's better when students teach other students; it eliminates the authority figure."

As the students in-need get tutoring, the more advanced

ones could quarrel with the complimentary equations posted on the board. These equations could span from geometry to difficult pre-cal. Olivares explains, "We do have [math] problems that go on the board for us to solve."

The Math club is a place for knowledge and social prosperity. By attending this club, one may expect interesting conversation and challenging arithmetic. Anyone is invited, and scholars are proudly welcomed.

FEATURES

El Rancho welcomes new slam poetry team

BY VALERIA HURTADO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The members of El Rancho's 4th Get Lit Poetry team were chosen from a panel of El Rancho coaches and judges. The team consists of Shaniah Santos, Derek Peyton, Sidney Carroll, Jennifer Guerra, Andres Lemes, and Emily James. "When I was notified that I had made the poetry team, I was excited to be able to experience this opportunity and be able to express myself through poetry once more," said junior Jennifer Guerra. Not many students have the opportunity to perform in front of a crowd and speak passionately about a certain topic. The students believe it was an accomplishment upon knowing that their work had an effect on the judges, an effect that made them want to hear more.

The love for poetry takes time to grow since most people learn to hate poetry instead of learning to appreciate it. "I was involved in poetry when I went to my first open mic during my sophomore year. I went to the open mic in Uptown Whittier that's hosted by Mrs. Zeko's new



Junior Derek Peyton performing in Mr. Sorenson's class

poetry teacher, Eric Morago," said senior Emily James. Mrs. Zeko gets her sophomore honor classes involved with poetry dur-

ing second semester, and some of the students come out of the program with a different perspective of this form of art. Some students

get inspired by being exposed to classic poets like Edgar Allen Poe and Robert Frost, while others get inspired by watching videos of poetry performances on YouTube.

Every poet writes in a different type of style. Sometimes it can take hours to weeks to finish one piece. "It usually takes about 2-3 days to write a piece, but it is never perfect," says junior Sidney Carroll. Poems grow and change with every draft and every performance. Most of the time, the final draft is typically the poem that is performed. "On average, it takes me about two weeks to finish one piece. The piece has to go through constant redrafts with Mr. Sorenson, so it's always being rewritten," says James.

Everyone loses motivation from time to time, but these students always find a way to keep themselves optimistic with their writing. "The idea that inner emotions and feelings can be shared through words is wonderful considering that sometimes sharing true emotions through casual conversations can be difficult for me," says Carroll. Poetry can be inspired by current events such as the Baltimore Riots and

events that occur in everyday life. For others, just seeing and hearing the crowds reaction is all the motivation some people need. "It gives me great pleasure to be on stage and say a poem that people can relate to," says Guerra.

Being on stage can be nerve-racking for some people. However in the moment, one can become relaxed and comfortable with the audience. "Nerves are normal before I perform, and I have learned to accept them," says James. "I use this nervous energy to help with my performance, motivating me to use gestures to get the jitters out or to reveal more emotion through my tone of voice."

The team will compete today at the Los Angeles Theater Center. On Saturday May 2nd, students will attend a field trip to see the finalists compete at Wilshire Ebell Theater. If you would like to support the team, you can still attend the competition. Admission is \$5. Grab a couple of friends and drive on to the Wilshire Ebell Theater for an awe-inspiring show.

Sierra DeMulder pays a visit to El Rancho



BY SOL MENDEZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Sierra DeMulder, a famous slam poet, paid a visit to El Rancho on behalf of the Get Lit program. For those who don't know: Sierra DeMulder is a poet who speaks about complex issues such as identity and gender and is known for the accomplishments of being a two-time National Poetry Slam champion, ranking 9th in the world in the Individual World Poetry Slam, and publishing two books (*The Bones Below*, 2010 and *Shoes on a Dead Horse*, 2012) under Write Bloody Publishing.

DeMulder is one of the most accomplished and recognizable young women in the world of slam poetry. She is also known for being a part of Button Poetry, which is a popular site among many poets who are interested in slam poetry. With this amount of prestige, the new El Rancho Slam Team of 2015 and Mr. Sorenson's Creative Writing class were pleased to learn new techniques from DeMulder in a matter of minutes. DeMulder hosted a quick workshop where she professionally evaluated El Rancho's poets, helping them in preparation for their first competition today and their second competition tomorrow (May 2nd). DeMulder was seen walking on El Rancho campus, sharing knowledge that our students will later use throughout their poetic lives, and helping prepare our poets to give the best performance possible! Good luck to our poets, and thank you DeMulder.

Pico Rivera's solar panel problem

BY JAMES CHOW
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Out of all the cities in Southern California, Pico Rivera has the least amount of solar panels. Instead of directing the sun to our backs for the perfect tanned beach body, we should use the sun for its greatest characteristic: its energy! That way, we can not only be productive with the use of free energy, but also make a profit out of it. Junior Angelica Hernandez, Vice President of El Rancho's Leo's Club, plans to spearhead and direct El Rancho to attaining solar panels in hopes that Pico Rivera will follow through.

The idea of saving energy came to Hernandez at a young age. "In seventh grade, my middle school instituted an awareness program for environmental protection. For two months, we would go to Rio Hondo and we would learn about the environment. We would make our own biofuel; use CO2 canisters to help launch our cars; and make solar panel cars. It was really fun. [The solar cars] worked by themselves. They had a little motor and they move pretty quickly," says Hernandez.

There are many alternatives for saving energy - e.g. building windmills for wind energy, fracking for natural gas, constructing hydroelectric dams in freshwater. However, the first is very costly and does not produce great amounts of energy on windless days; the second is dangerous for its use of deadly toxins in the process; and the third interrupts the water currents, causing the decline of



A California home with energy efficient solar panels.

anadromous fish that spawn in freshwater and migrate to ocean water and back, such as salmon and striped bass. The safest alternative is solar energy as there is minimal effort to convert energy from depleting earth's materials.

The installation of solar panels may start expensive, but these panels produce a pay-off within a few years. With the use of solar panels, "the Los Angeles Unified School District saved over \$776,000 this year, and over

the lifetime over 20 schools they saved over \$25.5 million in lifetime savings," says Hernandez.

In kick-starting this plan, Hernandez suggests the aid of Solar City. "There's a company called Solar City in California, and [El Rancho] would get [the panels] at a low cost. The school can also choose the payment method. It can have them strategically built. A possibility could be placing platforms over the stadium or stands. This

way, the panels can give students shade and cause wind-flow since it'll still generate electricity. Another possibility is to have [the panels placed] over the parking lot to give cars shade, as well as continue generating electricity.

Although the plan is still in its elementary stages, Hernandez's determination is higher than ever. Hernandez believes "if students become environmentally aware about solar panels, the district can learn from the students."

Suzanne Perea

BY EMILY JAMES
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Students of every grade visit the College and Career center every day. With hopes of applying for the SAT, attaining job permits or discussing future universities, there is hardly a day when computers aren't occupied and students aren't learning. However, there is also hardly ever a day when music is not playing in the background. These melodies come from the College and Career Center clerk Suzanne Perea.

Suzanne has been working for the El Rancho Unified school District for almost thirty years, fifteen of those years have been spent at El Rancho High School. Although most students recognize her as the woman who greets an individual with a huge smile and a bubbly personality, most don't understand the amount of work which occurs at her front desk. Suzanne says, "First and foremost, I am the clerk to the Career Center Counselor, so whatever the counselor is working on, testing or [working on] events I do most of the paperwork for. If there's a field trip, I order the buses and the permission slips. For the students my job is to assist the students in registering for exams and helping them with AP fee waivers. I also do work permits for the entire city." To say Suzanne does a little bit of everything would be a complete understatement.

Now, Suzanne's immense involvement within the school district does not deter her from her two main passions: reading and music.

It seems fitting for a woman who spends her life on a school campus to have an adoration for reading. When she speaks of some of her favorite books, her face begins to gather a whole new air around the topic and she shares her excitement through a

relatable anecdotal tale. She says, "The first time they [librarians] let me go into the non-children's section, I didn't know what to get, but that past weekend I had just watched *Wuthering Heights* on TV with my mom and I thought, 'Oh I'm gonna get this!' It was harder to read than it was to watch when you're in seventh grade, but it was fun to go from one side of the library to another. It was like a right of passage." Suzanne continues, "[Another] favorite book is flowers for Algeron, I read it over and over because it was such an interesting story as a kid." Suzanne's last favorable mention she says, "I'm a big *Wizard of Oz* fan. I've read various versions of it. I've read what *Wicked* came from and I would say that's probably one of the books I go back and re-read the most. I go back to it because I saw the movie first. I was afraid of certain things so I would turn away, but as I got older I wanted to know more about the characters so I read the book."

Although many people may have not recognized Suzanne's love for literature upon first impression, virtually everyone who steps into the College and Career Center can sense her deep appreciation for music.

Suzanne isn't just any mediocre fan; instead she is what most would deem an aficionado. She says, "I can't function without music. Cannot. The harder I have to work the more I need the music. I've been this way since I was a kid. I mean I could live without my television, but if you took my stereo away we would be in trouble."

Not only does her need for music prove her to be an audio admirer, but her desire to be connected to music in almost every aspect is a large part of her musical appreciation as well. Whether it be through purchasing albums, purchasing album art or

purchasing concert tickets, Suzanne needs to relish in the music in every way. She says, "As a kid I used to go to concerts all the time. All my money would go to concerts and albums."

Though most fans may spend huge sums of money on merchandise at the concert, Suzanne finds enjoyment in collecting the ticket stubs. She says, "I would just keep my ticket stub and add it to my box until it started filling up. I'd shake it and tell myself, 'Yup, those are mine.'"

Suzanne has a whole range of favorite musical artists but some are, "My very first concert was Journey." She continues, "I'm also that person who if they like a group [will see the group] multiple times. I saw U2 the very first time they hit California and I've seen them nine times since. I like the police and I've seen Sting after he left the Police."

Ultimately, Suzanne is the sweetheart of the College and Career Center. She has been the hero that many students need when applying for college, yet she maintains an extremely modest outlook. She says, "This [the interview] is all so strange because this is my job. This is what I do. I don't understand what the big deal is. It's very sweet to be recognized, but I think anybody who gets into the field of education gets in with the mindset that they want to help."

Her main wish for students is for them to understand that, "If you have a job that you really like, the day goes by so fast. So, when you decide on something that you wanna do, make sure it's something that you enjoy because you're going to do it every day. It needs to be something that you are happy with."

With the constant help that Suzanne offers coupled with her bubbly personality students will easily find success in their future.



Alma Del Reyes

BY SALONI PATEL
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

There are many unsung heroes at El Rancho. One of these heroes, most seniors may already know of, is Alma Del Reyes. Alma is the leader of the "Be a Leader Foundation". Some may have never heard of her, but those who have come into contact with her heroic deeds, know she is worthy of acknowledgement. Most of El Rancho's population is first generation college bound students and this is exactly where Alma steps in. She understands the student's background and confusion towards the obstacles of senior year, and smoothes the transition of these students by clearing their pathway to college. Alma says "I have the privilege of helping students make some BIG life decisions and I do that for a living! Isn't that crazy?" She takes her job up with a loving perspective. She says she loves that she "gets to enjoy sharing a lot of my own experiences, both my successes and my failures and really provide you all an opportunity to a whole new network. It's crazy and definitely, lots of fun."

Before her job at El Rancho, Alma "served as the Project Manager for BE A LEADER FOUNDATION." She was a teacher and taught 6th grade Math/ Science for 2 years and 7th grade English/ Social Studies for 1 year. Currently, she is also a School Board Member for Lynwood Unified School District. She was elected in November 2013. Having such a diverse background, Alma incorporates the skills she has attained through her extracurriculars into her daily schedule. Her days do not always look the same, but the most accurate description would "replying to emails, meeting with ten to twenty students, more emails, attend at least some sort of community event and reach out to community businesses to seek mentors for next year, more emails." She also spend a lot of time revising essays.

As seen, Alma helps students understand the importance of reading details and applying to

colleges. And this is proven in her home visits. During FAFSA season for seniors, Alma willingly did home visits for students who had not finished the FAFSA and clarified with the parents the importance of finishing the FAFSA. Alma not only helps students and their parents understand the importance of a college education, but she brings in individuals from successful careers to tell their stories of how they go to their goals. Alma hosts many workshops where she explains to students how to use their financial aid in a smart and clever way, so they can leave college in the smallest amount of debt possible. And she ensures she creates bonds with the club by sharing her personal struggles and regrets of her college experiences. This type of open nature of her personality allows students to sense the feeling of comfort with her and share any personal problems that she may be able to help along with college assistance.

Alma has created this club into a junior goal. Her club has reached such heights in the course of only one year, that her application process for next year as become more rigorous to ensure the level of productivity within the group. She plans to make this program next year even more effective. Alma says, "Next year I will be working with my first Senior Boot Camp cohort from summer to end. I am excited because I will be adding a mentorship piece where my SBC members will have access to a college mentor and a professional mentor. I will also be adding more career exploration opportunities in the form of career shadow week and career roundtables. Lastly, we will be starting up the BE A LEADER club which is more community service oriented. The core of SBC will remain the same as I will still offer all the guiding and coaching through the college application process and forward, but it will just include more opportunities to develop students into true LEADERS." As seen, Alma spends more than necessary amount of time on her students to see them graduate and excel in the school of her dream.



UNSUNG HEROES

Pauline Munoz

BY JAZMIN HERNANDEZ, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Unrecognized staff members do most of the production at El Rancho High School. In fact these staff members are “the doers” of this production and are the most valuable players. Pauline Munoz, Guidance Secretary, or the “transcript lady” as many students identify her as, has been working at El Rancho for almost 9 years.

Munoz’s work consists of retaining transcripts for former students as well as printing official transcripts to send out to colleges for current students. Overall, she is in charge of all records and transcripts for every student at El Rancho High School.

Munoz was hesitant to take this job, since she was unaccustomed to this type of job. She says, “I was apprehensive at first to work at the high school since I was used to working with elementary school students. It was a BIG change.” However, despite her conflict in deciding whether to take the job, she says, “I’m so glad I did.”

Instantly, Munoz fell in love with her job. She says, “I love my job because I get to help students graduate and get to college.”

Munoz loves the experience of helping a student achieve success in their lives. She says, “I get to help students see their counselor to be on track for graduation and college.” She continues, “I also enjoy helping those wonderful students who need a little bit more encouragement and need to see their grade level dean.”

Besides Munoz’s love for being part of a student’s success, she also enjoys the staff. She says, “It’s like family here. I have made some wonderful friendships that I will treasure for the rest of my life. As a staff family we have celebrated so many birthdays and we have provided food for each other.”

Without Munoz and many other staff members, the system of the school would crash. Munoz, just like unrecognized staff members, represent a vital unit to the school system. They get things done, and they do them well. The next time you see her strolling by or when she assists you, you should not hesitate to mention a “thank you” after all she is the one who helps you.



Adrian Sanchez

BY NATALLY MAURICIO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The El Rancho campus can rest easy knowing that Adrian Sanchez is on the lookout. The 2010 alumni returned to his “old stomping ground” as a School Security Officer on October 2014.

As an SSO, Adrian’s duties consist of providing a “safe, enjoyable learning environment for students, assisting administration and faculty in various tasks, and being professional and respectful to both students and staff.”

In addition to working at El Rancho, Adrian works at Home Depot and goes to school full time as a criminal justice major. Adrian decided to take on his assignment of being an SSO because he felt it is a “good step in the right direction” in pursuing his career in law enforcement.

Besides it helping his career, Adrian decided to become an SSO on the idea of giving back to the students. He enjoys the nature of the job and “enjoy[s] providing safety for the students and staff.”

In the little spare time that Adrian has, he enjoys partaking in physical activity. He performs extensive weight training at LA Fitness and cardiovascular exercise such as running and hiking. Adrian tries to stay in top shape in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle and prepare himself for a career in law enforcement.

Other than exercise, Adrian’s hobbies include cooking and listening to music. He became fond of cooking when he decided to begin his healthier lifestyle. Adrian occasionally tries to mix up his diet and he thinks cooking plays a crucial role in that. Listening to music helps him “relax and get [his] mind off things”. Adrian listens to all types of music including reggae, country, and rock.

So don’t worry students and staff of El Rancho, with the intent of safety and the body of Captain America going, hand in hand, Adrian Sanchez will roam El Rancho’s halls and bring peace to the school.



Lillian Gonzales

BY ELIZABETH JACOME
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

She comes to school every day, sits down at her desk, and braces herself to face another day filled with responsibility. The door leading to her workspace opens and closes every few minutes, filled with the foot traffic of students. Every student is greeted with a warm smile and a “Hi! What do you need today?” These characteristics are what make Lillian Gonzales known to everyone as just “Lil.”

Lil has been the secretary of business and activities at El Rancho for the past 18 years. After graduating from El Rancho, and continuing her education at college, Lil went on to receive an AA degree in paralegal studies but it ended up taking too much of her time. She says, “I wanted to get married and have a family.”

“I started off working at the district office. My mom had worked [at El Rancho] for many years and she was the one that told me something at the school was opening up.” Lil says, “I’m constantly busy, but my day goes by really fast.” Lil adds, “Here at activities we’re in charge of athletics, dances, scheduling, and transportation. [The job] is a lot of public communications, working with parents, staff, and ASB.”

This one time, Lil says, “I was in a hurry to get to work and as I stepped out of the car, my foot got caught on my purse strap and I fell flat on my face in front of one of the video cameras. When former Dean Mr.

Gonzalez reviewed the camera footage he saw my fall.”

Senior Anissa Ramirez says, “Lil is a fun, loving, and caring person. Every time you walk into her office, she always has a smile on her face.” Senior Jazmine Sanchez adds, “I love her witty personality. She’s always cracking jokes.” Senior Brandy Sandoval says, “She genuinely cares about me and others as well. That’s what got her the nickname ‘momma Lil.’” Ramirez says her favorite thing about Lil is that she never fails to make her laugh. She adds, “One time Lil thought she threw a check away so she went looking for it in the trashcan. She felt something warm, took it out, and there were maggots!” Sandoval adds, “One time she sent me to the wrong classroom and I quoted nacho libre and said ‘I looked like a fool out there.’”

Something that people might not know about her, says Ramirez, is that “Lil thinks she has a horse buried in her backyard!” There used to be a barn in her backyard and when they took it down there was a big pile of dirt and she said it “look[ed] like a horse was buried there.” Sanchez adds, “Every Thursday, she goes out and has lunch with her dad. Her dad even calls her to make sure they go get lunch.”

Lil says, “I love working with the staff and kids here. I’ve gone to other high schools, but Pico Rivera kids are just the best.” Sandoval adds, “Lil always had the answer people need to hear which just comes to show she’s a key aspect in our community.”

SPORTS

ER swimmers pursue personal goals

BY BREANNA PEREZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The girls' varsity swim team concludes Del Rio League play in 2nd place with an overall record of 4 wins and 1 loss, while the boys finish league in 3rd place with a record of 3 wins and 2 losses.

The boys and girls team earned a victory against Pioneer High without much effort needed. The boys coach, Mr. Pringle, says, "Luckily that's a meet where we don't necessarily need our strongest line-up and see where other guys fit," adding, "we got a win which is what we always want, but I was also able to see guys in different events, which helps with preparing for finals."

Shortly after, the team competed against Santa Fe High and the boys experienced a loss by 20 points, whereas the girls won by 16 points.

Pringle believes that it was a tough loss to sustain since the boys weren't at their best. "I can accept a loss, but not when somebody beats us and when we're not at our best. We were competitive, but I also felt that it was inconsistent," says Pringle.

Even though Pringle wasn't content with the boys' loss he said, "I thought we had a lot of highlights just because a lot of the guys dropped time."

Such team members include Daniel Duenez who earned his personal record of 59 seconds in the 100-yard butterfly, as well as Rosemary Valdez who dropped four seconds in the 100 backstroke.

Improvements, such as

this, aid the Dons to feel motivated towards dropping time.

Although both the girls and boys team endured a loss against rival team, La Serna High, Pringle was pleased with the individual performances throughout the swim meet.

"We had a lot of best individual times, and that was really the focus of today. La Serna was better than they were last year so coming and expecting to win by points was not realistic, but individual performances were great. So, there were a lot of positives," says Pringle.

The girls coach, Ms. Castillo, agrees by saying, "Individually we had some great times. Considering the fact that our competition were all club members and we're season swimmers, we did really well."

Due to how the Dons competed against the Lancers, Pringle feels more confident in how the boys will compete at prelims. "I actually feel better about prelims now because we faced better competition and performed better as well. There was stress last week knowing we were going to swim against Santa Fe, and they were tough," says Pringle.

He adds, "we responded better to the pressure, and I think that puts us in a better mind set for prelims." As for the girls team Castillo says, "Although it's my first time going with the team, I think my varsity girls are really going to make an impact and make a statement out there."

Team members from the boys' varsity team who quali-



El Rancho swimmer prepares to dive in and take on La Serna.

fied for CIF include all relay races, which consist of Jason Curiel, Nick Murillo, Anthony Najar, Elijah Guerrero, and Michael Morales. Najar and Curiel will both be competing in the 50 free-style event.

Daniel Duenez and Isaac Valdez will serve as alternates for

the relay medley event. Pringle says, "I'm taking a pretty decent size team to CIF. So it's a really exciting way to finish the year."

Regarding the girls team, team member Melody Carbajal qualified for the 100 breaststroke. Castillo says, "I have one free-style relay which I'm hop-

ing will make the time at prelims on Tuesday. So, hopefully that will happen," adding, "there's still more time to drop so that's really exciting because that's how the last week should be."

Support the Dons at their next meet at Whittier High at 3:15 pm on Tuesday May 5.

Track stars continue record-breaking performances



Senior, Crystal Rodriguez, demonstrates that El Rancho bleeds blue as she breaks the school's shot put record.

BY FRANCISCO RAMIREZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Heart pumping, muscles burning, feet aching, lungs screaming for air...yes the El Rancho Track and Field team run for fun!

As well as runners, there are also the throwers which are not people to mess around with.

Breaking records and staying on top is always the goal for the runners, hurdlers and throwers, and they are not likely to give up.

For some people, track is a place to make friends; for others, it is a place to have fun. However for both parties, track is a place to compete.

Track is a sport that re-

quires determination and heart. For many competitors, each one tries to surpass their capabilities and improve themselves.

Many people fall in love with track in the beginning of their high school years, but for some, like Crystal Rodriguez, they only get to experience the joy their senior year.

Rodriguez fell in love with throwing and "regrets not taking [throwing] the past four years."

Rodriguez, despite her senior year being her first year throwing, has broken the previous girl's record in shot put. The previous record was a 36'4", and is now a 37'24". Rodriguez would like to beat her record

once again before the year ends.

Vincent Cuevas, junior, says, "the most enjoyable parts of track are meeting new people and becoming a family with these people."

Cuevas loves track and is involved in many events such as, "300m hurdles, 110m hurdles, 4x100m, 4x400m, and the 800m." Vincent enjoys what he does and wishes to continue to run next year.

Madison Ortiz, sophomore, is glad to be a part of the team as well as doing really well for a young runner.

Last year Ortiz was able to "tie for first place in the 100m." Ortiz says, "at first they told me I got second place and I began to cry." She says she felt this way because she "came all this way and did not want to lose."

However, a week later, the league called and told Ortiz "you tied for first place and are eligible to go to CIF." Ortiz was jumping for joy and was glad that her hard efforts in competition got her to the goal she had set for herself.

Track is not for the ones who take things easily. Track is for those "who want to surpass [their] own records and become closer to their track family," says Cuevas. For Rodriguez, Cuevas, and Ortiz, track is their second home.

SPORTS

Girls' softball inches closer to playoff berth



The Girls' Softball team runs on field after a game well played.

BY FRANCISCO RAMIREZ
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Hustle and heart sets the El Rancho girls' softball team apart. The girls' softball team has an almost neutral record of 10-12. Despite not having a perfect season, the girls' softball team is ready to strike out their future opponents.

Jackie Deloza says, "preseason went well because it helped us realize what [the team] needs to work on for league."

Preseason is just as important as league because figuring out the team's flaws during preseason, when the games are not as important, instead of during league, when the games are extremely important, proves to be efficient. As Deloza says, "I expect my girls to have confidence and play their hearts out for the team."

As well as playing out their hearts for the team, the most important goal, as Janessa Lozano says, "is to win league!"

Lozano says, "our expectations [are] to go out there and perform our very best." So far, the Dons are 2-3 in league and are looking to get on a winning streak.

The girls have so far been able to keep a consistent win and loss ratio; however if they want to win league and reach CIF, the team has to hit home or go home. That is, what these girls want is to, how Lozano says, "win league!"

A strong point for the Dons is how no matter what, each

and every one of the girls perform their very best in each game. According to Deloza, "the weakness the team has is [the team's] mentality." Some games are not only won with heart, games are also won by whoever has the right mentality. "The right mentality would enhance our performances with each game," says Lozano.

For the seniors on the team, league games are most important because it is their last season as well as their last opportunity to reach CIF. The Dons' softball team is on their way to reaching CIF, but there is always time for improvement.

Despite the team's record, the softball players remain optimistic, as it has become apparent that the team's goal is to "win league." A combination of talent and heart will always prove to be a successful duo. Despite the team having "a few flaws to work on," as Deloza suggests, an improved morale for these lady dons would be necessary for a better performance.

Boys' volleyball improves to 4-1



Boys' volleyball poses after a successful match.

BY ERNESTO GARCIA
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

"Bump, set, kill!" are the words that come out of head coach Adelaida Picon as her boys volleyball team prepares to take on the second half of their season. The varsity boys finished the first half of their league season with a 4-1 record, only losing to their rival, Santa Fe, who are currently in first place. Despite the intent to prevent success from getting to their heads, the varsity boys are still proud of their efforts this volleyball season.

"We feel very confident right now, we are four and one in season. I think the Santa Fe Game messed us up a little mentally, but we are working hard and I believe we have what it takes to win the league title," senior John Caprietta said when reflecting back on the first half of the season. The team has been finishing behind Santa Fe in recent seasons, but feel that this year they can tie for first in league.

Nicholas Arauz, the only sophomore on the varsity team, believes the boys have been playing very well and can make it to CIF. "Halfway through the season we have played very well. Obviously our biggest obstacle is our next home game against Santa Fe, but we just have to take each game one at a time and if we keep working hard we can win league and CIF."

Having already played Santa Fe, the team feels they are capable of defeating their rivals at home. Preparing both physically and mentally, the team is working hard to finish the season strong in order to win league. "If Nick sets me, we can win this game," junior, Javier Torres, jokingly said as he pointed to his sophomore setter, "but seriously, we have what it takes. We have to work together, play together and we can win this title. Even if we lost our first game, we have home court advantage and we can tie for first."

The varsity team knows what lies ahead and expects that all their hard work will pay off. On the lower level, continuing their perfect season for a consecutive three years, the JV team hopes to again defeat their opponents for a second time. Come show your support at the volleyball team's next home game. It will be today at El Rancho's Main Gym at 3:15.

Dons baseball team hopes to sneak into CIF



Coach Frank Llanes steps out to the pitcher's mound to talk to his infielders.

BY MARISOL ALMAZAN
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With an overall league score of 7-13, the El Rancho boys' varsity baseball team hopes to overcome its weaknesses in order to play to the best of its ability. Coach Frank Llanes says, "We are struggling right now. We've had some key injuries, and the ball is just not bouncing right for us at the moment."

Coach Llanes believes that the team has weaknesses that they need to work on. "We are having trouble fielding the ball. We are making a lot of errors. We are averaging about five errors a game, and when you make errors it gives an extra out to the other team," says Llanes. "If we make six errors, they get two more innings than we do. They get more chances to score every time that we make a mistake. Lately, we have been giving them a lot of opportunities to score," he added.

Llanes believes that the team can fix its weaknesses very easily. "In order to improve, we need more repetition and more time on task. If we do this, we will continue to move forward.

Right now, everything that we do in baseball is temporary unless we dwell on it. We can't dwell on our mistakes; we have to keep moving forward and stay positive."

Center fielder Jesus Rojo believes that the team is doing everything needed to improve. "As a team we are making simple mistakes, but we are working on these mistakes at practice, so it should start showing in the games," says Rojo. "We are working as hard as we can to get out of the slump that we are in right now. Our mentality right now is not good, but we can do nothing but get better everyday," he added.

The Florida tournament helped the baseball team in many ways. "In Florida, the team got to see the type of talent that they are going to be facing when they decide to play college ball. The teams we played ranged from college ball to Division two or three teams. They were big boys, they could play the game, and there were a lot of Cubans and Dominicans. We were a little bit overwhelmed," says Llanes. "We were not ready for that type of tournament, but it's helped us because our younger guys

are going to be ready for season next year, and our seniors will be ready for college ball," he added.

Rojo agrees with Llanes about the tournament. "Florida showed what we are capable of as a team. In Florida, we faced a lot of good talent and a lot of good pitchers. We fought as hard as we could, and we could have done better, but the tournament showed us that we are capable of doing great things in league."

Although the baseball team has weaknesses that it needs to work on, the team also has much strength. "The biggest strength of the team is our pitching. Our pitching is great. Our poor guys are out there on top of that hill, seeing error after error after error, and they keep on working hard. They keep on throwing strikes. Our pitchers are doing a really good job," says Llanes. "Our chemistry within the dug out is another big strength. We are built as a family, and I think that shows out on the field. We try not to look at the negatives when we are down, we try to stay positive," Rojo added.

Coach Llanes believes that the team has gained a lot from this season so far. "I think all in

all, even though our results have not been good, we have still had a lot of good experience this year with baseball. It may not be showing on the scoreboard, but we are getting to where we want to be by the end of the season."

Llanes and Rojo share common goals for the team. "Our goal is to sneak into the playoffs. We are doing our best right now, and we are going to turn in our paperwork. If we are good enough, then we'll get in," says Llanes. "We want to finish this season with no regrets. I hope everybody, including myself, will play a hundred percent at every game, every practice, every week, until the last time we get to play together," Rojo added.

So far, this season has been great for the baseball team. "Overall, it has been a great season. We have a great group of guys, and we have been the first team to go cross-country. It's been a very memorable season; we just aren't playing to our fullest potential right now," says Llanes. "When we were in Florida, we got the chance to play against some really Class A teams. Our team now understands that when we get beat, we are getting better," he added.

Llanes and Rojo have both learned a lot from this current season. "I would not trade this season for the world. Every season is a learning season, and this season like any other season has helped us as coaches become better coaches, and the players become better people," says Llanes. "You have to believe on the field. You cannot really get down on yourself too much because in baseball, you are going to fail seventy percent of the time, you just have to keep believing that you will succeed," Rojo added.

Make sure to support the Dons as they face California High School at 3:15 p.m. home.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Maroon 5 amazes audiences of all ages

BY VALERIA HURTADO
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

On Monday April 6th, the multi-platinum selling pop-rock band Maroon 5 made their last stop on their North American leg of their World Tour at the Honda Center in Anaheim, California.

The Honda Center was a good venue size, but some seats weren't worth the price. I understand everyone wants to attend the last concert of their North American leg of their tour, but the seating arrangement on the floor was cramped, and people were too close to each other. Some people brought their children even though they had to purchase separate tickets when someone else could have been enjoying the concert. It was very uncomfortable especially when the band came out. Everyone stood up, jumped around, and occasionally bumped into the person sitting next to him or her.

Despite the seating arrangement problem, the show was great, and the band sounded amazing. Everything sounded clear. There was no lip singing, and, as usual, Adam Levine's voice was harmonious and beautiful. The setlist consisted of the band's greatest hits from all five albums. The lineup was posted on many



Adam Levine grabs his electric guitar as he prepares to perform "Makes Me Wonder."

websites, so fans would be aware what songs would be performed.

There was a moment during the concert when the band stopped playing "This Love" and just stood there, admiring the crowd

who was singing along. Other than the kids who attended the concert with their parents, there was not one person who was not dancing along to the music. Adam Levine was never in the same spot twice. He was jumping around to each side of the stage and running up and down the catwalk.

What is a concert without a fan overpowering security and jumping on the stage? Towards the end of the show, a girl jumped on stage and frightened Adam Levine. She was taken away by security shortly thereafter. This is one of many reasons that the gap between fans and the artist is so wide. Other than the girl surprising Adam Levine while he was performing a song, and the claustrophobic seating predicament, the concert was amazing!

The energy the band brought with them made the crowd go wild, and everyone was having a great time. Maroon 5 closed with their latest single "Sugar." Despite the hit signifying the end of the concert, everyone remained hyped and danced and screamed until the lights turned back on. It was the perfect way to end their North American leg of the world tour. The next time Maroon 5 comes to LA, find a way to get your hands on some tickets. This is not a concert you want to miss!

Sheppard's *Bombs Away* doesn't always hit its mark

BY JONAH ZEKO
EL RODEO GUEST WRITER

Whether it's fast-paced rap, a slow ballad, or an upbeat feel-good pop song, mostly everybody sings in the shower from time to time, and if anybody tells you they don't, you have legitimate reason to suspect they're lying, or else repressing some horrible memory of it. I can say with a certain confidence that nothing has, or likely ever will, come out of singing in the shower for me, except for the false belief that I can carry a tune and a deep fear that someone may hear me. But for Australian native George Sheppard, singing in the shower may have been the smartest career move he ever made. He and his sister Amy were home alone when Amy heard his voice coming from the bathroom door, allegedly hearing him sing for the first time. She had procrastinated writing a harmony-filled song for a music course she was taking, and after hearing George sing, she asked him to help her. On that day in 2009, Sheppard was born. Now a six-member band which includes sister Emma and features both George and Amy as lead singers, Sheppard has achieved international success with their hit "Geronimo" reaching the third spot on Germany's song charts, second on Austria's, and first on Australia's. They have also appeared on NBC's *Today* show, *The Tonight Show* with Jimmy Fallon, and *The Ellen Degeneres Show*.

Despite all this, I heard of indie rock band Sheppard for the

first time two weeks ago when I received their album. Listening to their music with an open mind and open ears, I hit play with hopeful anticipation, and, forty-five minutes of music later, I hit pause feeling... conflicted. Listening to the album a few more times over the next two weeks confirmed my initial thoughts: there are a few really good songs, but then there was a drop-off after that.

"Geronimo" and "Something's Missing," the first two songs of the album, left me feeling confident about the rest of it. "Geronimo" is the band's claim to fame and for a good reason. It's upbeat rhythm, feel-good vibe, and lyrically clever verses more than make up for any lack of lyrical creativity in its chorus ("So say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Say Geronimo! Can you feel my love? Bombs away, Bombs away, Bombs away. Can you feel my love? Bombs away, Bombs away, Bombs away, Say Geronimo!") and naturally drew a smile to my face as I even sang along to those awfully uncreative lyrics. "Something's Missing" manages to blend reflective lyrics with an upbeat sound and somehow makes it work, while providing a more acoustic sound. (I should add that I grew to like "The Best is Yet to Come" a good bit, and showed it to my friend, who now considers it one of her favorite songs).

Unfortunately, the album mostly went downhill from there. The contrast of happy sound and



reflective lyrics doesn't quite work in "Let Me Down Easy" like it does in "Something's Missing." "A Grade Playa" is painful to listen to, and I don't know how to describe "Smile" other than saying that listening to it makes you feel like you're licking a lollipop...or playing Candyland. Perhaps I have some subconscious childhood link between Candyland and bubbly sounds, but this apparently synesthetic song just makes me see purple and pink lollipops, and taste them too....

Yet while Sheppard mostly achieves an upbeat, light sound, it does offer some variety in its album. "Flying Away" and "Halfway to Hell" showcase more powerful backings, and the latter presents pessimistic—though in-

sightful—lyrics that don't match the feel of most of the album. I couldn't quite tell you what genre "This Electric Feeling" should fall in; it is definitely the most dissimilar song on the album, but I can tell you that I really want to play the bongos to it. And finally, "Find Someone" shows off Sheppard's angry side with some jazzy-bluesy vibes.

Ultimately, Sheppard is a band whose best work probably centers itself in lyrically reflective, feel-good, acoustic songs. "Geronimo" is simply a good song that could become very popular in America as it did in Australia, Germany, and other countries. "Something's Missing" and "The Best is yet to Come" have the potential to become

charted hit songs too, and I've been happy to have them stuck in my head the past two weeks. However, "Halfway to Hell" and "Flying Away" may be popular choices for people who prefer music a little harder driven. And if you like lollipops and Candyland, then go ahead and listen to "Smile" and "Lingering" (I didn't mention "Lingering" but let's just say it makes me see balloons). If you like "A Grade Playa", I'm not sure we can be friends.

Bombs Away contains a few very solid songs, and then a few more which may appeal strongly to some and not as much to others. Just don't be surprised when you hear Sheppard shouting "Say Geronimo!" on the radio. Don't worry; you'll be shouting it too.

PICTURE THIS

Dons show their spirit through April activities



Seniors wearing basketball shirts for "Three-point Thursday" during spirit week.



Senior Danielle Nunez and Junior Jorge Arreguin after a proposal.



Senior Samantha Munoz being extracted from a car crash during Every 15 Minutes.



Senior Mia Castillo spinning the wheel during Once a Don, Always a Don.

WORD ON THE STREET

Who do you support in the Mayweather vs. Pacquiao fight?



"I support Pacquiao because he will make good use of the money and not just spend it on himself."

- Jennifer Guerra 11th



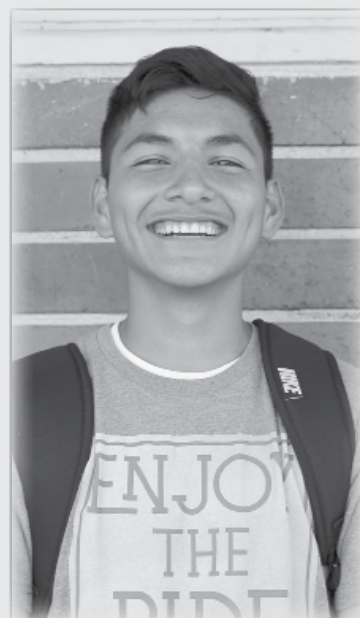
"I support Pacquiao because everyone chooses him in my family."

- Ashley Gutierrez 9th



"I support Mayweather because he's one of the best boxers around, and it's his last fight, so he's going to win."

- Michael Espinoza 9th



"I support Mayweather in the fight because he is a monster in the ring."

- Adrian Lopez 10th



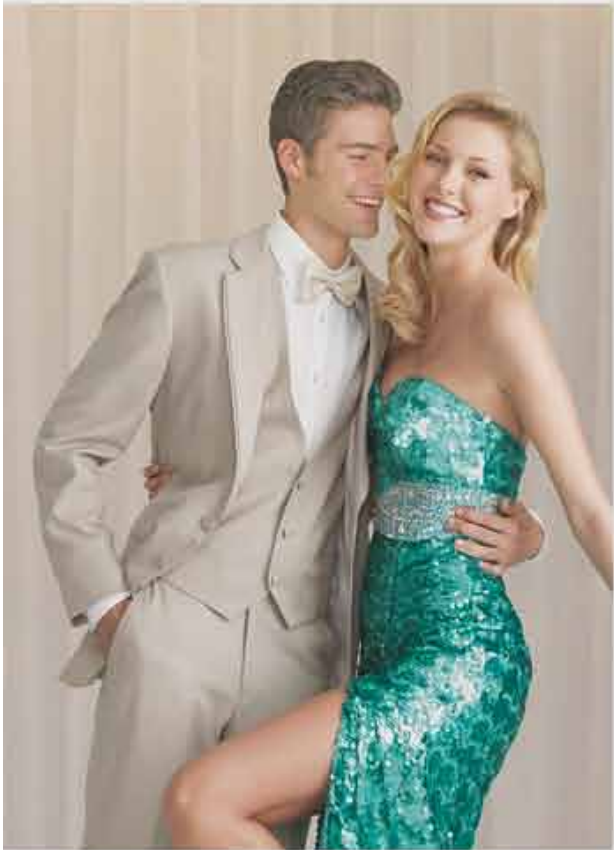
"I support Pacquiao because Mayweather just runs around. Pacquiao has the body."

- Jorge Arreguin 11th

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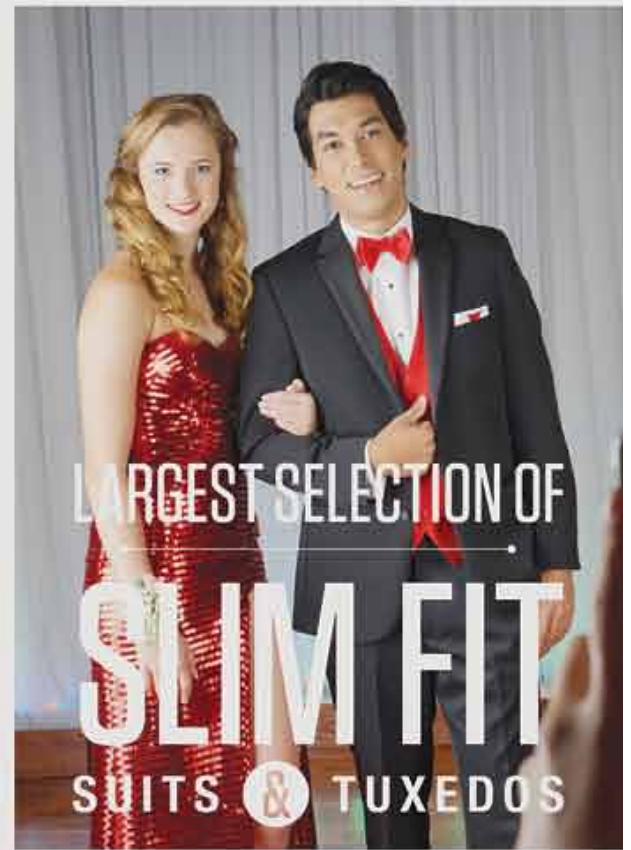


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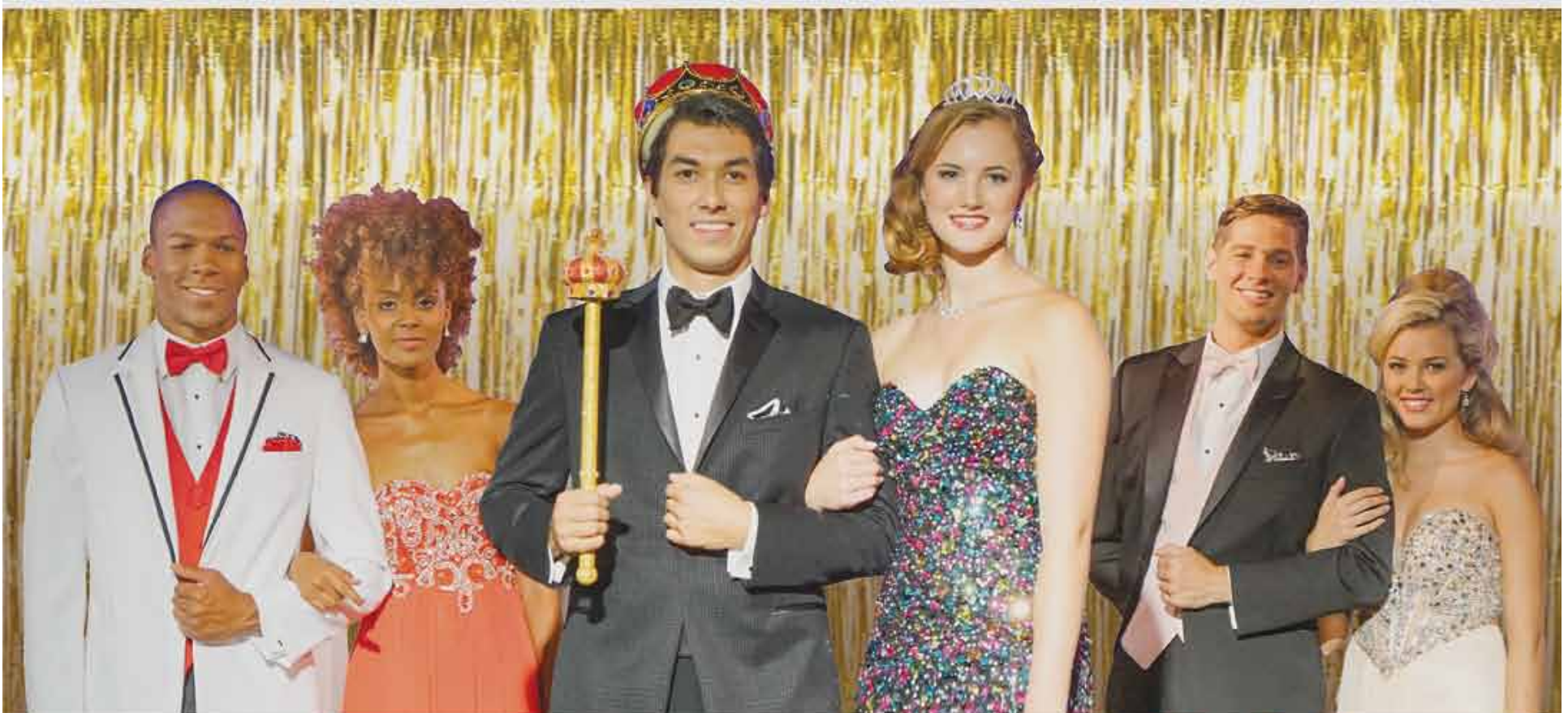
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