



# El Rodeo



## El Rancho's Get Lit team hopes to SLAM the competition



2016 Get Lit poetry team: Derek Peyton, Nayeli Hernandez, Marissa Armstrong, Katheryne Zavala, Andres Lemus, and Shaniah Santos.

BY NAYELI HERNANDEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Three hundred poets, fifty schools, and only one champion. The El Rancho High School, Get Lit team is competing at this year's tenth Get Lit Classic Slam poetry competition today, April 28<sup>th</sup> and tomorrow April 29<sup>th</sup>, from 10 AM to 5 PM. at the Los Angeles Theater Center.

El Rancho's slam poetry team, led by coach, James Sorenson, features Marissa Armstrong, Nayeli Hernandez, Andres Lemus, Derek Peyton, Shaniah

Santos, and Katheryne Zavala, who will be performing at the Los Angeles Theatre Center today to qualify for Saturday's final.

"I am so excited to be a part of this again," says second year competitor, Shaniah Santos, "It's my last year here, so it would be so cool if we made it to Saturday's final."

The team was selected through an after school tryout at the end of this past March. Poets from El Rancho recited their pieces in room H-3 in front of a hand selected panel of judges.

Each competing poet will be reciting a classic poem and responding with an original

piece. Classic pieces range anywhere from Emily Dickinson's "My Life has stood- a Loaded Gun" to Kendrick Lamar's "Mortal Man- First Excerpt."

This year's team has spent countless hours practicing after school and during lunch in Mr. Sorenson's room to prepare for today.

The Get Lit Classic Slam finals will be held for the public on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM at the Orpheum Theatre in Los Angeles. If you can't attend, send all your good vibes to the El Rancho team.

## Gray team dominates at Don Games

BY ADRIANA CARCHIPULLA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Don Games, held on the third Thursday of April, has been a part of El Rancho for the past three years. Students enjoy class competition games between the Blue and Gray team, along with skits, but overall enjoy blue pride.

Don games are not just enjoyed on the actual event night, but all week as well. The week of Don Games is when classes show their competitiveness by attacking other classrooms of the opposite team. Teachers along with their students gather up many things related to their color, blue or gray, and then take all their supplies to a classroom of the opposite team color and sabotage the classroom and their students. This activity gives pleasure to not only the students but to the school as a whole.

This is where you see the school spirit of the students and staff and their willingness to participate in school activities. There is also no need to fear getting in trouble or bothering a classroom because all the teachers who participate have agreed to be involved in these activities.

This year, the teams decided to change it up and go with themes other than just blue team and gray team; Blue Army and Gray Machines. Not only were the themes different, but the outcomes were too. After two years of the blue team taking the victory, the gray team stepped up and won the 2015-2016 Don Games with a score of 394 points.



Gray team members show their school spirit at the third annual Don Games.

*A first look at  
"Views from the 6"*

**Page 2**

*The Importance  
of Art*

**Page 6-7**

*Eight tips to relieve  
academic stress*

**Page 8**

## Taking a look at Drake's Views from the 6



BY TIM RIESGO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

If you're reading this it's too late? Actually, you are just in time because with *Views from the 6* dropping tomorrow, and to keep the hype building for all the fans, Drake has dropped his first three singles, "Summer Sixteen," "One Dance," and "Pop Style."

"Summer Sixteen" took a bit of getting used to. When I first heard it, I was not the biggest fan. I am not saying it was bad, but I felt it was not the best song I had heard from Drake. However, for some reason, Drake songs seem to grow on people. After giving the song a few listens, I could not take the song off repeat. The song is very catchy and upbeat. The best part of "Summer Sixteen" has to be the transition that happens about two minutes into the song, when the beat slows down and breaks into a rap. Easily one of the best finishes to a song Drake has ever done.

"One Dance" has to be my favorite of the three singles. The title says it all, you simply just want to dance when hearing it. "One Dance" has that "good vibes" feeling that most good Drake songs have. Since its release, "One Dance" has peaked at number thirteen on the Billboard Hot 100 and has taken the number one spot for the Spotify Top 50 most played list.

"Pop Style" is easily one of the worst singles on the list, but it isn't Drake's fault. His part in the song is actually done very well, and if he did this solo, it would have been another great single. When Kanye West is introduced, it completely ruins the song with his cheesy lyrics like "I just wanna rock your body. Take you to the garage and do some karate." The lyrics do not make any sense and should have been dropped from the album.

After hearing these singles from *Views from the 6*, I honestly feel the fans are in for an excellent album from Drake despite "Pop Style" being one of the bad songs on the album.

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## El Rodeo

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*El Rodeo*, the student newspaper of El Rancho High School is an open, public forum for student expression and an opportunity to discuss its audience's issues of concern. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the position of the school board, administration, sponsors, parents, student body or advertisers.

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

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

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Copy Editor.....Michael Neely

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# Legalizing marijuana is legalizing stupidity

BY TIM RIESGO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

This November, California voters will decide whether or not we should legalize marijuana. This issue has gained a lot of attention from the media with the huge push for the drug to be legalized over the past few years. I feel that voting yes on this issue will lead to addiction, use of harder drugs, and will drive our generations and others to go downhill.

If this vote is won in November, the trend of smoking will only increase and introduce many first timers to the act. The number of marijuana smokers will dramatically increase, and the probability of someone becoming addicted will be much higher. Many marijuana users in the past have argued that the drug is not addictive at all and is not as bad as cigarettes or alcohol. Do they ever hear themselves speak? "Not as bad" is still bad because it is terrible for your health and if those users say they are not addicted, then why can't they put the drug down? A few years ago a poll was taken by the *The National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, "Of the 7.3 million persons aged 12 or older classified with illicit drug dependence or



abuse in 2012, 4.3 million persons had marijuana dependence or abuse." Imagine with the drug becoming legal? These numbers will be increasingly higher.

It has been known for many years that marijuana is a gateway drug just like cigarettes and alcohol. If marijuana becomes legal, then the drug will become

widely available, making it convenient for users to join the trend. Once these new users build up a high enough tolerance level, they may get over the high they are used to. This may put those in a position where they will want to experiment with other drugs like cocaine, ecstasy, meth, etc. to achieve another high their body is

not used to. If more people are making their first attempt at smoking marijuana, there will be a higher number of individuals who attempt more "hardcore" drugs.

If more drugs are introduced into our society, I feel it will send our future generation straight into the ground. With the vast availability to consumers, we will start seeing less inspirational and intellectual people and more ignorant and unsuccessful people. I truly believe if one becomes a consistent drug user, they will have a very unsuccessful life. Sure not all are unsuccessful in life, but the ones who are successful are such a small percentage. The reason the success rate in life for those is so low is because it slowly becomes their life. They find something new and exciting, like drugs, so they put all important things in life to the back burner like school, work, and family. Successful people do not put those things to the side in life, and it is the reason why they became successful.

California's election day will be huge this year. This is a decider for our future as many lives will be impacted. Recreational marijuana use is not the way to go, and I hope voters realize this in November. If society puts a stop to this, the people can secure a better future for tomorrow's generation.

# Marijuana: legislate, legalize, liberate

BY MICHAEL NEELY  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Remember the prohibition era? People had this outrageous idea that if we banned alcohol people would stop drinking. However, they neglected to realize- people will do whatever they can, to do whatever they want. By voting for the legalization of marijuana on the upcoming California ballot, U.S. citizens could help the federal government make a profit while harming the drug cartels who have benefited from its illegalization for too long.

Many individuals do not realize the actual definition of the word "drug" and its current applicability to society. *Google* defines it as, "A medicine or other substance which has a physiological effect when ingested or otherwise introduced into the body." If we examine the definition carefully, we discover that we are exposed to and use drugs on a daily basis.

The coffee we drink in the morning coerces our brain into an unhealthy state of awareness and has harmful effects on a prolonged use, like marijuana. The television we sit in front of for hours alters the thoughts in our brain and feeds us an unhealthy amount of dopamine.

We all use drugs; we use prescription drugs not only for health but because they make us feel better in different ways. Yet, some think the demonic drug is marijuana. This is ironic since I've never heard of such an active and outspoken movement to stop children from being on other drugs, such as tablets and video games.

Some parents allow their children to drink sometimes but not smoke marijuana because marijuana is a gateway drug. I fail to see the logic in this argument: every drug is a gateway drug, and if children really want to do something, they're going to find a way to do it regardless of what the law says. What about the other pharmaceutical drugs included in the mainstream drugs? Morphine is legal, but if heroin is legal? Now that's just taking it too far.

I'm in no way defending people who smoke marijuana; I'm merely say-

ing that people are going to consume it as they've been doing for thousands of years.

It makes perfect sense to legalize marijuana along with every other drug so we can reduce the demand for them and teach children of its harmful effects. Also, if the federal government is the only authorized dealer who can sell these drugs, then we can make a tremendous profit and use that money. According to *huffingtonpost.com* billions would be generated in tax revenue and we can use that currency to improve our infrastructure, reduce our deficit, abolish the wealth gap, and restore the middle class.

Legalizing this drug would not only eventually pave the way for the legalization of all drugs, but would put an end to the profits the drug cartels in South America are making due to its popularity and demand. The cartels' profits will decrease, their reign and influence will diminish, and their terror will come to an end.

The argument, "if we make the drug legal, then more people will get it easier" is a complete fallacy. The fact of the matter is: a large amount of society already has marijuana and can get access to it easily. Legalizing won't cause an increase in people who use it since a high percentage of teenagers and young adults already have the drug. According to *pewresearch.org* and the *2012 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, marijuana is the most commonly used illicit drug in the U.S. If anything, its legalization could decrease the proportion of individuals who use it since the drug will lose its popularity and people will want to move onto "harder" drugs. But if all drugs are legal, there is no "hard" drug anymore, and when there's an absence of "hard" drugs, people will become more cognizant of its effects and use. I'm not saying these drugs will completely vanish, but their presence will decrease.

Of course, not everyone will have access to marijuana. Just like cigarettes and alcohol, it will be government regulated. An age limit will be imposed to assure the prevention of this drug falling into minors' hands.



Lastly, an enormously positive effect of marijuana's legalization is the legalization of hemp. Hemp is a plant that doesn't produce a "high," and its illegalization is due to its similarity to marijuana. This plant can make ropes, paper, and other things used on a daily basis. In addition, hemp oil has helped countless people with cancer. Hemp is a blessing, and it would profoundly benefit us to use it.

When marijuana is heavily prevalent in society, legalizing it only benefits the nation as a whole. Think of it this way:

your mom says you cannot have any cookies but behind her back you sneak into the kitchen and steal them. Then, she decides that you can have them. Either way, you're still eating the same amount of cookies. The best thing moms can do is be a mother and make sure their children are aware of what happens to one's body after harming it for so long. Marijuana like television, coffee, video games, and music, is a drug, and its use is no different.

I'm not asking you to think exactly like me; I'm just asking you to think.

## A Tesla Motors model for the masses



By MATTHEW MARROQUIN  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Stirring public enthusiasm and generating levels of anticipation other automobile companies could only dream of, Tesla Motors' latest model may herald the end of gas-powered vehicles.

Founded in 2003, Tesla Motors has always kept one goal in mind: to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable transportation. The automobile giant is

renown for their electrical, energy-efficient vehicles, which use AC induction motors, rather than petrol engines, resulting in a 100% electrical vehicle. While not exactly the most inexpensive cars, Tesla's latest model, the Model 3, seeks to close the affordability gap and thus bring a revolution in sustainable transportation; helping save the environment and wallets.

A premium sedan, much like Tesla's other models, the model 3 will give you a modest 215 miles per charge and acceler-

ate from zero to sixty miles per hour in under six seconds. Though offering less mileage and a slower acceleration than the Model X and the Model S, Tesla's preceding models, the Model 3 is meant to bring the benefits of an electrical car to a broader spectrum of consumers. This model, along with the entirety of Tesla's stock, is designed to achieve a five-star safety rating and comes equipped with state-of-the-art autopilot hardware; guaranteeing the security and, if he/she chooses, the leisure of the driver.

Model 3 lacks a traditional instrument cluster, a feature Tesla CEO Elon Musk assures consumers "will make sense after part two of the Model 3 unveil." Instead, all pertinent driver information will be displayed on the Model 3's interior fifteen-inch video display.

The Model 3 also houses "supercharging" capability, an innovation in electric car charging brought about by Tesla Motors themselves. Supercharging is the ability to charge any of Tesla's electric cars within a matter of minutes, rather than hours, as opposed to other electric vehicles; such as the Nissan Leaf, which charges at its fastest within 4 hours, and the Chevy Volt, which charges at its fastest in 8 hours. To supercharge a Tesla, one must find a supercharging station established by Tesla. As it stands now, Tesla has built 3,644 supercharging stations worldwide, with just under three hundred in the United States. Tesla plans to expand the number of locations to accommodate for an increase in Tesla drivers. Supercharging is free and efficient, but not the only way to replenish the car's battery. One can charge a Tesla at any electrical outlet, as long as the proper extensions are used.

Made to bring electrical vehicles to the major market, the Model 3 is set at a starting price of \$35,000, with a \$1,000 reservation charge. Production for the Model 3 will begin in late 2017, and once production has begun, deliveries for those who have reserved a Tesla will start on the West Coast, and move east. Anyone who would like the opportunity to drive a Model 3 can schedule a test-drive in late 2017 once production has begun, and truly experience the future of automobiles.

### Featured Poem

Love For the TrickyDicks of Language or  
Another Way to Say "An Ode to Euphemisms"

By Jose Alcalá

How does one say something  
without saying it?  
Simple, you use the wormhole  
of the language,  
You use the sailor's salty sextant,  
You use the Wall Street brokers' colloquialisms,  
You do the mandatory courtroom explanation,  
You find your grammatical sherpa,  
You bust a verbal Shyamalan,  
You use a euphemism.  
Have you ever  
backed the motorhome out  
of the garage, crimped off a length,  
dropped the kids off at the pool,  
seen a man about a horse,  
built a log cabin, taken a signal 92,  
twisted a nine coiler, burned a mule,  
robbed the bakery, plopped a nug,  
brownblinded  
the bowl, balanced your budget,  
cleaned the vertical file, or, in other words,

pooped.  
Have you ever  
run the Sidney Lanier Bridge,  
taken a Chinese singing lesson,  
freshened your Snapple, bled your lizard,  
changed the water for the goldfish,  
flushed your buffers, aimed Archie at the Armitage,  
floated the radiator,  
humped the cat loin, had a polyphonic spree,  
given the porcelain a taste of Hoffman's lemonade,  
watered the white seat, poured out the tart soda,  
untangled the yellow yarn,  
taken the 1:01 down the Siusiu river,  
thinned the pineapple pudding,  
or, as we all call it, peed.  
Wherever you are, wherever you go  
The trickydicks of language will surely show,  
and if you didn't before, well now you know  
euphemism are the best yo!  
Now if you'll excuse me,  
I have to go jolt the rizzo.

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# Today's birthday girl is simply irresistible

BY SOL MENDEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

She drives like a maniac in her elegant 95' Honda Civic while maintaining a perfect GPA of 4.6 seem like a piece of cake. El Rancho High School junior, Amy Rodriguez, is *Simply Irresistible*.

What more does a person need when they meet a person like Amy? She loves to hike and is quite a reggae music enthusiast. "I like reggae music and every time I tell someone, they get like very shocked." "...And it's kind of all I listen to... It's kinda my thing."

Amy is always demonstrating her excellence through her academic work and also her involvement in clubs. There is never a time; a person sees Amy not devoting her time to something that is school related.

Amy was recently recognized by El Rancho High as one of the highest scorers for the PSAT. It is no surprise that Amy really knows how to apply herself, Amy plans to attend University of Southern California where she will be studying business. "My mom began working at USC when I was small, so I started going to work with her and learning about what's up with the school and I ended up really liking pretty much everything about [USC]." She sees herself applying her knowledge in business so she can eventually become a CEO ("Big Bad Boss") one day. If you ever see Amy with a huge graphing calculator, don't be freaked out; Amy is always trying to make her point across. Speaking of points, Amy is always making points and is excellent at them for she is the president of our very own Debate Club.



Amy Rodriguez is a tree hugging, hiking loving cutie 3.14 (Pi) who knows how to press buttons.... Calculator buttons!

Besides being stellar at her academics, Amy has to be one of the most down-to-earth people on campus, and perhaps even in the city. Amy will be the president of Key Club next year. "I've been in key club only for junior year but will continue into my senior year since I'm the new president. I think it is pretty cool how it

focuses on volunteering and brings the opportunities to members so they don't have to go out and find them on their own."

Amy is literally down-to-earth, she is big on the environment and is all for nature, and it isn't weird to say that you'll see her hugging trees now and then. She is all for the gifts nature has to offer.

Simply Irresistible or Simply Amy, you won't ever regret having Amy for a friend. Keep in mind that this Amy is no "Gone Girl Amy"... She takes things seriously and is passionate. So, if you see Amy around, wish her a happy birthday because today marks 17 years of pure awesomeness. Happy Birthday *Simply Irresistible!*

# Sanchez shares his passion for the game

BY ALEXIS REYNA PARRA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Although there are two Mr. Sanchez's located in the J building, Matthew Sanchez (the Sanchez in J-8 who teaches Integrated Math One) graduated from "The Ranch" and has only been teaching here for two years, but if you want to get technical then he has been teaching here for a total of three years including his long term substituting year. Matthew Sanchez is also a dedicated basketball player, watcher, and coach.

Sanchez didn't graduate from college with a math degree, but a degree from USC in business administration. He later went to Cal State Fullerton for his teaching credential and is now attending Concordia University for his master's degree in coaching and athletic administration.

"Teaching isn't something I thought I would do through high school and even college, but once I started coaching I liked the idea of helping kids out. Teaching gave me the opportunity to coach and be more involved than if I was just a walk-on coach," said Sanchez.

Although Sanchez chose to pursue a career in education, one of his dream jobs would be to, "Own my own business as far as real-estate development or coaching facilities," he says.

Mr. Sanchez coaches boys basketball and has been coaching for about seven years. He started off with boys varsity for two years, then became the head freshmen coach for three years, and went back to coaching boys varsity for the past two years.

"I truly have a passion for the sport [basketball]. When I was little I was able to get better just by shooting and practicing on



my own. Now I want to be able to give back to the kids that maybe don't have an idea of what the game is about," says Sanchez.

Besides coaching basketball, Sanchez is one of the freshmen class advisors and a Link Crew advisor. "It allows me to get more involved and to get to know some of the kids," says Sanchez.

Outside of school, Mr. Sanchez works out, hangs out with friends, goes to the movies, plays basketball, studies for his

master's degree, learns new basketball techniques, travels, or goes to sporting events. Sanchez is a USC football season ticket holder and will sometimes travel for away games. He's traveled to see USC play in New York, Chicago, Oregon, San Francisco, Arizona, and this year he plans on going to see them play in Texas and Washington.

Although "Sanchez" is a Hispanic name he doesn't speak Spanish, "The kids have a hard time believing that I don't

speak Spanish because of my last name," says Sanchez. Although he doesn't speak Spanish, he would like to try to learn how to dance to Salsa music, but doesn't know if he has enough hours in the day for it.

"Something on my bucket list is going skydiving and traveling to Europe. People always ask me to go skydiving, but I'm either busy that day, or I question if I really want to do that," shares Sanchez.

If Sanchez had the chance to meet anyone he would meet basketball legends Kobe Bryant, Michael Jordan, and Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll.

A challenge that Mr. Sanchez faces every day is being able to motivate kids that aren't really into school. "It just kind of disappoints me and makes me sad that these kids aren't maximizing their full potential and aren't maximizing their opportunities here at school," he says.

Ten years from now Sanchez doesn't know if he sees himself teaching but instead maybe working at one of his dream jobs. "I do see myself trying to coach at the college level at some point, or at least giving it a shot, or if not be involved with real-estate," says Sanchez.

"What I want students to take away from me is the passion and love I have for this place, and me being an alumni. I want to see kids from here do well, I want to see them succeed and do something. So many times the city and the school get a bad rep, and if the kids don't do well they might feed into that stereotype. They won't get themselves out of it if they don't understand that they need to do well in school...I did what I needed to do, and I'm not saying that they can't come back, but I want them to go out and experience things and other places," says Sanchez.

## From all Angles: Daniel Reveles



Photographed by featured artist: Daniel Reveles

BY JULIAN LOPEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Daniel Reveles is a junior at El Rancho who has a passion for photography. With a love for street photography, he is always out and about in the Los Angeles streets. Although he is new to photography, he hopes to pursue it as a future career.

On a normal shooting night for Reveles, you can find him in Downtown LA with his Canon T5i. He often visits the fashion district or other areas of Los Angeles. Reveles says he has been to some parts so often that he is somewhat tired of certain areas. He loves shooting in LA for the sharp edges of buildings and abstract angles he can achieve.

One of Reveles' favorite nights involved him and his friends climbing to the top of the Deloitte financial building. "I had a lot of adrenaline, we were so high up and just hoping not to be caught," said Reveles. "We were up there for about two

hours just shooting and looking to capture different angles."

Most of Reveles' shots are dark, and it's not because he is color blind. In fact, some images use more colors he cannot properly recognize, such as red. His style of shooting and editing process involves editing images to lower the saturation and make his images look darker than they are.

Social media has played a key role in Reveles' growth and recognition as a photographer. He currently has almost 4,000 followers on Instagram and that number is steadily growing. Through Instagram, he has met many other photographers who share his passion. One of his biggest inspirations is a photographer named Marvin who he met through Instagram. Marvin is an inspiration to Reveles because he has been able to grow in his local scene and sell some of his art.

Reveles hopes to continue working and gaining popularity. He knows that as long as he continues to work hard and shoot better every day, he will one day accomplish his goals.



Photographed by featured artist: Daniel Reveles

## Art: The For

BY NAYELI HERNANDEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Three to four years of math, two to three years of science, one year of visual or performing arts. That is our A-G, 3 parts objective to one part creative.

Since the early days of kindergarten, creativity has been a suppressed concept and art tossed aside. "Don't color outside of the lines!" "Stop painting on the walls!" Children are taught art, but only when it can lead up to a mathematical or scientific concept.

As students get older, the idea of art and anything creative is only important when counting for extra credit on a project. The only thing that matters is whether or not one can utilize the quadratic equation.

Before you know it, you're taking AP Calculus and no one blames you for not being able to pass. Yet, anyone who doesn't understand a mathematical or scientific concept in the matter of seconds is suddenly "below average" and "unintelligent."

Students who would rather pursue a major in art and have a career in which they have a passion for are always frowned upon when compared to those who choose a more traditional path.

## "Moonpuppy" Gabriela Nava pursues her passion

BY MATT ZAMARRIPA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

She started off rocking out to classic rock when she was just seven years old. Now her influence in music has grown just as her musical talent. Sophomore, Gabriela Nava, has been playing and learning music since she was a child.

She picked up her first guitar and all she could recall was wanting to be just as good as AC/DC guitarist, Angus Young. She began taking lessons from her father who was part of a band when he attended El Rancho. After learning guitar for a short period of time, she joined Marching Band when entering North Hollywood Middle School where she then learned to play the saxophone. "I was nervous to join band back when I was in sixth grade only because all I knew how to play was guitar, but that's where I was taught saxophone and then I branched off to learn other instruments," said Nava.

"Learning music has helped me get a different view on things in life. It helped me have different opinions of others and it guided me to be more confident about so many other things," added Nava. "Starting with the guitar to then learning to play flute, clarinet, and piano in orchestras, it takes a lot of dedication and practice for me to pull it off," added Nava.

Her relationship with music has transformed her to be more unique and independent. She does not rely on the opinions of others and she is proud to obtain the ability and knowledge of knowing how to play multiple instruments.

Not only is the guitar the first instrument she picked up and tried out, but it is also her favorite to play, because there is so much more you can put into it. You can add lyrics, join or form a band, or do a solo project. "Guitar has helped improve my interactions with others and has helped me make friends along the years," said Nava.

She hopes to pursue a solo career in music and meet fascinating people on the journey to her dreams. Nava's Soundcloud is always available online to the public under *moonpuppy*, where anybody can view many of her acoustic covers by fan favorite music groups like Arctic Monkeys and The Red Peppers.

## gotten Subject

three compared to the students who are majoring in medicine because their parents told them they should. Why is it that people only care about art when it is beneficial to them? Why do they judge others and discourage the study of art when it is making others content? Without art and anything like it, you wouldn't be in line to watch *Batman v Superman*, the after school car ride would be completely silent, and we wouldn't be blessed with the beauty that is the *Star Wars* actor, Oscar Isaac. People fail to realize that most of what they enjoy in life is thanks to art, whether it be visual or performing. There needs to be an equal emphasis on embracing art skills and passion. How is it that a phenomenal artist is seen as less when compared to a brilliant mathematician? There are so many capable students who don't receive equal opportunities, resources, and attention because they have a passion for the arts. It's time to stop forcing down numbers and, instead, allow paint on the walls, beats turned up, and animations played.



Nava holding her Epiphone ES-339 Semi-Hollow.

## Marissa Armstrong demonstrates her creative writing skills

BY HUGO MARTINEZ  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Senior, Marissa Armstrong, beat out the best of the best in her age group and won the Mrs. Nelson's Young Writers Contest.

Creative writer, academic decathlete, and 2016 Get Lit poet, Armstrong is constantly in the mind space of searching for new ideas and getting her voice heard. "All of my activities cause an enormous amount of stress, but it's very rewarding at the end of the day," says Armstrong.

The Young Writers is a contest for various writers in different age groups. Multiple middle school and high school students throughout the Los Angeles area compete and only one student per age group wins. All the winners get their poetry piece published together in a book and receive a copy.

"I was super excited; I didn't expect to win out of all of the people who applied in my age group, especially those in my creative writing class. I was really honored" says Armstrong.

James Sorenson, creative writing instructor, says "Marissa has really developed as a writer, but she came to me with really impressive skills already."

The poem Armstrong submitted was a piece she wrote last year in response to Rudyard Kipling's *IF*, which is a mother's letter to her son. Her version switched it up a bit and was a letter to her future daughter (no she's not expecting).

Her process of writing this piece took a lot of energy and time. "If I had a child I want them to be better than me," Armstrong says, "faults in myself that I do not want my future daughter to have."

Not only has Armstrong won the Young Writers contest, but she has also earned a spot on El Rancho's 2016 Get Lit team. Get Lit is a program for teens, centered in Los Angeles, where high school students choose a classic poem to memorize and perform, then create an original poem in response. The Get Lit competition is on April 28th and 30th.

Being in Academic Decathlon and AP classes "definitely helped me become a better writer" Armstrong said, "lots of essay and speeches have me always writing." In her creative writing class, she studies different writing styles and tries to emulate them into her personal preference.

"I love to read, especially the young adult genre because it captures the essence of being a young person," Armstrong says.

On performing in front of an audience, she says, "I've never had stage fright, I've always been inclined to be in the public eye, to use my talents to better the people around me."



Poet takes her stance for the snapshot.

Armstrong's advice to aspiring writers is to "always write what you know to be true and never believe that you have nothing to write about because everyone has a story that must be told." The Award ceremony was held on Sunday, April 17th at the Center for the Arts in Pomona CA.



*Elbows kissing knees,  
I sit  
Curling, twisting a single strand of auburn hair*

*I watch my little girl  
With her cotton candy cheeks and teacup smile  
Her coffee eyes bore into mine, and I realize  
She is half me, yet far more than half me*

*"Baby" I tell her, "don't be like me."  
Don't shrink in your chair every time a substitute  
teacher calls out your lemon-flavored last name  
Just because your father's father's father's father  
happened to be white  
But everyone else around you  
Is not*

*"Baby" I tell her, "don't be like me."  
Don't waste time an ink trying to solve unsolvable  
genetic equations  
Because if  $x+y=normal$ , then where the hell did I get  
This!  
I trace back my steps, trying to locate the miscalculation  
I try the problem again and again but the answer  
remains the same  
No solution*

*"Baby" I tell her, "don't be like me."  
Don't ball your fists so tight around your heart that  
it starts to wonder what it ever did wrong  
Your heart did nothing wrong  
It is not wrong to crave concrete when all you have  
ever known is seasickness*

*"Baby" I tell her, "don't be like me."  
Don't let heavy handed words and weighty judgments  
cement you to the ground  
If ever you feel that gravity just isn't your thing  
By all means, take wing  
You can be any bird you wish, take your pick  
No! No, I take that back  
You can be any bird you wish except  
A mockingbird  
Who spends her days copying and pasting everyone  
else's identity because she fears she does not have her  
own*

*"Baby" I beg her, "don't be like me."  
Before you have guarded your lips against more smiles  
than they could carry, learn this:  
A compliment is not a lie, a touch is not a hidden  
agenda, a hug is not a trap  
Don't make walls of your hair or blades of your sharp-  
ened words  
Do not put yourself under quarantine  
Damn it, baby girl, don't be like me!  
Please, just don't be like me*

*I watch my little girl  
With her cotton candy cheeks and teacup smile*

*Elbows kissing knees  
She sits  
Curling, twisting a single strand of auburn hair.*

MARISSA ARMSTRONG

## How to pick the right college for *you*

BY MARISSA ARMSTRONG  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

Calling all desperate seniors! Do you need last minute help choosing the best college for you? Well, look no further!

With decision day just around the corner, you are probably doing some serious stressing right about now; but all this unnecessary worry can be resolved by simply becoming self-aware. You must be aware of both your personal taste and the environment in which you can achieve your greatest. That said, here are five easy steps to help you decide which college is your perfect match.

Step one: Location, location, location. Whether you like big cities or small towns, the east or west coast, location is essential. Whatever it may be, you must be aware of your personal taste. Do you enjoy the rush of a larger college town, or would you enjoy a smaller, more personal atmosphere? Would you prefer to stay local as opposed to venturing into the unknown? After all, you are choosing the place you will live for the foreseeable future, so you should probably like it! If you love the big city life, you might consider urban schools such as USC, NYU, or Arizona State. If you are more inclined to live in a smaller area, you would probably enjoy Humboldt, Whittier, or either of

the Cal Poly's. If you want to leave the nest ASAP and experience something new, try Boston University, Penn State, or Gettysburg. If you are more of a homebody, some local favorites are UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, or CSU-LA. Side note: before you make your final decision, make sure you have visited the campus of your chosen college.

The second step in making your decision is very intertwined with the first. Now that you've decided on a general location, you must now think about size. Are you the type of person who thrives on large crowds and students buzzing about their day all around you? Or are you inclined to a quieter, more serene work environment? The atmosphere in which you will live for the next four years depends on the size of the college you attend.

The next and probably most obvious of issues is \$\$\$\$. You must know which of your options is most expensive, and which is willing to give you the most financial aid. It goes without saying that the college that offers you the most money is probably the best option. Enough said!

This next tidbit is probably the single most essential feature to consider when finding the college of your dreams. When making your choice, do not (I repeat: DO NOT) forget to look at majors. Assuming you have your future already planned out, you probably know what you

will be studying for the next four years. Or maybe you are one of the millions of teenagers out there (and this is totally ok) who is still undecided. In either case, you must make sure the colleges you are considering offer a suitable program for your major. For example, if you gravitate toward the fine arts, you might consider a liberal arts school such as Swarthmore, or maybe (if you want to stay local) Pomona, or Claremont McKenna. Or if you are of the left-brained variety, choose a school with a good math and science department, like Colorado State, or Johns Hopkins. Whatever your career path, choose the college/university that accommodates your plans.

The last step is one that is often overlooked. While choosing a college, it is ideal to get in contact with alumni. Who better to talk to about a college than someone who has actually attended it? Most college websites provide a means to contact either alumni or undergraduates currently attending your school of choice. You can even find graduate manifestos on those cute little postcard-like college letters you probably stashed away in a drawer somewhere. Bottom line: talk to people!

If followed, these five easy tips will lead you to the college that fits you perfectly. Good luck seniors!

## Eight tips to relieve academic stress



BY SAMANTHA BERROSPE  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With the ACT, SAT, APs, and finals approaching, it is a VERY stressful time for many high school students. The tests you take in your academic career can either make or break your grade. Chaos occurs when a student stays up late the night before an important exam. Since testing is such a huge part of high school, many students seem to forget about taking care of themselves during the hustle and bustle of exams. Here are some tips to not over stress yourself and to insure a positive outcome in yourself and in testing.

### TIP ONE: Take Breaks

Distracting yourself can be useful from time to time when stressing out over any upcoming test. Make sure that when studying, you let yourself have a study break every now-and-then. It's not healthy to be all "work, work, work," because you will burn out and your stress level will be more than before. Listen to music, watch T.V., read a book, or try doing anything that helps take the weight off your shoulders.

### TIP TWO: Spread Out Study Days

The night before a big test, freaking out, rushing to cram all the information learned, staying up late and not sleeping well is the worst thing to do before an exam. When feeling this pressure remember to take a step back and relax. Instead of cramming the night before, start

studying many days prior to the test day; that way the night before you can take it easy and review your notes.

### TIP THREE: Exercise

When your body feels better, so does your mind. Exercising or participating in physical activity produce endorphins. Endorphins are released in the brain and act as a natural painkiller. They also improve sleep patterns. Getting a good night's rest reduces stress and therefore will help with decision making and testing performance. That doesn't mean go out and join a gym; a simple thirty-minute walk will do wonders.

### TIP FOUR: Eat Well

The added stress of staying up late and cramming information can sometimes lead to bad eating habits; NOT EATING! Often enough, students forget about eating because all their focus is on the upcoming exam. The lack of food consumption will result in low energy levels and the ability to retain what has been studied. Poor testing performance will most likely be the result when there aren't enough nutrients keeping the brain running.

### TIP FIVE: Rest Up

A good night's sleep the night before a big exam is key to ensuring academic success. Put away notes, textbooks, study cards, and every electronic device owned. Feeling tired and having no energy is a sure way to do poorly on a test. The brain can-

not function properly if all it can think about is sleep.

### TIP SIX: Study Buddies

Sometimes studying alone can be boring. A good way to avoid a study coma is to study with a friend. Studying with a buddy can keep things interesting and also make it fun. It also offers the opportunity to discuss different perspectives for the upcoming exam.

### TIP SEVEN: Stay Organized

Organization is key. Make a list of things needed and cross them out when done. Doing this will make things much easier and ensure nothing is forgotten.

### TIP EIGHT: Don't Procrastinate

Pulling an all-nighter studying is a sure recipe for disaster. Stress levels before the test will be considerably higher, and the lack of sleep will interfere with your ability to focus and do well. Start studying a few days in advance. Not only will that keep the stress levels at bay but it will also make it easier to do a quick review the night before.

Test taking is stressful. If the proper steps are not taken to ensure stress levels are kept under control, failure is sure to happen. When studying, remember always to take breaks, spread out the study days, exercise, eat well, rest up, find a study buddy if needed, stay organized and don't procrastinate. No test is worth your health, but excellent marks can be achieved if the balance between work and play is reached.

## Quijada and Trujillo look to improve Pepster program



Quijada and Trujillo look ahead in improving the Pepsters and striving for a better future for the program.

By KATHELEEN MADERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

The Pepsters program is undergoing a complete upgrade with the aim of increasing participation and creating a more competitive team.

The idea to improve the program came from the current cheerleaders. They wish to compete in more events and be at a more competitive level along with the other cheerleading teams in nearby cities. With the new opportunities, the cheerleaders will be proud representatives of our great school and community.

Former high school cheerleader and El Rancho Spanish teacher, Elia Trujillo, the new advisor of the program is looking forward to seeing the program and its members grow.

"I want the cheerleaders to consider my classroom their second home

and to know that I will support, guide, and push them to be the best cheerleader, student, and community member they can be," says Trujillo. "El Rancho is a school of so much pride and talent, I simply want the Pico Rivera community and surrounding areas to know it!"

Trujillo wants the program to be well-known and for the community of Pico Rivera to be proud and supportive of it.

"I want little girls to YouTube 'El Rancho Pepsters' when scouting High Schools." "I want the El Rancho Yell and Song athletes to be decorated with trophies and go on to cheer for universities and professional sports teams around the nation. I ultimately hope to gain recognition for the school and the athletes," says Trujillo.

Trujillo says she would like more of everything: "bigger team, more turns, more leaps, more flips, more cheerleaders being tossed in the air, more energy,

more smiles, and more school pride."

The recruitment process for the new head coach: Lauren Quijada was long and difficult, but it exemplified the intense effort that the school put into creating a successful program. It consisted of several meetings, interviews, and panel judging, but in the end the school chose an experienced and dedicated coach.

Quijada started in the Pico Rivera Donnas from age 7 to 13. Once she entered El Rancho, she was in all of the dance-related programs from Modern Dance to becoming varsity Songleader. She is very committed and passionate about dance. She has coached and choreographed over 100 routines ranging from cheer to theater performances.

"There is so much talent in our schools and it is slowly, but surely drifting away to other districts," says Quijada. Similar to Trujillo's aspiration, she

wants El Rancho to have a great program that will attract many students to it and in the end benefit the school as a whole.

She recognizes that she is a competitive coach and as such will expect commitment and effort. She is not interested in the trophies, however, but is interested in increasing "blue pride."

"I want these kids to be excited to put on their ERHS uniforms, excited to come to practice, and excited when that stunt they've been working on for a month, finally hits," says Quijada. Their enthusiasm "is what creates the program [success will naturally follow]." To her the most important thing is ensuring that the students are "having the times of their lives."

If you're interested in being part of the 2016-2017 Pepsters team the mandatory tryouts clinic will be held May 16th-20th at the quad from 4:30 to 6:30 and tryouts will be May 21st at 9 am.

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- You will pay attention to the announcements, the Don Page, El Rodeo, social media, announcements, and the signs all over campus.
- You will notice school staff wearing their **READ** shirts.
- Your class might come to the Get Lit Poetry Performances.
- You might participate in a reading-related contest and win a prize
- Your class may get lucky and have an administrator or counselor come and read to you.
- You are fortunate enough to be in a freshman English class and you earn a reading achievement prize and maybe even have a class pizza party.
- You might read to the Library Dogs during lunch on May 23.
- You decide to get a free **READ** tattoo in the quad at lunch on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup>.
- You will rush over to Literary Lunchbag Theater in the Little Theater at lunch on May 25<sup>th</sup>.
- You may drop by the Library on May 26<sup>th</sup> and play tabletop games

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## Track takes on La Serna today at home in final meet



BY ADRIANA CARCHIPULLA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

El Rancho track members are looking forward to their last meet this afternoon against La Serna.

Senior Erika Lemus' "favorite part about track is still being able to do what [she] likes to do best while still spending time with [her] friends." "Being in track is like being in a big family, everyone supports one another," says Lemus. For Senior Luis Martin Del Campo, his, "favorite part about track would have to be the meets themselves because although they could be quite nerve-racking, [he found] the whole competitiveness of it all to be real exciting!

Track and field does not only offer events for the track stars, but also, "the 5k fun run, which allows families and the community to come together to fund raise," says Lemus. And now that it will be her last year in track, Lemus is, "bittersweet because [she's] happy it's finally over but at the same time she'll miss the coaches and teammates, and the love hate relationship with the workout." Lemus is not pursuing track in college, "at least not for [her] first year."

Currently standing in the top ten for Discus Varsity, Martin Del Campo says he "[feels] this season has been the best of [his] three years in track in terms of everyone being connected together as more of a family than just teammates." As a senior, Martin Del Campo also has "a bittersweet feeling because as much as [he] wishes it could never end, it's also a good feeling to move on and begin a new chapter in [his] life."

This year, competition has spiraled in a new direction. "Usually Santa Fe has been the biggest opponent," says Martin Del Campo, but "this season our biggest opponents were from Cal High," says Vincent Cuevas. No matter who the opponent is, the "team has unity, skill, and passion in every event," says Cuevas, and this has helped the team grow.

There's only one league meet left against La Serna, but there are still preliminaries on Monday and finals on Thursday next week. Make sure you go out and support our team!

## Boys Volleyball team dominates league

BY KATHELEEN MADERA  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With an overall record of 18-4 and a league record of 8-0, the boy's volleyball team is looking to add another league title to their banners.

"The season has been how we all imagined; a rough start, but a perfect ending," says senior Randy Ibarra. "Anything can happen, but for the most part, we are league champions," says junior, Nicholas Arauz.

Ibarra recognizes that the best qualities of the team are its "great offense and chemistry. Since most of us have been on the team for the past four years, we know each other well." Senior Javier Torres says, "We mess around with each other a lot, but in the end we work really well as a team."

"It is a big mental game; you have to deal with the referee's bad calls and team mistakes. There are a lot of things we need to overcome, but we are at a good spot right now," says Arauz.

"We obviously want to be CIF champions," says Arauz, "but we know that we have to take it one game at a time and focus on our next game and just go on from there."

To be ready for the games, the boys



Middle blocker, Javier Torres, gets a kill against Whittier.

do much more than practice hard and team bond. "We all gather together and eat lunch. We also go over our opponents' strengths and weaknesses and practice them so we can utilize it to our advantage," says Arauz.

As their season comes to an end, the boys are hoping to continue their

winning streak and leave a high standard for the underclassmen that will lead the team in the upcoming years.

The team members ask for the support of their fellow Dons as they take on their last two league games against Pioneer and Santa Fe.

## Varsity tennis leads Del Rio League



Ricardo Ibarra in action showing off his skills.

BY MATTHEW MARROQUIN  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

With a current six-game winning streak and a total league record of 8-1, the El Rancho's boys varsity tennis team hopes to continue their league success into playoffs.

"We're in pretty good shape," says coach Eduardo Galindo; as the Dons are currently tied for first place in the Del Rio League with rival school La Serna. With only one game to go, the tennis team is confident in their ability to do well in playoffs. The Dons currently have the number one doubles team in the

league and the returning Del Rio League champion, Ricardo Ibarra, who only has three losses so far. The team's number two doubles boast only a single loss.

Galindo says that this season has confirmed what he has always known, that the team needs to train hard, work hard, and fight for every point. "There are some close games where if they just stick with it, they can get those wins," concludes the coach.

After demolishing Whittier 18-0, the Dons will play one final league match at home against Cal High today after school and play their first playoff game at home on May 4th.

## Dons cling to playoff hopes



Centerfield Jason Vela at bat.

BY TIM RIESGO  
EL RODEO STAFF WRITER

After pulling off a win over the undefeated Santa Fe High Chiefs, the Dons varsity baseball team's playoff hopes have been reignited as they stand only two games behind Whittier High School with an 11-11 record. Once again, pitching has been one of the key elements to this team. However, these hitters should not be slept on, as Senior Jose Guerrero and Sophomore Jason Vela have led the charge this season with a combined 46 hits and 19 runs scored, helping the Don's to outscore their opponents in the majority of games.

Since the start of the season, the pitching staff has been on fire and does not seem to be cooling down soon. With only giving up 48 runs in 22 games, the pitching staff is one of the best in the Del Rio League and will look to pull through in the final league games of the season.

Standing two games back from a potential playoff spot, this will be the Dons' last chance at a postseason run. To get there, they have two games versus the (1-8) Pioneer High Titans. If those games can result in victories, the varsity baseball team can control their destiny and take their next swing at the CIF Southern Section Championship.



*Alexis Zacarias pitching to the lead off batter.*



*Vincent Fuentes waits for the signal from his catcher.*



*Giovanni Navarro gets a jump on the competition.*



*Swim team members prepare to splash their opponents.*



*Robert Quijada and Stephanie Anguiano posing after a track meet.*



*Boys volleyball team huddles after a tough match.*



*Steven Banuelos preparing for a heated game against division rival La Serna.*



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