

Pony Express

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A deadly message: Every 15 Minutes

By Susan Beresford and Niki Kidd

On October 23rd, 2002, at 7:50 am, senior Jack Rolovich died in a drunk driving accident.

Every 15 minutes for the remainder of the school day, students were taken out of class by the Grim Reaper just like Rolovich, representing the fact that they died in a car accident due to drunk driving.

This program, entitled "Every 15 Minutes," was created to increase awareness in teens of the effects of drunk driving. Once the living dead were taken away, they put on ghost makeup and white clothing and then placed their own graves in the graveyard outside of the library.

By fourth period, many people, including students and staff members, had "died" and participated in the crash scene that took place in the front of San Marin High School.

The crash was a simulation of a fatal drunk driving accident that could happen at any time. Senior Will Grayson was arrested under the charge of drunk driving and was taken to jail after the crash scene was over. Seniors Brooke Barnecut, A.J. Phillipelli, and Carina Ruggerio were all victims and suffered serious injuries when their car was struck by Grayson's. Novato paramedics pronounced senior Cristina Restivo dead at the scene when Grayson's car hit the innocent biker.



Juniors and seniors witnessed the event while Novato Police and Firefighters responded to the 911 call. Although after the simulation students went to their fifth period classes, the event continued for the participants of the accident.

Barnecut, Phillipelli, and Ruggerio were all taken to emergency rooms at local hospitals and were admitted into the hospitals.

Restivo was taken to Keaton's Mortuary in a body bag.

The Novato police, accompanied by a priest, visited each victim's parents and read their children's obituaries.

At the end of the school day, all

of the participants in the program went to a retreat at the Inn Marin. There, they paired up and were exposed to the dangers of drunk driving through different activities and guest speakers.

Some of the emotional activities included a trust walk in which one partner was blindfolded and the other had "drunk goggles" on. These goggles were an example of how alcohol can impair the judgments of people under the influence.

At the end of the night, the "living dead" wrote letters to their parents about their expe-

riences. Their parents had a separate retreat and wrote similar letters to their children.

The following day, the participants returned to school for the trial of the drunk driver. The trial took place in an all-school assembly in Hank Moroski Gymnasium.

Students, staff, and parents of the victims were all present for this event. Guest speakers spoke on the dangerous effects of drunk driving. Volunteers shared the letters they had written the night before in an emotional display of love and tenderness.

In terms of monetary donations, tax dollars, a generous private donator, who wishes to remain anonymous, the City of Novato, the Novato Fire District, The Novato School District, The District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, the CHP, and the Novato Community Hospital all donated substantial sums to help in the organization of the program.

Captain Reginald Lyles and NUSD assistant superintendent Jan Derby were the co-chairs on the committee that organized the program. They were assisted by San Marin coordinator Lilli Rollins who contributed a tremendous amount of time and effort.

For more on the Every 15 Minutes program, including an editorial and reactions by both students and parents, see pages 6 and 7.



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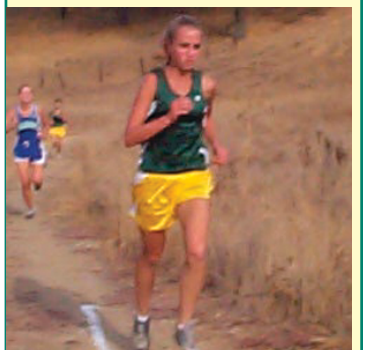
More Every 15 Minutes stories and pictures ...pages 6-7



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Question of the issue

By Rachel Oppenheimer and Myra Perez

If you could be any kitchen utensil, what would you be?



Paige Thelen, freshman
An ice cream scooper because the way you can easily push the ice cream out of the new high-tech ones is awesome and fun!



Whitney Lee, junior
I would be a baby spoon because they always have cute designs and I love little kids.



Bud Norris, senior
I would be a whisk so I could stir things up.



Matt Milano, junior
A knife. Not only does it look exquisite, it has many uses such as spreading, cutting, carving, and making great sandwiches.



Jennie Gay, junior
A blender because I would mix up the party!



Graham Howes, sophomore
A spork, because it's unique and it has more than one use.



Rachel Klein, senior
A ladle because they dish out mashed potatoes and I like them a lot.



Charlie Drummond-Hay, sophomore
Chopsticks because I like Chinese food

Why vote?

By Michael Lovejoy

California has seen its voter turnout decrease over the last four decades. About 45% voted in the General Election this November. Election officials had hoped that the surge of patriotism after September 11th would encourage voting, but they have been disappointed. People may be cynical about voting, with the Presidential Election dispute in Florida, and the fact that more people voted for Gore than Bush. Many people also argue that the lack of good candidates has deterred them from voting.

In the "California Journal," A.G. Block calls Gray Davis "an incompetent and corrupt incumbent cockroach whose ethical core long ago burned to a cinder; whose brain was surgically replaced with money-management software; whose bungling is directly responsible for the energy crunch, budget deficit, collapse of the stock market, demise of Amtrak and global warming; and who has transformed the governor's office into an extortion racket that Al Capone would think excessive," and Bill Simon "an inexperienced reptile who bilked the government out of billions in tax dollars, lied about his experience as a prosecutor, flushed a savings-and-loan down the toilet and therefore vaporized the retirement security of 10,000 grandmas, siphoned off millions of dollars meant to support widows and orphans through a charity, refused to share even the most basic information about his tax returns, couldn't remember writing off more than \$1 million in business losses, partnered with a convicted drug dealer and practiced management skills that resulted in a \$78 million fraud judgment."

Until there are better candidates to vote for, voter turnout will remain low.

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The *Pony Express* is published monthly by the journalism class at San Marin High School. The *Pony Express* seeks to provide a public forum for student expression and encourages letters to the editors. No unsigned letters will be accepted; however the author's name may be withheld upon request.

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Candy corruption

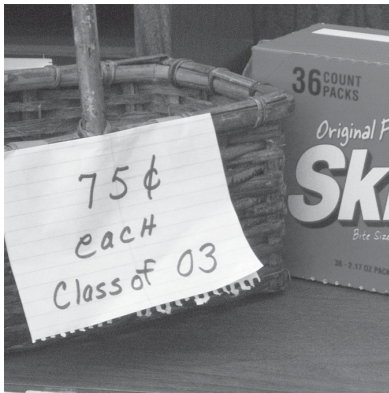
By Bridget O'Connor and Christina Pelka

"Nooo...please...not the candy!" Anger and rage filled his candy-crazed eyes as the news hit him like a sudden shower of Skittles. Due to the decline in productivity at the lunchlines, the sale of candy has been banned during school hours. The recent school-board ruling has crippled candy sales at San Marin, which contribute to the funds for Leadership classes and the high-energy motivational learning of many students.

The Novato Unified School District Board Policy states "Food offered by student or adult entities or groups should reflect concern for the health and well-being of our students." However, cookies and donuts, both of which do not

comply with their concern for health, are sold on a daily basis in the lunch lines. They are the most popular items available, according to students. Is this really about nutrition, or is it about money? The policy seems to show more concern for monetary issues than that of a student's eating habits.

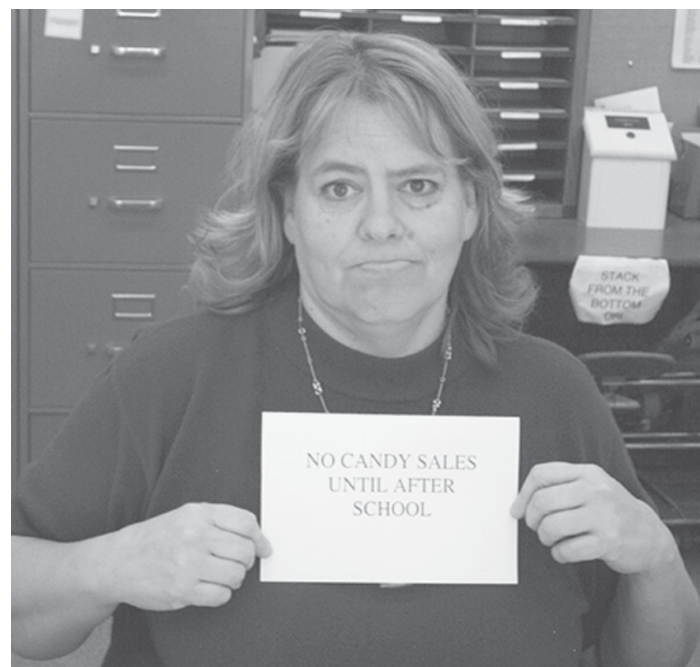
Students are terrified at the idea of not being able to eat or buy candy during school hours. "It really, really scares me..." cried Junior Loren Egide. "The lunch line food tastes like garbage anyway." Junior Alex Grant, a fan of the College and Career Center's Caramel Apple Pops, shared Egide's disgust in the lunch line's



menu. "I was under the assumption that candy was healthier" Senior Jonah Friedman, a Nerd Rope advocate, feels that the senior class will suffer due to lack of fundraising. "We make a lot of money; money that helps the Leadership class, which in turn benefits the entire student body."

Secretaries Nancy Zanardi and Chris Eisenberg have also felt the effects of the school board ruling. "Things have gotten quiet here, a little lonely."

Zanardi shared a crazy story of one candy-holic who took it a little too far. "He crept up behind me. I felt a presence and when I turned around, he began to speak to me in a low, demonic voice. I leaned closer, and he whispered, 'Just slip it under the desk.' I explained to him the new rules, but he just stared at me. 'No one will ever know.' He even offered extra money. I had no idea that candy was causing such corruption in the minds of our children."



SAT changes announced

By Michael Lovejoy

For the tenth time in its 76 year history, the College Board has announced modifications to its SAT I exam.

But don't celebrate too quickly; the changes will first be introduced in March of 2005, only affecting the current freshmen.

The alterations to the test are nothing most students would celebrate either. The loathed analogies will be replaced by the even more reviled critical reading.

Algebra II will be added to the Algebra I and Geometry concepts

already in the math section.

A new section, the SAT Writing Exam will also be formed. It will consist of multiple choice grammar questions as well as a written essay. In 1994, a student-written essay was added to the SAT II: Writing Subject Test. This has provided the College Board with a basis for developing the new SAT I writing test.

College Board President Gaston Caperton explains, "the new SAT I will only improve the test's current strengths by placing

the highest possible emphasis on the most important college success skills - reading and mathematics, and, now, writing."

U.C. President Richard C. Atkinson hailed the new revisions as a step toward focusing student attention on mastery of subject matter rather than mastery of test-taking skills. "It will ask students to express their thinking in writing - a critical skill for success in college and beyond - and will focus attention on the teaching of writing in the K-12 schools."

Whether the new test will help students in learning the subject matter taught in schools or simply create a new, lower average score for colleges to look at, one thing is for certain. The College Board will profit handily by publishing all-new SAT I study materials. Libraries, high schools, and students all across America will have to buy new College Board literature in order to gain the best advantage for the test.

Novato "Buzz" killed

By Logan Bartling, Sean Johannessen, Zack Kinyon, Brad McCarter

As of Fall 2002, Novato High discontinued its journalism class, which produced the 'Hornet's Buzz' school paper.

Last year, a controversial article with strong anti-immigration sentiment caused a firestorm of anger and protest that resulted in walkouts by students who fiercely disagreed with the article, a lawsuit, and ultimately an award for exercising free speech in journalism.

Some have speculated that the Novato administration axed the program because they wanted to avoid the liability of a journalism class capable of causing the kinds of problems initiated by last year's article.

The administration of Novato High School tells a different story.

Principal Matt Byrnes explained that there were a number of factors that contributed to the demise of the Buzz. "It was lack of both student and teacher interest that ended the class. There were about 10 students who expressed interest, but there was no guarantee that even that many people would have been enrolled in the class, considering all the problems that result from scheduling. The district wants a certain number of kids in each class and journalism

fell far short."

San Marin students who attended Novato last year had a different take on the issue, "I think the immigration article was definitely a big part of the paper being stopped," commented junior Sarah Moraes.

"I got the impression that no one wanted to deal with it," junior Jennifer Higbee said.

Last year, San Marin had a similar problem with low enrollment, when only 10 students signed up for the yearbook class. Like Novato High, San Marin didn't have a yearbook teacher after Sarah Obbagy left the school.

Unlike Novato High, the administration at San Marin was able to create interest in the class, instead of discontinuing it, "We talked to students who wanted to transfer out of their current elective to see if we could recruit them for the yearbook class," explains Assistant Principal Toni Beal.

Byrnes and members of the community are hopeful that the journalism class and the newspaper will return to Novato High as soon as next year. Until then, the administration is attempting to interest students and staff in producing the newspaper as a club.

The play's the thing

By Rebecca Guthrie

On November 20 and 21, a pair of actors from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival will present two assemblies and four workshops for students.

The actors will perform excerpts from Shakespeare as well as classic and contemporary literature in assemblies. They will also conduct interactive workshops with students in honors English and drama classes.

The school visit program is part of the festival's commitment to bringing theatre to young people and young people to theatre. The San Marin program was funded entirely by the PTSA.

After the festival closed its 2001 season, teams of actors visited 162 schools and organizations, reaching over 100,000 students in five states and Canada.

For many students, these performances are their first experi-

ence with live theater. After seeing the program, a student at another school wrote, "I used to be bored by Shakespeare and by plays in general. You have given me not only an appreciation of drama, but inspiration as well."

All students at San Marin read "Romeo and Juliet", "Macbeth" and Hamlet. Some students also read "Taming of the Shrew", "Much Ado about Nothing", "Julius Caesar" and "Othello" along with other classic and contemporary plays.

The 2002-2003 school visit program is funded in part by a generous grant from Bank of America; the Frances and Townsend Burden Foundation; Lifescan, Inc.; Chevron Texaco; and the support of many members of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

SAT changes in 2005

- New writing section, including multiple choice questions and student written essay
- Analogies replaced by more critical reading passages
- Algebra II concepts added

ASB Account Totals

ASB General \$ 7,581.95
 Class of 2003- \$12,172.59
 Class of 2004- \$ 3,019.14
 Class of 2005- \$ 997.73
 Class of 2006- \$ 638.35

as of November 6, 2002