

ORACLE

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LAUREN KIM

ORDER IN THE COURT: Theater III actors listen to the testimonies of individuals associated with the Shepard case during a dress rehearsal.

Theater III Ensemble brings back “The Laramie Project”

Warrior thespians stage a production regarding the topics of intolerance and discrimination.

By Sarah Kremer
STAFF WRITER

Rising to the challenges of producing a modern play, Theater III Ensemble is performing “The Laramie Project” in the Thomas Moore Auditorium Nov. 6, 7, 13 and 14.

“The Laramie Project” is based on the 1998 murder of Matthew Shepard, an openly gay student at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. In the aftermath of the homophobic violence, the town faced considerable media scrutiny. A performing arts organization, the New York-based Tectonic Theater Group, travelled to Laramie and interviewed residents to capture their reactions to the murder. The group then created “The Laramie Project,” a broad compilation of the interviews. Because of the mature content, the play has been difficult for Theater III Ensemble to master.

The show incorporates many innovative theatrical elements,

including extensive monologues and overhead projections, teacher Joe Hufferd said.

“It is the most unique play that I’ve done,” Hufferd said. “It is a collection of monologues presented to the audience with little interaction with other figures. It also includes a lot of background projections and photographic projections that give the viewer a chance to see environments through photographs as opposed to sets. It’s the first time we’ve added that technological advance.”

Furthermore, many Warrior actors and actresses find that “The Laramie Project” limits dramatization because it portrays an actual historical event, senior Elizabeth Hawkinson said.

“This [play] is much more realistic,” Hawkinson said. “With other plays, there’s the story line, and it doesn’t really get much deeper than that. But this play actually did happen, which is different. It is more difficult because I’m playing a real person rather than an animated character with overactive emotions and expression.”

Although the play revolves around a sensitive subject, the as-

piration of the group remains to produce a polished and perfected performance, Hufferd said.

“My hopes are always that people who see the show feel a sense of honor or dignity in the production, and that they feel as though they see high school students striving for professionalism,” Hufferd said. “If we can impress the audience on that level, then I think that’s a success.”

The theater department hopes the play, which addresses equality for homosexuals, will unite the

student body, Hawkinson said.

“Even if [the audience] doesn’t necessarily like the play itself, [I hope] they’re moved by the concept, and that it gets them thinking about how society today discriminates against things that they don’t really need to,” Hawkinson said. “It’s going to bring our school together, collectively saying that we should treat people right, no matter what. That’s something that really needs to be said.”



LAUREN KIM

GUILTY OR INNOCENT: Sophomore actor (Russell Henderson) awaits judgment during his trial at the Albany County Courthouse.

Warrior Robotics launches preseason

Entering the competition for the first time, the members worked as a team to create a slingshot for the annual Pumpkin Launch.

By Lisa Mattson & Sarah Lee
STAFF WRITER & NEWS EDITOR

Preparing team members for future competitions, the Warrior Robotics club participated in the seventh annual Pumpkin Launch held at California State University Fullerton (CSUF) Nov. 1.

A total of 19 collegiate and community teams competed in the event, hosted by CSUF’s College of Engineering and Computer Science and the Discovery Science Center. Vying to build the most accurate apparatus, each team designed a launcher to propel various-sized pumpkins at targets up to 300 feet away. The Warrior Robotics club started designing and building a slingshot launcher in the summer.

The club decided to enter the competition after several members attended it last year as spectators, Co-President Ben Chang said.

“Last year, we took AP Physics B, and one of our extra credit assignments was to go to the Pumpkin Launch at Cal State Fullerton,” Chang said. “We saw all the cool pumpkin launchers they had, all the trebuchets and catapults. We said, ‘Hey, these are pretty simple; we can actually build one of these as a team.’”

When drafting blueprints of the machine, the team focused on achieving precision, Chang said.

“I led a design session where we brainstormed ideas,” Chang said. “Because we were on a very limited time constraint, I modeled it myself using my plans. We [built] a slingshot, not a trebuchet. The competition is for accuracy; it’s not for distance. If it was for distance, you could build a really big trebuchet, but we wanted to hit a small target; that’s how you win the competition.”

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ISSUE

LIFESTYLE

Explore the rich flavors of autumn with classic pumpkin-spiced drinks and other seasonal beverages from nearby cafés.



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FEATURE

Trace how First Sergeant Steven Lyon’s days in the U.S. Marine Corps influenced him to establish Warrior NJROTC.



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SPORTS

After years of dedication, junior Milly Chi will represent the USA with her fellow skaters on the U.S. Synchronized Skating Team.



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Upperclassmen work at local polling stations throughout OC

The opportunity to engage in the election process piqued students’ interest in politics.

By Kyle Patel
STAFF WRITER

Increasing their involvement in the democratic processes of the local community, Warrior upperclassmen worked at Orange County (OC) polling stations during the midterm election Nov. 4.

Prior to Election Day, students who met the prerequisites set by the 1996 Student Poll Worker Program attended a training session to review the procedures. Each earning \$95 for his contributions, approximately 30 Warriors helped at the all-day event, constructing voting stations, registering voters and directing them to their respective booths. Senior John-Michael Linares and teacher David Bainter led the effort to prepare and organize the students before the election.

After providing assistance at the polls, students better appreciated the complex workings of the

government, junior Sabrina Albrecht said.

“There are so many intricacies with taxes and voting that we don’t learn in school,” Albrecht said. “We learn math and English [early on], but we don’t learn the basics of government until the last part of senior year. It’s important to introduce taxes, bills, voting and payments that all will eventually make up our lives as adults. We should learn about real-world issues that we’re eventually going to have to deal with.”

A campus-hosted poll-worker training session made participation more accessible to Warriors, Linares said.

“Generally, students learn better in environments that they are comfortable in,” Linares said. “By being with their friends, they would learn the new skills better. Working with their friends to problem-solve and learning about these skills first-hand give [students] a positive experience.”

Encouraging political involvement will allow students to make educated decisions in the future when the time comes to vote on

legislation and elect policy makers, senior Kirsten Manahan said.

“Everyone should [participate in elections because] we’re voting for people to represent us,” Manahan said. “It will help society because more people will be represented in what they want. We’re always talking about how we want our voices to be heard in the community, and this is our chance to make that happen.”

Students should act in accordance with not only politics but also economics and current affairs for a more knowledgeable voting population, Bainter said.

“I think it’s beneficial to have a general awareness of the [events happening] around you,” Bainter said. “It’s not just about paying attention during an election, though. [Students] should really look at politics, the economy and everything [else] that’s going on around them. Getting involved with these processes gives [them] the opportunity to make informed decisions about our government, whose policies directly come back to either support or harm us.”



RENEE SUSANTO

MIDTERM MADNESS: Senior poll worker receives a completed ballot from a voter at a Fullerton fire station polling location.



LAUREN KIM

T-MINUS TEN SECONDS: Prior to pumpkin launch, Robotics seniors prepare and calibrate the team’s slingshot device.

Continued from page 1

Soon after the Warriors began constructing the launcher, they faced the hurdle of coordinating their members, Chang said.

“The biggest challenge we faced during the actual competition was organizing everybody and delegating them a task,” Chang said. “It’s really hard because you want to build something, but you don’t know how to split it up and give everybody an equal amount of work and be productive.”

However, the Pumpkin Launch prepared new members of the team for future large-scale competitions by helping them gain the skills necessary to work on more advanced projects, junior Christopher Wang said.

“We didn’t have a lot of pre-season projects last year, so a lot of the members didn’t have any experience [in the] competitions,” Wang said. “Because of the amount of projects we’re taking on this year, all our new members have the chance to apply themselves to the projects. [The Pumpkin Launch] was all about helping

them get experience. When we do go into competition season, we’ll have experienced builders.”

Also, as one of the few high school groups participating, the team inspired younger students at the event to invest themselves in robotics, senior Linda Vu said.

“[The Pumpkin Launch] was a great way to promote our club because we were one of the few high school teams there who actually had a launcher,” Vu said. “A lot of the community came out to see what it was. There was a lot of publicity for us. Junior high students had the opportunity to talk to us about it and gather up their interests in engineering and robotics.”

While preparing for the Pumpkin Launch, the board pinpoints individual and group strengths before the FIRST Robotics Competition begins second semester, Chang said.

“The club isn’t just a club; it’s a team,” Chang said. “You have to qualify to be in it. [Club leaders] see your qualifications during the pre-season, and we can see if you’re eligible to compete. Once competition season starts, we’ll know exactly what we’re doing, and we can hit [the ground] with a running start.”

Budget Challenge tests students’ fiscal competency

Warrior seniors are partaking in a national competition to demonstrate their budget management proficiency.

By Nicole Kuntjoro
STAFF WRITER

Testing their financial savviness, Warrior seniors are participating in the H&R Block Budget Challenge that commenced Oct. 17.

The ongoing online national competition gauges students’ money management skills as they prepare for their future lives as financially responsible adults. To assess the students’ expertise, the contest places individuals in a scenario where they balance an income and budget while paying

various fees and bills. Participants earn points based on the amount of money in their savings accounts, performances on quizzes and surveys and overall participation throughout the two-month period. At the end of the simulation, the student with the most points in these three categories will receive a \$100,000 grand prize scholarship. Students are also eligible for \$20,000 scholarships based solely on their savings funds and quiz points. These scores will be calculated when the simulation concludes Dec. 18.

In addition to encouraging students to study fiscal management, the Budget Challenge gives students the opportunity to apply their economics knowledge in a semi-high-stakes environment, senior Katie Sun said.

“[The competition] gives students a chance to gain some hands-on experience with money without actually getting their feet wet,” Sun said. “The scenarios that show up have a lot of applications to real life. [They] demonstrate how we could pay our bills or how to choose a 401(k) plan or how to choose a bank account based on your situation.”

These scenarios exemplify the applicability and practicality of the financial skills that students develop in an economics class, teacher David St. Clair said.

“There can be competitions in other academic subjects, but the cool thing about economics is that because it is so real, it has real-life implications,” St. Clair said. “There are a lot of similar contests [to this one] that emulate and talk

about some of the things that we talk [about] in the classroom that bring them to life and make them real. [The challenge] expands upon what we do in this class and brings the curriculum to life.”

Competitions like the Budget Challenge promote personal fiscal management education that many individuals do not receive in high school, St. Clair said.

“After the recession in 2008, there has been a huge push in the world by private organizations and the government to make sure that people are financially literate and to make sure that people understand not only economics but also personal finance,” St. Clair said. “There are too many that graduate from high school that don’t know how to balance a checkbook, what a 401(k) is, how

to write a check or how to survive in the basic consumer economy. From that perspective, what these competitions have to offer to the students is great.”

Through the issues posed by the competition, students will gain experience and be better equipped to lead independent lives, senior Ashley Takeshita said.

“The skills that I learn from the competition will definitely help me in the future,” Takeshita said. “I am learning how to budget money and how to spend my money wisely. The entire purpose of this is to learn how to budget efficiently and to realize what I can and cannot afford. It prepares students to face the real world when we have to live on our own later on when we have graduated and have jobs.”

Warrior administration hosts Golden Jubilee festival

Reflecting on decades of demographic and cultural shifts, the campus will host its semicentennial memorial event.

By Riddhima Kumar & Joshua Alcantara
STAFF WRITER & NEWS EDITOR

Commemorating many years of Warrior pride, students and alumni are invited to attend Troy’s 50th Anniversary Celebration on campus Nov. 8.

A myriad of activities will take place throughout the day, such as club-organized game booths and staff-guided campus tours. In addition to celebrations of the school’s academic progress in recent decades, performances by the Warrior Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, Red Hots, cheer team and band will provide a glimpse of Warriors’ extracurricular accomplishments. Furthermore, the current and former principals will participate in a cake-cutting ceremony to honor the Warriors’ achievements since 1964.

To recognize various milestones, the administration will transform the 300 and 500 building hallways into exhibitions of historic relics from different eras, Assistant Principal Danielle

Kenfield said. “We are collecting memorabilia from the last 50 years,” Kenfield said. “You will see band uniforms, athletic programs and slides from the sixties, seventies and eighties. We will get old projectors instead of putting the slides into a DVD player because we wanted to stay with the theme and be authentic. What we hope we can replicate in the hallways are interesting things that have happened since the specific decade that have put Troy on the

“The way we come together to do things, for example, the ‘Fight Like a Warrior’ t-shirts, our togetherness and how we act like a family are really unique to our school.”

Michelle Kim
junior

map. We want to honor Troy’s history and culture.” As a demonstration of school spirit, the event will unite current Warriors and alumni, junior Michelle Kim said. “[The event] is a good way to bring us all together,” Kim said. “People who are attending Troy right now will be going. Alumni will come, too. That’s the best thing about Troy: unity. The way we come together to do things,

for example, the ‘Fight Like a Warrior’ t-shirts, our togetherness and how we act like a family are really unique to our school.” Over the years, Warrior focuses have shifted in a more academic direction, creating an environment where students can be social and be motivated to learn, teacher Rich Liem said.

“When I went here, [Troy] was not nearly as academically-oriented,” Liem said. “It was a traditional high school with lower test scores and [fewer] class offerings. Students are much more interested in learning today than when I graduated in 1982. It is a place where people are serious and can have fun, but still have an objective.” The 50th Anniversary Celebration will honor the dynamic history of the Warriors, Kenfield said.

“I want to see people having a good time,” Kenfield said. “I want it to be fun whether alumni come to football games or they want to become a part of Troy Support Organization (TSO) or they fly in for the day and that’s it. Everybody who participates is really celebrating our past, because it is our past that got us where we are today. We would not be here without all of the past things that have happened.”



COURTESY OF ILIUM



LAUREN KIM

NOSTALGIC NUANCE: Since its opening in the mid-1960s (above), the modern Warrior campus has become more diverse and academically driven (below).

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Celebrating

50th

BACK TO THE PAST

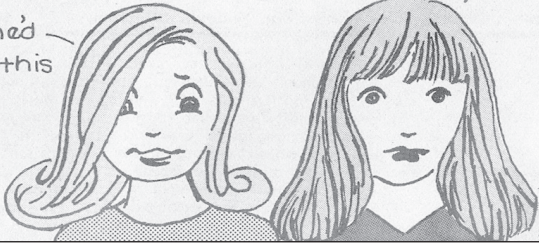
Travel down memory lane with Oracle as we celebrate our 50th anniversary. This issue features five snippets from past papers published from 1981 to 1985.

Compiled by Ariel Liu and Angela Zeng, EDITORS IN CHIEF and cartoons by Ariel Liu and Hanbi Ko, CARTOON EDITOR

Now children, today Mr. Smith from the district will be sitting in on class.

I wish she'd always be this nice.

Yeah, maybe Mr. Smith'll stick around till grade time.



From 1983



From 1981: "Troyletts"

Currently on the Troy campus, teachers employ a variety of methods to calculate students' semester grades. This variety proves confusing and misleading for many students. In order to better benefit both the students and teachers, some form of policy should be adopted to unify at least the various departments' semester grading procedures.

One of the more common grading procedures being used by course instructors such as social science teacher Mr. David Bremer involves the averaging of the two quarter grades for the semester grade. Miss Susan Gilmont, English teacher, uses another method in issuing semester grades in which two-thirds is based on the second quarter, and only one-third on the first quarter.

Mr. Gene Beaver, psychology teacher, bases the semester grade almost completely on the second quarter. This method, he said, works to prevent second-quarter laziness from a student who is "depending on his 'A' (first quarter) to get him a 'C' at the semester."

From 1982: "Grading Policies"

GOONIES — the Spielberg tale of fortune-hunting youngsters from the wrong side of the tracks promises your money's worth of adventure and comedy as well as hit music. (Theme music by Cyndi Lauper).

D.A.R.Y.L. — A modern action adventure revolving around a robot/boy, his normal family and their efforts to stop top army officials from absorbing Project D.A.R.Y.L.

HOT CHILI — of course no summer is unavoidable without its share of teen sex comedies. This one depicts for guys with over-active hormones at a resort besieged by nymphomaniacs. To add depth to the flick, the meaning of life is examined.

PERFECT — is anything but! John Travolta gets down and gets sweaty as investigator/journalist searching for drug dealers. Ultimately leading to the ultra-chic world of health spas to fight crimes, he finds time to aerobicize with leotard-clad Jamie Lee Curtis.

From 1985: "Summer Movies"



From 1984

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STAFF EDITORIAL

Expensive college applications place burden on family savings

There is no doubt about it. College is expensive. But forget tuition, just applying to college these days can break the bank. From exorbitant testing expenses to outrageous application fees, the entire admission process just screams dollar signs. To be swallowed by bills even before we leave the nest is highway robbery at its best.

It all begins with the pricey testing fees. Almost every college requires students to take either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Testing (ACT) with writing. At \$52.50 and \$54.50 respectively, these tests drain our wallets right off the bat. If you add on re-takes and the recommended \$26 SAT subject tests, the price soars to a couple hundred dollars. What about the fee waiver, you ask? Nope, it does not apply unless you fall into a low socioeconomic bracket.

The onslaught of dollar signs does not end after test day; on the contrary, it has only just begun. Your test scores are only official if they are sent to colleges by College Board or ACT, Inc. For the SAT, four score reports are free only if they are sent nine days after the testing date. That means those of us who want to save a little money must submit our scores before we even see them. If we choose to mail our results later, these reports are \$11 per college; the ACT charges a dollar more. So if you want to apply to colleges that require official reports, you had

better get ready to pay up or be prepared to send off an unknown score that could potentially harm your chances in the end. From this perspective, it seems as if companies are banking on our confidence, or rather lack thereof.

Then after the testing come the dreaded applications themselves. Many students will be deterred

with just one glance at today's insane fees. According to U.S. News and World Report, the average cost is now \$41, the highest it has ever been. Even worse, the elite and popular colleges charge two times that amount, from \$70 to \$85 per application. And with the increased competition, most of us will likely apply to multiple colleges. The advent of websites such as The Common Application has made the process even easier. According to University of California Los Angeles's Higher Education Research Institute, nearly one-third of prospective students applied

to seven or more schools in 2013. That is 11 percent higher than the 1988 statistic. With all these applications, you would assume colleges are making quite the profit. Harvard alone gained around \$2 million last year. The entire process seems like a good business, especially since such selective schools are going to attract more students. When you think about it, the lack of a guaranteed acceptance makes all this spending even more ludicrous.

At times, it seems as if testing companies and universities are just looking to make a profit off of college-bound students. From what can be seen today, the cost of applying to college is only going to continue rising. Because it seems unlikely for colleges to start reducing their costs anytime soon, we had better start saving up early before every last penny is squeezed out of our wallets.



HANBI KO

Overreaction to Ebola epidemic needs to stop

By Yannie Hoang
STAFF WRITER

The next epidemic is not Ebola. It is mass hysteria.

Until the death of U.S. Ebola patient Thomas Duncan, America had kept its distance from the deadly disease. However, since the virus has entered the country, citizens have grown more sensitive to public health outbreaks. While it is necessary to respond to this global crisis, it is more essential to avoid adding unnecessary fear to the chaos.

Though concern for public health is encouraging, the current national response has gone overboard. To put things in perspective, Americans are more likely to die from a bee sting than from contracting Ebola, according to National Public Radio. If infected, despite the one in 13.3 mil-

lion chance of an American being infected, medical staff and resources are already prepared. The disease, currently with no vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration, can be alleviated with supportive care. The treatment involves suppressing symptoms such as hemorrhages and body aches. Starting treatment earlier can also increase the chances of recovery, as was the case for nurse Nina Pham.

However, the nation must also not let its guard down too easily. For instance, two possible cures for Ebola will not be approved and released to the public until they undergo extensive lab tests and clinical trials. Additionally, because it takes about 21 days for symptoms to show, a carrier of the disease can slip by undetected at airports. In Duncan's case, because he did not show symptoms, he was mistakenly deemed healthy by airport customs officers. Rather than futilely

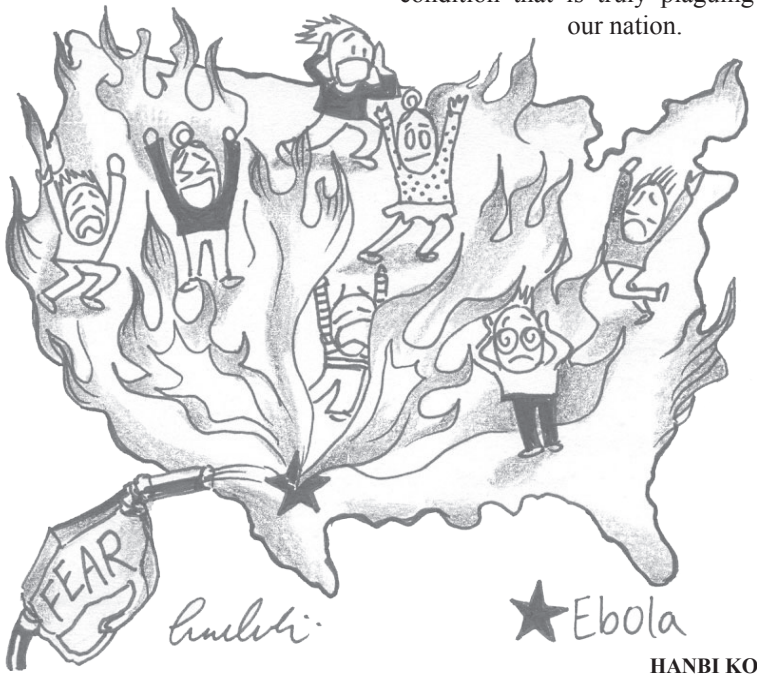
attempting to block all possible pathways of the disease into the U.S., we need to confront the issue by finding a cure.

While the search for a vaccine continues, the public should be educated about Ebola. Online courses can easily teach people how to avoid contracting the disease or identify tell-tale symptoms. That way, citizens can respond more reasonably to the disease and less crowded hospitals can focus their efforts on improving communication.

Most importantly, we should redirect our attention to the disease in West Africa. Our national total of nine cases pales in comparison to West Africa's 7,157, according to Time. These statistics correlate with the difference in living conditions; crowded Africans are more likely to come into contact with infected body fluids than Americans are. With a dysfunctional health system broken down by the Ebola crisis, Af-

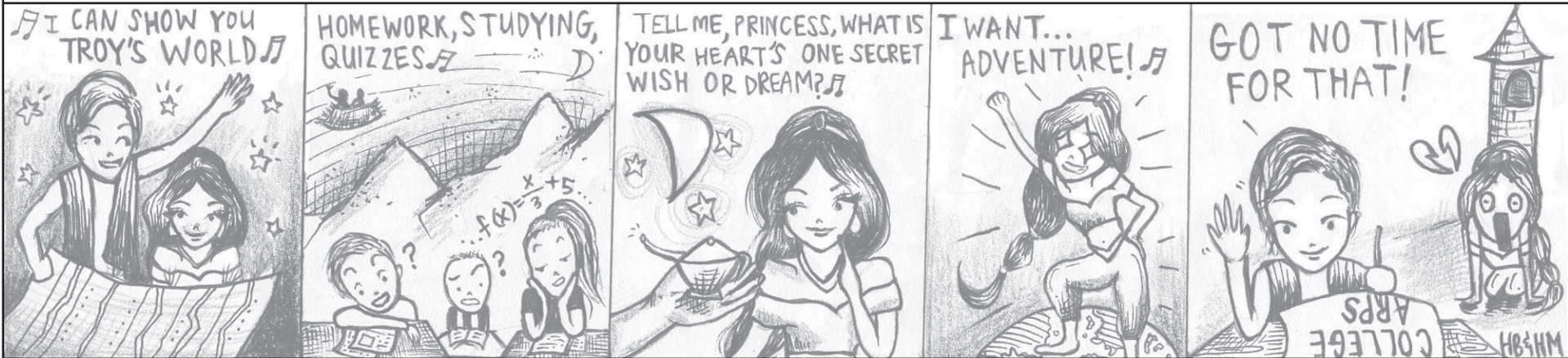
rica is in want of necessary support, from medical volunteers to donations. The U.S. should continue defending West Africa from Ebola. Our support is the key to fighting the virus.

While it is a serious force to be reckoned with, Ebola should not be a source of panic. Rather, it should be a driving force for Americans to work together to suppress unfounded fear, the one condition that is truly plaguing our nation.



HANBI KO

Once Upon A Troy: College Crunch by Hanbi & Hanmin Ko



PUMPKIN SPICE & EVERYTHING NICE

Autumn—and the accompanying pumpkin mayhem—is upon us. Learn more about the origins of the pumpkin spice craze and find some alternative drinks to the ubiquitous Pumpkin Spice Latte.

Compiled by Leanne Ho, ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE EDITOR, and photos by Ariel Liu, Leanne Ho and Maggie Deng

THE GREAT PUMPKIN SPICE REVIVAL

By Leanne Ho
ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE EDITOR

It starts innocuously, creeping into our pies and desserts. Then it infiltrates our coffee and floods our Instagram feeds. By the middle of autumn, it drowns us in a sea of orange. From dog treats to deodorant, almost everything the eye can see (or the nose can smell) has been doused in pumpkin spice.

Although its ubiquity might be overwhelming, pumpkin spice, with its cloying fragrance and fifty shades of orange, is nevertheless a crucial autumn tradition. How else would we Southern Californians be able to tell our seasons apart? The trees? Don't be absurd. We rely on the arrival of Starbucks' Pumpkin Spice Latte (dubbed #PSL by devotees) to signal the transition from aviators and muscle tees to oversized sweaters and slouchy beanies. What's more, grocery store displays of pumpkin-flavored everything remind us that nothing in this world is sacred, not even Trader Joe's ice cream mochi, which now comes in a Pumpkin Pie variety.

The pumpkin spice craze can be traced back to 2003, when Starbucks first introduced its Pumpkin Spice Latte. At the time, executives had been searching for a niche drink to bridge the gap between the iced teas of summer and the peppermint mochas of winter. After testing and discarding drinks such as the "chocolate caramel" and "cinnamon spice," Starbucks selected the humble Pumpkin Spice Latte. It proved to be a wise choice. The unique potpourri of spices includes cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and allspice—what chefs and scientists consider "warm" flavors. Mint and cilantro, for comparison, are "cool" flavors. In the fall, we tend to crave warm spices such as the ones in the PSL, which kindle a feeling of coziness with every sip. It's no surprise, then, that the Pumpkin Spice Latte is a massive success to date, over 200 million have been sold. Starbucks, in all its devious brilliance, also restricts sales of the PSL to fall months, using the limited availability to strategically increase demand.

Since that first PSL, things have escalated quickly. Knock-offs have popped up at McDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts and 7-Eleven, just to name a few. And don't forget the other pumpkin spice products; in past years, stores have begun to stock their shelves with a proliferation of Pumpkin Spice Oreos, Pumpkin Spice Marshmallows and, in the greatest outrage of all, Pumpkin Spice Tortilla Chips. The out-of-control trend is a marketing gimmick, pumpkin spice critics warn. But consumers just don't seem to care. Pumpkin sales in the United States have risen 34 percent in the last five years. On Twitter, the PSL boasts close to 96,000 followers. And if the trash can outside Forever 21 is any indication, Pumpkin Spice Latte is the flavor of the season. Whether you love it or hate it, this great autumn tradition is here to stay.

PUMPKIN PIE TEA

Price: \$5.00 // Rating: ●●●●
Location: Tranquil Tea Lounge
106 W. Wilshire Ave
Fullerton, CA 92832

By Ariel Liu, EDITOR IN CHIEF

If LUSH holiday bath bombs came in a porcelain teapot, this would be the taste. Tranquil Tea Lounge's Pumpkin Pie Tea delights all senses. Instead of pumpkin, the secret ingredient is organic rooibos, a non-caffeinated bush tea. Its translucent, mahogany liquid captivates as the server decants the tea into a simple glass cup. The hot steam carries with it the inviting fragrance of a wild flower field after the rain, enhanced with the homely aroma of cinnamon ginger cookies. Its fresh, light flavor cleanses the palate, and the aftertaste brings to mind a blend of green tea and nutmeg. Although fans of traditional astringent brew will be disappointed, those who dislike the dry-mouth aftereffect of some teas should take note. This drink's subdued, soothing sweetness will make a tea-lover out of anyone.

KEY

● Just water, please.

●● Meh.

●●● Christmas came early.

PUMPKIN SMASH SMOOTHIE

Price: \$4.99 // Rating: ●●●●
Location: Jamba Juice
1080 E. Imperial Hwy E1, Brea, CA 92821

By Leanne Ho, ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE EDITOR

With its dull and earthy undertones, Jamba Juice's Pumpkin Smash Smoothie is a welcome reprieve from the syrupy monotony of a Pumpkin Spice Latte. The creamy smoothie incorporates an edge of cinnamon, but refrains from piling on any added sugar. As a result, the drink errs on the sour side, with the powerful pumpkin flavor taking center stage. Just remember to drink it quickly, because once it's melted, it takes on an unsavory color and consistency.

BUTTER PECAN LATTE

Price: \$4.65 // Rating: ●●●●
Location: Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf
3626 Grand Ave, Chino Hills, CA 91709

By Maggie Deng, MANAGING EDITOR

If the joy of burrowing into a thick, soft blanket for a brief winter hibernation (also known as a nap) had a flavor, it would be Butter Pecan Latte. Upon first sip, the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf's Butter Pecan Latte greets you with a luscious milk froth, complemented by a drizzle of caramel. The smooth texture of the coffee envelops you with a warm tingle that travels to every inch of your body. This drink is perfect for anyone craving a sweet pick-me-up. By toning down the usually cloying profile of caramel with a healthy dose of vanilla and hints of nuttiness, the Butter Pecan Latte makes for a balanced treat.

BUTTERSCOTCH BOMBSHELL ICED TEA

Price: \$5.00 // Rating: ●●●●
Location: Tranquil Tea Lounge
106 W. Wilshire Ave, Fullerton, CA 92832

By Leanne Ho, ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE EDITOR

This organic white tea from Tranquil Tea Lounge features bright floral notes and a saccharine undercurrent of cinnamon. To offset the sweetness, pink peppercorn and marigolds lend an herbal touch, resulting in a well-balanced medley of autumnal flavors. The tea tastes the way the Hallmark candle aisle smells: rich and comforting. However, unlike other heavy seasonal drinks, the Butterscotch Bombshell Tea keeps the flavor to a minimum, allowing it to linger on the tongue without overwhelming the taste buds. The iced option (shown below) delivers the same punch without any of the heat, a perfect compromise for our balmy Southern California autumns.

CINNAMON APPLE CIDER

Price: \$4.00 // Rating: ●●●●
Location: Night Owl
200 N. Harbor Blvd, Fullerton, CA 92832

By Joshua Alcantara, NEWS EDITOR

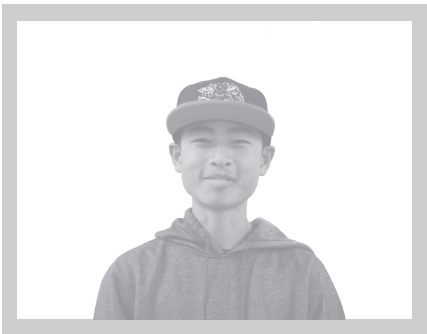
It was the best of drinks. It was the worst of drinks. Consisting of raw apple juice and a shot of cinnamon, this hot cider elicits memories of homestyle apple pies. However, with each sip, it becomes clear that this apple confection has lost itself in an entirely unsuitable medium. Taste buds suited for less sugary fare will be overcome by the saccharine drink within the first few sips, and if the beverage is not constantly stirred, the cinnamon dregs at the bottom of the cup will leave an unpleasant, grainy texture on the tongue. Regardless, for the sweet-toothed connoisseur, this beverage can sate any apple pie craving. Just buy the smallest size.



WARRIORS WEIGH IN

Because of recent social media controversy, Warriors were asked the question: In the event of a photo leak, is Snapchat at fault for allowing a security breach? Or are users at fault for sending embarrassing pictures?

Compiled by Elizabeth Li, **OPINION EDITOR** and Lauren Kim and Renee Susanto, **PHOTO**

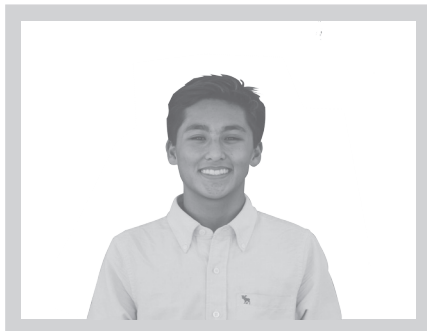


"[I think] the person's at fault because they shouldn't have sent the photo in the first place. There could be a security breach at any time. You should be cautious because you never know who will find your pictures online. It could ruin your future and reputation when you look for colleges and future jobs."

~freshman

"I'd say both are at fault. The person who sent it shouldn't have sent a nude in the first place because that's something you should keep private to yourself and you never know what's going to happen between the two of you. But Snapchat should [also] be protecting their users, so I feel like both are at fault."

~sophomore

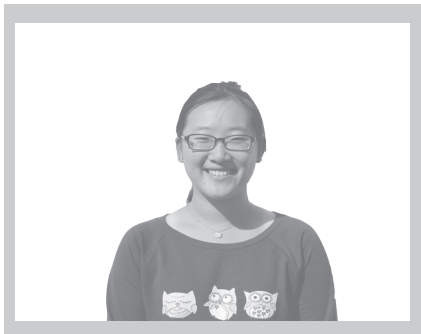


"Users [are at fault]. Snapchat is just a program. The people who use it, that's their fault for not being responsible when they use it. That's why I think Snapchat is not responsible for photo leaks. People [should be responsible] when they do this. The hackers [are the ones who] start these leaks."

~junior

"I think that it's not the user's fault. When you agree to use an app, it's an agreement that the app is going to protect your privacy. If that privacy is breached, it's not the user's fault that Snapchat is being hacked by someone. It's Snapchat's fault for having a not-secure-enough security."

~senior



Companies should not profit by selling offensive clothing

By Christina Meyer
STAFF WRITER

"Offensive" seems to be this fall's fashion trend.

Recent merchandise labeled with controversial messages is causing a great stir. In September, Urban Outfitters released a faux-bloodstained "Kent State Sweatshirt." It alluded to the 1970 Kent State shooting, when the Ohio National Guard killed four unarmed students during a Vietnam War protest. Though it was not the first fashion offense of its kind, the sweater sparked debates about the inappropriate nature of certain products. In fact, within the past month, a Sears ring proudly touted a silver swastika and a shirt sold in a Filipino mall read, "It's Not Rape It's a Snuggle with a Struggle." Such offensive products should not even be manufactured,

much less sold, by companies. In doing so, they are essentially making money by antagonizing particular groups of people with their egregious products.

Although their image should be tainted by selling derogatory clothing, companies actually benefit from these transactions. For example, Nine West, a shoe and accessory store, published thinly-veiled misogynistic ads portraying women as "husband hunting" when they are just shopping for shoes. Contrary to the common belief that the store will suffer from negative press for releasing these ads, branding consultants said it was a calculated move intended to increase publicity. Indeed, when fashion producers release controversial lines, they garner attention. Eventually the criticisms simmer down, leaving companies with much more exposure, especially on social media.

Although offensive garments and trends often cause a stir among targeted consumers, company profits are barely dented by protests. For instance, after Abercrombie & Fitch released a shirt with racist caricatures of Asians saying such slogans as "Buddha ash," Stanford Asian-American students staged a boycott. As a result of the group's efforts, the shirts were recalled. How-

ever, even with the negative response, the store continued to make substantial profits. Overall, Abercrombie's sales did not decrease significantly at all; rather, the company reported that it had a profit margin greater than 40 percent that same year. Neither the companies nor the original clothing designers faced any economic consequences. This incidence demonstrates the fact that stores face few restrictions and are allowed to sell increasingly reprehensible outfits with impunity.

Through such insensitive mass-marketing, companies trivialize the serious problems that their young and impressionable audiences might be facing. Many shirts with phrases that condone eating disorders, such as "Nothing Tastes as Good as Being

Skinny Feels," continue to be sold. Similarly, HUF and Pacsun sold controversial apparel with drug paraphernalia glorifying substance use to their primarily under-aged target group. With 36.4 percent of high school seniors reported to have smoked mari-

juana, companies are not helping to reduce these numbers when they sell distasteful products. By referencing drug use and violence in their merchandise, corporations make these behaviors seem harmless to teenagers, who may then become unsensitized to these products and even partake in them. After all, the power of suggestion is irresistible. Why else would schools ban clothing that depict illegal products?

With such thoughtless trends, it is no wonder that many consumers find themselves isolated from popular fashion. Companies should not be selling products that feature obnoxious slogans and images in order to amass profits and attract public attention. Only by retracting their contentious clothing lines can corporations help put an end to this offensive fashion fad.



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TROY
HIGH
SCHOOL

Album Reviews: 1989 (TAYLOR SWIFT)...



TRACKLIST

1. Welcome to New York
2. Blank Space
3. Style
4. Out of the Woods
5. All You Had to Do Was Stay
6. Shake it Off
7. I Wish You Would
8. Bad Blood
9. Wildest Dreams
10. How You Get the Girl
11. This Love
12. I Know Places
13. Clean

With her release of “1989,” Taylor Swift makes a disappointing shift to the pop music genre.

By Adrija Chakrabarty
STAFF WRITER

One upstaging, four albums and a dozen heartbreaks later, Taylor Swift has joined the ranks of mediocre pop artists with her newest album, “1989.”

Swift first entered the music industry at 16 years old, when she captivated both country and mainstream pop audiences with her melancholy tune “Teardrops on my Guitar.” In 2008, after releasing her “Fearless” album, Swift gained acclaim for her unique country music that effortlessly combined earthy tones with a touch of contemporary beat. However, with her latest release, “1989,” Swift has ditched her diluted country style and soulful lyrics for the glory of autotuned pop.

Look no further than the album cover to get a feel for the “indie” vibe Swift tries to attain; the vintage crewneck and Polaroid picture are reminiscent of the late 1980s, an era that has been making a comeback in retro fashion and music. This is especially evident in “Out of the Woods” and “Welcome to New York,” two songs in which the grating, autotuned voice is paired with bland techno infusions. Although these tunes may appeal to ardent Swifties and pop music aficio-

nados, the pulsating beats are mediocre at best and the mindless repetition sounds as if she ran out of words to sing.

However, some songs strike a delicate balance between old and new. Albeit overplayed, there is undeniable charm in Swift’s “Shake it Off.” With its fast-paced rhythm and audacious, optimistic lyrics, the melody sounds closer to popular music than country without coming off as strained. Also, songs such as “Blank Space” revisit the theme of reckless love present in her previous albums but with a twist, switching out her classic guitar for techno instrumentals. The result is a sound that effortlessly combines the best of her past and present styles.

“1989” also showcases some hidden gems like “Wildest Dreams” and “Clean.” A reprieve from her instrumentally busy pieces, these tracks have a chillingly beautiful tone. In “Wildest Dreams,” Taylor sings with a light, breathy voice, creating an ethereal melody that is soothing to the ear. Also, in “Clean,” the country princess makes a short reappearance; simple and sweet, “Clean” hearkens to Swift’s past music and possesses the depth that some of her pop pieces lack.

Although some songs embody Swift’s transition in a more agreeable way, others border on cacophony. Diverging from her trademark simplicity, Swift inserts noisy instrumentals in too many pieces. But if you think my criticism is too harsh, don’t worry. Swift can just shake it off.



...and Heart On My Sleeve (MARY LAMBERT)



Mary Lambert’s debut album, “Heart On My Sleeve,” is a somber autobiography featuring thoughtful lyrics and expressive vocals.

By Anthony Kim and Leanne Ho, STAFF WRITER AND ENTERTAINMENT & LIFESTYLE EDITOR

An aspiring singer and songwriter, Mary Lambert was once “a million miles away from anywhere,” as she sings in her song “So Far Away.” While searching for a profession in music, the Seattle native worked as a waitress and bartender, occasionally dabbling in drugs and alcohol. After years of financial and personal obstacles, Lambert was asked to write and sing the hook of Macklemore and Ryan Lewis’ marriage equality anthem “Same Love.” In it, she discusses her personal journey as a Christian and a lesbian. The part landed her a contract with Capitol Records, where she catapulted to stardom from rock bottom.

Her autobiographical debut album, “Heart On My Sleeve,” was released on Oct. 14. With instrumentals and melodies that ease the mind, the album explores the life experiences that helped Lambert achieve “quasi-stardom” (as she calls it). In “Secrets,” the opening track, she confesses, “I’m overweight / I’m always late / I’ve got too many things to say,” only to follow up with “I don’t care if the world

knows what my secrets are.” Her bubbly ode to self-acceptance is as happy as the album gets; the mood sombers quickly, though, as she tackles her struggles with sexual abuse, body image, bipolar disorder and sexuality.

Listeners can only empathize with Lambert as she establishes a sorrowful mood in many of her songs. Even the background instrumentals, which usually consist of a piano or a delayed drum beat, complement the slow speed and striking vocals of each song. The diminishing rhythm further elicits our sympathy. Beautifully arranged into a song, Lambert’s lyrics tell us of her perseverance and uniqueness. She even takes Rick Springfield’s classic “Jessie’s Girl” and re-imagines it as a dark piano ballad in which a woman laments her unrequited love for another woman. And in “Dear One,” Lambert discards instrumentals entirely for powerful spoken word poetry.

The album’s mournful tone conveys sadness and evokes admiration. “Heart On My Sleeve” has been Lambert’s first step in telling others her story through music. And with lyrical songs that open up her personality and experiences to the world, the album presents Lambert as imperfect, yet utterly likeable. Looking beyond her flaws and messy past, the listener can sympathize and even relate to Lambert. As she puts it in “Sum of Our Parts,” “we are more than our scars / we are more than the sum of our parts.”



TRACKLIST

1. Secrets
2. So Far Away
3. Ribcage
4. Dear One
5. When You Sleep
6. Chasing the Moon
7. Jessie’s Girl
8. Monochromatic
9. Heart On My Sleeve
10. Wounded Animal
11. Sum of Our Parts
12. Sing To Me
13. Assembly Line
14. Sum of Our Parts (Alternate Version)

ORACLE GIVEAWAY

Like our page on Facebook, Oracle (Troy High), to be entered in a raffle to win a Mary Lambert poster, mint tin, sticker or temporary tattoo. Giveaway ends Monday, Nov. 10. Winners will be notified via call slips by Wednesday, Nov. 12.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ASSOCIATED PRESS, US MAGAZINE, BIG MACHINE RECORDS AND CAPITOL RECORDS
GIVEAWAY PHOTOS BY LAUREN KIM

1974

1980

1990

1991

1995

2014

ACTIVE DUTY: 1974-1995

Enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduating from Bell High School.



1975: Lyon and a fellow marine take a break while participating in landing craft training on the Naval Amphibious Base in Coronado, California.

Reported to Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, as a Tactics Instructor and Platoon Commander.



1986: Lyon rests in his makeshift home while stationed at the Australian military base, Shoalwater Bay.



1989: While parachute training in Okinawa, Japan, Lyon laughs good-humoredly when he misses his landing target.

Elevated to the rank of First Sergeant from previous position of Gunnery Sergeant.

Due to a near-fatal accident in Anchorage, Alaska, that resulted in a five-week coma, placed on temporary retirement.



1992: In partnership with Toys for Tots, Lyon visits an young patient in critical care at the Providence Hospital in Anchorage, Alaska.

Accepted full retirement and began NJROTC Program at Troy High School as an Associate Naval Science Instructor.



STANDING TALL: Compared to its humble beginnings, Troy High School's NJROTC program now boasts over 400 cadets.

THE HEART OF A LYON

Celebrate the Marine Corps' birthday on Nov. 10 and chronicle former Marine and Warrior Naval Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps founder Steven Lyon's journey from high school recruit to esteemed First Sergeant of the Marine Corps.

Article by Yuri Ceriale, **STAFF WRITER**
Graphics by Rachel Lee, **GRAPHIC**

Photos by Renee Susanto, **PHOTO** and courtesy of Steven Lyon and NJROTC

The year is 1974. A boy of 17 wakes up just before 5:00 a.m., laces his boots, presses out the creases in his uniform and falls in with his unit by 7:15. Following a run-down from his unit commander, the young man spends the rest of the day patrolling the grounds of Camp Pendleton as he takes on guard-duty and undergoes intense physical training, all with a hand ready for a respectful salute.

Forty years ago, this was the daily routine of First Sergeant Steven Lyon, a former member of the U.S. Marine Corps—the country's elite military organization of about 200,000 soldiers. Since then, Lyon has transformed from a warrior on the battlefield to a Warrior on campus, and his current career as a Naval Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC) instructor calls for him to teach young cadets the lessons he learned from his missions worldwide.

As Lyon came to learn, the heart of the Marine Corps beats to the rhythm of its motto: "Semper Fidelis," Latin for "always faithful." Loyalty, integrity and respect are essential

Marine Corps values, and such ideals paralleled with Lyon's own long-held beliefs, he said.

"I grew up with a single mom," Lyon said. "My mom was strict, but she was fair. If I crossed certain lines, my mother would sit me down at the table and have me tell her why I did what I did. When I got into the Marine Corps, there was a standard, and they wanted me to reach it. If I didn't reach it, they wanted to know why, and then they would help me reach it."

Lyon soon turned from a fresh-out-of-bootcamp newbie into an experienced Marine prepared to engage in risky overseas conflicts, including the evacuation of Saigon in 1975 and the political power shift in the Philippines. His most notable experiences in Asia, however, did not test his body, but rather tested his mind as he encountered harsh realities that contrasted with the wel-

coming environment of America, Lyon said.

"I've been to countries where people sell their children to provide for their other children," Lyon said. "I've been to countries where there are no flushing toilets or sewerage. There is no welfare. I saw somebody get run over by a civilian bus in Taiwan. I saw a girl shot in the back of the head in the Philippines. When you see that, you realize how fortunate you are to be who you are and where you are. I learned that life is important, and that we need to be thankful for what we have here."

While many of Lyon's assignments pushed him to his limits, one particular accident in Alaska left him injured and comatose for five weeks. When he awoke, he learned that the Marine Corps had placed him on temporary retirement. It was during this time that he established Troy's very first NJROTC program, in which he was able to integrate his

accumulated military knowledge, Lyon said.

"I teach what I live," Lyon said. "The values that I have and teach my students are the values I live

"The values that I have and teach my students are the values I live by, in relation to performance, expectations, grooming standards, attitudes, mannerisms and behaviors."

Steven Lyon
NJROTC First Sergeant

by, in relation to performance, expectations, grooming standards, attitudes, mannerisms and behaviors. One of the things you learn about leadership is leadership by example. I try to set that example. If I'm teaching something I don't believe in, then I don't teach it well."

Some time after his retirement from the Marine Corps, Lyon was invited back and offered the position of "Sergeant Major," the highest possible enlisted ranking for a Marine. But Lyon declined the offer, as he came to believe that the position of NJROTC instructor was, by far, his most worthwhile career, he said.

"The students are the future," Lyon said. "And I didn't need to go fight a war in a foreign country. I like seeing the youth mature, and I like seeing them grow. I like seeing them have ambition and goals. That's more rewarding than trading bullets for prayers in the Middle East."



TWO GENERATIONS OF WARRIORS: Lyon presents a certificate of accomplishment to senior Matthew Gohl during the 2013-2014 Awards Night.



FROM MARINE TO MENTOR: During an after school practice, Lyons gives tips to senior Nathan Kang to improve his push-up stance.



RENEE SUSANTO

TIP-TOP SHAPE: *Advancing the team’s offensive momentum, senior athlete nudges the ball over the Coyote defense and helps preserve the Warrior’s perfect league record.*

Volleyball eclipses the Buena Park Coyotes 3-0

The Warriors (7-0, 14-3) crush the Coyotes in a decisive 3-0 league victory.

By Austin Shin
STAFF WRITER

When people say that the Warriors are still undefeated, they are not crying wolf.

Strengthening team unity between the upper and underclassmen, the Warrior volleyball team (7-0, 14-3) continued its undefeated league record by subduing the Buena Park Coyotes 3-0 Oct. 28.

Senior Anna Fink gave the Warriors an early advantage with two aces, and she continued to widen the Coyotes’ deficit with strong serves that had the defense struggling to return. Also leading the charge was senior Lauren Jackson, clubbing powerful spikes past the Coyotes’ defense line and keeping the momentum in the Warriors’ favor by thwarting three consecutive shots. Senior Rachel Howard spiked three kills into the susceptible Coyote defense to end the first period.

The Warriors started the second

set with several blunders, but they kept their technique on point and spiked their way to a 25-10 victory. Starting the third period with long shots past the boundaries, the Warriors found themselves tied 4-4. However, unforced errors by the Coyotes allowed the Warriors to gain a six-point lead. Moving past their mistakes, the Warriors rained a series of well-aimed spikes past the Coyote defense, ending the third period 25-

and even leads it. Because [the coach] can count on anyone to take charge, practices are not led by only one class.”

The primary mentors of the younger athletes, the junior class has taken on an authoritative role in leading the team as well, Brice said.

“Our junior class has about half the starters, so we make up a huge part of the team,” Brice said. “A lot of the seniors look up to the juniors, too, rather than [the juniors] looking up to [the seniors] all the time.”

Consolidating strong bonds and open communication between all of the team members has generated heightened performance on

the court, co-captain Shirley Liu said.

“I feel that our team unity is better than last year,” Liu said. “The seniors last year [distanced themselves from the rest of the team]. However, this year everyone is new, and so that helps with coming together. Volleyball is a team sport, so if you do not work together you cannot win. Our good relations with each other help us communicate on the court.”

“Our good relations with each other help us communicate on the court.”

Shirley Liu
co-captain

16 and claiming a 3-0 win.

While the seniors were pivotal in the match’s success because they scored a majority of the points, the underclassmen played a large role in the team in terms of responsibility, co-captain Krystina Brice said.

“We all share leadership duties,” Brice said. “[Our coach] tells us what to do. She can tell a sophomore what drill we are going to do, and she sets it up

Warriors submit to La Habra Highlanders

The Highlanders narrowly take down Warrior football (2-2, 6-3) in a league match 35-42.

By Evan Lewis
STAFF WRITER

Despite intensifying its training in preparation for top-tier competition, the Warrior football team (2-2, 6-3) yielded to the La Habra Highlanders 35-42 Oct. 30.

The Warriors started off strong, scoring on the first play of the game, courtesy of a 60-yard run from junior Draytwoine Shaw for a 7-0 lead. The Highlanders immediately countered with three touchdowns of their own, putting the Warriors into a substantial 7-28 hole. Looking to prevent a blowout, though, Shaw dashed in the end zone to cut the deficit to 14-28. Following suit, junior Ryan Scotti grabbed back-to-back passes for 52 yards and a touchdown. The Highlanders concluded the half with a touchdown pass of their own for a 21-35 score.

Attempting to mount a comeback, Scotti continued to dominate in the second half by receiving another bomb to the one-yard line, where Shaw ran the ball in, 28-35. The Highlanders responded with a touchdown, but after an interception by senior Jesse Johnson, the Warriors chipped away at the lead, 35-42. The Warriors then recovered an onside kick, leaving them in scoring position with two minutes left, but failing to convert on a critical fourth down, the



LAUREN KIM

BACKBONE: *Squaring off against the La Habra Highlanders, the Warrior football team prepares at the line of scrimmage in an attempt to secure a scoring position.*

Warriors fell to the Highlanders 35-42.

Efforts to watch practice films every morning were implemented by the coaching staff to adequately prepare for the Highlanders, senior Nicholas Magee said.

“Coming off of the game at Buena Park, [we are] really picking up the pace at practice for La Habra,” Magee said. “A big part

of it is definitely watching film. The coaches have us in there during zero period to break down film and see what we need to work on, and some of us come in at lunch just to really get a feel for what we need improve. We need all the practice we can get for La Habra, even if it’s just watching film because [La Habra] is such a tough and physical team.”

In spite of their loss to La Habra, the Warriors appreciate the opportunity to challenge themselves with high caliber competition, Magee said.

“At the end of the day, a win is a win,” Magee said. “But beating a team like La Habra carries a little more meaning for us. They’re always at the top of our league, and we’ve come close to beating them

in the past. I’ve always used the analogy of chopping down a big tree because we’ve been chopping at them the past three years, and with this year being senior year, we’re ready to bring them down. It’s huge for us to just get the chance to knock them off their pedestal and to prove our worth and strength as a team.”

The newly established rigor in their training has also compensated for the Warriors’ lack of starters against La Habra, co-captain Dominic Vaccher said.

“Beating La Habra is never easy,” Vaccher said. “But when you have as many guys out as we do right now, it just makes facing a team that much harder. However, we never want to make excuses. We’re looking forward to bouncing back this week at Sunny Hills.”

With the regular season coming to an end, the team emphasizes the importance of entering league playoffs with forward momentum to achieve postseason success, Vaccher said.

“If the standings hold and even if we lose the last two games, we’d still make CIF,” Vaccher said. “But we are really making it a priority to close out the regular season with a victory. Teams that are hot going into the playoffs always seem to do a lot better than those who coast in, so we are taking this part of the season very seriously. Even against Sunny Hills, a team we should beat, we’re going to work really hard to close out the season with a win.”

Milly Chi

USA! USA! USA! Rally behind junior Milly Chi as she skates to victory as part of this year’s Team USA for synchronized ice skating.

By Dallas Nguyen & Angela Zeng,
SPORTS EDITOR & EDITOR IN CHIEF
Photo by Lauren Kim, PHOTO

Melding individual devotion with team spirit, junior Milly Chi looks forward to competing internationally as a member of Team USA’s synchronized ice skating lineup.

Chi began her athletic career at age five, participating in singles figure skating at a local ice rink to offset the dramatic transition from her previous, chilly home in Virginia to her current, sunny residence in California. Enthralled by the sport’s athleticism, Chi continued to cultivate her skills as an individual skater but soon yearned for a sense of community, which she found in synchronized skating, Chi said.

“I tried [synchronized skating] when my skating abilities developed more because I really wanted to be part of a team,” Chi said. “It was a good way to find peers who were close to my age and able to skate together in a new form and style. I just loved it.”

However, as Chi became more involved with synchronized skating, she concurrently familiarized herself with other team-oriented sports. Because of this exposure and the increasing difficulty of managing her schedule, Chi began to lose her motivation to pursue a solo skating career, Chi said.

“Around my middle school years, I really doubted whether I should continue to skate because I was introduced to other team sports like basketball,” Chi said. “Skating is a lonely sport. Even though you have a lot of support from your friends, coach and parents, at the end of the day, it’s just you out there on the ice. For me, it was just really hard to be alone and to depend on [myself only]. The hours were getting long, I had done it for so many years already and I was losing faith. But sometimes changes have to be made, and faith is renewed. You have to be reminded of why you are doing [it].”

To strengthen her resolve, Chi diverted her energy toward practicing with her teammates. Their unwavering dedication motivated Chi to strive for further improvement in her skating, allowing her to land a coveted spot on this year’s Team USA, Chi said.

“It was pretty cool [when I found out I was on Team USA] because my [regional] team sees each other in practice, and we know how hard we’re working,” Chi said. “It’s fun, and honestly, I love it. Even though it’s such a struggle, like getting up at early hours and doing workouts at the gym, everybody lives for skating. Everyone is so dedicated, especially this team; everyone just wants the challenge.”

A victor at both national competitions and against her own personal struggles, Chi emerges as a skater who is confident in her abilities. Skating with Team USA has taught her the essential values of devotion and perseverance to a sport that she loves, Chi said.

“When you think about it, skating is something that is kind of insane because you are on this four millimeter-thick blade; it’s literally a piece of metal that’s supporting you on ice, which is very slippery,” Chi said. “But [skating] also has pushed me to do things that I thought I could never really do, and it’s really helped me in developing myself into a better person. It’s been a really great outlet for my feelings, and it has shaped me into who I am today. I’m staying in it because I’ve met a lot of new people while skating and because I want to see how far I can go with it.”

TEAM
USA

ICY SYNERGY

Singles skating, popularly known as figure skating, focuses solely on individual skill and technique on ice, while synchronized skating is a team sport that emphasizes cooperation through complex dance sequences and detailed formations. Synchronized teams compete at various levels from juvenile to adult for a chance to enter the U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships. Only top-performing teams at the junior and senior levels can qualify for membership in Team USA, officially known as the U.S. Synchronized Skating Team.