

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
DECEMBER 15, 2010
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES

SAN CARLOS, BELMONT

Carlmont traffic meeting

Officials from two cities to brainstorm

By Jesse Dungan

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Representatives from San Carlos and Belmont will hold a study session tonight to discuss traffic safety and congestion on Alameda de las Pulgas near Carlmont High School.

The meeting between the San Carlos Transportation and Circulation Commission and the Belmont Traffic and Parking Committee will give officials and residents a chance to brainstorm both short-term and long-term

solutions to issues of traffic congestion on Alameda de las Pulgas, access to homes along Cranfield Avenue, and gaps in bicycle lanes and sidewalks.

The decision to remove a lane of Alameda de las Pulgas near the border of San Carlos and Belmont about two years ago sparked an outcry from commuters, students and parents. While the cities have made some changes, officials continue to look for solutions to improve traffic conditions.

San Carlos has budgeted \$15,000 for a traffic study to examine access issues for Cranfield Avenue residents.

The direction the study takes will be shaped in part by feedback at tonight's meeting.

The meeting will also include a presentation on preliminary designs for an additional lane on Alameda de las Pulgas that would lead into Carlmont High School's drop-off area.

Budget constraints will likely prevent the lane from being added anytime soon, but it could be part of a long-term plan.

The meeting will take place at 7 p.m. in the student union of Carlmont High School, 1400 Alameda de las Pulgas.

CROSS COUNTRY

Carlmont girls' title makes Petersen's win much sweeter

But Scots boys see CCS run ended by loaded Bellarmine

By Glenn Reeves

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Jessie Petersen, even after taking individual honors at last year's Central Coast Section cross country championship, wasn't all too pleased. The Carlmont girls team had a streak of four consecutive CCS Division I championships ended by Gunn.

On Saturday Petersen repeated as CCS Division I champion, winning easily in 18 minutes, 22 seconds on the 3-mile course at Toro Park near Salinas.

And she was in better spirits afterward, seeing how her team had reasserted itself as the top Division I girls program in the CCS, making it five titles in six years.

"We ran really hard," Petersen said. "It was nice to get the title back."

The Carlmont boys had a streak of five consecutive CCS Division I championships ended Saturday. But that was to be expected, as Bellarmine is seriously loaded this year.

The Scots still managed to come in second and get the second automatic berth to the state meet in Fresno.

Pierce McKenzie was the top Carlmont finisher, placing ninth in 16:16. And that's a story in itself. McKenzie

was a nonscoring seventh for Carlmont last year.

"I've improved a lot, getting out there once or twice a day," McKenzie said. "I'm racing smart, not chasing people."

Aragon junior Lauren Croshaw placed second in girls Division II behind Alison Sturges of Mountain View. Croshaw was timed in 18:54.

"Sturges has been a nemesis," Aragon coach Frank Hunt said. "Now Lauren knows she can run with her."

Croshaw will make a return trip to the state meet.

"This is my nightmare course," Croshaw said. "I was happy just to see her. This makes me look forward

to track season."

Woodside's Kyle Feuerhelm qualified for state by finishing sixth in boys Division II in 15:56.

"I wanted to be top three, but a lot of guys stepped up," Feuerhelm said. "I'd like to finish top 10 to 15 at state, somewhere around there."

A big surprise: El Camino's Mario Roussanov who placed sixth in the boys Division III race in 16:43, earning a trip to Fresno. So did Capuchino's Aaron Jones, who was 10th in 17:06.

Crystal Springs Uplands qualified both its boys and girls teams in Division V. The CSU girls won the CCS title behind Elsa Valenzuela, who placed third. The boys took second.

Student cancer story

Nathan Galicia, a 16-year-old junior at Carlmont High School in Belmont who was diagnosed with T-cell lymphoblastic lymphoma in June 2009 at the age of 15, was the honorary speaker at the recent Light the Night Walk held at Central Park in San Mateo.

Sponsored by The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the event featured more than 500 people carrying illuminated balloons — white for survivors, red for supporters and gold for those who died — during the 1.5-mile fundraising walk through downtown San Mateo. The walk commemorated those whose lives have been touched by blood cancers and also celebrated survivors. More than \$60,000 was raised.

“By donating to organizations such as The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, you are giving money to help researchers develop new drugs and procedures to help blood cancer patients overcome their illnesses,”

Galicia said in a statement. “By sharing my experiences with the community, I am making them aware of the effect blood cancer has on the people around them. I am showing them that cancer is not necessarily a fatal disease, that it can be overcome.”

In his heartfelt, inspirational talk, Galicia shared his initial reaction to his cancer diagnosis and said, “Being diagnosed with cancer has changed the way I live my life. Since I don’t know what my future will be like, I take advantage of every day and appreciate everything I have.”

Galicia noted that he also takes his classes more seriously. During his treatment, he was home-schooled and earned straight As. Now back at school, he continues to get straight As in his AP and honors classes. After graduation, he wants to major in molecular biology and immunology in college to help other cancer patients.

Galicia’s parents, Regina Louie and Jeff Galicia, and sister, Mackenna Galicia, are very proud that he had the courage to share his story.

To learn more or donate to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, call 800-955-4572 or visit www.lls.org.

If you have any news tips about our county communities, call or fax Carolyn at 650-355-5533 or e-mail her at carolynlivengood@sanbrunocable.com.

CARL MONT HIGH SCHOOL
THE POST
SEPTEMBER 22, 2010

NEWS

Sister cuts sister just to avoid P.E.

Two freshman sisters tried to cut P.E. at a Belmont high school by cutting each other, police said yesterday.

One sister cut the other sister's arm with a razor blade on Monday morning at Carlmont High School at 1400 Alameda de las Pulgas, said Capt. Dan DeSmidt.

But the sister cut too deeply and the two rushed to the office, telling a se-

ries of fibs as to what happened, said DeSmidt. He said one story they told was that the injured sister fell and cut herself.

But officers were able to whittle down the stories to the truth, DeSmidt said. Parents were called in and officers will work with the school's administrators to determine what punishment is appropriate, DeSmidt said.

CARLTON HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
AUGUST 28, 2010

Employment lessons

Redwood City's Verde Youth Ambassador Program, which recently employed 14 Redwood City students from Carlmont, Redwood, Sequoia, Summit and Woodside high schools, proved to be quite successful.

The program, financed with federal grants, provided summer training and workforce development for the teens, who were supervised by two graduates of Sequoia and Woodside who are currently attending four-year colleges. The city manager's office oversaw the entire program.

The youth ambassadors were split into two teams and performed work that benefited the local community. The gardening team improved the gardens at Roosevelt Elementary School and Redwood and Woodside high schools. Team members also planted a new garden at Garfield Elementary School.

The outreach team worked downtown three nights a week to explain energy-efficiency and water-conservation programs to people attending various downtown events.

The students met with industry experts in the green-job and cleantech sectors, and they received tips on getting environmental jobs after they graduate. They also learned about local government and how to make their lives more eco-friendly.

The program is part of Redwood City Verde, which provides programs, activities and ideas for sustainability and decreasing energy and water use in the home. To learn more, visit www.redwoodcity.org/verde.

Marching on

CLIMBING ENROLLMENT FUELS LARGE GRADUATING CLASSES AT MOST SCHOOLS



DAN HONDA/BAY AREA NEWS GROUP PHOTOGRAPHS

Julia Granahan hugs a fellow Carlmont High graduate in the halls before the graduation ceremony in Belmont.

By Neil Gonzales

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Jasper Anderson of Redwood City felt a little ambivalent about leaving Woodside High School.

"It's kind of a strange thing because Woodside has been a second home the last four years," said Anderson, 18, who graduated Friday. "I guess graduation is moving on to new adventures."

Anderson is among more than 5,100 graduates from public high schools across San Mateo County moving on, according to a preliminary tally. Most

of them celebrated commencement in recent weeks.

Overall, the county continues to have large graduating classes partly because of climbing enrollment, educators say.

For instance, the Jefferson Union High School District graduated 1,054 students this year compared to the 987 the previous year. Much of the increase came from Westmoor High in Daly City, which saw nearly 400 graduates versus about 330 a year ago.

"It's a reflection of the number of

kids in the class," Jefferson Union Superintendent Mike Crilly said.

Westmoor High in particular "had a couple of big classes," he said. For next year, the district is projecting seniors to number 435 and juniors 478.

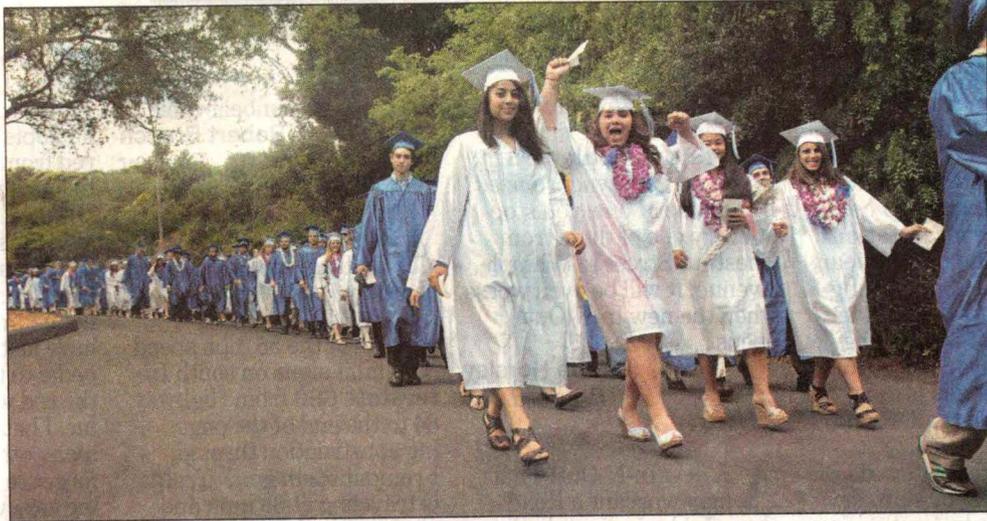
Crilly partly attributed that school's large student bodies to a district policy that allows students to enroll in the school of their choice if space is available.

"For the most part, there has been

CARL MONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
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12/15/10

SAN MATEO COUNTY SCHOOLS



Carlmont High grads march to the commencement ceremony on campus Friday.

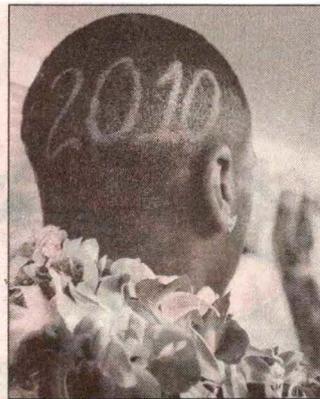
space” at Westmoor, he said.

But some districts saw decreases in graduation numbers. Sequoia Union’s comprehensive high schools graduated 1,408 this year — down about 70, according to the district.

“A lot of that is because we have different enrollment” from year to year, said Jim Lianides, the incoming superintendent for Sequoia Union.

The district, however, has improved on its dropout rate. It lowered that rate to 9 percent in the 2007-08 school year from the previous 12.6 percent, according to the state Department of Education.

“We’re doing a lot more analysis of data, looking at various trends and continu-



DAN HONDA/BAY AREA NEWS GROUP

Carlmont High grad Evan Dayce has his hair trimmed to mark his graduation.

ing to strengthen support systems and programs that meet the individual needs of students,” Lianides said.

Countywide, the dropout rate was 12.7 percent in 2007-08 compared to 14.3 percent

in 2006-07, according to the state.

Elsewhere, San Mateo Union had 1,810 graduates — a decline of about 100 from a year ago — while South San Francisco Unified had 627, which was a slight increase.

According to the Colorado-based Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, California’s public high schools are projected to see graduation numbers continue to increase over the next couple of years before leveling off and going down in succeeding years.

The state is expected to have nearly 387,000 graduates in 2011-12 before steadily declining to about 379,000 in 2021-22, according to the commission.

Contact Neil Gonzales at 650-348-4338.

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
OCT. 19, 2009

Youth orchestra performs Halloween music

A Halloween show at Carlmont High School in Belmont will feature a children's orchestra, costume contest and parade.

The "Halloween Music and Magic" festivities start

at 4 p.m. Oct. 31 and feature the Peninsula Youth Orchestra performing the season's favorites from "Batman," "Phantom of the Opera" and other works.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors.

Founded in 1997, PYO has more than 420 student musicians with four full orchestras and numerous chamber ensembles.

For more information, call 650-325-7967 or go to www.peninsulayouthorchestra.org.

Cross country team in turmoil

■ Carlmont High's boys team sees 11 of 12 runners quit team amid controversy involving former coach

By Glenn Reeves

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The Carlmont High School cross country team is the elite program in San Mateo County and one of the best in Northern California, with the Carlmont boys and girls teams each four-time defending Central Coast Section Division I champions. The transition to a new coaching staff this season, however, has not gone smoothly.

After practice Friday, 11 of the top 12 runners on the boys team tried to talk to first-year coach Jennifer Randazzo, and that encounter ended badly. That group of 11, which does not include defending CCS Division I champion Ethan Scardina, decided to quit the team.

One mother who witnessed the scene described it as ugly.

Five of the top runners on the Carlmont girls team also were considering quitting the team, but a phone call from former coach Jeff Gilkey to top runner Jessie Petersen on Thursday night convinced her to continue running.

The crux of contention involves the relation between the runners and their former coach.

Randazzo was hired after Gilkey, the coach who built the program, was fired last winter for entering a runner in a race under a false name. He initially was allowed to continue in a role as a volunteer coach for the distance runners on the track team. But after an incident during track season, he was told by the school's athletic administration to remove himself from any contact with Carlmont athletes.

Carlmont's elite distance runners, however, have continued to train with Gilkey. Several of Carlmont's top runners competed for RF United, Gilkey's track club, over the summer at the AAU Junior Olympics in Iowa, and did well.

"He's an unusual guy, but he gets the results, and

Carlmont

From Page 1

the kids respect him," said Julie Petersen, mother of Jessie Petersen.

Jessie Petersen is the two-time defending CCS 3,200-meter champion in track. She placed ninth at the Division I state meet in cross country last year.

"Her goal was to finish in the top five this year," Julie said. "Without (Gilkey) that's not going to happen."

Randazzo, who coaches the team with her brother, Mike, and sister, Stephanie, has her own philosophy on training, one that differs from Gilkey's.

Last week she asked the runners to sign a contract that prohibited contact with a personal trainer, a move designed to curtail a continued involvement with Gilkey. It was that demand as well as a disagreement in regard to training methods that precipitated the Friday altercation

after practice.

A meeting was held Monday night among the coaches and parents to iron out the situation. Parents who attended the meeting said the prohibition against contact with a personal trainer was extended to include all running outside of Carlmont's formal practices. A Sunday jog on one's own, in other words, is grounds for dismissal from the team.

Carlmont runners and parents are, for the most, part not happy about the situation.

Some of the boys have asked to return to the team, and those who have are on probation for a week and will not compete at the Stanford Invitational on Saturday.

"Everyone wants to get past these growing pains and get down to running races," wrote Keith Reyen in an e-mail. He is the father of Chet Reyen, one of the top runners on the boys team who wants to continue running for Carlmont. "The next few weeks will tell the tale."

Carlmont High School
San Mateo Times
Sept. 3, 2009

School's traffic woes persist

■ Belmont officials say improvements haven't eased problems near Carlmont High

By Mike Rosenberg

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BELMONT — Congestion has not eased in front of Carlmont High School during the first two weeks of the school year, despite traffic improvements installed over the summer, officials said Wednesday.

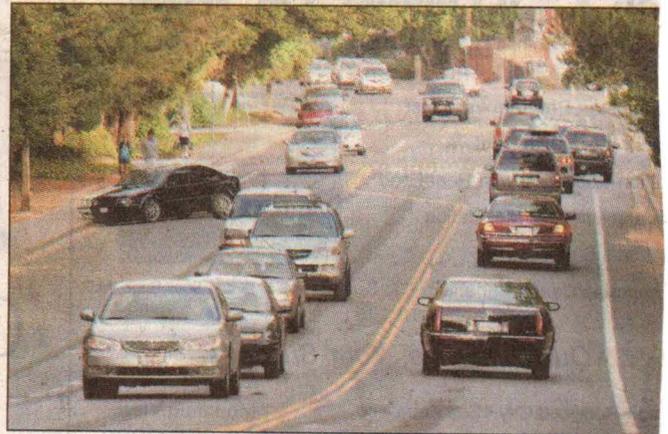
Since school began in August, driv-

ers have been sitting in an equal amount of traffic compared to this past spring near Alameda de las Pulgas, close to the San Carlos border, according to results from a city traffic study.

While drivers are still inching their way through the area during the peak school drop-off and pickup periods, there has been a slight decrease in congestion during other times, said interim Public Works Director Karen Borrmann.

She called the study results "inconclusive," saying most parents and stu-

See **TRAFFIC**, Page 11



JOHN GREEN

To improve traffic congestion around Carlmont High School, the city of Belmont took away one of the lanes on Alameda de las Pulgas last December.

Traffic

From Page 1

dents likely had not gotten their routines down pat yet, and police who have been monitoring the area agreed. At the advice of traffic officers, public works engineers will study the area again in mid-September, Borrmann said.

The study comes after the city in July installed a left-turn lane into Carlmont High and relocated a bus stop away from the heaviest traffic area.

The City Council authorized the changes in April in hopes of quelling anger over the standstills created by the council's decision in December to remove a traffic lane on Alameda de las Pulgas to install a bike lane. Students and parents from four schools, plus commuters who use the corridor to ac-

cess freeways, have since been clogging the road's remaining lanes.

The bike lane has been barely used, but officials have stood by their decision to remove the traffic lane, opting instead for other changes.

Officials in San Carlos, who have been critical of the lane removal, said more action needs to be taken.

"It's a starting point, but we think there obviously has to be more done to really make a major impact," said Brian Moura, assistant city manager in San Carlos, who said the study results were not surprising.

Both Borrmann and City Manager Jack Crist said their offices had not received any complaints about the traffic so far this year.

But Moura, whose city received hundreds of angry e-mails when they solicited comments on the topic earlier this year, said if they sought input once more,

"We would overnight get hundreds of them again, just like we did before."

Both Borrmann and Councilman Warren Lieberman, who is a member of the city's infrastructure committee, acknowledged that there needs to be more repairs made over the long term, although they have yet to figure out exactly what those solutions should be.

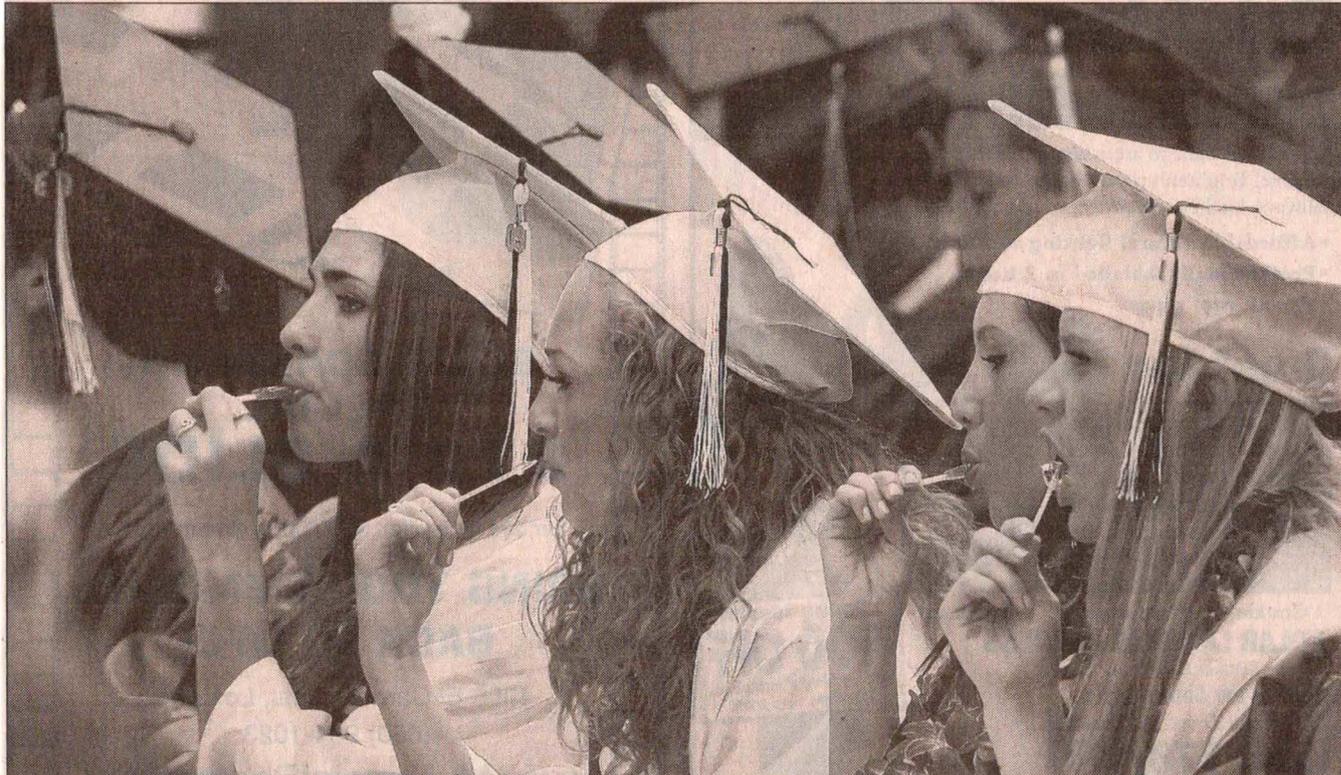
"The issue's not done," Borrmann said.

Police said they are working with school officials to encourage more carpooling among students and parents, or to increase bike racks on campus. School representative did not return calls seeking comment Wednesday.

Mike Rosenberg covers San Mateo, Burlingame, Belmont and transportation issues. Reach him at 650-348-4324.

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
JUNE 6, 2009

ONE SWEET DAY



A GROUP OF GRADUATES eat lollipops during the 2009 graduation ceremony for Carlmont High School in Belmont on Friday.

DAN HONDA/STAFF

CARL MONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
APRIL 27, 2009

Sequoia district selects two new principals

■ Instructional vice principal to take over at Sequoia High, while Orinda official is set to return to Carlmont

By Shaun Bishop

MEDIANEWS STAFF

Two schools in the Sequoia Union High School District have new principals.

The school board Wednesday night appointed Bonnie Hansen as the new principal of Sequoia High School in Redwood City, where she is currently the instructional vice principal. She has worked there 14 years as a teacher and administrator.

Raul Zamora, the principal at Miramonte High School in Orinda, will return to the Peninsula as the principal of Carlmont High School, where he was formerly a vice

principal for four years.

"I'm excited about returning back to Carlmont because the staff is a great staff, just like the staff ... at Miramonte," Zamora said Thursday.

The new appointees will replace two well-regarded principals in Carlmont's Andrea Jenoff and Sequoia's Morgan Marchbanks. Jenoff is retiring after 10 years at the helm, and Marchbanks is leaving to pursue a doctorate at UC Berkeley.

"I'm grateful that I had a mentor like Morgan and that I get to work with a staff like the one here at Sequoia, serving the incredible student body that we have and the parent community that we have," Hansen said Thursday.

Both Hansen, 38, and Zamora, 40, will start July 1.

"We are confident the two

new principals will capably build on the recent records of success at both schools," said district Superintendent Pat Gemma in a written statement.

Carlmont staff had pushed for administrative vice principal Robert Fishstrom, but Gemma told them at a January meeting that he retains the authority to hire top staff and urged them to trust the selection process.

Zamora said he and Fishstrom have a mutual respect for one another and that he feels comfortable coming back to the school.

"(Fishstrom is) going to add value to my leadership as well as the administrative team to push the school forward," he said.

Hansen, who lives three blocks away from Sequoia, has degrees from UC Davis and UC Berkeley and joined the district in 1995 as an

English teacher at Menlo-Atherton High School before landing her current job at Sequoia.

Zamora was a high school music teacher for four years in Anderson, and administrative vice principal at Carlmont before going across the Bay to Miramonte in 2006. He has a master's degree in music education from the University of Illinois and will complete a doctorate in organizational leadership from the University of La Verne in the fall. He lives in Castro Valley.

Salaries for the two have not yet been negotiated, but principals in the district make \$132,000 to \$153,000 per year, said spokeswoman Bettylu Smith.

E-mail Shaun Bishop at sbishop@dailynewsgroup.com.

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
JAN. 19, 2009

Belmont teacher tapped to be part of Antarctic telescope project

By Neil Gonzales
STAFF WRITER

BELMONT — Two years ago, Casey O'Hara took a ride on an elephant, lumbering through the subtropical lowlands of south-central Nepal.

He was on a safari in the Chitwan National Park with his brother, hoping to spot the single-horned Indian rhinoceros and Bengal tiger.

"Alas, we didn't see any rhinos or tigers," he said, "but we saw a lot of other wildlife."

O'Hara doesn't expect to see much wildlife on his next adventure. But it will likely pack more thrills than the far-flung locales he's visited so far.

About this time next year, the Carlmont High School physics teacher will experience extreme subzero temperatures, 24 hours of intense sunlight and 10,000 feet of elevation.

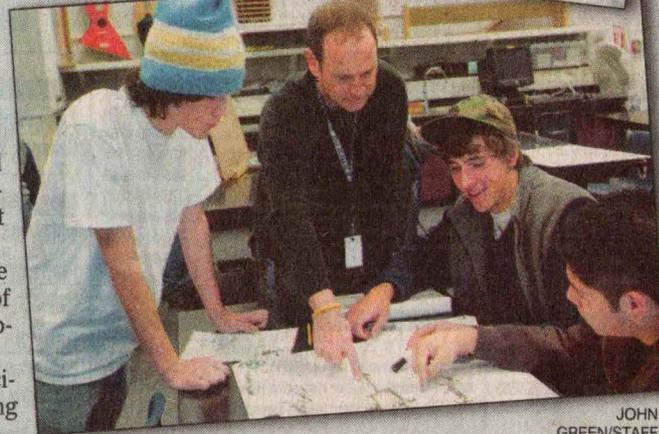
He'll travel to desolate Antarctica as a member of the largest research project of its kind — the construction of IceCube, the world's biggest telescope for detecting subatomic particles.

The international project, funded by the National Science Foundation, may lead to an improved understanding of black holes, supernovas and other phenomena.

"I'm pretty excited about it," said O'Hara, 36, who has a ruggedly fit appearance but low-key demeanor. "Most people don't have the opportunity to go to an exciting, extreme place like the South Pole."

He is among just several teachers nationwide who are

See ICE, Page 9



JOHN GREEN/STAFF

CASEY O'HARA, a physics teacher at Carlmont High School in Belmont who is participating in the IceCube telescope project site in Antarctica, above, helps students Kyle Zink, from left, Shaun Soelberg and Jose Rangel with an assignment on reaction forces during class Friday.

(OVER)

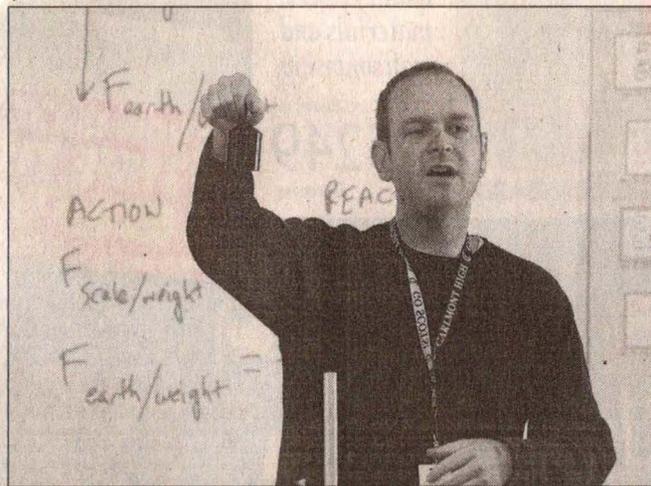
Knowles Science Teaching Foundation fellows chosen for the project.

"He's perfect for this," said Nicole Gillespie, senior program officer for New Jersey-based Knowles, whose fellowship program seeks to nurture and encourage beginning science and math teachers so they improve on their craft and remain in the field. "He's adventurous and likes to travel. He has exceptional science content and knowledge. He is also dedicated to teaching."

O'Hara already had a strong science and math background before he became a physics teacher. He was a mechanical engineer in the semiconductor industry for nine years and holds three patents involving an implantable defibrillator developed when he worked in the medical field.

As a teacher, he has helped lead Carlmont students on ecology missions in Costa Rica to save endangered sea turtles and their hatchlings.

For the IceCube project, O'Hara and the other teachers will start their training in



JOHN GREEN/STAFF

CASEY O'HARA, a physics teacher at Carlmont High School in Belmont, talks to his class Friday. O'Hara has been chosen to travel to Antarctica to take part in an international astrophysics research project.

Alaska next month, followed by additional instruction at the University of Wisconsin.

They then will travel to Antarctica for the 2009-2010 winter, which is the South Pole's summer. IceCube is being built deep in the Antarctic ice and is expected to be finished in about two years. It will feature thousands of spherical optical sensors. At the surface, the telescope would reach a height more than six times that of the Empire State Building.

IceCube is designed to detect neutrinos, other subatomic particles and high-energy cosmic rays. It will help scientists determine the neutrinos' direction and energy level and ultimately learn about their source, such as an exploding star or a black hole.

"I'll be installing sensors on the surface," O'Hara said. "Most of the time, I'll be outside, digging in the trenches."

He and his fellow teacher researchers also will use blog-

ging, Webcasting and photography to bring their work to their students as it happens.

In addition, they will develop new classroom curriculum and activities based on the science of IceCube. That curriculum could cover such topics as environmental changes and explore ways to apply the concept of neutrinos, O'Hara said.

"The wonders of the universe is a hook that I can use to interest students (in) something that can be so abstract and daunting," he added.

O'Hara's students plan to check his blog to keep up with his icy expedition.

"I think it's pretty cool he's going to the South Pole," said junior Kyle Zink, 16. "I just hope to learn about his experience and hope he shares anything that's interesting."

Katherine Whyte, a 17-year-old senior, always enjoys learning about different parts of the world.

"It'll be interesting to hear how he'll be living over there for an extended period of time," she said.

Staff writer Neil Gonzales covers education. He can be reached at 650-348-4338 or ngonzales@bayareanews-group.com.

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO TIMES
MARCH 7, 2009

CARLMONT TEACHER PROVIDES CULTURAL LESSON: Mindy Chiang, the Mandarin-Chinese teacher

at Carlmont High School in Belmont, recently gave about 110 students in her Chinese Mandarin classes a unique opportunity to enjoy a traditional Chinese New Year celebration. More than 150 people attended the event.

Chiang, whose goal was to give her students a better sense of Chinese culture, set up the event with the help of her students, former students and parent volunteers.

Chiang's students were required to visit three activity centers, where they could explore hands-on activities and visual displays including tea tasting, playing Chinese chess, making scrolls, writing calligraphy, painting Peking Opera masks, and much more. Each student was given a "passport booklet" in which they were required to answer questions about each station they visited.

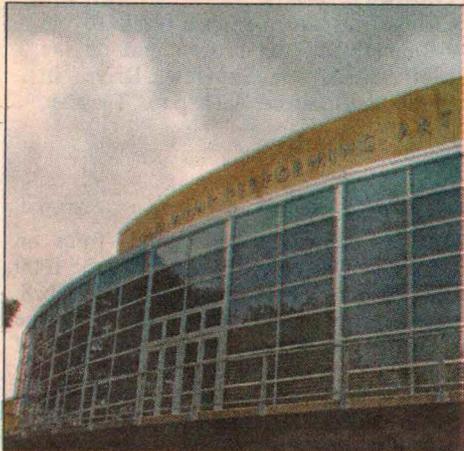
"It's fun," said junior Ian Glish, of Belmont. "Last year's celebration was not as elaborate, but this year it's a blowout! It's better for individuals to be able to choose what they want to do."

"This is very good," said sophomore Yinyin Lu, of Belmont, who arrived in the U.S. two months ago from China. "People are very kind and interested in Chinese culture. I can only do a little bit of calligraphy."

The West Coast Lion Dance Troupe from Daly City kicked off the event with a lively performance. Nathan Galicia gave an impressive martial arts routine, followed by students doing an interesting Chinese yo-yo demonstration.

A tasty Chinese lunch catered by Yeah! restaurant in Redwood Shores concluded the fun, educational gala.

Almost curtain call for Carlmont's new theater



HEATHER MURTAGH/DAILY JOURNAL
Carlmont High School's new performing arts center includes a 500-seat theater.

By Heather Murtagh
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

When the curtain lifts for Carlmont High School's upcoming musical "Oklahoma!" next month it will be in a brand-new state-of-the-art performing arts center.

The \$21 million project funded by Measure H, a \$70 million bond passed in 2004, took a total of 13 months of construction, said Bettylu Smith, Sequoia Union High School District spokeswoman. Within the 21,000-square-foot facility is a 500-seat theater, top-rated sound system, theatrical lighting and a black box theater. "Oklahoma!" opens March 12 giving the public the first glimpse at the new facility.

"This facility is more than your average high school theater. The sound and lighting systems are top of the line and the acoustical treatments

are way above par for more high schools," said Genevieve Sagi Tep, visual and performing arts chair. "We also have a gala motorized orchestra pit lift. It's going to be one of the most functional theaters on the Peninsula and a real asset for the whole community."

The facility includes environmentally friendly flooring, furniture, acoustic properties within the ceiling and thermal windows, said Smith. The lobby overlooks a 150-year-old oak tree — from the lobby, this view is at canopy level. Plans include student artwork to decorate the lobby.

Some of the center's costs — such as the flexible seating in the studio, the main stage sound shell, the grand piano and recruitment for a theater manager — were also covered by the Carlmont Academic Foundation. When it opens, plaques will be placed on armrests to more than 50 families who endowed seats to

the center, said Smith.

"It's really nice to have your kids perform in a nice facility. After over 25 years of teaching, this will be the first time my kids will have a home in a really nice facility," said Instrumental Music Director John DaBaldo.

The center is part of a larger project for the arts. A new music and arts building currently under construction will include classrooms for arts, ceramics, band, music, practice rooms and a music library.

Those interested in taking a look around will have a chance when "Oklahoma!" opens. Performances are at 8 p.m. March 12 through March 14 and 2 p.m. March 15 at the new theater located on campus, 1400 Alameda de las Pulgas in Belmont. Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$12 for students. Tickets can be purchased online at www.carlmont.seq.org beginning Friday, Feb. 20.

Carlmont Principal
High School
San Mateo Times
Dec. 8, 2009

Carlmont principal confirms plan to retire

By Shaun Bishop

MEDIANEWS STAFF

Teachers at Carlmont High School say they are skeptical of the superintendent's plan to replace well-regarded Principal Andrea Jenoff, who confirmed this week that she plans to retire after this school year.

Jenoff, the longest-serving principal in the Sequoia Union High School District, started telling staff and community members last spring that she was ready to retire after 10 years at the helm, but the district has not publicized her de-

parture.

"I had total devotion and love for this school," Jenoff said Tuesday. "All I'm thinking about at this point in time is making sure the school transitions well."

She said there was no spe-

cific reason for her decision to retire after 33 years as an educator.

"When you get to a certain stage in your life, it's the thing that you do," she said.

See RETIRE, Page 5

Retire

FROM PAGE 3

The exact date Jenoff will step down is not yet clear, but the district hopes to have her replacement hired and ready to start work by July 1.

Superintendent Pat Gemma met with staff members Tuesday afternoon to announce the district's plans to advertise the position and narrow down the candidates between now and May, when the school board is expected to make a decision.

The decision irritated some teachers, who say a search is unnecessary because they already have a good successor in Robert Fishstrom, an administrative vice principal at the 2,100-student school, located on the border of Belmont and San Carlos.

Genevieve Tep, the choral music director, said the staff

"is extremely concerned that a principal not supported by the Carlmont community will be appointed." She handed Gemma a petition signed by 93 percent of the school's tenured faculty supporting Fishstrom's appointment.

"He knows the kids, he knows their friends and their strengths and weaknesses," said Tep, citing a letter from the faculty.

But Gemma, who praised Jenoff as a "highly effective, excellent principal," asked teachers to "trust the process," which he said will include input from staff, parents and students.

"The superintendent has to have the authority to hire and fire," Gemma said. "I've got to maintain that."

Teachers said they grew nervous in recent months that Gemma has already hand-picked Jenoff's successor after there was no word about how she would be replaced.

Gemma denied Tuesday that he had "someone in mind" for the job.

Several teachers said they understand the need for a search process, but others said they worried that several principals who have been selected in the past have turned out to be poor fits.

"The process hasn't always worked for us," one teacher said.

Gemma said Fishstrom is one of three candidates within the district who have expressed interest in the job, and he has encouraged each to apply.

"Through the process, if you're the choice, it only enables you and empowers you to be more successful," Gemma said.

He said the position is a "plum job" — heading a well-run school with high-achieving students in an affluent area that provides ample funding through property taxes.

The district plans to advertise the position beginning Feb. 1 and collect applications through mid-March. Interviews with finalists will be held in April before the school board votes on a recommendation at its May meeting, Gemma said.

Before she was an administrator, Jenoff spent 16 years in the classroom teaching art and English and also ran yearbook classes and helped cheerleading teams.

She said she is gratified that student achievement has soared, especially in math and science, and there is now a waiting list to get in to Carlmont. A decade ago, local parents were sending their kids to private schools in much higher numbers, she said.

"The thing I'm most proud of as a principal is I gave this community back a school they can be proud of — a school they deserve," Jenoff said.

*Sequoia Dist. Teachers
Honored
San Mateo Times
December 8, 2008*

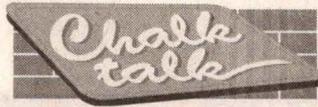
Sequoia district teachers honored

SEVERAL TEACHERS from the Sequoia Union High School District recently earned praise from different groups.

The California League of High Schools named social-studies teacher Jarrod Harrison and English teacher Nancy Staves from Carlmont High School in Belmont as outstanding educators in the region.

Harrison also is in the running for the league's statewide educator of the year award, which is expected to be announced next month.

Three other teachers have received \$1,000 grants from Pacific Gas and Electric Co. and the nonprofit energy advocate Sustainable San Mateo County.



They are Ann Akey, an environmental-science teacher at Woodside High; Sarah Newman, an environmental-science teacher at Sequoia High in Redwood City; and Johnny DeSollar, a science department chair at Redwood High.

Akey and Newman will use their grants to build special stationary bicycles that generate electricity and allow the rider to experience the difference in the amount of power required to run cell phones, microwaves and other consumer electronics.

The bicycles will be built

with salvaged, used and refurbished parts.

DeSollar plans to use his grant to support the renovation of an outdoor classroom for environmental activities. This program features its own creek, pond and garden.

College offers China program

Skyline College in San Bruno is seeking students interested in studying in China.

The college will hold informational sessions for its Study Abroad in China program today from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. and Jan. 24 from noon to 1 p.m. in Room 8302 in Building 8.

Students will visit Beijing and Shanghai from April 4 to

17 and experience Chinese culture, business practices, language and cuisine while earning college credit.

For more information, e-mail pate@smccd.edu or go to www.smccd.edu/accounts/skyasia.

Chalk Talk is a regular feature with items about schools, students, teachers and administrators in San Mateo County. To submit an item, write to Chalk Talk, San Mateo County Times, 477 Ninth Ave., Suite 110, San Mateo, CA 94402; send a fax to 650-348-4446; or e-mail education reporter Neil Gonzales at ngonzales@bayareanewsgroup.com. Also visit the Chalk Talk blog at www.ibabuzz.com/chalktalk.

School shuts down paper

Content too sexy for the classroom? Students feel censored

By Heather Murtagh
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

An administrative decision to cancel the Carlmont High School newspaper yesterday for "lack of supervision," has reporters and editors feeling censored.

The decision might also be against California law, according to the

Student Press Law Center.

One week after the Scots Express hit news stands, two students were told the paper would no longer print due to the content of the paper — particularly a satirical look by one student about his own sexiness. The Carlmont administration said the cancellation came after months of struggling to find a

long-term advisor for the club.

Express editor Alex Zhang explained he was told the paper was canceled due to its inappropriate content. Principal Andrea Jenoff, on the other hand, explained the student paper needs a full-time advisor. The first edition made it clear the students needed more help, which is not available at the moment, she said.

If the decision was content based, it goes against California law, explained Frank LoMonte, Student Press Law Center executive director. California has two layers of protection for student writers: The First Amendment and the Leonard Law, which prohibits schools from disciplining students for protected speech.

Unless the story causes a true dis-

ruption, it is protected, said LoMonte, who added canceling the paper is the ultimate form of censorship.

The decision discouraged state Sen. Leland Yee, D-San Francisco/San Mateo, the author of a new law protecting high school

See **PAPER**, Page 20

PAPER

Continued from page 1

teachers and school employees from retaliation as a result of student speech.

The idea that children could learn that their ideas can and will be censored also did not sit well with Yee, who hoped the administration would reconsider its decision.

The Scots Express began as a club publishing in March. So far this school year, the paper published one edition — which came out last week. Within the entertainment section was a humor story called "Jack Dooley — a beautiful man," written by junior Jack Dooley.

The narrative piece is a first-person interview with Dooley essentially talking to himself about his looks.

"... I am sexy. And I don't mean that like my physical attributes can be described as sexy, that's a given. What I mean is, I embody sexy. I am that word. That word is me. I am sexy,"

Dooley wrote. At one point, Dooley describes himself taking off his shirt and rubbing baby oil on himself before once again declaring his sexiness.

The idea began as a joke for Dooley who frankly thought few people would read the paper and therefore expected little response, he said. After the paper came out, Dooley began being called sexy in the hall, he said.

On Monday, Dooley and Zhang were called into the office and told the content led to the decision to cancel the newspaper, they both said.

Zhang also pointed out that the paper's first edition was self-funded since advertising sales covered the costs.

Jenoff disputed this and noted the club received an allocation from the school site council.

Zhang, who sits on the site council, was not aware of any allocation.

Heather Murtagh can be reached by e-mail: heather@smdailyjournal.com or by phone: (650) 344-5200 ext. 105.

*Carlmont High School
Daily Journal
Nov. 11, 2008*

Carlmont High School
San Mateo Daily News
Nov. 22, 2008

» CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL

Student paper to re-launch

Administration shut it down early this month

BY JESSICA BERNSTEIN-WAX
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

Carlmont High's school newspaper is on track to start planning a new edition next week after a faculty member agreed to work with student reporters to re-launch the paper.

Administrators at the Belmont school shut down The Scots Express earlier this month after a somewhat racy first-person narrative appeared in the November edition. Andrea Jenoff, Carlmont's principal, has said the paper's closure was unrelated to the story, but students say administrators told them the content was "inappropriate."

Carlmont's paper will function as a club rather than a class under the direction of English teacher Raphael Kauffmann, said Bettylu Smith, a spokeswoman for the Sequoia Union High School District.

Kauffmann has a degree in broadcast communications from San Francisco State University and previously taught a journalism class at Carlmont, according to Smith.

"We believe our comprehensive high schools are exceptional, and part of a comprehensive high school would be to have a quality student newspaper," Smith said.

CARLMONT, page 9

She added that the district is exploring ways to strengthen journalism programs and student papers at its schools and might add journalism as a featured career in an upcoming Community Technical Education program, which seeks to give students pre-college training in various fields.

Of the district's four high schools, Carlmont and Sequoia do not currently have newspapers, Smith said.

Under California and federal law, administrators and teachers cannot dictate the content of student newspapers unless it is gratuitously obscene or likely to incite violence or other disturbances at the school.

Junior Alex Zhang, editor of The Scots Express, said he and newspaper staff decided to work with Kauffmann rather than run an underground paper because "we thought that it was best for the interest of students coming to Carlmont in two years or so when we leave.

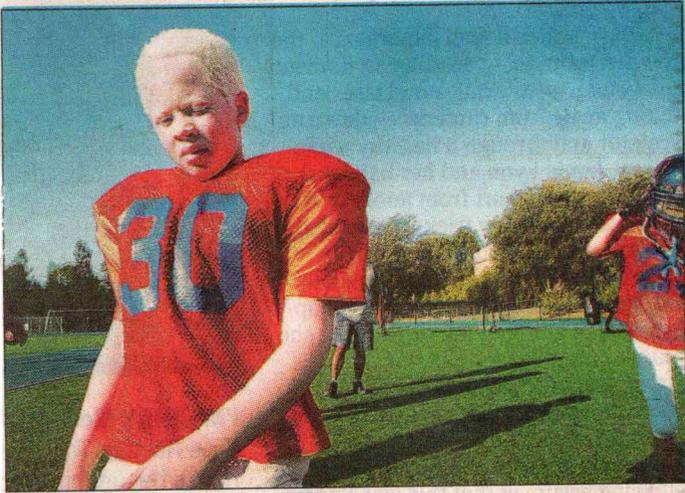
"When we leave, there will be a legacy," Zhang said, adding that the paper would likely continue to get all or most of its funding from ad revenues.

Zhang added that he hopes to publish the next issue before winter break.

"Mr. Kauffmann is a really strong First Amendment advocate," Zhang said. "I think he'll do awesome as our adviser."

E-mail Jessica Bernstein-Wax at jbernstein@dailynewsgroup.com.

Tino Benelli
San Mateo Co. Times
Sept 13, 2005



MATHEW SUMNER/STAFF

TINO BENELLI, 10, has albinism which limits his vision. He played last weekend's game nearly blind because league rules didn't allow him to use his doctor-prescribed tinted face shield.

Legally blind, ready for contact

■ Daylight makes seeing virtually impossible for Tino Bennelli, 10, when he takes the football field

By Neil Gonzales

STAFF WRITER

BELMONT — The whistle blew and No. 30, Tino Benelli, took tentative steps at first, trying to find the boy with the football.

It appeared Tino was feeling his way through the dark even though the drill was being held during a bright Wednesday afternoon at the Carlmont High School football field.

He eventually closed in on the ball carrier and made a textbook-sure tackle.

He did the same thing on a couple of other plays.

"I like football because you get to use your hands and push," said Tino, 10.

Tino plays offensive tackle as well as defense for the local Pop Warner team Bayside Broncos. He's a first-year player and competed in his first regular-season game Sunday.

He also happens to have albinism, a condition that renders him legally blind.

He played that way — with low to no vision — in the day game last weekend when referees refused to let him wear a doctor-prescribed, tinted face shield.

"Because there's a lack of pigment in his eyes, he needs a filter," said his

mother, Jeni Benelli. "Without it, light blinds him."

Benelli had considered pursuing a discrimination case against Pop Warner, but after making several calls to officials this past week, she accepted an explanation for the ban on tinted shields connected to helmets.

The prohibition involves medical reasons, said Josh Pruce, spokesman for Pop Warner Little Scholars Inc. in Langhorne, Pa. "It's not discrimination. It's completely for the safety of the participant."

If a player wearing a tinted visor is

See Tino, Page 15

Tino

FROM PAGE 1

injured and remains prone on the field, Pruce said, paramedics won't be able to check the eyes for responsiveness without taking off the helmet.

Removing the gear would jostle the head — which can cause more damage, he said.

Tinted goggles, however, would be OK in Tino's situation, he said. "You can reach in and pull the goggles down."

So Benelli has backed off any legal action.

"I'm not going to fight that and decide to get tinted goggles," said Benelli, who serves as board president for the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District.

She will also have a letter signed by a doctor indicating goggles are needed medically and a legal accommodation for her son, Benelli said.

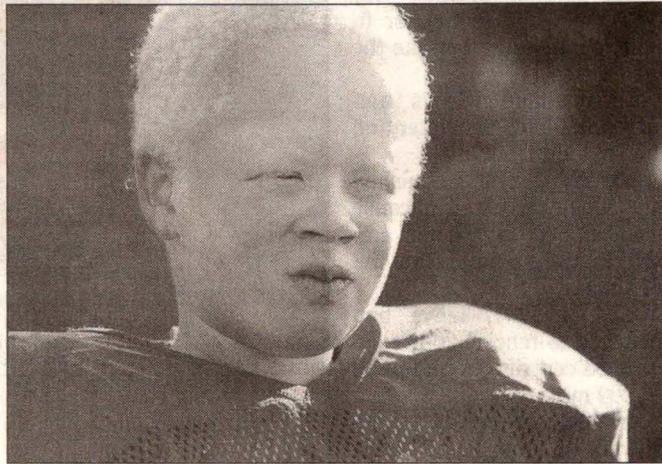
Tino is expected to get his darkened goggles next week and will have to play tomorrow's game against Half Moon Bay without any light-filtering protection.

But if last weekend's game was any indication, Tino will likely be fine.

The Broncos crushed the San Lorenzo Valley team, 36-12.

"We had six different running backs score a touchdown," said Broncos coach Alex Cabezon. "So the credit goes to the offensive line, and (Tino) was part of that."

Still, Tino "virtually played blind," Cabezon said. But "feeling the contact allows him to play like this. He knows where the play is going and which



MATHEW SUMNER/STAFF

TINO BENELLI, 10, squints in the evening sun during practice with the Bayside Broncos football team in Belmont on Wednesday.

way to block."

He also goes by sound at times and communicates with his teammates, said Tino, who dreams of playing for the Chicago Bears or some other team in the National Football League.

"We had to tell each other where to go" in the game against San Lorenzo Valley.

Depending on the time of day, Tino said, his vision is almost washed out with yellow.

"It's kind of complicated," he said, squinting most of the time during practice at Carlmont High. "It's not the best sight. I see a few shapes. When I'm not facing directly at the sun, it's easier."

Tino's albinism also makes his short, kinky hair platinum blond and skin pale, although he's African-American.

"It's sort of cool having white hair," said teammate Shawn Swanson, 9. "Maybe when I grow up, I'll want white hair."

"It's kind of complicated. It's not the best sight. I see a few shapes. When I'm not facing directly at the sun, it's easier."

— Tino Benelli, 10

But he doesn't see Tino differently from anyone else on the team.

"Looks don't matter," Shawn said. "You can be friends with anyone and communicate. That's pretty much it."

Staff writer Neil Gonzales covers education. Reach him at 650-348-4338 or ngonzales@bayareanewsgroup.com.



JOHN GREEN/STAFF

SEQUOIA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES toss their caps in the air after their commencement ceremony Friday in Redwood City. Lollipop the dog, below, watches as Carlmont High School students file in for the ceremony in Burlingame.

County continues to see large graduating classes



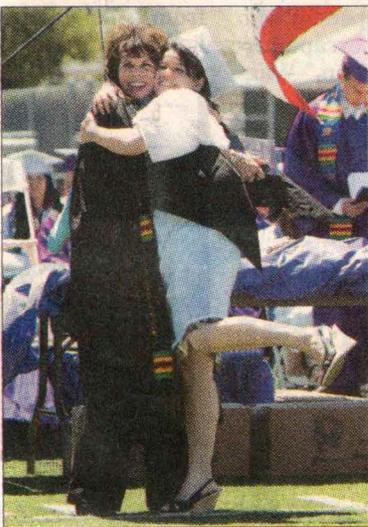
VICTOR MACCHAROLI/MEDIANEWS STAFF

(OVER)

By Neil Gonzales

STAFF WRITER

A throng of blue and gold swelled in front of the Jefferson High School gymnasium in Daly City on a sunny Thursday afternoon.



JOHN GREEN/STAFF

Seniors in caps and gowns representing the school's colors waited excitedly with family and friends for commencement to start.

"All the hard work is paying off," said new graduate Carlo Combes, 18, who's going to a community college in Southern California and plans a career in computers. "I'm getting out of here and moving on."

It's a celebratory scene playing out at high schools across San Mateo County and elsewhere this time of year.

For the most part, that scene continues to show large numbers of graduates.

For the 2007-08 academic year, the county's public high schools are expected to graduate more than 5,190 seniors.

That follows the record-high tally of 5,415 graduates a

year ago, according to figures from the state Department of Education.

This year, California, along with the rest of the nation, is projected to see the biggest graduating class in history, according to a March study by the Colorado-based Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

However, the numbers are predicted to level off or drop slightly in succeeding years while the ethnic composition of graduates increasingly grows diverse, according to the study.

Those factors will have implications for California's workforce in the years to come, said Brian Prescott, senior research analyst at the commission. The future "workforce is a combination of the workforce you have today plus new entrants. California will just have a smaller number."

At the same time, "we have huge educational attainment gaps," Prescott said. "The diverse groups that are growing the fastest are demonstrating less success in achieving college degrees, which are the ticket to a middle-class lifestyle and jobs" in today's technology-driven economy.

Those gaps show that certain groups of students, particularly Latinos and African Americans, continue to lag behind their white and Asian counterparts in test scores.

State education officials have already launched a concerted effort to tackle those gaps.

Last year, an education summit spearheaded by state Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell offered strategies to narrow the disparities such as expanding preschool programs, enhancing technology access for middle school students and developing policies that support achievement of African Americans in urban communities.

According to the commission's study, Latinos will represent the fastest-growing

group of graduates. In 2004-05, Latino graduates numbered 129,671. Within a decade, that will rise to 166,765 — an increase of nearly 30 percent.

This year, California will peak at about 389,000 graduates, the study said. But the numbers will slide in later years, eventually hovering at about 375,000.

Nationwide, the 2007-08 graduating class is projected to be history's largest at more than 3.3 million, the study said. "In fact, 2007-08 will mark the last year in an era of continuous growth in the nation's production of high school graduates, a period that reaches back to 1994."

That growth is largely a result of a "baby boomlet" in the 1980s "when we had the most births in recent history," Prescott said.

In Daly City, Jefferson High's Class of 2008 numbered 260 students compared to the 207 last year.

"This year's was a larger class for some reason," Jefferson Principal Louis Silberman said.

In that class was Monica Vega, 18.

"I'm really excited," she said of graduating. "It's been really hard balancing my personal life and academics. But I met so many people and made friendships that will last forever."

She's headed to University of California, Davis, to study exercise biology and aspires to be a physical or sports therapist.

With 450 graduates, Carlmont High in Belmont has the biggest class in the county this year. Carlmont's graduating class also drew one of the largest scholarship amounts, raking in about \$2 million worth.

"I think this is a very special class," Carlmont Principal Andrea Jenoff said. "Even as college acceptance is getting harder, our class really excelled."

County public schools by the numbers

5,190+ graduates
3,400+ college-bound
\$9.8M in scholarships offered

Sources: Local high schools and County Office of Education

Carlmont junior has humble approach to win

Daniel Semmler has an unusual approach to achieving success in the ancient game.

The Carlmont-Belmont High junior has taken only one 30-minute golf lesson in his life, plays at a public course, has little tournament experience and relies on a steady diet of the Golf Channel and swing tips from his 15-handicapper father for improving his game.

"I watch about seven hours a week," Semmler said of his Golf Channel reliance, which he says includes infomercials. "The Golf Channel has taught me everything."

Semmler was the unlikely winner of the NCGA/CIF NorCal boys golf championship Monday, shooting a 2-under-par 68 at Richmond Country Club to win by one stroke. He made a 15-foot birdie putt on his final hole of the day to secure the victory and a trip to the state championship on June 3, at Santa Maria Country Club (Santa Barbara County).

Unlikely because Semmler wasn't even the No. 1 player on his Carlmont team at the beginning of the season. That was his brother **Scott**, a senior who didn't qualify for the Central Coast Section tournament. The younger Semmler had a decent enough season, averaging a couple of strokes over par for his nine-hole matches. His two rounds of 74 and 75 in the Peninsula Athletic League tournament earned him third place and a boost to his confidence.

Semmler's breakthrough round came last week at the CCS tournament when he fired a 70 at Rancho Cañada West in Carmel that his coach **David Heck** predicted.

Heck once again showed his confidence in his player before the title-winning round.

"Today I said, 'How about shooting a 67 and qualifying for the state championship?'" Heck said. "He's a grinder."

Semmler will be looking forward to the trip south for a number of reasons, including the opportunity to practice on a grass range. Semmler spends most of his afternoons at Crystal Springs Golf Course in Burlingame, where he hits practice balls off synthetic-turf mats and waits to play until after 3 p.m. when he can take advantage of \$2 greens fees court-

sy of the Youth on Course program.

On a flat Richmond course with slick greens, Semmler leaned on skills that he has developed on Crystal Springs' tight, windswept layout.

"Crystal Springs is a very tough course. People who shoot par or under tend to shoot over par there," Semmler said. "Coming here, this course looks very flat."

On High Schools
Will McCulloch

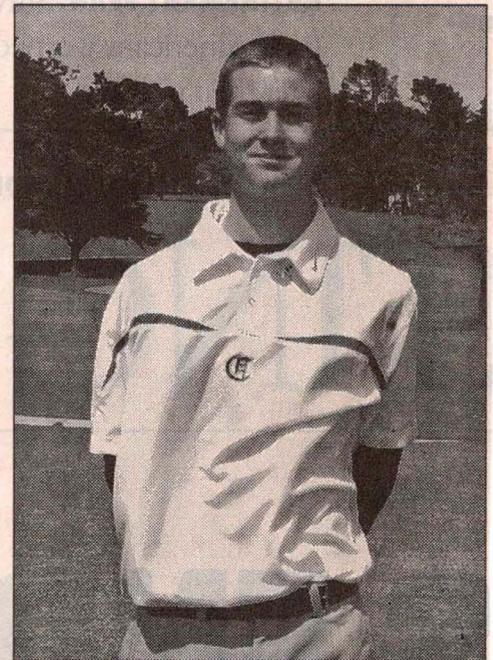
Against a field packed with quality players who attracted a number of college coaches, Semmler didn't carry a tournament-tested resume into Monday's round. He started playing in Northern California junior tournaments only last summer and didn't even attempt to qualify for the U.S. Junior Amateur Championship.

"I wasn't good enough," Semmler said.

At 5-foot-7, 135 pounds, Semmler doesn't pound the ball the mighty lengths that many of his lanky peers do, but he hits it straight and has a short game. Semmler mixed five birdies with three bogeys in his round and looked at every putt with one thing in mind.

"I was very confident in my putting," said Semmler, who is hoping to get a summer job at California Golf Club in South San Francisco to support his game. "I knew if I got it on the green, I was either going to one-putt or knock it real close."

The Golf Channel will do that for you.



Daniel Semmler watches a whole lot of Golf Channel programming — and won the NCGA/CIF NorCal championship.

CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL
SAN MATEO COUNTY TIMES
APRIL 28, 2008

Top Carlmont High School student

makes all-academic team

A SENIOR AT Carlmont High School in Belmont recently joined Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's first All-State Academic Team.

Joy Zhang, who has a grade point average of 4.44 and is ranked first in her class, was among the 25 students statewide named to the team.

Zhang's other honors and activities include serving as Go Club founder and president, winning the San Mateo County Fair piano competition in 2005 and being invited to the USA Math Olympiad Training Program.

The 25 all-state students were picked out of 144 young people recognized during the inaugural Governor's

Academic Recognition dinner in Sacramento for their academic, extracurricular and volunteer achievements.

"I think it is extremely important that we take the time to honor the hard work, dedication and commitment to excellence all of these students have demonstrated," Schwarzenegger said. "These young men and women should be proud of what they have accomplished. We have students who never missed a day of class, made perfect scores on the SAT and still find time to volunteer for a dozen different extracurricular activities. They mentor, tutor and excel in sports. They dream of making the world a better place, and they already are."

The 144 honorees included three other students from San Mateo County: Aurora Victoria David of Westmoor High School in Daly City, Margaret de Larios of South San Francisco High School and Jasmine Nachtigall of Hillsdale High School in San Mateo, who was one of about 80 torchbearers for the recent Olympic run through San Francisco.

"The selection of only four students, the maximum allocated to San Mateo County for this new program, was an extremely difficult task," said county schools Superintendent Jean Holbrook. "Each of the students nominated is an academic high-achiever with a strong record of leadership and



participation in co-curricular and community activities. Our only regret is that we could not recognize all of the outstanding students nominated by their schools."

Carlmont High School
San Mateo Co Times
2/24/08

SEEDS OF SUCCESS



RON LEWIS — Staff photos

GINA DABALDO (above), a Carlmont High School student, waters a plant growing for a DNA experiment in the ROP biotech class Friday. Carlmont ROP students Holly Withrington (below, from left), Mary Morgan and Tony Fuentes measure a plant. A new law seeks to expand ROP classes for high school students while limiting participation by adults in those programs.

Law forces county to rethink ROP programs

By Neil Gonzales

STAFF WRITER

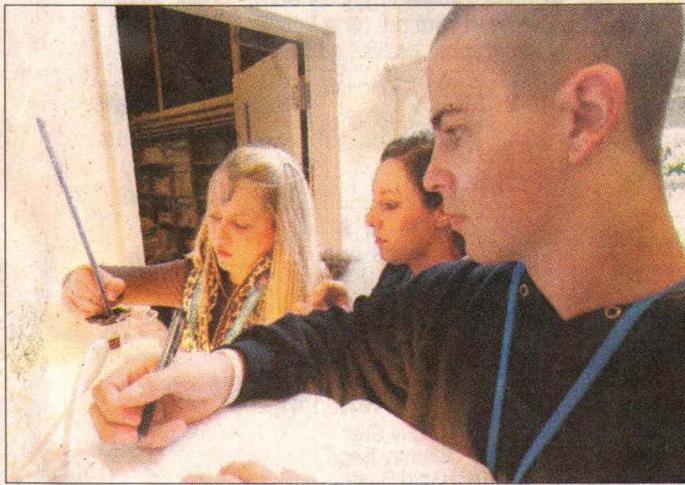
A new state law seeks to help vocational programs make a comeback in high schools.

In recent years, increased academic rigor and an emphasis on higher-education pursuits have in part pushed trade classes such as auto shop out of secondary campuses.

But Assembly Bill 2448 aims to raise the number of high school students taking Regional Occupational Program classes while limiting the adult students.

Taking effect in 2007, the legislation by Assemblywoman Loni Hancock, D-Berkeley, requires ROPs to enroll 90 percent high schoolers and 10 percent adults by the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year.

That's a challenge, particularly for San Mateo County, among just a handful of counties statewide with an ROP serving more than 40 percent adult students.



ROP in San Mateo County

- ▶ More than 40 percent of San Mateo County's ROP students are adults, one of four counties in the state with such a high number.
- ▶ A new law mandates that 90 percent of ROP students must be high schoolers by the end of the 2013-14 fiscal year.
- ▶ High schoolers currently make up about 50 percent of the ROP enrollment, up from about 40 percent a year ago.
- ▶ The county can receive up to \$6.2 million a year, most of it from the state, with a maximum enrollment of 1,467 students for ROP classes.

That required population shift also raises concerns over ROP funding, which is tied to a program's average daily attendance.

This year, the county ROP can receive a maximum of about \$6.2 million with an enrollment capped at 1,467 full-time-equivalent students, according to Peter Burchyns, spokesman for the local Office of Education. Most of that funding comes from the state.

"If we don't meet the cap, and enrollment declines, our income will go down," Burchyns said. "We'll see how that plays out and if we'll be attracting (enough) secondary students."

The county has been working to increase ROP's high school population, which currently stands at about 50 percent — up from 40 percent a year ago, Burchyns said.

The county ROP offers job training in various fields, from

Please see **ROP**, News 13

Carlmont High School
San Mateo Times
2/26/08

High school ROP enrollment may get boost

► **ROP**, from News 1

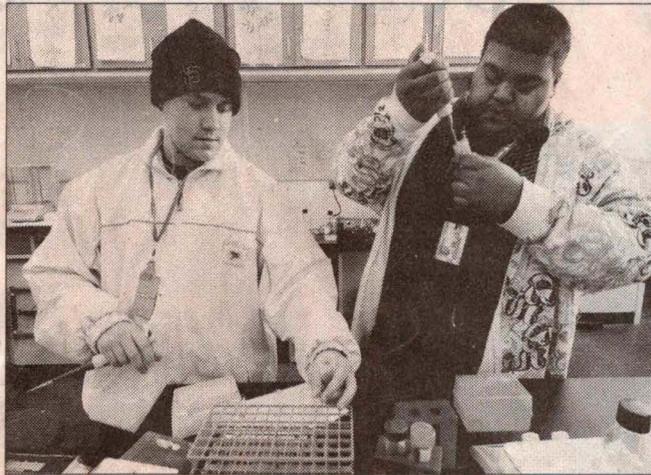
computers to hospitality, for those 16 and older. The program is free for those in high school, while adults pay an \$80 enrollment fee per class.

"I understand the reasoning behind" the legislation, said Susan Alvaro, member of the county Board of Education. "I'm happy to serve high school kids."

But today's teens are "so busy" with their academics and other activities that the county program may have a tough time drawing in the required percentage of high schoolers, Alvaro said.

She is also worried about a loss of revenue from a mandatory decrease in the adult population, she said. She's concerned, too, that the program will no longer be able to provide a service that many adults have relied on for career retooling and job placement.

The original intent of ROPs was to serve juniors and seniors in high school, said Tammie Holloway, education programs consultant for the state Department of Education. But over time, ROPs increasingly took in adults,



RON LEWIS — Staff

TED MOORE (left), and Rajiv Bhartu, both Carlmont High School students, work on a DNA experiment during their ROP biotech class Friday.

partly to fill demand by employers for skilled, trained workers.

Also, heightened focus on meeting graduation requirements such as the state High School Exit Exam and a secondary curriculum increasingly geared toward college or university education left less room in a student's schedule for ROP classes, Burchyns said.

But AB 2448 is an attempt to bring ROP "back to its orig-

inal intent," said Holloway, who works with the San Mateo County program.

The county's program is just one of four in the state with an adult population of more than 40 percent, according to Holloway.

One way ROPs are trying to reduce that population is by working with local community colleges and other education providers to have them pick up the vocational programs for the older students, Holloway said.

At the same time, she said, the legislation will allow high schools to offer additional ROP courses.

That prospect excites Carlmont High School Principal Andrea Jenoff and ROP biotechnology students at the Belmont campus.

"I think it's great for us," Jenoff said. "It helps build new programs."

The school could add another biotech class, a Web-animation course and an after-school program, she said.

Biotech students say they enjoy learning through real-world projects.

"It's a lot of hands-on stuff instead of reading," said senior Radhika Chaudhary, 17.

She likes the idea of expanding the school's ROP to let more students explore careers.

"I think a lot of people will benefit from it," she said. "If they go into a biotech class, they'll know what they're getting into and know if biotech is for them, or they can still go into a different science."

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