



**Movie Review:**  
*Freedom Writers* is an inspirational film based on a true story. For more details check out the entertainment section.



**Senior Spending:**  
 It is getting more and more expensive being an active high school senior. Read about these fellow seniors and their expenses in the campus section.



**Special Guest:**  
 Mrs. Henderson's P.E. class learns the new extreme sport called the "wave." For more see the campus section.



# EL RODEO



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[www.erusdk12.ca.us/elrancho](http://www.erusdk12.ca.us/elrancho)



**Pride Day:** Following the three year tradition of E.R. Pride Day, senior Art Ortega lends a helping hand by replanting foilage in front of the counsler offices. Ortega was accompanied by approximately five-hundred fellow El Rancho students.

## Hundreds Help Re-Polish the Ranch

BY ROBERT PRIETO  
 EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Approximately five hundred Dons picked up their putty knives, brooms, and rakes cleaning the school campus for El Rancho's third annual Pride Day. "Pride Day was started three years ago because El Rancho was asked to host part of the Academic Decathlon. We talked about what an honor that was for our school because we had 57 schools coming from all over L.A. County and whatever their perceptions were of El Rancho High School, they would have an opportunity to be on campus and see it first hand. So a group of adults came up with the idea to make a clean campus day," said El Rancho High School Principal Julie Ellis. "Overall with Pride Day, of course we want to have the kids contributing to cleaning the campus. The concept is that if our kids clean the school then they will look at their peers and apply pressure about keeping the school clean," explained Ellis. The overall objective of Pride Day remains the same, but this year the staff wanted to pay more attention to the nooks and crannies.

Junior Natasha Sanchez came to Pride Day "to make the school look nicer and cleaner and to make a better campus." Senior Diana Gonzalez, who has participated in Pride Day all three years, said she enjoys Pride Day because it gives students a "chance to get together with [their] friends and do something productive and it gives [them] the opportunity to give back to the community." Freshmen Crystal Hernandez and Genesis Moreno both agreed that Pride Day gave them a chance to give back to the school for giving them an education. Freshman Jeremy Zazueta-Ruiz, who spent Saturday morning cleaning graffiti and sweeping the halls, thought Pride Day was fun.

Ellis appreciates, "the mixture of adults and kids on this day. We have teachers that volunteer their own time to take leadership roles and today we have about 30 teachers here, who have said that they want to work with the kids and help facilitate the event. I'm always so pleased when teachers and students get an opportunity to work together outside the classroom, because it's powerful."

Ellis mentioned that Sophomore Dean Edna Tristan, who was part of the Executive Commission at the time, played a big role in pushing Pride Day through the first year. She also said that Adrian Ayala, the Assistant Principal of Business and Activities, and Student Government Adviser, Enrique Romero, worked hard together to supply the materials and make sure everything was organized.

"Some of our kids are here because their teachers offered them incentives. Some of our kids are here because they do want to give back to the community. [Pride Day] is a good opportunity for students to get community service hour credit for college applications. Some students are here because they believe it is the right thing to do. So there are a number of reasons why students come to Pride Day," said Ellis.

## Laughter and Suspense Fill the Little Theater

BY JACOB SANCHEZ  
 EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Reaching new heights of hilarity, the El Rancho drama department's adaptation of Norman Krasna's play *Who Was That Lady I Saw You With* delighted audiences in the Little Theater for three consecutive nights.

The play showcased the talents of director Mr. Wlasick's two leading male actor comedians, Adam Hernandez and Joshua Gonzales, as well as Norman Krasna's brand of classic comedy, which, judging by the audience's laughter, has aged gracefully. Krasna, a prolific Hollywood writer, won an Academy Award in 1940 for *The Princess 'O Rourke*. He also wrote the hit Broadway play *Kind Sir*, which was adapted into a film called *Indiscrete* starring Ingrid Bergman and Carey Grant.

With *Who Was That Lady I Saw You With*, Krasna took the romantic comedy genre and incorporated the environment of the Cold War, complete with Russian spies and the FBI. In his director's message, Mr. Wlasick fondly recalls watching the film, which starred Dean Martin and Tony Curtis, at the Lakewood drive-in in 1960's.

Each of the young thespians carried himself with the certainty of a seasoned actor, memorizing immense bodies of dialogue and delivering believable performances. Of particular note is Adam Hernandez's ability to



**Comedy Central:** Leading actors, Senior Adam Hernandez and Junior Melissa Legaspi take center stage as a married couple on the verge of a divorce.

belch on command. There were only a few occurrences in which an actor seemed to stumble over his lines, but in such instances the actor always recovered. A scene in which female lead Melissa Legaspi notices a gun on the dinner table was rendered unbelievable by her reaction, which was too quick as to be convincing. But such mistakes are minute and easily brushed aside by the audience that greeted the plays clever situations with gleeful laughter..

The stage was designed by Brando, and built by the drama students

who worked from noon to 11 pm the Saturday before opening night, as well as from noon to 6 pm on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. Mr. Wlasick praised his students for their assiduous efforts. Ms. Frislie Lam's father, Mr. Frislie, built the set for the play's signature scene in the basement of the Empire State Building, despite the fact that he was in the middle of planning his daughter's wedding. The final scene with the flooding basement set proved to be a bona fide crowd pleaser, a fitting end to a funny play.

# Learn to Reed



By JACQUELINE ESPINOZA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Teacher and alumnus of El Rancho, Mr. Allyn Reed has taught not only at El Rancho, but also in Germany. Mr. Reed has always found that he is an avid reader and best able to express himself

with the Department of Defense for a better career opportunity and education for his son.

Because he is so well recognized, Reed was told by El Rancho he was welcomed to return at any time.

Mr. Reed taught military families in Germany for twelve years. There his son received a great education and Reed learned the German language. At the fall of communism, Mr. Reed ended his career in Germany in fear of being transferred.

Eventually, Reed resumed his position at El Rancho. If Reed had to do it all over again he would choose the same direction. Mr. Reed would never exchange his experience of life in Germany with any other career or life opportunities.

He is very satisfied with his career and has no plans of upgrading to a higher paying job. "This is my home," says Reed, "Germany is my second." He would not choose any other place to live and work.

"If lightning were to strike me now," says Reed, "I wouldn't be dissatisfied." Everything he ever set out to do, he accomplished, including teaching U.S. Government, U.S. History, coaching baseball, and raising his family.

Mr. Reed believes in expanding horizons through learning, reading, and traveling. He sees life as one big learning experience. You learn from every experience, good or bad. Reed takes Michelangelo's words to heart; "I'm still learning."

through history. During his junior year at El Rancho Reed was inspired by his history teacher, Mr. Evans, who in Reed's opinion had an interesting approach to teaching.

Mr. Reed would often travel with his wife to Europe during his first years working at El Rancho. They toured there until the "infection" of the "wider world" took hold of them.

Through the Department of the Army, Reed temporarily left El Rancho to teach in Germany. After two years, returned to California to continue his work at El Rancho.

He remained at El Rancho for two years, during which time his son was born. He officially left El Rancho to go back to Germany under a military contract

# Put a Little Pep in Your Step

By KARISSA GUILLEN  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Junior, Kyra Mills is a busy student. Mills is involved in several school activities such as Pep Commission, Social Justice Club, Leos Club, and she is a Pepster; a song leader to be exact. Mills

is also in junior honors team and is maintaining above a 3.0 G.P.A.

Mills currently has a part time job working in the school cafeteria every morning. Mills says, "Even though I only work forty-five minutes a day, I enjoy my easy job. I usually listen to my iPod while I am working, so it's always fun for me."

Mills is involved at the Leos Club at The Ranch. "The Leos Club is by far my favorite club. Being a member of the

Leos Club is very enjoyable and exciting. I love the fact that I get to help out the people who are less fortunate as well as helping out my community."

Last weekend at Tesoro High School, Mills had her first competition as an El Rancho song leader. Mills was very ner-

vous before the team performed because she was afraid that she would mess up and ruin the chances of the song leaders getting a high score. "I felt nervous

because I didn't want to mess up and make our school look bad. Once I heard the crowd cheering us on and screaming for us, my nervousness disappeared. As soon as I got on stage, I was ready and pumped up to show off our new routine that we had been practicing for a long time." The

song leaders won second place out of six schools, and they also made it to nationals. Mills states, "When they called six and fifth place, I was relieved that it wasn't us. When

they called fourth place I felt even better, but what hit me the most was when they called third place and it wasn't us. I had realized that we either won second or first place."

"Being occupied in so many activities at school can be difficult at times. I like to tell myself not to be a quitter and that's what motivates me to keep on doing what I love to do."

Even though it is hard and tiring for Mills to keep up with her busy schedule, she finds a way to cope with it because they are activities that are fun and she enjoys doing.



Leos Club at The Ranch. "The Leos Club is by far my favorite club. Being a member of the

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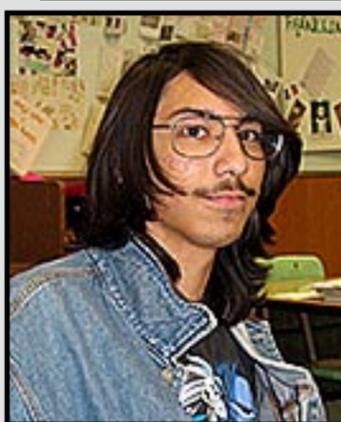
# Students of the Month

By ALEX MOTA AND ALFRED ARMENDARIZ

Meet the freshmen student of the month, Angeli Vicenti, that along with her hard work and effort, has received what most ER students work hard for. Currently taking Spanish as foreign language, Geometry honors, P.E. and attending TEAM as of her second trimester of this year, she has proved that she certainly has potential to do just about anything you lay out for her to do. No doubt, her ability to play both the piano and violin is rather well. "I'd like to go to Medical School after High school and study to be a Family Doctor or a Pediatrician," states Vicenti. UCLA seems to be her school of favor at this time that with her persistence she'll be able to attend to without a doubt. When she's not studying hard or doing homework, she likes to be on the computer and watch T.V. Vicenti enjoys reading books with a classic romantic edge to them. Published in 1847, the book "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Bronte, is one of the top novels on her booklist. Classic Rock bands like Queen and Journey match her sound delight. It won't be a surprise to find out what this studying bee's potential will lead her to, for she has only to show her best.



Unless you were Veronica Hernandez, you would not be December's Sophomore year student of the month, you would not enjoy helping out your community with the Leos Club members as much as she does and you would not be as proud of being a JV water polo player as much as she is, because this is just exactly what she is doing at the time. She's breaking barriers standing in her way and creating a great future for herself. You would not think that of her for she seems like she'd never hurt a fly, but at this point were looking at a girl who'll do just about anything not to jeopardize her future and she's doing a very good job at it too. Chemistry, Digital Art, TEAM, and Algebra 2 Honors are her present scheduled classes for this trimester, and doubtlessly, she is acing them straight. Aside from reading Harry Potter books, Hernandez enjoys reading Manga, a Japanese anime comic book. She's has a great interest in drawing and just about any 80's dancing music. She plans to attend a university and study in hopes to be an architect. No obstacles stand between her and her dreams.



Junior Diego Rubalcava is mildly amused to be selected Student of the Month. When I first attempted to interview Rubalcava for the newspaper, he yelled, "Go away, you capitalist pig!" But once I explained I wasn't "the man," he apologized. Besides being currently enrolled in AP Biology, Junior Team, and AP Calculus, Rubalcava is also part of this year's Academic Decathlon Team and participates in the Social Justice Club and the Advanced Mathematics

Posse. Rubalcava admits, "I've been busy, but I'm learning some useful things. I joined the cross country team this fall and thought it was a great experience, and Decathlon is cool, too." He would like to thank his family and teachers for their support. When not in school, Rubalcava enjoys chillin' out, maxin', relaxin' all cool, and saying no to drugs. His goal in life is human rights for all people, and maybe some animals.

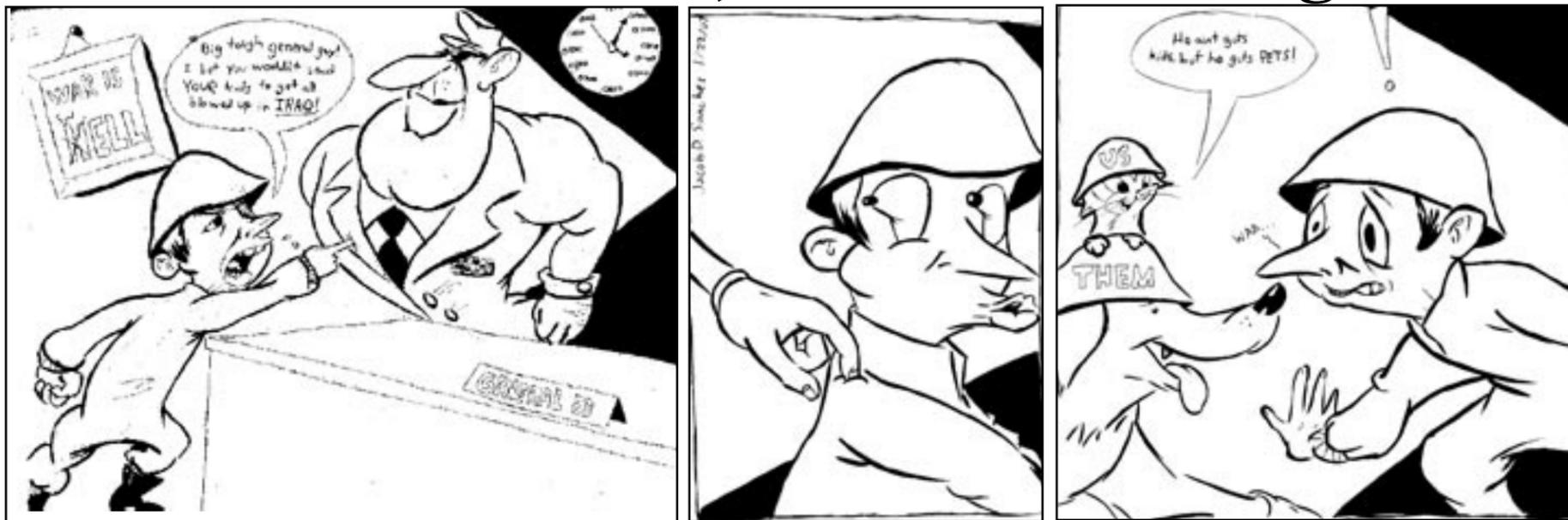


Apart from participating in the Leos Club, MEChA, MESA, the Math Club, and CSF/UC Partners, Aide Macias, Senior, is Student of the Month.

As a Senior, Macias plans to attend Stanford and major in the field of Medicine. Outside of her academic life, Macias enjoys hanging out at the Pico Rivera Town Center with her friends.

With challenging academics and a barrage of extra curricular activities, Aide Macias has proven that she deserves Student of the Month.

# Screw You America, I'm a Draft Dodger!



CHRIS GALLIZZI,  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

It's easy to make an educated generalization that no one really approves of President Bush's plan for America's future. With twenty-one thousand more victims (troops) at his disposal his next move for the Middle East is Iran. In case the main stream media did not inform you, America has invaded Iran and if any person with the slightest understanding of politics or world affairs would know that any invasion upon a country is an act of war. Now to clarify my facts, America did not

invade Iran the country but did invade a province of Iran. "U.S. forces in Iraq raided Iran's consulate in the northern city of Arbil and detained five staff members," according to state-run Iranian news, via Bloomberg. The actual website that posted the story first was "http://www.alternet.org/bloggers/evan/46589/" so go visit the story that really never made the headlines.

Well, on January 23, 2007 the president gave his State of the Union address, were he constantly B.S-ed the whole 9/11 tragedy... yes, it is a tragedy that approximately 3000 innocent U.S. citizens died, but it is a bigger tragedy when over 3000 U.S. soldiers died plus a hefty 60,000 innocent Iraqi casualties died.

Now the draft has become some sort of urban myth that has never been answered, but every month seems to move closer to an idealistic draft. In the begin-

ning of January Bush asked for 21,000 troops, but recently during his State of the Union address he asked congress for a five year plan for 92,000 troops enforcement in the middle east.

Now, if you do your math correctly that is 113,000 troops that have been asked to go to the Middle East within one month. Imagine every month there is a 5,000-10,000 troop necessity needed... so that means by the end of President Bush's term there will be approximately 450,000 troops in the Middle East! Now, I have the most respect for the soldiers in Iraq because they are there out of pride, and because they are more, but they are sitting ducks; being blown up by IED's (Improvised Explosive Devices) and losing limbs for what? Stopping terrorists?

Honestly that excuse came down faster than the twin towers. No matter who you are, you can

not stop the terrorism because it's hard for American people to understand that there is someone that disagrees with America. Those thoughts can never be silenced because not everyone wants to conform to American standards and just because we are America does not mean we are right 110% of the time.

The beloved president also spoke of immigration and everyone knows that El Rancho is notorious for the walkouts, but one thing that stuck out like a sore thumb about the Presidents speech was that he wants to put more guards at the border, and strengthen the border structure. It is extremely sad when a racist president is allowed to run his mouth in public about false accusations because the Department of Homeland Security was created after 9/11 in order to keep America safe. Well, that was all poppycock. Remember the whole

anthrax fear speculation and supposedly Al Qaeda was sending mail filled with fatal powder. Well it sure as hell wasn't Al Qaeda, it was some white guy born in the U.S. Then the whole immigrant incident came up when the U.S. was notified that the terrorist's that caused 9/11 were actually illegal and that's when minute men started popping their racist heads out of the boonies and the Mexican border started to be rebuild... Now why would the Mexican border be picked, When the terrorists came from the Canadian Border which is a fact.

So this whole country is making a turn for the worse, with republicans touching little boys and democrats being broke republicans, it's just all very annoying and sad.

Karl Marx wrote in the Communists Manifesto "the proletarians do not fight their enemies, but the enemies of their enemies."

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## Clinton or Obama, Who is America Really Ready For?

BY SANDY ARIAS  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Is America ready for a female or black president? Democrats seem to think so. Buzz about Senator Hillary Clinton taking the presidency first emerged even as she campaigned for a second term in the Senate three years ago. However, the new kid on the block, Illinois senator Barack Obama has mustered a large following, so large it just might trump Clinton's troupe of experienced advisors and million dollar endorsements. Not that Obama is short on monetary support; he has the backing of Hollywood producer David Geffen and celebrities like George Clooney and Oprah Winfrey.

Clinton has money and experience on her side. Much of her supporters from the 2000 and 2006 Senate races will carry over into her presidential campaign. She not only has more experience as a senator than Obama, but she is a seasoned campaigner since her days as First Lady of Arkansas and later, of the United States. Clinton had her share of controversies, which only further cemented her image and name in the minds of Americans.

However, the fact that Clinton voted for the US to wage war against Iraq in 2002, could come back to haunt her. Obama can pick at Clinton's longer voting record to try to alienate conservatives that think she is too radical and liberals who think she compromises too much. On the other hand, Obama has



not done much in Congress and has approached issues cautiously as a novice senator.

Obama, son of a Kenyan father and American mother, first jumped into the spotlight when he spoke out against the White House's slow response to Hurricane Katrina. He is a powerful speaker and charismatic. Obama promises an energetic approach to politics and change in issues like energy use. Whenever he speaks in public, hoards gather much in the same way as John F. and Robert Kennedy could draw a crowd. To many young and optimistic Democrats, Obama could start a new page in American politics.

However, Obama's momentum might run out by election time, or at least falter in comparison to Clinton's following, which is something she has steadily worked on for years. Although both candidates represent minorities, a female president is far more likely since Clinton encompasses a broader demographic, from African-Americans to women to moderates to independents. At primary elections, Democrats will probably go with Clinton, who is the safer choice.

Former Senator John Edwards announced his candidacy for president before Clinton and Obama. Edwards is just one of the other hopefuls vying for the Democratic nomination, all of which could eat away at both Clinton's and Obama's fan base.

# Amazing Alvarado- Still Teaching Lessons about Life After 34 Years

JAZMIN DIAZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

You expect to learn metaphors and analogies in English class, but I doubt you would expect to learn them in the wrestling room. Coach Alvarado (also known as "Alv") has been teaching his wrestlers many of life's and wrestling's techniques through his indirect, infamous, long speeches. "He always looks for the positive in kids and uses his wisdom and knowledge of the different aspects of life and wrestling to bring out the best in them," claimed Assistant Coach Mr. Hartman.

Alvarado has been coaching for an incredible 34 years here at the Ranch. Alvarado

also lends a helping hand with the other sports during wrestling's off season; he also coached tennis a couple years back. Alvarado says it's the love of the individual, yet team sport that kept him longing for more.

Alvarado joined the wrestling team his junior year in high school in hopes of losing some weight and becoming faster for baseball season. Luckily, he appeared to be a natural and stuck with it. In fact, Alvarado transferred to Sonoma State to continue wrestling for the division II Team. While at Sonoma State, Alvarado advanced and conquered State at his weight class earning himself a trip to Nationals, where he won the MVP award.



"Alv teaches us dedication and heart," said Senior Matt Valdepeña. Alvarado has an obvious passion for wrestling, and it shows through his successful wrestlers. Maybe dedication, hard work and

heart are Alvarado's secrets for successful coaching. Or maybe it comes with the years of experience?

But what exactly can Dons expect out of the last half of the season? "I don't know yet," confessed Alvarado, "the seniors have a lot of heart; I expect them to lead by example." The wrestling team is set to face their toughest competitors in

league this week. The hardest part of Alvarado's season is coming up as well. As the clock keeps ticking; Alvarado realizes he has one less day to spend with his senior wrestlers. "They've become like my children over these past four years. I just hope I prepared them not only for wrestling, but life as well," replied Alvarado. "I've learned a lot from Alvarado's speeches, a lot of life long lessons that I will remember well into the future," said Captain Billie Rivera. As for the rumors of retirement, Alvarado says he is just not sure how much longer he will be coaching here at the Ranch, but says even after retirement, "I'll always be here."

# An Athlete for Every Season

BY SELISA PONCE  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Aide Marquez, is more than just a one season athlete. She plays volleyball and basketball, and is this year's Girls Varsity Basketball team's captain.

Since the first time Marquez touched a basketball, she knew it was the sport she wanted to play. At the mere age of eight, she began practicing and was able to begin her dream when making the Junior Varsity team as a freshman. Marquez then returned the following season as a member of the Varsity Team.

"She's the heart of the team," fellow teammate, senior Mayra Ramos, says of Marquez. "She is always motivated and manages to keep a smile on her face even during a hard practice. Marquez keeps the team going and constantly encourages them to try their best".

Coach Lawson chose Marquez as player of the month because she always plays well. "She's a great offensive and defensive player," a skill that not many basket players are successful of

achieving. Marquez is a leader that many team players look up to.

If Marquez is not playing on the court, she enjoys watching Laker Jordan Farmar and studying his techniques. She also studies her favorite team, the UCLA Bruins, and cheering them on for each of their games.

Besides playing sports, Marquez can be found with her friends, eating, or texting. She has a sweet personality and is always found making funny faces or laughing. Ramos believes that Marquez is "a good friend" and is always there "pumped up for every game."

"I would like to see her play volleyball or basketball at the college level" says Coach Lawson. At the moment, the team has a record of 10 wins to 11 losses. Although the win to lose ratio is about the same, the team still has a good chance of making it to playoffs.

As for Marquez, she will end this final basketball season with many memories. She will always be remembered at El Rancho through the record books as captain of the 2007 team.



A well rounded athlete, Aide plays both basketball and volleyball.

# This Week in Sports History

**1924** - The first Winter Olympics were held in Chamonix, France

**1980** - The Dutch Government demands boycott of Olympic Games

**1989** - Michael Jordan scores his 10,000th NBA point in his 5th season

**1998** - Spice Girl Victoria Adams (Posh) and soccer David Beckham get engaged

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## “Min” Balances Both Athletics and Academics

BY: SELISA PONCE  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Most people view soccer as a simple pass time, but senior Yasmin “Min” Torres takes the sport a bit more serious and believes that, “Soccer is life.” As of freshman year Torres has played for El Rancho’s Varsity girls’ soccer team and has since shown an undying passion for soccer.

Coach Galvan has experienced first hand what a pleasure it is to work with Torres. “She’s the most intense player we have. She plays hard every game.” Even during practice, Torres pushes herself to her limits and focuses purely on the task at hand. Fellow teammate sophomore, Gabby Barrios, considers Torres to be the “best player on the team.” Other team mate sophomore, Jennifer Valdez agrees with Barrios and considers Torres to be her “idol.”

Torres is a “true scholar athlete” and manages to keep a 3.0 GPA while holding the position of Captain on the soccer team. Not only has Torres done exceptionally well in high school, she has plans to do so in college

also. She has been accepted into Cal State Dominguez Hills and is debating on majoring in either Economics or Accounting.

Coach Galvan hopes more than anything that Torres goes on to play college level soccer since she is the player with the most chance this season. “A lot of schools have been asking about her, she’s outstanding!” With Torres’s Amazing skills, there is no wonder why so many schools are after her.

Although Torres has had a great soccer season so far, the luck has not been the same for the entire team. With a record of 3 wins, 9 losses, and 2 ties, the varsity team has been struggling to grab a hold of a higher rank in the league. Coach Galvan is “not pleased with the record, but [sees] much growth” which is much more valuable. He simply hopes to end the season with respect from the league.

However the season does end for the rest of the team, Torres has a bright future ahead of her and has the best wishes from all those who recognize her amazing skills and ability.



Captain Nick Razo has been playing basketball for most of his life.

## Razo Leads Talented Team as Court Captain

BY: BIANCA ORTIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Nicolas Razo is a senior and captain of the boy’s varsity basketball team. He has proven to be worthy of his title due to his great relationship with his teammates and his outstanding performance on the court. So far he has the leading score, re-bouncer, and shot blocker. Razo has been playing basketball at El Rancho for three years, two years varsity.

Razo has always been playing sports for El Rancho since freshman year as a lineman in the football team. Razo has also been in the track team, sophomore year. Although Razo has ventured in other sports, he says that he will stick to basketball because he’s good at it.

Razo decided to try out for the basketball team as a sophomore after getting a few inspiring words from Mr. Llanes, former basketball coach. “Llanes is my inspiration; he has developed my overall game. I owe him everything.”

Razo is motivated by “winning and becoming the best.” He also gets motivated by seeing

other teammates do things that he has taught them. Razo’s goal for the team is “to go undefeated for the rest of the season.” As for himself, Razo wants to turn all area player. In the future, Razo plans to “play basketball in the next level, go to college, and be successful in life.”

One of his fellow teammates and close friend, Armando Montes Jr., senior, describes Razo as a “good friend, funny guy, but still knows when he needs to be serious.” As a captain, Razo “knows how to direct the team, become very vocal, and he always helps guide the younger players who don’t have all of his experience.”

Along with Montes, David Talavera, senior, gives two thumbs up when hearing Razo made captain. “As a two year varsity veteran, he deserves to be captain because he has a lot of talent and experience.” According to Talavera, Razo has brought “moral encouragement, hype, and aggressiveness” to the team. “Razo never gives up. He looks out for everyone and has the potential to be a great Del Rio League threat.”



A successful scholar and athlete, Yasmine “Min” Torres is able to maintain over a 3.0 G.P.A. while also being a soccer star.

## El Rancho’s Most Eligible Athlete

BY: DAVID TORRES  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With many injuries in his athletic participation here at El Rancho, senior David Escobedo has managed to still play sports at a varsity level. Escobedo multitasked participates in two sports which are track during the spring and soccer.

The position that Escobedo plays is defense but more specifically, he plays left back. Escobedo says, “I began my soccer career in 1996 when I played with my first team which was The Terminators in the A.Y.S.O. league. What got me into playing soccer were my older brother Luis and my dad.”

Since then, Escobedo has played for Arsenal F.C., Atlas, Manchester United and Celtics which are all club teams. Escobedo has devoted all of his time to El Rancho soccer and being his last year at the Ranch, Escobedo said,



The team huddles together for a blue pride before an important game.

“Before I leave, I want to win League and hopefully, take C.I.F.”

Team mate and captain of the soccer team, senior Jose Dominguez says, “David is a talented player but he needs to improve a little in his condition but he has an extraordinary touch. As a person, he is great guy to talk to and a great person overall.”

Escobedo’s favorite teams are Real Madrid from Spain and

Galaxy from Los Angeles. His favorite player is David Beckham but Escobedo said, “I was a hard a core fan of Beckham even before he signed to play with the Galaxy.” His favorite move, the ZZ-360, comes from another player who, “Escobedo respects and adores even though he had his incident in the World Cup,” Zinedine Zidane.

From his time with the soccer team at the Ranch, Esc-

obedo has learned, “new skills and discipline” but, “I have also become a better person.” On his spare time, Escobedo likes to go out with his friends and family, go paintballing and play soccer.

“In the future,” Escobedo said, “I want to go to college and graduate but I am undeclared at this moment.” While in college though, Escobedo wants to play soccer. One of his biggest dreams, although he does not know if he will ever get the chance, is to play for the L. A. Galaxy.

At the moment, David Escobedo is most proud of, “Myself because I am keeping my grades up and I am also very proud of the fact that I am going to graduate from high school.” Finally, Escobedo wants everybody to know that “I am single, bilingual and ready to mingle. So if you don’t have a date for Formal, you can consider me as an option.”

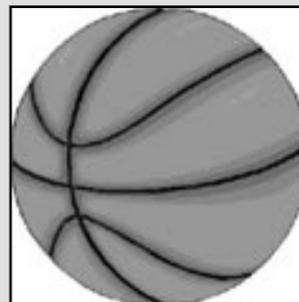
## Sports Schedule

Today:



**Boys Soccer**  
ER vs. Santa Fe  
3:15 @ ER

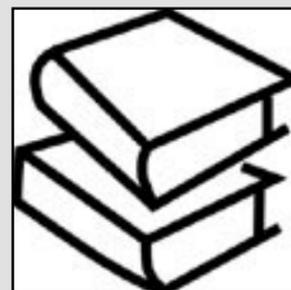
**Girls Soccer**  
ER vs. Santa Fe  
3:15 @ Santa Fe



**Boys Basketball**  
ER vs. La Serna  
7:00 @ La Serna

**Girls Basketball**  
ER vs. La Serna  
5:15 @ La Serna

Tomorrow:



El Rancho Hosts  
Part One of the  
Los Angeles County  
Academic Decathlon  
@ 8:00

Wednesday, 1/31



**Wrestling**  
ER vs. Pioneer  
T.B.A

## Vasquez Appreciates America After Tour of Duty; Prepares to Depart Again

BY AMBER SCHMIDT  
& NADIA DOMINGUEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITERS

Albert Vasquez, 21, a former El Rancho alumni joined the army back in 2003 after graduation. "I joined the army to serve the country and I have never once regretted it."

When he first arrived in Iraq, he thought to himself, "I can't believe I'm in f-in Iraq!" Although Vasquez at first had difficulty with the different environment, he has gotten used to the living conditions in Iraq, "The weather here is almost the same as the weather at home." Even though Vasquez is in a very violent and difficult place, there are perks to his life in Iraq; for instance, exercise equipment is available and a combination of video games is accessible to choose from, including Call of Duty 3. Vasquez takes advantage of the resources around him and works out every day and plays video games with his newly made friends.

In the army, Vasquez has made plenty of close friends. "All of the friends I have made come from California. I think we could relate to each other more because we come from the same place." Vasquez has also decided to stay in touch with his fellow soldiers due to the great relationships he has made. "After this whole thing is over, we plan to still hang out and reminisce over our army days. I would miss them too much to just forget about them." Vasquez misses his family and friends dearly and looks at pictures of them on the computer to remember the life he had before.

Vasquez's duties in the army consist of refueling helicopters. Although Vasquez's duty is considerably dangerous, he considers himself lucky so far because he has "to worry about snipers." Vasquez confesses that "every time [he would] make



Albert Vasquez an Alumnus from 2003 is now a proud soldier.

[his] way to load more fuel, the only thing on [his] mind was the worst possible predicament. Although Vasquez had these feelings, he believes that the army is "definitely well prepared for any dangerous situation."

He has accomplished plenty by joining the army, but being a modest man, he simply states, "I have never felt that I was better than any other man, I just chose a different path than other people. I've never felt like a hero." Vasquez also feels he has made many significant changes to his persona by joining the army. "I feel, I have built up my character and now I see things are more important than I used to see them. I used to be pretty careless with just about everything and now I feel I have more of an opinion about things." Although Vasquez is proud

to be an America, he does have certain beliefs about children living in America. "American children have no appreciation of what they have. The people in Iraq have nothing! They respect any little thing that is given to them. We give them jobs to do for us and pay them and they don't have to work, but they do because they like being able to make their own money. They are grateful. Americans complain about every little thing and most likely they don't even need that luxury." Vasquez goes on to state that "everyone should have to go to Iraq for like a year just to see how good they got it."

In the future, after finishing his third tour of duty, Vasquez plans to become a police officer. Vasquez believes that the training in Iraq would blend with training in the police academy.



Ice was discovered in the early Tuesday morning 1/9/07 by several teachers and did not melt till mid-afternoon.

## El Rancho Gets a Chilly Visitor

BY ALFRED ARMENDARIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Due to the recent drop in temperatures this January, the El Rancho campus has seen proof that the nightly lows have dropped below thirty-two degrees.

Around campus students may have recognized the thin layers of ice covering various patches of grass. From between buildings to the Quad, ice has formed in large clumps, soft snow-like layers, and thin broken shards.

This picture shows a small mound of ice that formed on the south side of the Quad. Many more mounds similar to this were found throughout the campus.

## Social Justice Makes a Civil Mark

NADIA DOMINGUEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

February first marks the beginning of black history month. The Social Justice Club has once again thought of a new and creative way to inform El Rancho students of current issues.

Everyday, the club will search for an inspirational quote in books, poems, and the internet and post it in our daily bulletin. These quotes will come from individuals of different races such as Martin Luther King J.r., Gandhi, Caesar Chavez, John Lennon, and many others. The purpose of these quotes is to "teach tolerance of different groups," says club member Yahaira Gonzalez. The quotes will also be from "people that the students can definitely relate to."

The club hopes that these inspirational quotes will "make people realize that every single ethnic group goes through the same struggles and that everyone is equal," Gonzalez continues. She also hopes that this will make students "think outside of the box and that the quotes affect them in a very positive way."

Fellow club member Pricilla Maturino also anticipates that the quotes will "inform students of different cultures and minorities." She believes that since "most of the school is a minority, they should realize that their back ground is important and has established a great deal in the world." Overall, the Social Justice hopes that this effort will build El Rancho students' knowledge of ethnic equality.

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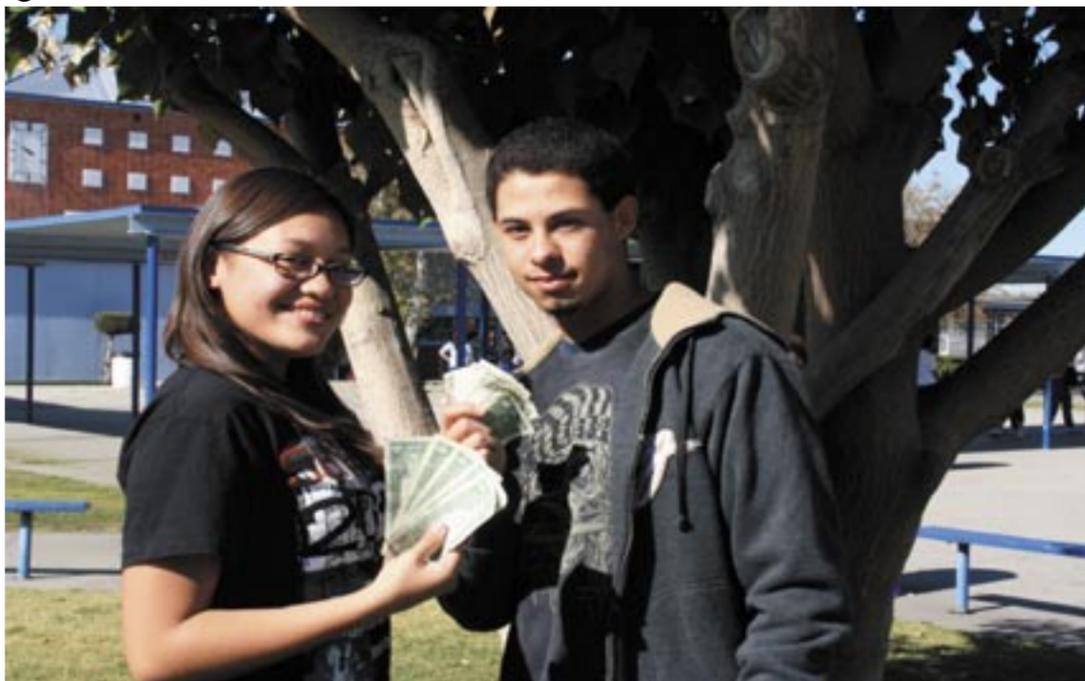
# The Hefty Cost of Senior Year

BY: JAZMIN DIAZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Coming back from Christmas vacation means a lot to seniors. It is the end of most college applications, the beginning of college acceptance letters, and for some a serious case of senioritis. Not only that, but Winter Formal, Spring Break, Prom, Graduation and Grad Night are now so close they can practically taste it. With all this in mind, seniors are more reluctant to think about what Mr. Halley and Mr. Retana aimed to teach them in Econ. The tremendous amounts of planned senior activities are sure to leave a heavy imprint on their own or their parents pocket books.

The cost of senior year does vary from student to student and their activities. According to [www.monetcentral.msn.com](http://www.monetcentral.msn.com) the average high school life costs and amazing \$15,810. This price includes everyday essentials to a limited amount of miscellaneous purchases. However, it does not include the average cell phone bill, car insurance rates, formal wear, A.P. tests and so much more. So, it's a practical conclusion that freshmen should start saving their pocket change now!

Seniors Sara Navalta and Jeremy Vasquez are exem-



play active students here at the Ranch. Navalta is involved in A.S.B., Pep Commission, Pepsters, and was a former A.P. student. Vasquez, is involved in football, baseball, CSF, drives, and is still an A.P. student. These extra curricular activities do of course look great on their college applications; but they don't look as great to their parents who end up paying for all these costs.

Vasquez has reportedly spent more than a thousand dollars so far his senior year. "I expected to spend a lot of

money; senior year is the most expensive." "Money is important your senior year because without it, it feels like your missing out." Navalta has spent over two thousand dollars this school year. "Senior year gets to be really expensive if you're active in school," added Navalta. Despite all the finances Navalta had to make, she says she does not regret them at all. "I've looked forward to being a Pepster and riding a fire truck at the Homecoming Game since middle school," confessed Navalta, "It's worth spending

so much money in Pepsters because it pays off when we have fun at competitions and get to wear our uniforms every Friday."

As for Vasquez, he says he does not regret spending how much he has spent and will spend this year. "You have to make the best of it, its senior year," claimed Vasquez. As for you underclassmen, be ready for a fun filled senior year that is bound to make a big impact in your wallet. "Watch your money now," says Vasquez, "you'll need it more your senior year."

## Spending Seniors...

What do you spend your money on?



"I spend my money on clothes, graphing calculators A.P. tests, S.A.T's, paintballing and my cell phone bill."

- Senior Daniel Alcala



"I spend most of my money on clothes, IN-N-Out, college applications and on the weekend."

-Senior Valerie Mena



"I spend my money on my daughter, food, my girlfriend, and buying parts for both my car and my truck"

- Senior Braulio Olivarez



"I buy myself make-up, clothes, go to the movies and buy lunch."

- Senior Carime Gonzalez

## Los Angeles

BY: JAMES RODRIGUEZ

Her narrow roads stretch far and wide, through tunnels and over bridges. Like long elastic veins twisting and turning, filled with the blood of life Majestic towers clutter the somber sky, like stretching arms. Brightness merges with the evening sky, proving the presence of life. Poverty and decay plague her like a malignant virus spreading through the body. I'll and pale, she slowly dies as the autumn sun falls, to only be revived with its rise. The rush of morning life quickly embraces her with the rising sun. To only slow as the sharp hunger pains begin to take control. Evil runs wild everywhere, causing pain and sorrow as it goes by. Stealing, rape, and murder follow the paths of those chosen to suffer. The only protection comes from the anti bodies of society. And even they are powerless to prevent so much suffering. The sirens cry and wail through the narrow veins. To only slow upon the thick traffic of life.

## Riding a New Kind of Wave



BY: CHRIS GALLIZZI, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Within the past five years, extreme sports has been gaining "brownie-points" when it comes to the time for outdoor recreation; such sports are skateboarding, surfing, snowboarding, BMX, and dirt biking. Well Mrs. Kama Henderson's P.E. class was able to get a taste of a new kind of extreme sport; it's called the "Wave". The wave is a skateboard but with only two wheels, the innovative board is suppose to give the rider a feel of skateboarding, surfing, and snowboarding. The company that created the board is called "Street Surfing"; now this board can do the exact same thing as a skateboard, such as grinding, basic flip trick, but is mostly made for turns and manuals.

Henderson's students were all the test subjects for the board and three lucky individuals were randomly picked from the company's spoke person Zack to take a free board home.

Regularly the Wave would cost and easy \$100, but many students that tried the board out said they would not mind paying the price because of the amount of fun they had, freshmen Anthony Preciado "highly recommended to get one" and that it is "pretty sick".

Even though many students had a tough time getting on the board and had a phobia of falling many actually enjoyed the challenge, Nicole Marquez also a freshmen said "it's scary, but fun".

Henderson wanted to give the students a chance to experience the new sport because "exercise is fun and any kid can have fun exercising," so even though this was the first year she invited Street Surfing to El Rancho, she expects to have this presentation an ongoing lesson for her upcoming years.

As for the Wave anyone can pick one up at any Sporting Good store such as Big 5.

## "Winter Wonderland"

Friday, February 2

at the Quiet Canyon in Montebello

\$70.00 w/ no ASB

\$65.00 w/ one ASB's

\$60.00 w/ two ASB's

\$35.00 for a single ticket

### Requirements:

-Must have a 2.0 GPA from 1st or 2nd trimester  
-Must have NO fines

### Guest Passes:

Guest Passes are needed if you wish to take someone that does not attend ER.  
Please see Mr. Ayala in Activities for guest Pass approval.

## The Chinese Democracy

BY: MARIJKE TORRES, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

"Do you know where the f\*\*\* you are?" Those eight simple words were accompanied at the opening of the GNR concert at the Gibson Amphitheatre by guitar teases from Robin Finck on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup>. At that moment in time the audience knew it was time to be welcomed to the Jungle.



Around 8:00pm, hours before Guns N' Roses came on stage to amaze the crowd; the Suicide Girls gave the audience a series of burlesque dances. Fifteen minutes after the SG's ended, Helmet showed the audience that there are famous bands that do not have much talent. At 10:00 p.m. Sebastian Bach was next with his band. They came on stage and gave a great performance. Bach repeatedly said every night in the middle of his show, "Make enough f\*\*\*\*\*g noise that Axl can hear you backstage." This expression made the whole amphitheatre scream their lungs out.

GNR gave an amazing performance in all, and the whole band totaling seven people did not miss a single beat. The band includes, lead singer William Bruce Bailey A.K.A. Axl Rose, guitarist Robin Finck, guitarist Ron Thal, rhythm guitarist Richard Fortus, bassist Tommy Stinson, drummer Frank Ferrer, and keyboardist Dizzy Reed. Later in the show Mr. Izzy Stradlin came on to help the band perform classic hits.

On December 19<sup>th</sup>, the second night of the concert, Sebastian Bach came on stage in the middle of GNR's show and brought out a very 'special' friend of his, Bubbles from the Trailer Park Boys. Trailer Park Boys is a movie coming out in 2007. The audience had no real interest to ever see Helmet again. The show kicked with the usual wallop of "Welcome to the Jungle" followed by "It's So Easy" and "Mr. Brownstone" but you could tell Axl was in a better mood than on Sunday. He interacted more with the audience and even cracked several jokes. In a surprising delight, during "November Rain" the drums actually caught on fire as a stream of sparklers fell from above. Some roadies immediately rushed in and put the fire out but afterwards Axl joked that maybe Wednesday night they'll torch the drummer. In Axl's comedic nature he changed the lyrics to "smoke on the drummer," during an impromptu Deep Purple jam.

During Tuesday nights performance, guitarist, Robin Finck took a spill while drummer Frank Ferrer almost became a victim of pyro gone wrong. But at Wednesday's tour finale performance it was Axl who ate it, tumbling down the staircase that leads to an elevated platform during "Live and Let Die." Shocked and embarrassed Axl's grin was ear to ear as he struggled to get through the rest of the song without laughing.

Gunners Tommy Stinson, Dizzy Reed and Robin Finck were celebrating before the show along with guests Ron Jeremy and Danny Bonaduce. It's great to see how genuinely excited these guys are to playing in Guns N' Roses. If you missed out for those three nights, do not worry, they will come back too amaze us soon!

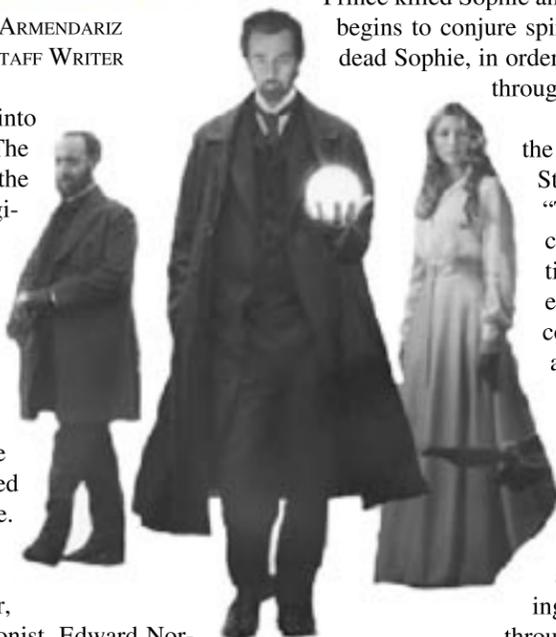
## Mystery, Magic, and Murder

BY ALFRED ARMENDARIZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Digressing into the early 1900's, "The Illusionist" portrays the life of a lonely magician and his passion for his work. With the use of amazing special effects, unmatched magic tricks, and a twist worth the film's beauty, "The Illusionist" delivered an amazing storyline.

After being torn from the love of his life as a teenager, Eisenheim the Illusionist, Edward Norton, finds that his love Sophie (Jessica Biel) is now soon to be married to the Crown Prince Leopold (Rufus Sewell), who wants nothing but to expose Eisenheim's illusions.

The story shifts as drunken violence overcomes the Crown Prince when he learns of



Eisenheim and Sophie's relationship. In a fit of rage he murders his fiance and covers it up. Eisenheim knows the Prince killed Sophie and to prove so he begins to conjure spirits, even of the dead Sophie, in order to gain support throughout the city.

Based on the short story by Steve Millhauser, "The Illusionist" captures attention through its excessive use of computer effects and suspenseful storyline.

The mystery drama winds down and ends with an interesting twist seen through the eyes of an inspector following Eisenheim and his tricks throughout the film.

Through its occasional slow moving scenes, "The Illusionist" proved to be successful as one of the opening DVD releases of the year.



## A Toast for Change

BY ALEJANDRA MOTA, EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

It doesn't project the way a student's life should be. It doesn't say that the teaching ways today are wrong, but it leaves a great impression of the capability a teacher has to make a difference on you. In the inspirational feature and true story, *Freedom Writers*, actress and two time Academy Award winner, Hilary Swank, as Erin Gruwell, certainly gets away with the part. "I poured out my heart in an e-mail to Erin," says Swank in a cast interview. "After I read the script, I wanted to meet her, talk to her, and tell her how important I thought her story was."

Swank takes the role of Mrs. Gruwell, a teacher who taught at Wilson High School, located in Long Beach. Swank as Gruwell lets down her guard and loses her marriage to dedicate herself to giving students hope.

"True stories resonate with me," continues Swank, who won her first of two Academy Awards for her portrayal of Brandon Teena in the true-life story *Boys Don't Cry*. "I was inspired by the screenplay and moved by its humanity. I felt in my heart and soul that I needed to be part of telling this story. When I found out that I was Erin's first choice to bring her story to the screen, I thought it would be an honor to do so."

Fearless without a doubt, the film protrudes Mrs. Gruwell taking unimaginable risks, giving her time and full dedication to give the students' lives a change that they would not have easily accomplished without her support. Other than giving them hope, she helped them seek for themselves, because aside from being at war with each other for gang relations born from racial differences, they were also at war with themselves.

"I felt that in some way teaching was the most noble thing that I could do in our own country, working with kids who oftentimes don't have the best teachers, supplies or the best schools," says Gruwell. "I really wanted a school that had diversity, that had been affected by the riots and could be this wonderful eclectic mix of races and economics and cultures. On paper, Wilson seemed to be perfect because it was this fusion of affluent kids and abject poverty, and included every ethnicity under the sun with kids who could be headed off to Harvard or to jail."

A cartoon drawing and the witnessing of a fatal shooting by a Latina girl become the two assistants to making this story a whole. Along with asking the students to keep a journal recording their experiences, emotions, challenges, and triumphs, Gruwell teaches them to teach themselves self worth and real self respect.

"The kids learned to pick up a pen instead of a gun, and the act of writing saved them," explains director Richard LaGravenese. "Erin asked them to write about their wars and battles and it opened the gates for them to share their lives, which no one had ever asked them to do before. Through Anne Frank, she opened their eyes to a thirteen-year-old girl going through a war of her own and how writing helped her cope with the situation, Erin showed them how to apply that to their own lives."

When watching the film, you're naturally influenced to live it, as if you were every single student taught by Mrs. Gruwell. When you walk out of that theatre, it's really like you're strolling out of room 203. Out of your worries, and into a life of unbreakable ambitions.

## From Tragedy to Triumph

BY KARISSA GUILLEN  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

*We Are Marshall* is inspired by a true story based on devastating events that occurred in Huntington, West Virginia. The small town in West Virginia loves their college football team. Many people come together to cheer on Marshall University's Thundering Herd. For this community, and the team itself, Marshall Football is more than just a sport; it is a way of life.

On a fateful night in 1970, while traveling back to Huntington, several members of Marshall's football team and staff were killed in a plane crash. Many families struggled to cope with the devastating loss of their loved ones, but when a young man by the name of Jack Lengyel came along, those families found hope.

Jack Lengyel was a young coach, determined to reconstruct

Marshall's football team and inspired to help heal the community as well.

Jack Lengyel convinces Red Dawson, the only living coach from the previous staff to come back and help him form a new team. Using players from junior varsity, incoming freshman, and players from different sports, Lengyel and Dawson form a team for the 1971 season.

It was known that the new Marshall team would have difficulty in playing against other schools, but Lengyel believed

that the team had the ability to compete against great teams.

After winning only two games, Coach Dawson quit leaving Lengyel alone.

Many people doubted the 1971 Marshall team, but towards the end, several people were inspired by them.

