



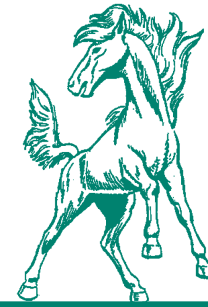
Where is Qatar anyway?
...page 4



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Warmer weather means heading to the beach...page 12



Pony Express

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County Districts Plan for Budget Cuts

By Sean Johannessen and Amber Shields

The past few months, California school districts have been preparing for a worst-case scenario in the budget crisis. The problem is that districts must create a budget for next year without knowing ex-

actly how much money they will receive from the state. Though faced with the same problem, the potential loss of millions of dollars from the school budget, each district is dealing with the crisis in their own way. Marin's three districts that include high schools—Tam, San Rafael, and Novato—have all responded with different ways to cut, and save, the structure of their district.

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The Novato High mural

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Tamalpais Union High School District

In February, the Tamalpais Union High School District Board reviewed budget reductions totaling \$4.34 million. They then came up with proposed cuts that would help retain the structure of their district by reducing the scope and scale of programs, not eliminating them.

The District issued termination notices to 26 temporary teachers and possible layoff notices to 30 probationary teachers (those who have only been at the district

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San Rafael High School District

San Rafael will have to make cutbacks of an estimated \$2.2 million, 15% of their current budget. San Rafael is trying to maintain its standard of excellence by making cuts as far away from the classroom as possible.

They began at the district level by not replacing people vacating their positions whenever possible. They have already saved money by not re-hiring an associate superintendent and a high school principal, who left earlier this year.

The Board is pulling together to save as many programs as they can and have come up with possible solutions, like sharing teachers between the two high schools.

Still, the board was forced to send pink slips to 21 full-time equivalents and 12 classified positions. Cuts in the district may in-

clude the position of one associate superintendent, one continuation school principal, one high school assistant principal, and reductions in business and human resources departments.

Novato Unified School District

The Novato Unified School District is also planning for the worst.

Of a faculty of 474, NUSD presented 145 certificated employees, including teachers, principals, vice principals, and district office administrators, with lay-off notices on March 15. The Board also has the option of cutting back the classified staff because they are only entitled to thirty days' notice.

Possible program reductions, also created using a worst case scenario, also threaten to make cutbacks at San Marin and other Novato schools. The Board was forced to consider program reductions in so many different areas so that they will have the flexibility needed to respond to the amount of money, and stipulations for spending; they receive from the State. High school electives may be the

hardest hit. Accounting, Yearbook, Journalism, Psychology, Drama, and Leadership are just a few of the suggested reductions. The District has not finalized any of these proposed budget cuts and encourages members of the public to express their views at board meetings. They hope to work together with the community to create the best possible solutions for this crisis.

Novato parents, worried about the effects of lay-offs in the classroom, are in the beginning stages of forming a foundation to raise money for the district. The Novato Foundation for Public Education hopes to develop a group to do significant, long-term fundraising to support NUSD schools. Frank Howard Allen Realtors are working on a letter writing campaign asking Novato residents to make a donation to NUSD. They are also trying to organize a 5K/10K fun run in fall of 2003 to raise funds.

Another group of parents is developing an Emergency Education Fund to keep programs and teachers from being cut next year. They are going to ask for donations from parents between April and May in hopes that teachers and specific programs can be saved.

Many students are also worried about the proposed cuts. Freshman Jessica Bousquette is afraid that, "If all our electives are taken away, no one is going to want to come to school here."

The possible lay-off of teachers and an increase in already extremely large classes is another

concern. For many students it seems hard to imagine that their brimming classrooms could be packed with more students and that the students can be expected to learn in these claustrophobic environments. "Too many teacher cuts will increase already large class sizes. Some of my classes are huge, almost 40 people, and it is much harder to learn in these classes than in my English class, which has less than 20 students," comments freshman Briana Van Epps.

Community copes

As people begin to realize the drastic realities of the budget crisis, it falls on the students, parents, and community to help save their schools. While districts are urging the community to write letters to state legislators and Governor Davis, they are also taking a local approach.

By working with community members and foundations, they are looking to make up for losses from the state, and by voicing their opinion, parents and students are looking to keep what is important to them. Although each district is looking at the budget differently, they are all pulling together similarly. Only by working together with the students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community can Marin hope to pull through this crisis intact.



A San Rafael hallway; SRHS is one of many Marin County schools anticipating cuts.

Question of the issue

What do you think of the situation in Iraq? Will our efforts there make the world a better place?



U.S. Marines escort captured enemy prisoners of war to a holding area in the desert of Iraq. Courtesy of defenselink.mil

By Logan Bartling



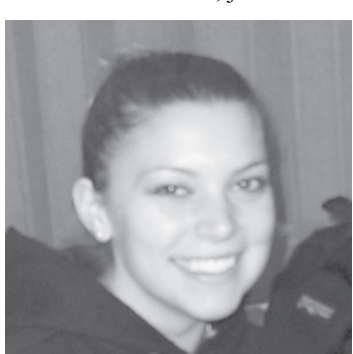
"I'm for the military action in Iraq. Human history is the history of war." Nick Porttorff, junior



"It's not a joke anymore. People die." Danny Gasparini, senior



"Operation Iraqi Freedom" is a misleading name for a mistake that is sure to lead to long-term instability in the Middle East and around the globe. The Bush administration is setting a dangerous precedent: that violence is an acceptable solution to any perceived threat, with or without the approval of the international community." Jeff Arnold, senior



"Given how important and historic this war is, it's disappointing how little we discuss it in class." Michelle Winsor, senior



"No, it's only going to make old white people richer, and everyone else poorer." Jeremy Brown, senior

Pony Express Staff

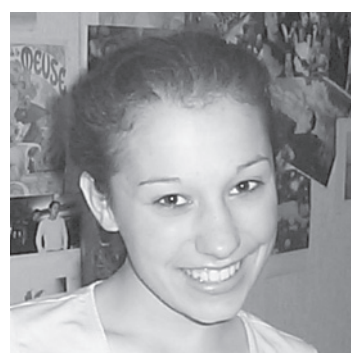
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The Pony Express is published monthly by the journalism class at San Marin High School. The Pony Express seeks to provide a public forum for student expression and encourages letters to the editors. No unsigned letters will be accepted; however the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

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"No, we should endeavor to find peaceful solutions to all the world's problems." Katie Arcidiacono, sophomore



"If I have to drive behind one more person with a "NO WAR ON IRAQ" bumper sticker, I'm going to lose it!" Andrew Banakus, senior



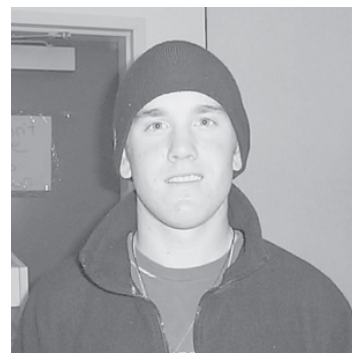
"I just think people who are so pro-war should be willing to go over and fight it themselves." Rachel Walera, senior



"No, and it's ridiculous the way we're alienating our traditional allies and telling the U.N. to screw itself." Debbie Goodman, junior



"The threat from our invasion is worse than the threat of Saddam Hussein." Melissa Corner, freshman



"No, too many lives will be lost, and Saddam has like 1 million cousins, and I don't want to fight baby-Saddam or baby-baby-Saddam." Nick Lerch, senior

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Seniors weigh their options College Acceptances Arrive

By Katie Winsor

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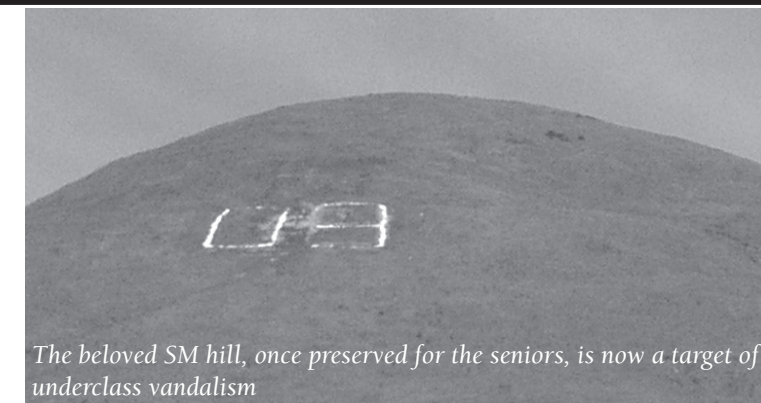
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 University of Oregon, Loyola Marymount
 UC Davis, UC San Diego

Southern Oregon University
 Sonoma State
 University of Oregon, Ithaca, University of Puget Sound, UC Santa Cruz, Lewis
 and Clark College, Hendrix College, Mt. Holyoke, Smith, Syracuse University
 University of Southern California, University of Washington, UC Davis, UC
 Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, UC Berkeley
 UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego, UCLA, Yale University
 San Diego State, University of Hawaii, Hilo
 Sonoma State, San Francisco State, University of Hawaii

ASB	ASB general	\$ 6,995.72
Account	Class of '03	\$12,267.97
Totals	Homecoming	\$11,531.19
	Class of '04	\$ 3,762.33
	Class of '05	\$ 1,382.45
	Class of '06	\$ 769.67
as of April 4, 2003		



The beloved SM hill, once preserved for the seniors, is now a target of underclass vandalism

'05 vs. '03

The Battle for the Hill

By Bridget O'Connor

Chalking the hill has been a long-standing tradition since the creation of San Marin. It is the seniors' privilege to chalk the hill, displaying to San Marin and the community the year they will graduate. The key to the tradition is that seniors chalk the hill, not sophomores.

Throughout the years, the hill has not just displayed the year in which the seniors intend to graduate, but it has been a place to make statements, play jokes and honor those who have passed.

In recent years, cross-town rival, Novato High, has repeatedly climbed the hill and chalked the letter N in an attempt to show their superiority and dominance. Of course, the actions of Novato have upset the student body, but that anger has only helped to rally students together.

At the end of some years, the junior classes have chalked the hill the night before the seniors graduate—or at least threatened to do so. This caused some trouble between the seniors and the juniors, but it was soon forgotten.

However, the current situation at San Marin over the hill is quite different. It is a battle within our school, and it is not between seniors and freshmen, or juniors or seniors. It's a battle between the classes of 2005 and 2003.

A few weeks ago, as many of us sleepily roamed the campus on a Monday morning, we realized that the hill no longer said '03. Much to the anger of many seniors, it said '05. Senior Cristina Restivo comments, "I am disgusted by the entire situation. Why can't the class of 2005 just wait their turn?"

The most important aspect about the tradition of chalking the hill is that it is a rite of passage. One is supposed to wait four years to experience the tradition. The sophomores that are chalking the hill two years prematurely are not only ruining the tradition for the class of '03 but for themselves as well. How will it be special when they are seniors if they have already experienced it two years before?



A Capella Harmony, "The Accidentals"—Brad McCarter (baritone), Drew Gasparini (lead), Eric Rivera (bass), Danny Gasparini (tenor)—placed 4th in the high school quartet category at the Barbershop Western Regional Competition in Reno. They will be singing the national anthem at the A's game on Saturday, April 19th.

Laramie Project Opens May 15

The drama department's spring play, The Laramie Project, which dramatizes the community response to the murder of Mathew Shepard, a gay University of Wyoming student who was lured from a college bar, kidnapped, tied to a fence and beaten with the butt of a gun opens Thursday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Student Center with productions on Friday, May 16, 8:00 p.m., Saturday, May 17, 8:00 p.m. Sunday, May 18, 3:00 p.m., Monday, May 19, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the door and in the front office.

The ensemble cast includes Devonne Johnson, Kevin Oliver, Rachel Garber, Jeremy Brown, Jeff Arnold, Andy Zabko, Nick Pottorff,

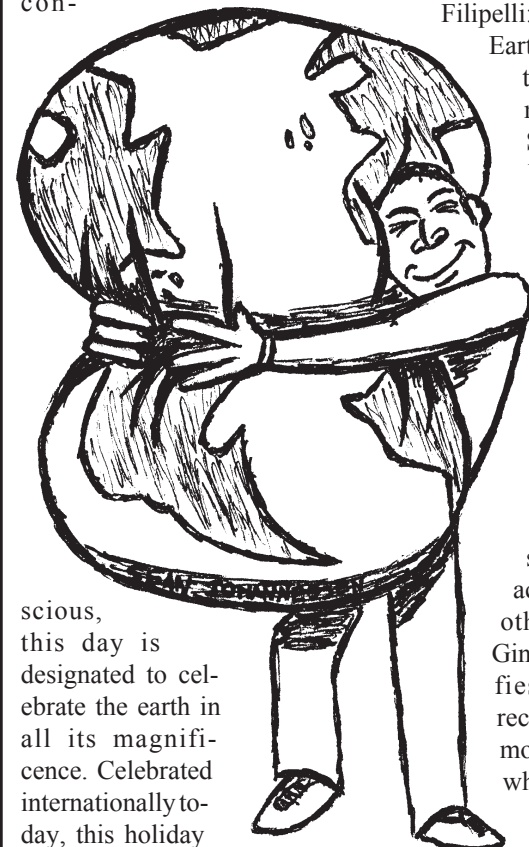
Beth McLaughlin, Cayla Wardenburg, Ali Mafi, Lillian Nickelson, Jeni Bacich, Megan Paulson, Sean Poojarara, Winston Friedman, Brit-tany Bexton, Erin Brydon, Melissa Corner, Yan Gorman, Charleen Hall, Brandon Hoberg, Danielle McVay, Ally Mangarelli, Kaley Myer, Christina O'Brien, Shane Rose with special cameo appearances by community members Brian Brady, Father Phil Rountree, Ross Millerick, Rich Gerhardt and Pat Eklund.

Student directors Ali Mafi, Rachel Garber and Devonne Johnson assist teacher/director Linda Kislingbury Cain and student producer Cayla Wardenburg.

Unsure About Earth Day Celebration

By Jamie Lummis and Alyssa Pomponio

April 22. Does this date have any particular significance to you? To those who are environmentally conscious,



this day is designated to celebrate the earth in all its magnificence. Celebrated internationally today, this holiday was fathered by the United States in 1970.

Senator Gaylord Nelson, concerned with the lack of attention focused on the environment in the early 1960s, took it upon himself to persuade President John F. Kennedy to raise national awareness through a conservation tour. The circuit, popular among the general public, failed to attain the political support that was originally hoped for. However, it was the first step to proclaiming Earth Day.

Ultimately inspired by the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations taking place throughout the country, Senator Nelson decided to organize a "grassroots" rally to raise awareness about the damage occurring to the environment. The first official Earth Day activities were based in San Francisco in 1970, with huge success. The massive following prompted it to become the international holiday it is today.

While the day has not been forgotten, participation and support have dramatically decreased, especially among today's youth as shown by sophomore Pat Filipelli: "What the funk is Earth Day?"

Contrary to Filipelli's comment, much of the San Marin student body is aware of the holiday and also involved in everyday earth-friendly activities.

Though many students wish to do more to help the environment, recycling seems to be the sole environmental activity for lack of other ideas. Junior Gina Zucconi exemplifies this, "Uh...I recycle...I would do more but I don't know what else to do."

Custodian Mark Miller worries about the lack of environmental concern at San Marin. "It's hard for me to do it all by myself. The Environmental Club and the contributions of the senior Integrated 4 science class last year, both no longer in commission, made a big difference."

For those who are interested in getting more involved in the environment, Earth Day is the perfect occasion to start. Events occurring nationwide in the month of April offer opportunities for hands-on workshops, involvement in the beautification of cities, and other earth-related activities.

Science teacher Eliza Spang gives additional advice for those wishing to make every day Earth Day: "Things like recycling and carpooling are easy ways to help out. Traveling and seeing natural places will help you understand why it's important to protect them."

Where in the World?

By Kevin Kahn and Michael Lovejoy

When you hear the word 'geography,' do you cringe as you think of mind-numbingly boring maps, globes, statistics, and charts? Does geography seem like just another pointless subject? After all, how hard is it to locate a country on a map, or know how many people live in a city?

However, geography is one of the most important fields of study because of its broad range of topics. It encompasses such subjects as history, culture, politics, economics, religion, ecology, geology, and meteorology, just to name a few. It broadens peoples' minds on current events and global issues, while allowing people to learn about different cultures, philosophies, and ways-of-life. Geography studies the diversities of the world, from the people who inhabit it, to the geological factors that affect its intricate balances. According to the National Geographic Society, people with strong backgrounds in this diverse subject are more tolerant of other cultures, better educated in global and national affairs, and have a better understanding of the human impact on the planet.

Despite geography's importance, a recent study by the National Geographic Society shows Americans to be among the most geo-illiterate. In the 2002 Geographic Literacy Survey, 3,000 18 to 24 year olds in Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, and the United States were polled and asked several questions. The questions concerned global matters in politics, environment, popular issues, and map locations. The results showed that the US scored second to last behind Mexico, implying that Americans lack geographical skills compared with the other leading nations of the world.

Only 25% of Americans could correctly identify the

population of the United States. Almost 70% polled thought the number of inhabitants was between 500 million to 2 billion. This statistic worries John Fahey, President and CEO of the National Geographic Society. "It gives sense that there is this Americentric thing going on—that we are big and powerful and have all these people in our country." Says Fahey, many Americans fail to recognize the existence of many countries in international affairs, thus believing in US superiority in all facets of the world. The correct population of the US as of July 2002 is 281 million, according to the CIA. The US ranks third in population in the world, far behind both China and India, each with well over one billion.

Another startling result was Americans' poor scores on locating Middle Eastern countries on a map, such as Israel, Iraq, and Afghanistan. "Despite the [turmoil] in Iraq and the daily reports of suicide bombers in Israel, less than 15% of the young US citizens could locate either country," reports Fahey.

The results underscore an inept understanding of global affairs and too much attention on material matters. "More US citizens in the study knew that the island featured in last season's *Survivor* is in the South Pacific than could find Israel."

To see how San Marin students would rate in geographic knowledge, an abridged version of the National Geographic survey was given to 121 students in sophomore and junior history classes. The results from the questions referring to a world map

were very encouraging. Every student polled was able to identify the location of the US, and 98% could locate Mexico. Over 90% could identify Japan, Italy, and the Pacific Ocean.

Despite all the recent news in the Middle East, 57% at San Marin could find Afghanistan and 87% could find Israel. Only 17% and 21% in the national survey could locate Afghanistan and Israel, respectively. The statistics show that SM students know where the major countries and features of the world are, but more remote nations' locations, such as Israel and Afghanistan, are unknown.

The San Marin results of the political/environmental questions were around the national average. 29% of those polled at San Marin knew the population range of the US was 150-350 million people. This is slightly better than the 25% nationally, but significantly worse than every other country surveyed. Most students thought the population was between one and two billion, a fact that attests to

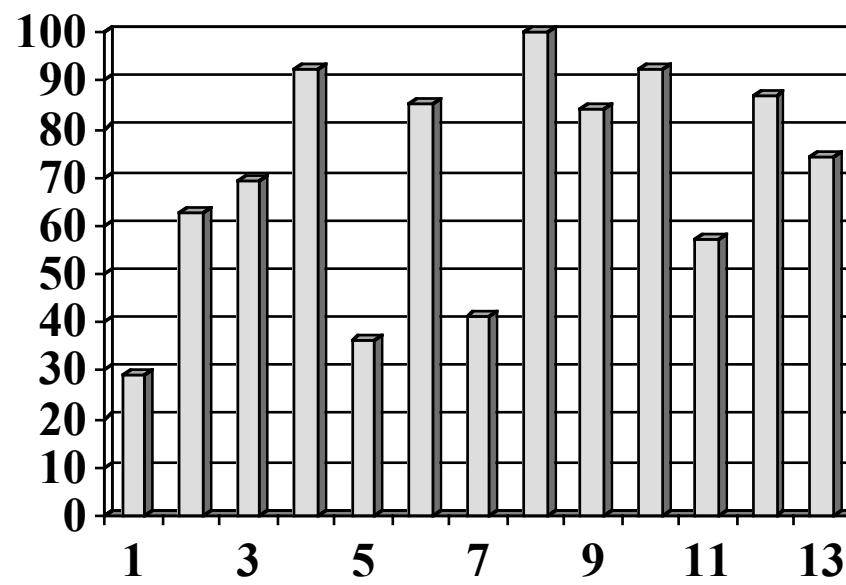
"More US citizens in the study knew that the island featured in last season's *Survivor* is in the South Pacific than could find Israel." — John Fahey, President and CEO of the National Geographic Society

president John Fahey's 'americentricism.'

The subpar results of this quiz at San Marin and around the world stress the importance of teaching and learning geography.

For the full test and results, go to the National Geographic website at <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geosurvey>.

San Marin Test Results



Quiz questions

1. Population of U.S.
2. Largest religion
3. Taliban and al Qaeda based in which country
4. Region with largest oil exports
5. Two countries in dispute over Kashmir
6. AIDS most prevalent on which continent
7. Two countries with over one billion people
8. Location of U.S.
9. Location of Russia
10. Location of Japan
11. Location of Afghanistan
12. Location of Israel
13. Location of Argentina

Question Number

Spring Fling

Check out the hottest trends to hit SM this spring!

By Bridget O'Connor, Rachel Oppenheimer, and Challen Pressley.

The temperature is rising and San Marin students are crawling



Juniors Ashley Peterson and Leland Hansen get a leg up for the camera.

these micro minis is with a little variation: try skirts with low-rise waists, cargo pockets, corduroy, or with a wide, low-slung belt. Beware of the *too* short, Christina Aguleria skirts; dirty isn't in style this season. Colorful graphic tees are also a must, as are classic thong flip-flops. Overall, when shopping for some saucy and hip clothes, look for bright colors, short hemlines, and anything you will feel good in this season while soaking in some rays.

The effortlessly fashionable guys at San Marin have nothing to fear this spring. Top trends for guys have little variation from what you sported last year at Spring Break. Loose-fitting cargo shorts are still fabulous this year, especially rested oh-so-

low on your hips. Trust us. These shorts are stylish in natural hues such as olive green and khaki. Pair these with a slightly fitted graphic tee and your favorite flip-flops and the girls will be flocking. When considering what to wear this season, think faded colors in a relaxed fit, and don't forget some sun screen!

Wondering where to find these dazzling styles? Try Abercrombie and Fitch, Pacific Sunwear, American Eagle, Macy's, and Gap.

out of their drab winter confines to discover the fun fashion trends for spring 2003. The hottest styles for guys and girls are relaxed, fun, and just in time for Spring Break. Girls, your closets are about to get more colorful and hip with the latest vintage styles that are coming back full speed ahead. Ultra feminine floral tops look sultry paired with spring's most leg-loving trend, the mini skirt. Keep in mind the best way to sport one of

low on your hips. Trust us. These shorts are stylish in natural hues such as olive green and khaki. Pair these with a slightly fitted graphic tee and your favorite flip-flops and the girls will be flocking. When considering what to wear this season, think faded colors in a relaxed fit, and don't forget some sun screen!

Wondering where to find these dazzling styles? Try Abercrombie and Fitch, Pacific Sunwear, American Eagle, Macy's, and Gap.

Getting ready for Prom

...or any other special occasion?

We can help with just about everything you can think about including a full line of gowns and accessories.

Visit us on-line at gownswest.com or 643 Martin Ave. Suite One, Rohnert Park or call us at 707.585.1686.



What is your favorite spring style for the opposite sex?

By Challen Pressley and Bridget O'Connor



Alicia Miranda, sophomore: "You gotta love when guys with toned arms wear those cut-off shirts."



Joe Farasati, junior: "Any kind of clothing that shows skin. I have to say, skin is in this season."



Vito Capitan, freshman: "I love when a foxy chick strolls by in a leopard print spandex suit with sequins."



Nicole Shea, senior: "A wifebeater clinging to a tanned, perfectly sculpted body."

Check out these websites the new spring styles:
www.abercrombieandfitch.com
www.pacificsun.com
www.ae.com
www.macys.com
www.nordstroms.com
www.gap.com
www.jcrew.com

Still don't know what to do? Check out these activities:

Second Annual Peoples Earth Day 2003

Event Date: April 12, 2003
 Event Time: 11:00am-4:00pm
 Address: Heron's Head Park (Pier 98), San Francisco
 For more info: <http://www.lejyouth.org>

Naturally Funny Comedy Show

Event Date: April 26, 2003
 Event Time: 7:00pm-10:00pm
 Address: 685 14th St., Oakland
 For more info: <http://www.informedating.org/events.html>

Worst Case Scenario Will Affect Every Student

Limiting Electives

By David Hoytt and Mark Kellner

In the coming weeks and months, the school board will make many decisions regarding numerous classes at San Marin. Because many of these are designated electives, some people may see them as unimportant "fluff". However, students in these classes often gain experiences and vocational training that is often more valuable than those available in many college prep courses.

The following is a sampling of the classes that could potentially end up on the chopping block and why they are important to the students they serve.

Drama

What we have now: Three periods of drama, two introductory classes and the advanced drama class that meets at night
Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: Intro-66, Advanced-28

Worst case scenario: Drama offerings could be reduced by two sections at each school which would leave San Marin students with one section of drama

What's at stake: A UC elective that provides visual or performing arts credit, drama is self supporting except for the teacher's salary

Comments: "It gave me a sense of community," commented former drama student Laura Kopp. "I vastly improved my public speaking skills and knowledge of literature and history." Kopp, who has become a fixture at almost every school board meeting, hasn't gone on Broadway, but the skills she learned have helped her to feel confident speaking in public. According to Kopp, "Besides filling your UC elective, Drama offers a chance during the school day to release energy and get your creative juices flowing."

Journalism

What we have now: One period of Journalism I, II, III combined
Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: 30 total in Journalism I, II, III admitted by application

Worst case scenario: Journalism would be eliminated as a class and possibly become a club, but it's unlikely that students would participate in an academic class for no credit when they rarely have enough time to complete the paper with 50 minutes a day

What's at stake: A UC elective with a 30+ year history at San Marin, journalism is the only English elective at San Marin.

The "Pony Express" is so popular in the community that it collected almost \$3,000 in subscription sales for the 2002-2003 school year. The only cost of the class is the teacher's salary.

Comments: Hopefully the importance in journalism comes out simply in the publishing of the "Pony Express" every month. The journalism class is the only academic elective that produces a product. This product, the monthly paper, gives a unique perspective on the events and concerns of the San Marin student body while providing insight into the lives of students, staff, and community members. The true value of the class comes in the education that the staff receives. Senior editor Ross Thelen, who plans to major in journalism at USC's Annenberg School of Journalism next fall, explained, "English classes teach us how to write, but journalism teaches us why to write." The journalism class and the "Pony Express" have been in existence since 1969.

Psychology

What we have now: One period of psychology
Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: 25

Worst case scenario: Psychology would be eliminated as an elective

What's at stake: A UC elective whose only cost is the teacher's salary.
Comments: Students will lose the opportunity to take a UC approved elective.

Architectural Design

What we have now: Two periods mixing beginner and advanced courses and enrolling a total of 60 students.

Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: 52

Worst case scenario: Architectural Design would be eliminated as an elective

What's at stake: Classes such as architecture are important for those students who seek an education in many trades that aren't prepared for in standard CP English or History courses. The students learn manual drafting, computer drafting, and real construction application. Without classes of this sort many students could be unprepared and confused when graduation time comes.

Comments: According to teacher Cathy Oakes, "Any elective is an introduction into a vocational field. If these classes are eliminated the students will leave the structured classes offered with

no idea of what they might be interested in." Paul Rilla had another angle. "The need for a four-year degree isn't huge. There are a lot of college graduates who don't use their degree and need training in vocational careers."

Yearbook

What we have now: One period of yearbook

Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: 18

Worst case scenario: Yearbook would be eliminated as a class and possibly become a club that students would receive no credit or grade for, and would also likely suffer due to a lack of students.

What's at stake: A 30+ year history at San Marin, and a book that graduates usually keep for the rest of their lives. The quality of the yearbook could suffer with fewer students in the program to work on it.

Comments: Ryan Berberian, the Yearbook teacher, said that "they [the yearbook students] should get some credit for the work they put into it."

Student Council

What we have now: One period of student council

Number of San Marin students enrolled 2002-2003: 33 students elected/selected as class officers and representatives

Worst case scenario: Leadership would be eliminated as a class and become a club that students would receive no credit or grade for and would also likely suffer due to a lack of students.

What's at stake: It's a slacker class, right? NO!! Did you go to homecoming or the winter formal? Ever eaten at one of the class barbecues or any other school function? And do you want to go to prom? That is the nothing that the leadership class does. They are the fuel that makes the '85 Pinto that is our school run.

Comments: Senior Eric Letsch based his entire application on the feats he has accomplished in the class during his four years at San Marin. "Leadership is a huge factor in my getting into college," said Letsch, a former class president and treasurer. "It makes you a better person in terms of



The voice of the students: journalism, yearbook and student council students are asking that each school be allowed to decide what to cut based on student signups.

communication and in being open to new ideas and experiences. I owe a lot to the program." If the class is cancelled, many students such as Letsch, who doubles as a varsity baseball player, will have no time to come to an after school club and will undoubtedly never reach their potential as leaders of their school.

English

What we have now: State funded class size reduction in freshman English classes limiting classes to 20 students with a maximum of 22

Worst case scenario: If the state eliminates funding for class size reduction, freshman English classes will be staffed at the district ratio, which will result in an average of 31 students in each class.

What's at stake: Student attention and teacher jobs. Although studies have not proven the benefits of class size reduction, students, teachers and parents all believe that smaller classes result in more individual attention and increased student achievement.

Comments: In English classes, the fewer students in a class, the more frequently teachers can assign essays without killing themselves. With ten more students in these classes, grading would become impossible. This means that writing skills of students in these impacted classes would severely decrease. Objective tests would be given more often, and teachers would have a more difficult time testing students' skills. Discussion time would also decrease with larger classes that would be harder for a teacher to control. English department chair Ronnie Campagna, who has been teaching ninth grade English since 1975, has noticed a tremendous difference in her students' progress under class size reduction. "Small freshman English classes allow teachers to work with students

individually and really concentrate on their writing. I can't imagine 'slicing and dicing' over 30 essays."

Math

What we have now: State funded class size reduction in freshman math classes limiting classes to 20 students with a maximum of 22

Worst case scenario: If the state eliminates funding for class size reduction, math classes will be staffed at the district ratio, which will result in an average of 31 students in each class.

What's at stake: Student attention and teacher jobs. Although studies have not proven the benefits of class size reduction, students, teachers and parents all believe that smaller classes result in more individual attention and increased student achievement.

Comments: Cutting of math classes would mean additional students being put in classes that are already overcrowded. Class size in Algebra 1 and geometry classes would be affected the most and grades may go a little down as a result. "It is likely that it will cause decreased performance in the larger classes, by how much, I don't know," math teacher Tom Zechlin said.

Library media center

What we have now: Librarian three days a week (cut mid-year from full time), full time library clerk

Worst case scenario: No librarian (Donna Tantillo is the library clerk; the board has not made any proposed any classified staff reductions public.)

What's at stake: Books catalogued more slowly, no time to pull books for class research
Comments: Students' research has become more difficult, as the librarian's time in the library has been decreased due to the budget

Teachers wait for answers

By Paige Lehman

At San Marin, thirty-two teachers reportedly received March 15 letters telling them they may not have jobs next year. This number includes temporary teachers and those hired within the past three years.

These teachers have to plan for the fourth quarter and upcoming finals with the knowledge that they may not be coming back next year.

While there is a chance that many of them may be hired back in August or not laid off at all, for many not knowing just makes it harder.

"The uncertainty of it all is partly what makes it so bad," explains English teacher Ryan Berberian. He is in the process of trying to buy a house in the converted Hamilton Air Force Base. As an NUSD employee, he is entitled to a priority slot in the lottery for a house. However, if laid off in May, he may lose his chance for a house, even if he is re-hired as early as August.

Another teacher who preferred not to be named said that she had to stop looking for a new house.

"It really puts your life on hold," commented Principal Loeta Andersen.

And it is not as easy as just finding a new teaching position. All the districts in California are facing cuts; very few are looking for new teachers. And, in addition, there will also be recently-credentialed teachers looking for jobs. "The reason why this round of layoffs is different from past layoffs is there are so many more teachers on the market [than positions to fill]" says Andersen. This could result in many qualified teachers being completely out of work.

The remaining teachers will also be greatly impacted by the potential layoffs. Their class size could increase dramatically. It is almost certain that ninth grade English and math classes, limited to 20 students for many years, will rise to the district average of 31. An understaffed, overcrowded school is no means an ideal working environment.

For now, many teachers are just dealing with the emotional toll of being laid off. As they prepare lesson plans and grade papers, they are also having to con-

front the possibility of being laid off. "Becoming a new teacher, I never thought I'd be laid off. I don't think you feel appreciated as a new teacher. You understand [the layoffs], but you don't feel appreciated," says another teacher on the staff. It is extremely stressful for teachers to be unsure of their employment situation. Teachers will know for sure by May 15th if they are being laid off. However, depending on the budget situation in Sacramento, additional letters

"It really puts your life on hold." —Principal Loeta Andersen

can be sent as late as August.

As students look forward to the end of school, it is important to remember the teachers. They are working hard for us, and they may never be fully compensated for it. We should show our appreciation for them, and they should know our gratitude. It will not be long before we understand how much they really matter in our lives.

Why Can't Clubs Replace Electives?

By Marie Buich

As we already know, the California budget crisis is causing major problems for school-districts within the state, not to mention students' schedules at San Marin. Several valuable classes are at high risk of elimination, which may result in students losing the opportunities to enroll in crucial electives, such as Journalism, Leadership, and Yearbook. Besides simply eliminating these classes, another possible solution is to offer them as after-school clubs. Due to personal experience, I can assure you that this strategy will not be a success.

The beginning of the second semester of my junior year started off with a frustrating dilemma, thanks to hasty decisions made by the school district. Not only was I notified of the sudden change

within my class schedule, but was also introduced to a hopeless struggle of juggling my classes around, in attempts of creating a suitable schedule from the few classes offered as replacements. Because of the budget crisis, my seventh period U.S. History class and several other classes were simply "cut" from the school day...a bit unreasonable, in my opinion. Junior Brad McCarter, who experienced the same difficulty, comments, "Trying to juggle the responsibilities of journalism outside of class time has been quite difficult and I don't see how Journalism could exist as a club, when it has never in the past." Considering I am one of many students enrolled in AP and Honors classes, which are only offered once throughout the school-day, I was

limited as to how much I could do to resolve this issue. My only options were to simply drop one elective, or to place one class under the "independent study" category, indicative of my being in Journalism on my own. Quite frankly, choosing to study Journalism *independently* was not my exact favorite approach to dealing with the problem, but the options were slim, and I wasn't willing to give up such a valuable elective.

I can guarantee that writing articles in the comfort of my home is not as enjoyable as you'd imagine it to be. In class, I had the opportunity to seek help, ideas, and suggestions from my fellow classmates...to interview students from our school conveniently...to manage my time wisely. At home, I feel as if I am missing out on the true "journalism experience..." it just isn't the same. I don't have as much of an inspiration to write as I did while I was attending class daily. I'm excluded from group editing, learning valuable journalism lessons offered in class, and most depressing of all, conversing with the fabulous journalists during class. If Journalism and other electives are made after-school clubs, the outcome will not be as successful as expected. This deci-

sion will only result in less interest in the elective, and will diminish the importance of Journalism to both our school and our community. The countless skills we attain from this class will benefit our futures tremendously, especially if we plan on pursuing careers in media or broadcasting. Applications of reading, writing, and computer skills are incorporated into this elective, and a realistic understanding of the media and communications is also offered. Other acquired skills include self-expression, photography, art, organization, and time management. One concerned Leadership student, Junior Sunny Banihashemi, remarks, "I think that leadership couldn't function as a club. Class time is critical to run our main events, such as dances, fundraisers, and keeping students spirited." The fact that many students engage in sports and other after school activities will only result in further conflicts and less student participation. I am not speaking on behalf of myself, but on the behalf of dozens of enthusiastic, eager students who devote much of their free time and imagination contributing to classes of their liking, whose fates lie in the hands of our school district's budget-cut decisions.

Voice your opinion about the budget cuts

Do you have an idea about the way the board should approach the budget crisis? The board and superintendent encourage community input. Write an e-mail (addresses listed at <http://nUSD.marin.k12.ca.us/board/board.htm#members>) or letter to the school board (1015 Seventh Street, Novato, CA 94947) or speak at one of the upcoming board meetings on April 29 or May 6. Meetings are held at the District Education Center and begin at 7:30 pm. The board will make a decision at the May 6 meeting.

Team to Beat in MCAL

By Colin Dietz

Although for the most part, pre-season success does not display a team's true expectations, for the San Marin Mustangs Varsity Baseball team it does. After an amazing 7-0 preseason, in which

for 2 with 2 RBI, 2 runs, and 2 doubles.

Although trailing early for the first time this season, the Mustangs pulled off a 6-5 win over San Rafael. Despite five errors, due in



Senior Erik Egide gets a base hit.

they beat such highly touted teams as El Cerrito (2A NCS Representative) and Arroyo (3A NCS Representative), the Mustangs went on to win their first three regular season games before losing a heart-breaker to Marin Catholic.

It was the first time since the 1982 NCS Championship team went undefeated throughout the pre-season. The Mustangs did it with great pitching (led by Darrell Fisherbaugh and Bud Norris), solid defense, and a powerful offensive lineup that outscored its opponents with a combined score of 55-10.

San Marin opened league play against a tough Justin Sienna team that is predicted to be in the top three. The Mustangs proved that the pre-season was not a fluke in an explosive 8-1 victory. Fisherbaugh stepped up as the opening day pitcher, throwing a complete game. He improved his overall record to 6-0 by striking out seven Braves without allowing a walk. The hitting attack was led by Dustin Colclough who was 2

part to only their second night game all year, pitcher Norris (2-0) was able to keep the Mustangs close through six innings, striking out six, and allowing only four hits (all in the first 2 innings). Fisherbaugh extinguished any thought of a Bulldog seventh inning rally by striking out two and picking a runner off first base to earn the save.

The Mustangs trailed by as many as three runs at one point,

for 2 with 2 RBI, 2 runs, and 2 doubles. Although trailing early for the first time this season, the Mustangs pulled off a 6-5 win over San Rafael. Despite five errors, due in

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for 2 with 2 RBI, 2 runs, and 2 doubles. Although trailing early for the first time this season, the Mustangs pulled off a 6-5 win over San Rafael. Despite five errors, due in

Soccer Worthy of Notice

By Niki Kidd

Despite the recent success of the varsity girls' soccer team, it seems as though they are placed behind the JV baseball, softball, and freshmen baseball teams. How so? The talented girls are not allowed to practice on their home soccer field.

Their practice space is delegated to the football field, a torn up area with non-regulation goals. These goals are the main reason why the Mustangs can't play their regular season home games there, as MCAL may force the team to forfeit any games they play there. Yet they practice there nonetheless, as they are not allowed to practice on their home field.

When game time does roll around, the girls play on the upper field, an area where the boys' soccer team plays in the fall. It also throws them in the midst of baseball and softball practices. These practices force the Mustangs to take a ride on the field merry-go-round, never getting the opportunity to become acquainted with their home turf.

A team should have a home-field advantage when it plays on

Impressive Start for New Lacrosse Squad

By Jamie Lummis



Senior Kim Larkey penetrates through the defenders

The newly formed girls lacrosse team is proving that they deserve a permanent spot on the San Marin sports roster.

Winning all their pre-season games, the young team (with only two seniors) is showing its skills. At their first league game on March 18, the girls traveled to the prestigious Sonoma Academy. In a sweeping victory, the Lady Mustangs outscored Sonoma 15-5.

Junior Karli Jayne led the team with an incredible five goals. Senior Kim Larkey and sophomores Kelly Larkey, Bonnie Lummis and Lisa Neal also contributed with goals. Sophomore Kim Puliafico, a first year player, made a great showing as the team's goalie.

Encouraged by their previous victory, the Lady Mustangs were eager to face the Marin Catholic Wildcats. Despite the Wildcats' long lacrosse tradition, the Mustangs were able to hold their own after overcoming a lackluster first half. With goals from Jayne, Larkey, sophomore Lori Stohler and freshman Liz Maurer, they were able to finish with a tied score of 8-8. The stunned Marin Catholic team decided not to continue into overtime. "They chickened out for an overtime... Next time it's going down!" commented Lummis.

If the rest of the team has any of Lummis' enthusiasm, they are sure to have a successful first season as a high school team.

its own turf. But if a team can't practice at their own home field, where is the advantage? The girls' soccer team is suffering in this field balancing act, seemingly being delegated to whatever field is left rather than getting priority over the lesser teams.

Despite these problems, the girls' won their first home match against Justin Sienna 4-0 with goals by senior Brooke Barnecut (2), and juniors Gina Zucconi and

Katherine Niehoff. The Mustangs prevailed even with the larger, slower field and the wet weather.

Overall, the girls' have had success in the regular season thus far. They are 3-1-2, and are continuing to improve. With one of the most difficult parts of their schedule complete, the Mustangs hope to maintain their focus and edge while improving upon individual skills and talents.



Spring Sports Update

Track

By Christina Pelka

"Skilled, but small." The San Marin Boys Track and Field team may be lacking participants, but it's definitely not searching for talent. Freshman Marty Cunnie, who throws shotput, and freshman Jeff McLaughlin, who runs the 800, 400, and 4x4, have shown to be strong leaders of the frosh-soph. team. Jared Barrilleaux, a 2-year track veteran, who will continue to contribute to the varsity team in the pole vault and the mile, and Scott VanHootegen, a runner in the 4x100, 100, and 200, have shown to be strong competitors on the varsity squad. "I plan on having a lot of fun during my senior year and I hope we have a successful, injury-free season." Barrilleaux commented.

After getting warmed up at their first three invitational meets, San Marin competed against Drake on Thursday, March 20, where the girls' team won by two points. The girls hope to dominate the league in all events, especially the 4x4 relay, where senior Susan Beresford and juniors Whitney Stenberg, Ashley Peterson, and Marie Buich have worked to create one of the best relay teams in years. Many compliments have surrounded this group of exceptional athletes. Other leaders of the girls' field team include juniors Amber Miller (high jump, triple jump), Kelly Wyrsh (shotput, discus), and Courtney Carroll (shotput, discus).

The next meet is an invitational at Santa Rosa J.C. against many of Northern California's strongest track school on Saturday, April 26. The team will meet their cross-town rival, Novato High, on Thursday, May 1.

Swimming and Diving

By Myra Perez and Katie Winsor

Although this year's San Marin swim team has faced several disheartening defeats, the swimmers are managing to keep their heads above water. While the girls' team has a firm record of two wins and two losses, the boys are still striving for their second win.

The girls attained their first win of the season in their meet against San Rafael. Senior Emily Parker placed first in the 500 yard freestyle with a time of 5:17:23. Sophomore Sarah Cochrane finished second with a time of 5:49:71.

"Our 400 yard freestyle relay has consistently dropped time over the past four meets. We are currently at a 4:03:25," says junior Melanie McCollum. The team hopes to send seniors Ashley Karrell and Parker, and sophomores Myra Perez and Cochrane to the North Coast Section Championships with their 200 and 400 yard freestyle relays this season.

The boys, however, lost their meet against San Rafael. Freshman Matt McDonald finished third in the 200 yard freestyle with a time of 2:13:71.

Golf

By Brad McCarter

As the season begins, the San Marin boys' golf team faces some steep competition. The first match of the season was a face-off against Justin Sienna. But by the end of the day, San Marin lost by 2 strokes. By the third match of the season, the team

ATHLETES OF THE ISSUE

Jenny Jackson and Katherine Niehoff

By Niki Kidd



finally pulled through against San Rafael. After that empowering win, the team followed with a 7 stroke win against the Branson team. Now in the third week of competition the team stands with a 2-5 record.

Some of their toughest matches are coming up in the weeks to follow including their match against the team to beat, Redwood High School. But with the help of all the players, including #1 Kyle Manzoni and #2 Reese Holtz who have consistently shot well all year, the team can easily pull out of the slump they find themselves in.

Softball

By Rachel Oppenheimer

Spirits remain high among the young group of screaming girls as the score remains tied at the end of the 7th inning. After another scoreless inning junior Jennie Gay slams out a magnificent triple in the bottom of the 9th scoring on a RBI groundout by Lindsey Benson. This win over Justin Sienna, 1-0, set the tone for another dominant Girls varsity softball season.

"I'm really optimistic about the season to come and I'm happy with the way the girls are coming together as a team as well as friends."

The young team has a reputation to hold and intends on working its hardest to remain number 1.

Boys' Tennis

By Kevin Kahn

After a 2-0 start with wins over Justin Sienna and San Rafael, the varsity boys tennis team lost tough matches against league powers Marin Catholic, Redwood, and Tamalpais. However, they bounced back from the losing streak with wins over Terra Linda, cross-town rival Novato, Drake, and Justin Sienna to have a strong current record of 6-3. One and two singles players Zach Warren and Blane Shields, both juniors, are currently undefeated in league play, and the strong doubles squad led by sophomores Kevin Jamieson and Aaron Hartney round out a balanced attack. The team plays each Tuesday and Thursday at 3:00 and fans are always welcome.

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No matter what side they attack from, the San Marin Mustangs girls' soccer team is dangerous. That is because of the presence of their two star outside midfielders, senior Jenny Jackson and junior Katherine Niehoff. From crosses, to breakaways, to give and go's, these girls dominate the field and have helped lead the Mustangs to a successful regular season thus far.

They combined on two goals in a 2-0 win over perennial soccer powerhouse Branson, in the biggest victory of the year thus far for the Mustangs. The combination of Niehoff crosses and Jackson finishes propelled the team past the Braves and into the upper echelon of MCAL soccer.

Jackson enters her senior season after years of success on both the Mustangs and her numerous travelling soccer clubs, most recently the Tiburon Lightening. Her accolades on the soccer field have led to an offered scholarship from Dominican, and

has led her in the pursuit of other scholarship opportunities at other universities. Jackson said, "I love being on the field, and I think we can do really well this season."

Niehoff's speed and ball skills have proven why she is a force to be reckoned with this season in MCAL. She has five assists during the regular season, none as impressive as her cross to Isabel Rowley to help the Mustangs keep up with Marin Catholic in a 1-1 tie. "I really want to beat MC and Redwood. I can't wait to play them both again," Niehoff said. And after a 1-0 loss to Redwood on April 2nd, not to mention a 2-0 overtime MCAL loss last season, both Niehoff and the rest of the team have plenty of motivation to beat the Giants.

The combined effort of these captains has led to the best start by the Mustangs in several years, despite having the toughest schedule in all of MCAL. With these results, expectation continue to be high for this talented group of girls.

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Sun's Out— Head for the Beach

By Stephanie Alderson

Beaches	Advantages	Disadvantages	Activities	Rules (fires, camping, clothing)	Doggies	How to get there
Stinson Beach	Largest beach in Marin, great atmosphere, and a seasonal snack bar	Dangerous swimming conditions and recent shark attacks	Volleyball, fishing, surfing, picnic areas, hiking, biking, kayaking	No camping, fires allowed in picnic areas, nude beach in one section	Nope	Marin. Take Highway 1/Stinson beach exit, follow the signs.
Muir Beach	Good surf and restrooms too!	Dangerous swimming conditions and windy	Surfing, hiking, and picnic areas	Campfires allowed	Yes (with leash)	Marin. Six miles from Highway 1 exit.
Bolinas Beach	Calm water within sand bar and a view of Twin Peaks in San Francisco	Bad parking, no lifeguards	Kayaking, surfing, fishing	Camping and campfires are allowed	Yes (no leash required)	Marin. Three miles north of Stinson Beach Exit CA 1 at Olema-Bolinas Road west. Go through town, turn onto Wharf Road and follow it to the beach
Baker Beach	Protected from wind (warmest beach in SF), view of the Golden Gate bridge	Frigid water, no lifeguards, and swimming is not recommended	Hiking, picnic areas, and fishing	No camping or fires, northern end is a nude beach	Yes (no leash required)	San Francisco. Located on Bowley Street off Lincoln Boulevard in the Presidio
China Beach	Picturesque, protected from wind, restrooms and showers	No lifeguards	Picnic areas, BBQ's	Campgrounds nearby	Nope	San Francisco. Adjacent to the exclusive Sea Cliff District
Ocean Beach	Longest beach in SF, great waves for surfers, restrooms and showers, lots of free parking	Cold and windy, dangerous for swimming	Surfing, sunset watching	Fires allowed (packed with nighttime bonfires during the summer)	Yes (no leash required)	San Francisco. Western edge of the city from approximately Sloat Boulevard to Golden Gate Park.
Pacifica State Beach	Attracts a lot of surfers, close to a Taco Bell, restrooms and showers	Dangerous swimming conditions	Surfing (especially longboarding), fishing, clamming	Fires allowed	Yes (on leash)	Pacifica. From San Francisco take Highway 1 South-exit Paloma/Francisco Blvd.

62 Days and Counting

Senioritis plagues the class of '03

By Bret Pughe

It's now three weeks into the fourth and final quarter for San Marin seniors. College acceptances are finalized, spring

ing year up on the hill (if it hasn't been changed by sophomores) and walk across the stage on June 14. Senioritis seems to happen

Now into April, the seniors also have a good idea of where they will be spending the next two, four, or even six years of their life. All the pressures of getting good grades throughout high school, applying to colleges, and getting accepted are over; the days of spending time with friends and family before we leave for school are now here. However, there are still 62 days left in the school year and we need to make sure we all graduate.

So, class of 2003: we're almost there. The long anticipated wait and the struggles with senioritis are almost over. Our last moments with good friends and the senior festivities are here. Senior Jenny Jackson summed up her emotions, "I'm going to miss all the friends I've made over the last four years, but at the same time I can't wait to go off to college."

Party time is just around the corner, and I for one can't wait.



Senior Bud Norris dreams of the ladies on the beach...a common symptom of Senioritis.

break is here, and the weather is getting warmer. Instead of the classrooms, the summertime and the beaches are beckoning the class of 2003.

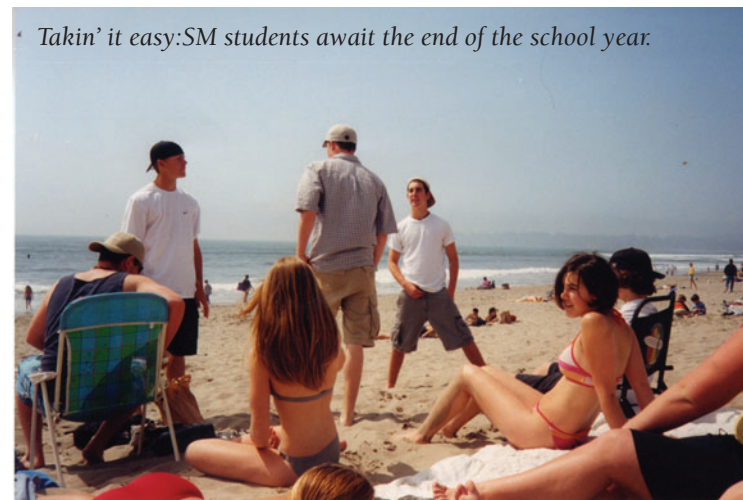
Although ALL of my classes are extremely challenging and enjoyable, the smells of summer BBQ's and exotic senior trips are much more appealing at this time of the year. Don't get me wrong, San Marin has been wonderful the past four years; however, most seniors have been anxiously awaiting their turn to put their graduat-

every year; when the sunshine comes out and the senior contracts are due, most seniors begin to focus their attention elsewhere than school. The anticipation of the Disneyland trip, senior cut day, Safe Grad Night, and Prom are just a few of the distractions seniors are presented with.

Senior Will Grayson explained his senioritis diagnosis without hesitation, "I've had senioritis since kindergarten. I can't wait to graduate!"



The ladies of '03 soak up the sun.



Takin' it easy: SM students await the end of the school year.



Nice catch: gone fishin' at the beach.