



Do You Know Your Reps?

Check out a partial listing of your committee representatives.

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Student Showcase

Marvel at the artistic and literary talents of your peers.

See Pages 4 and 5



Instrumental Music Director Tom Lilienthal Goes Digital

New class coming to AHS.

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Albany High School

The COUGAR

Albany, California

January 26, 2000

Volume I, Issue 5

AHS Discusses Later Start Time

Administration expresses sensitivity to teens who need more sleep



COMATOSE TEENS, trying to get by on less and less sleep, sometimes catch up in the classroom.

by Margaret Chan

As the lights dim and the teacher announces that the class is going to watch a movie, most students do the rational thing.

They sleep.

Although students have long known that a darkened classroom is the perfect place to catch up on some much-needed Z's, it's taken a while longer for researchers to catch on.

Studies reveal that adolescents may be the most sleep-deprived age group in society.

Studies also show that teens who don't get enough sleep often end up tired, cranky, irritable and even depressed.

Such symptoms could lead to plummeting grades, poor test performance, slow reaction time and even worse, a sleeping disorder.

"I'm stressed out," says Senior Sarah Meister. "By the time I get out of school, I'll be bald!"

Teen sleep-deprivation is not going unnoticed.

Schools across the nation are pushing back morning start times and ending school later in the afternoon in order to better accommodate students.

Last June, U.S. Representative Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.) introduced a bill that would grant \$25,000 in aid to school districts that move secondary school start times to 9 a.m. or later.

Biology teacher Ms. Lois Peterson echoes these concerns: "We should realize that we need to have some kind of improvement because it is hard to start at 20 to eight."

Last year, Principal Gloria Galindo suggested a new schedule for the school after realizing that teens need more sleep than any other age group.

"I had suggested 9 o'clock as the start time of school," she says.

"As it turns out, many of the students would love that but parents and teachers are not really in favor of it."

Social Studies teacher Mr. David De Hart is one of those who does not like a later start time.

"Teachers have afternoon obligations as well," he says. "Many of us teachers use the after-school time to work."

He also points out that pushing back start times will not help those who are dilatory.

"There are always students who are habitually tardy," he states.

"If you started school at 10 o'clock and that was your first period, you would still get students coming in late. It wouldn't change one bit."

Though 9 a.m. was initially suggested as the start time, Ms. Galindo now believes that 8 would probably be more realistic.

Sleep, see Page 6

Bulletin Cases Try To Close Rift In Communication

by Erin Danielson

In hopes of improving school-wide communication, the AHS Administration recently installed five bulletin boards around campus.

Each class is responsible for posting announcements about everything from schedule changes to bake sales.

There are four bulletin boards in the center of campus. The fifth bulletin case is located outside the Main Office.

These bulletin boards make information more accessible to the entire student body because they are in a place where everyone walks through.

Social Studies teacher Mr. David De Hart comments, "The new bulletin boards seem like a positive way to get better communication. It demands that we take the initiative to become informed. This is a life-long learning process."

Communication between students, teachers and the Administration has been a problem at Albany High ever since the PA system was torn down with the old building.

The Daily Bulletin, which for a long time was the only form of communication at AHS, seems to be lacking in what it is supposed to accomplish.

Many students say their third period teachers don't read the Daily Bulletin. This increases the problem with communication that many students have.

Nevertheless, Mr. De Hart feels "it is the student's responsibility for listening, not talking, while the Bulletin is being read."

New Bulletin procedures require students to listen more carefully because announcements are only allowed for a limited time.

"People need to hear things a lot for them to take action," says Senior Christine Gjerde, a member of the Community Service club. "For the Canned Food Drive, we were only allowed to put it in the Bulletin for two days and we got no cans."

While the bulletin boards are a good way to display information, the Daily Bulletin needs to get the job done too.

"People at this school are lazy," Gjerde remarks. "That's why every deadline is extended so many times."

To balance out this general inattention, information needs to be readily accessible for everyone.

"In the midst of college applications, school, work and what little fun I can fit in," voices Senior Sophia Rivera, "I don't have the time to go around digging for information."

Campus Connection

* AHS is currently preparing for a state-mandated accreditation process by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

Focus groups will meet periodically after school to evaluate the level of excellence at Albany High and will discuss ways of improving the school.

To get involved, contact Mrs. Karen De Hart in Room 38 or student representative Vanessa Fredericksen-Oxford.

* Beginning at the semester, The COUGAR will be produced by the combined 4th and 5th Period Advanced Journalism classes in ROP Room 128. E-mail us at ahscougar@juno.com

* If you didn't purchase Yearbook 2000 from a staffer last September or through Jostens directly — there's still another chance. Bring your \$60 on Friday, Feb. 25 to the Yearbook 2000 table in front of the Main Office. This year's edition will be the biggest ever (229 pages) so don't be left out.

Cougars To Shadow "Groundhog" Mentors

by Amy Chen

Whether or not Punxsutawney Phil the Groundhog sees his shadow next Wednesday, 60 AHS Seniors will cast their own shadows in observance of Albany High's inaugural affiliation with National Groundhog Job Shadow Day.

"This is Albany High's first time to participate so it's a big step," says career development consultant Ms. Marjorie Weingrow.

AHS students will be paired with local mentors as part of a national program that will make it possible for almost a million students to observe adults in the workplace.

Hired by the Site Council to expand school-to-career programs at AHS, Ms. Weingrow chaired last year's PTA-sponsored Career Day and can attest to the surge of interest in this particular pilot program.

"Parents and students have been calling, saying that they want to participate," Ms. Weingrow says.

Given Albany High's history of poor communication, she finds it ironic "that with this Groundhog Day project, almost all of the students and teachers know about it, although we are only working with

one teacher and two classes!"

As determined by the school's four Government teachers, only students enrolled in Mrs. Karen De Hart's two Government classes will be participating this year.

"We just thought it would be easier to do with all of my classes since they are the only ones I teach this semester," explains Mrs. De Hart. "The hope is to incorporate the whole school, starting with the Senior Class and ultimately including the rest of the grades."

Ms. Weingrow sees the day as a very important experience for a high school.

"Students are really getting out in the world, seeing how their academics are going to help them in the future and in their life's work."

"It's a long overdue opportunity for us," agrees Mrs. De Hart. "Our new Administration sees the value in it and is willing to put in that extra effort to make it happen."

But due to the experimental nature of the program, Vice Principal Amy Hansen, who acts as the program's high school liaison, says they are "starting small. If it's successful this year, hopefully we can build up next year."

The success of the day will be



determined through evaluations from all involved parties, students and mentors alike.

Mrs. De Hart says students will be required to reflect on the day through a follow-up writing assignment that will be the equivalent of a regular homework assignment.

National Groundhog Job Shadow Day is organized nationally by Junior Achievement and General Colin Powell's non-profit agency called America's Promise, but relies heavily on local community support.

In addition to Ms. Weingrow and Ms. Hansen, 11 PTA parent coordinators have been instrumental in coordinating the day's details. From arranging transportation to contacting the mentors, the PTA

Shadow, see Page 7

Gym Reopens After Toxic Scare

by Margaret Manson

The newly constructed gymnasium at Albany Middle School has recently reopened after a series of sampling tests concerning the building's safety.

Reports of dizziness, nausea and chemical odors first caught the District's attention last October.

"When you take deep breaths in there," says AHS choral director Mrs. Joan Sextro, "you want to know that you're breathing in good air."

Mrs. Sextro also teaches at the Middle School and is rightfully concerned about the air quality: "The music room has no windows, you know."

Sample air and wood tests from the new gymnasium showed excessive amounts of the toxic chemical methylbromide.

The substance can be linked to such symptoms as vomiting and headaches.

Other studies have shown that the chemical may also be carcinogenic and therefore damaging to the brain.

Gym, see Page 8

Injustice Initiates Frustration

by Sanam Jorjani

To some, it is known as the "Injustice Initiative."

In reality, it is the California Juvenile Justice Initiative, a bill written by former California Governor Pete Wilson that will be on the March 7 ballot.

Supporters of Prop. 21 rant that it will "take back the streets." But from who? From those same youth who are responsible for the still falling 20.8% decrease in juvenile crime from 1991-1996?

So you're probably wondering what exactly Prop. 21 holds in store for California youth.

For starters, it will allow everything from harsher sentencing and eliminating privacy to redefining what constitutes a "gang."

Under Prop. 21, gangs will be defined as a group of young individuals with similar characteristics.

The bill will also allow law enforcement to wiretap the phones in the homes of suspected gang members.

Moreover, the proposition will permit a database in which the names of suspected gang members will be stored.

In fact, this database is already in effect in LA County where 50% of African American males between the ages of 18-24 are already entered.



Is this helping narrow down the number of criminals or is it simply finding a way to incriminate more people?

Although these new policies are bad enough, the worst attack on youth by the proposition is the expansion of felony strikes.

Youth can be given a felony strike for vandalism amounting to as little as \$400 worth of damage, a \$49,600 decrease.

This means a broken window, footprints in wet cement and graffiti can all be felonies.

Prop. 21 will allow more youth as young as 14 to be tried as adults and locked up in adult housing facilities.

In 1903, the government made youth consequences different than those for adults. Why now, 97 years later, do they wish to gray this distinction?

Youth in adult facilities are two times as likely to become second-time offenders.

They are also more likely to be

sexually or violently assaulted by much older men.

We already know how far politicians are ready to go for their own political gain. Still, there are questions.

Why the sudden need to get tough on juvenile crime when the crime rate is going down? The juvenile homicide rate peaked in 1991 and has since declined by 50%.

You'd think we were on the right track. Yet in that same time period, media coverage of crime has increased 721%. As youth crime may be going down, television viewers across the nation are seeing more malicious acts committed by youth.

The pressure's on. Politicians feel a need to crack down on crime.

But do we really need to lock up more youth? If studies show locking up minors in adult facilities often makes them harder criminals, then what is the purpose?

Will Prop. 21 prevent crime or will it turn petty crimes into real criminal offenses?

Are we willing to give 25 years to life in prison to a youth for committing non-violent crimes?

With the current system today, youth are already being punished for their actions. Their serious crimes do not go unaccounted for.

Is it worth hundreds of millions of dollars to build new prisons?

I Am Not "White"

by Kathryn Booth

Why is it that whenever I fill out an ethnicity background question on applications or standardized tests, I am consistently being classified as "White?"

The last I heard, it was not acceptable to categorize people by the color of their skin.

Yet as much as it bothers me to have my entire lineage summed up by a color that most human beings are not, it bothers me even more to know that we are the only ethnic group to which this is happening.

Throughout the last few centuries the most widely publicized form of racism in the United States has been against African Americans, but in recent years it has become commonplace for Caucasians to be on the receiving end of racially stereotypical abuse.

Recently I have noticed that it has become fashionable for movies and television shows comprised primarily of African American actors to feature at least one Caucasian character who is slow-witted and occasionally a redneck or a Valley girl.

These insulting stereotypes portrayed by the media are sending mixed messages to Caucasians such as myself, who have been taught that the color of someone's skin does not necessarily dictate

who they are, whether it's their personality or their ancestry.

As proof of this double standard, one needs to only look as far as the Golden State Exams taken by AHS students earlier this month.

These were all of the choices for the "ethnic background with which you most closely identify":

African/African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian/Asian American, Filipino/Filipino American, Hispanic/Latino, Pacific Islander and White — not of Hispanic origin.

Why can't they just be consistent and say European/European American?

Although the terms "Black" and "White" are commonly used to describe people of African or European descent, it is considered politically incorrect to label other races by color, such as calling Asians "Yellow" or Native Americans "Red."

I have never seen "Red" or "Yellow" as choices on applications or tests, because, of course, that's racist. So why is it so different for Caucasians?

As I see it, this is one of the last acceptable forms of racism.

If our goal as a society is to be politically correct, the next step should be listing "European/European American" instead of just "White."

Color me "Red" with anger.

Plethora of Committees Available at AHS

by Chris Colvin

Do you ever ask yourself, "Why do I even come to school? It's such a waste of my time!"

Well, I could answer that in the way that most adults would.

You are here to learn. Your high school education is important — it's the key to the rest of your life — without it, you'll get lost in the real world.

Blah, blah, blah.

All of us have probably heard some version of this, at least once.

But I say it's not the science that you learn in Biophysical Science or the books you read in English class that end up determining what you get from coming to school everyday.

It *should* be the experiences you gain and the methods for making change that you learn.

Talk about a skill that will be important in the real world!

If you're lobbying for a raise at your minimum wage job flipping burgers or if you're trying to change federal laws as a U.S. Senator, you need to know how to communicate effectively enough to change your situation.

Right now is a great time to work on these skills. So, I make a plea to everyone out there with a complaint or an idea: PLEASE, MAKE YOURSELF HEARD.

There are countless ways to go about this. There are so many adults and students working hard, trying to make things better here at AHS.

The following is a list of people and committees who deal with issues that you may have.

Principal Gloria Galindo: If your issue has to do with the high school, she is the most powerful person to talk to. You can approach her or leave a message in the Main Office (559-6641).

Vice Principals Amy Hansen and Randy Booker: They are both on countless committees, no doubt at least one that relates to your issue.

ASG: They represent the students. This makes them the most powerful body around. Let them know about your issue, there's a good chance they can do something about it. Leave a note in the ASG box in the Main Office.

Senate: Though the real purpose



TOO MUCH homework? Need more sleep? Perhaps the Curriculum Council or newly formed Cabinet can help!

of the Senate is still evolving, it is a large group of students who are willing to work on AHS issues.

Instructional Improvement Council (IIC): This group reviews and recommends new courses for the upcoming year. Talk to Senior Scott Kagawa, Juniors Daphna Klugman and Peter Hsu or Sophomore Natalie Focht.

Curriculum Council: This is a District-wide committee that examines homework and student performance. Student reps are Tamara Failor and Pat Glenn.

The Cabinet: This is the "final decision-making body" at AHS. Members include Ms. Galindo, Ms. Hansen, Mr. Booker, members of the IIC, PTA, faculty, a counse-

lor and student representative Freshman Vanessa Frederiksen-Oxford. Currently, they are discussing such issues as starting school later and having homerooms.

School Board: Your reps are Junior Oscar Whelan and Senior Emily Jackson. These people are a great connection to the higher powers that run the entire District.

Site Council: This group gives out lots of money each year. If you've got an idea that needs funding, you should apply for a grant from them.

Without input from the student body, these committees have to figure out what you want.

It would be a whole lot easier and more likely for you to get some results if you approach them.

So, here's a challenge for everyone:

If you're sick of wasting your time half-asleep in some boring class, then figure out something you'd like to change and pursue it.

Don't be surprised if you end up feeling better about school and the valuable experiences you've gained.

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Young Virtuosos Virtually Perfect

by Tamara Failor

Studies show that classical music increases brain cells. One could almost feel this occurring at the concert sponsored by the Classical Music Club earlier this month, which netted a grand total of \$244.

It was also enjoyable enough that the Albany Education Foundation has invited the club to play again, possibly for pay.

The concert featured music from the Baroque, Classical, Impressionistic and Contemporary periods as well as a variety of instruments: violin, piano, flute, clarinet, trumpet and voice.

The staff of the concert worked well to create a very distinguished and professional atmosphere.

Performers and ushers dressed in black and white formal attire as Senior Ben Hoff introduced and explained each period of music.

Violinist Quen Cheng and accompanist James Liao's performance of Beethoven's *Sonata in D Major Op. 12 No. 1* was absorbing and memorable.

The fact that the two Juniors could stay so well synchronized was very impressive.

Naomi Augustine's *Clarinet Concerto in F Minor*, ac-



Photo by Tamara Failor

TAKE A BOW for a Friday night filled with classical joy.

companied by Linda Zhou, was a lively and challenging number that the two Seniors pulled off very well.

Choir Director Joan Sextro and Classical Music Club President Alice Zhang also treated the audience to dual performances, switching from singing and accompanying on piano on two different numbers during the evening.

Another highlight was a performance by Senior Kalil Wilson, whose pure and moving vocal rendition of *O Del Mio Amato Ben* was truly the kind of music meant to be loud.

Anyone who knows the music scene at Albany High knows that Wilson possesses an amazing voice.

Violinist Howard Zhao, accompanied by Alice Zhang, played a gentle, plaintive and aptly named *Meditation from Thais* to bring a close to the Classical period.

Science teacher Mr. Rich Lohman's *Sicilienne* on flute, accompanied by Liao, jump-started the Impressionistic segment of the show.

Senior Scott Kagawa ended the concert with a contemporary *Sonatina for Solo Trumpet* that almost seemed like the trumpet form of interpretative dance.

He went beyond the call of duty with a snippet from *Swan Lake*.

Seniors Victor Tsai and Alice Zhang had both graced the audience with multiple piano performances, and after the bows had been taken, the duo played a reprise of their piano number *Hungarian Dance in G Minor*, played with four hands, and invited the audience to come up onto the stage and dance.

Not only did we hear two teachers from AHS play that night, we also saw them do an improvised "Hungarian" step dance.

In the end, the concert turned out to be a worthwhile way to spend a Friday night.. Considering how closely teenagers guard their free time, what better compliment is there?

Q & A with Singer-Guitarist Turned AHS History Teacher

by Farnoor Foroutan

Not many people know that Ms. Cynthia Mansourian, an AHS History and World Problems teacher, has a band and singing career.

Luckily, I got the chance to interview her.

Q: How did you start out?

A: I just started a new band but I was a solo artist on tour with other bands during the summer.

Q: Did you start singing in high school?

A: I started singing in fifth grade but I was writing my own songs in seventh grade. When I was 19, I started to seriously get into a band, this was when I was going to UCSB.

Q: Is this something you do in your spare time?

A: I was doing this and subbing as a day job. Teaching now allows me to do both.

Q: Where did you go on your tour this summer?

A: We went all over the U.S. in six weeks. We were playing everyday.

Q: What instrument do you play?



A: Electric guitar.

Q: What kind of music does your band play?

A: It's not really a punk band, but Bauhaus is an influence. We tour with a lot of punk bands.

Q: Have you made any CDs?

A: Yes, various radio station and magazine compilations, and we have several singles. On a CD, *Loop*, we have one track. It's with a lot of trip-hop bands. It's like trip-hop: "spacey."

Q: What is your band name?

A: We still need one!

Rhythm Bound Bounces Back High School Band Returns To the Music Scene

by Colleen Smallfield

Albany High School's R&B band, *Rhythm Bound*, has developed quite a reputation over its short career.

I still remember the first time I ever saw the group perform.

By the end of the hour, I swear every member of that audience was up and out of their seats, inspired by *Rhythm Bound's* soulful sounds and simply getting their groove on.

Along with great music, much of *Rhythm Bound's* charm comes from its collectively exuberant personality.

With the graduation of many of *Rhythm Bound's* founding individuals, some were worried new could not be found.

Still, Instrumental Music Director Tom Lilienthal scoured the masses to find a crop of fresh faces that have proven to be as spirited as the originals.

Seniors Nick Brenni and Amy Lee and Juniors Natalie Spautz and

Ryan Takemiya head up the vocal section this year.

All four are excited about performances set to start in late February.

Backing up these soulful singers are instrumentalists Scott Kagawa, Kevin Gamba, Scott Nelson, Irene Chou and Alex Burr, among others..

This year's musical program includes "Baby I Love You," "Let's Stay Together," as well as two

Rhythm Bound staples, "Signed, Sealed, Delivered" and "Midnight Train to Georgia."

While some outsiders seem concerned over so many new faces, those on the inside know better.

Drummer Gamba says, "People will see us having fun and they'll get into it — and we've been practicing."

Trumpeter Kagawa sums it up with a smirk: "We can be as funky as we want to be."



Photo by Colleen Smallfield

BAND MEMBERS of Rhythm Bound bust out and show their spirit as they prepare for another season of being "funky."

Jesse Sung — Albany High's Phat Rapper

by Abdul Jandali

You've probably seen him around school with earphones on, a bald head and a steady stride. He's soft-spoken and unusually down-to-earth.

He is also known around campus as the man to confer with on the quality of the most recent Nas album or the production of Dre's latest track.

He's Albany High's Godfather of Rap, Oracle of Hip Hop and Fortuneteller of Flows — but Senior Jesse Sung is also the nicest guy you've ever met.

Although his first dosage of Hip Hop came in only eighth grade, he's shown a precocious ear for the style and first developed a love for the genre because, as he says, "The music simply makes me feel good."

Since then, however, his love for "the music" has grown, as Sung lays it down, "to ludicrous levels. I can't explain how it happened, but now a portion of me lives, breathes and eats Hip Hop



Graphic by Jesse Sung

everyday... just a portion, but still."

While other portions of him are eclectic New Age, Techno, R & B, Select Alternative and Air Guitar Solo music patrons, Sung maintains his passion is Hip Hop.

"The first album I ever acquired was Pac's *All Eyez On Me*. That album pulled me in and set the tone

for my devotion to rap.

"Since then I've paid close attention to players in the industry, but ask me about Old School and I'll have to take the Fifth."

As his passion for Hip Hop deepened, Sung was compelled to create his own material, drawing inspiration from "Jay-Z, Big Pun

and Tupac because of their flows, Mountain Brothers because they're Asian, and A+, Cardan and Lil' Wayne because they're the same age as me."

Though "it's only a hobby," Sung concedes he'd like to make a name for himself in the industry.

"I think I have a good ear for music. I wouldn't be holding onto it so passionately or get into it the way I have if I didn't believe I could become successful."

His perseverance may well indeed lay ground for success, having already written "well over 150 loose verses and about 50 complete songs."

Songs, as classmates can testify, with smooth flows so buttery they're bound to make your cholesterol level rise.

Producers and agents have shown extreme interest in Sung's music and untapped talent as well.

"I've had direct feedback from major labels through letters and phone calls," he explains.

"But some say because I'm

Asian I'm not as marketable.

"I was supposed to be signed with the small label HighLife Records up in Ontario, Canada, an expansion of AMA entertainment.

"But the CEO said he didn't have time to run a label at the moment, so that deal fell through.

"I'm gonna start recording more aggressively once second semester starts," adds Sung.

"I plan to work as my own producer and writer, put out demos every two weeks and send them to select labels I've researched.

"Everyone undoubtedly has dreams of dramatic success, but you never know what will happen."

Will his new work find an immediate audience in the increasingly lucrative industry?

"Who knows," he remarks. "The commercial scene is mostly luck and connections. There are so many talented rappers out there who can't get a record deal.

"But when I *do* get a record deal and go triple-platinum..."

My Little Runaway
by Lauren Quinn

He dragged the silhouette through sidewalks, ducking, in shadows — alleys, crouched on one knee. Calloused finger flicking the Bic lighter, to try and burn the edges away; melt the black into something he could touch.

But, boy, no matter where you hide some things always find you. Can creep back up, climb the spine to find its way home on you — a wrinkle, a crease, when you grimace and grin, when you let the light out and the outside all in, cover your mouth and giggle at all your sins — collecting like coins in a pocket — heavy with misfortune. buried deep and sagging inside the seams of it.



Lauren Quinn
Grade: 12
Talent: Writing
Inspiration: "I first started writing when I'd make up stories and tell them to my dad, who would write them down since I didn't know how yet. I'd make little books. I was probably like three or four."
Claim To Fame: "I've done four issues of my 'zine and have been published in the East Bay Express, as well as Poetic License, an anthology of teen writers around the Bay Area. It's due out in 2000."
Dream Career: "To write, maybe teach writing. Something where I could travel and also sleep in late!"



Alexandra Spautz
Grade: 11
Artistic Experience: "I don't really have that much. This is the first canvas I've ever done. I used to paint with water colors last year."
Inspiration: "I was depressed and I wanted to show myself and how I felt."
Future Plans: "I'll do something to get money, but I'll do art on the side. You can't get money as an artist."

Students C
The Draw



Perception = Saved by the Bell?
by Lincoln Hurlbut

It was my first day of school at Rangitoto College a year ago this month and as I stepped on to the enormous campus, I freaked out.

How would I make new friends? How would New Zealanders react to an American? What were they going to say once they heard my accent?

My head was spinning with apprehension as I entered my first class, Statistics, and sat in the corner so as not to make a scene. Some people looked back at the "new guy" although my school had many new students every year so I did not cause any stir. That is, until they heard me speak.

I don't recall the exact question, but when I answered "six" everyone turned around.

No one said a word and my teacher just looked at me with a blank stare and asked me to repeat myself.

At this point, the entire class

was practically rolling on the floor with laughter, because apparently everyone thought I had said sex! The situation was behavior on par with elementary school children.

And the amusement continued as word quickly spread through the school that the "new guy" from United States was from California no less.

In each class I was bombarded with every kind of question imaginable. It was like I had just arrived from another planet. If I had come from any other country I'm sure there would have been a far different reaction.

Unfortunately, New Zealanders are fed all the same daytime garbage television which was broadcast back in the 1980's.

So, of course, everyone wanted to know if school was like *Saved by the Bell* or more like *Full House*?

Are there really nerds like Screech? Is there a "popular" crowd? Do you have cheerleaders? Do you surf at lunch time? What is cafeteria food like? What is Homecoming and the Prom? Who gets to be class president?

Now I'm sure there were many more ridiculous questions that have escaped me at the moment, but I found myself laughing most of the questions off.

Sure, I explained what we do at Homecoming, but they never quite understood the concept of class rivalry or what the heck a Sophomore was!

They also had a hard time believing that the sun doesn't shine 24/7 in California and no, not everyone lives next to the beach, and no, there are not women constantly rollerblading on the streets in tiny bikinis.

However, some of the most amusing questions would have to be: are all the women blonde

in California? (yes, they actually asked me that) and what *do* you *do* at school?

Okay, so now you know what happens when a small country in the South Pacific is only shown really, really poor American sitcoms portraying a jaded image of high school life.



Lincoln Hurlbut
Grade: 12
Where: Auckland, New Zealand (Rangitoto College)
When: Returned Jan. 12, 2000
What it was like: "Filled with new experiences. Yes, meeting new people from all over the globe gave me a sense of my place in society."

The Camera Never Blinks



Vanessa Yanez
Grade: 12
Artistic Experience: Photography, 2 years.
Future goals: "Since I was little, I dreamed of being an artist."

Marion
Grade: 11
Artistic Experience: Photography, 2 years.
Inspiration: my torture into a tre creative v
Future G
pictures v

Go Back To Drawing Board



Eileen Lei

Grade: 12

Talent: "Ever since I was little, I started drawing as a hobby."

Inspiration: "Chris was really cute in that picture."



Waylon Bacon

Grade: 12

Artistic Experience: "I started drawing when I was five after I saw my first horror movie. It's become somewhere between a hobby and a compulsive obsession ever since. I also enjoy painting in acrylic and sculpting caricatures of random people I see on the street."

Inspiration: "The Y2K one was not particularly how I felt, but there was so much anticipation to the new year I assumed there were at least some people out there who were locking themselves in a room with a shotgun and a radio. The other drawing is a bit more personal. I'll just say I'm really not on the best terms with my ex."

Future Goals: "I'd like to be able to grow up and make movies and be a cartoonist or have my own comic series."



Anna Adams

Grade: 12

Experience: Mudpies, photog-
ee house creation and architect-

Inspiration: "Inspiration comes from
red childhood which drove me
ee. That's what influences my
voodoo doll making."

Goals: "To live in a tree and take
with voodoo dolls."



Green Haze

by Adam Phillips

Once there was a village high up in the mountains that was secluded from all else save its own people and culture. All of the tiny huts of the village faced a small lake that provided water and game for the people of the village. In the middle of the lake was a miniscule island on which a lone tree stood.

Since the lake provided all that the villagers needed, the people of the village thought the lake to be all-powerful. They thought of the island as the head of the lake and called the island Pu-chong-yon.

In the morning, the villagers would ask Pu-chong-yon's guidance and assistance for the upcoming day, and at night they asked Pu-chong-yon's blessing for their sleep. Pu-chong-yon directed all of the villager's actions.

The villagers did the same thing every day. They hunted in the morning and then prepared their catch during the day. At night they would eat whatever they had been fortunate enough to fish out of the lake, or shoot by the lake. At dinner the villagers would thank Pu-chong-yon for a generous gift of sustenance.

The people of the village led uninteresting, but largely not unhappy lives because of their dull routine. But most of the villagers were grateful that they had a safe, planned life to live.

However, there was a villager named Zay who did not like doing the same thing everyday. He thought that the people of the village should be able to do colorful things like dance and make costumes.

Zay voiced his thoughts to the other villagers but was met with staunch opposition. The leaders of the village told Zay that they had done the same thing centuries over and it had made them a happy people.

At night, when Zay did not ask the blessing of Pu-chong-yon before he went to bed, he could not sleep. He felt

a pressure on his head that was ever-increasing. A green haze clouded his vision and he could not think very well. When Zay was almost to the point that he felt like his head would explode, his vision cleared and the pressure in his head subsided.

The next morning Zay asked Pu-chong-yon's aid for the upcoming day. That day, Zay was unusually successful in his hunting endeavors and was praised by the village for his hunting skill. The feast that night was merry and everyone went home happy. After asking Pu-chong-yon's blessing for the night, Zay went to sleep.

When Zay woke up, he again was filled with thoughts of rebellion. He didn't want to have to hunt and cook every day.

He again told the heads of the village that he was unhappy with the way the village worked and that they should be discontent as well. Immediately, a green haze blanketed the village and everyone became terrified. The green haze pervaded the entire village and clear vision was impossible.

Everyone blamed Zay for the disaster. The yells at Zay increased until they became a cacophonous chant without cessation. When the chanting reached its zenith and the hatred for Zay was at its apex, the haze dissolved into nothing.

But some people of the village now had doubts about village life. They too did not want to do the same thing everyday. Nevertheless, that night everyone asked Pu-chong-yon's blessing and slept well.

In the morning, the town was mysteriously divided. The huts of the villagers who doubted the village's ways of doing things were on one side of the village, and the people who were content to live their lives as they had always lived them were on the other.

The villagers sensed the reason for this separation and instantly became aware that a battle was imminent. The two sides began advancing towards each other, but before they were in reach of one another, the green haze returned, though this time

it was partisan.

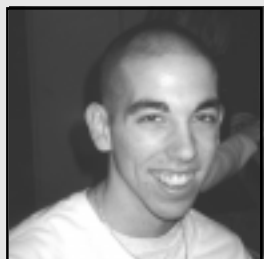
The haze floated towards the side of the villagers who were discontented and started to choke them. The villagers could not breathe. They were stifled. The dissenting villagers' faces turned red then purple as they collapsed to the ground, all dead save one.

Zay stood by himself impervious to the haze. He stood upright but was not sure what to do. The villagers opposing him knew what they had to do. The villagers chanted, "Pu-chong-yon, Pu-chong-yon," and advanced towards Zay chanting frantically.

They surrounded Zay, then pounced on him. They knocked him down and held him so that he could not breathe, move, or speak in any way. Then the green haze came to linger over Zay's head. The haze hovered over Zay's head for some time, neither backing away nor progressing.

With a final act of defiance, Zay kicked off his suppressers and tried to run. The green haze followed, overtook him, and then entered him. Zay stood there for a long while wretching and making all kinds of gesticulations until finally he collapsed to the ground dead.

The green haze floated out of his body and returned to the island in the middle of the lake. The villagers returned to their huts, not unhappy, just leery of what would happen if they became happy.



Adam Phillips

Grade: 12

Artistic Experience: None

Inspiration: "Censorship and violation of the First Amendment inspired me to write this."

Future Goals: "To write a book."

AHS Construction Is Well On Its Way!

by Amy Chen

After long delays involving state funding, construction of the new Albany High School finally makes some significant headway — but at the inconvenience of students, teachers and residents alike.

The sidewalk of Key Route Boulevard remains closed to pedestrians and by next month, the northbound lane will also be shut down to cars headed towards El Cerrito.

Of the imminent one-year Key Route closure, construction manager Mr. Rich Vila says: "If we can open it up sooner than that, we will."

But at a recent School Board meeting, Assistant Superintendent Constance Hubbard advised students and teachers to continue entering the school on Portland.

"The plan is to continue public entrance to the Little Theater via the gates on Portland," Mrs. Hubbard says.

She notes that the sidewalk, which extends from Portland to the end of the Little Theater, will be reconstructed in time to give stage access for productions like the Spring musical which use the high school facility.

Still, Board President Bill Cain advises students and teachers to avoid the 600 block of Key Route if possible.

"The entrances aren't there anyway," Mr. Cain reasons.

He adds that "residents will have preferential parking because they are inconvenienced enough."

By next month, heavy machinery will occupy half of Key Route along with the trailers that have dotted the District-maintained median strip since September.

Mr. Vila, who was also the construction manager of the recently completed Middle School, explains the need to have more room to house construction equipment:

"We don't have much of a high school site to begin with, but we don't have much of a staging site either."

He says that other alternatives



BUILDING from the ground up, construction starts anew.

were explored as far back as last May before the City Council voted earlier this month to convert the southbound portion of Key Route into two separate lanes.

Potential ideas included using part of Memorial Field as a makeshift storage area. However, this plan was nixed because it would render the field useless for soccer and other recreational activities.

Mr. Vila says that they also toyed with the possibility of using intermittent signs during the day for a partial closure. The confusion and nuisance of opening and closing

informational tours to be given from the second floor of the Little Theater, which overlooks the site and provides an aerial view of construction.

"That could be done, but not with the whole student body standing behind me," he jokes.

The scheduled completion date of Classroom Buildings A and B is set for April 2001.

The new gym is tentatively planned to open shortly thereafter.

"The intent is to move in during Spring Break," Mr. Vila says, noting that next year's Spring Break may be extended to two weeks.

If this were to happen, the school year would start a week earlier.

"We're trying to have it set up so we can get this opened up and get rid of the portables."

Currently, a dozen to two dozen construction workers are on site, but as the building progresses, there may be as many as 60 to 70 workers.

Summer 2001 will be dedicated to installing a new elevator between the Little Theater and old shop building-turned-makeshift gym/library.

Summer construction work will also include the modernization of the Fine Arts Building.

So far only a few construction days have been lost in November and January due to the inclement weather.

"We don't have much of a high school site to begin with, but we don't have much of a staging site either."

— Construction Manager Mr. Rich Vila

the street were deemed overly disruptive.

Current construction work includes preliminary groundwork for Classroom Building B.

"They'll work their way to A and up to the gym," he says, lightly tracing the progress on scaled-down blueprints of the new school. "That's going to extend over the next few months."

Of the possibility of giving tours to groups of students and faculty interested in the varying stages of construction, Mr. Vila hedges that "eventually we'll get tours going, but at this stage it becomes unsafe."

He does, however, believe that it will be possible to arrange for

Digital Recording Studio Takes AHS Into 21st Century

by Kathryn Booth

Over the last two years Albany High School has been changing to better represent the needs of a student body growing up in the dawn of the 21st century.

The latest of many technological enhancements to the AHS experience is the prospect of getting a digital recording course next fall.

Instrumental music director Tom Lilienthal is in the process of creating a class that will focus on digital recording—possibly the first of its kind in high schools across the country.

The purpose of the class is to teach how with the use of digital recording, sound mixing and computer technology, high school students can create top quality CDs.

Four years of this proposed course would prepare students to enter the digital recording profession right out of high school.

David Waugh, Class of '99 AHS graduate, was one of the few students to have access to the studio. Although he didn't have the full four years of experience that Mr. Lilienthal wants everyone to have, he feels the exposure assisted him in furthering his career in music.

"It totally helped in terms of writing and composing music," says Waugh.

Senior Chris Uchiyama, an experienced filmmaker, is also an advocate of the class.

"I think it would be very useful," remarks Uchiyama. "Any experience you can get in sound mixing can get you a pretty good paying job in the music industry and the film industry."

Students in all music classes would benefit from the digital recording class, because they can learn how to correct problems and refine their skills by listening to recordings of themselves.

"If we can play something and hear how it sounds from the per-

spective of an audience," comments Junior Stephanie Royball, "it helps us to understand how we can improve."

But before any of this can happen the course needs to begin.

Having spent the last two years accumulating funds and materials for the studio, Mr. Lilienthal is firmly committed to teaching this class beginning next September.

With the help of students in his band classes, parents and local businesses, \$15,000 has been raised for the course. But with that money, \$30,000 of equipment has been acquired as a result of the enthusiasm associated with the class.

Major manufacturers have given Mr. Lilienthal reduced rates on studio equipment and donated lots of it because they are thrilled that AHS will be the first high school they know of to offer a course in digital recording.

Unfortunately, \$15,000 more is needed to finish the studio. In addition to financial help from the community, Mr. Lilienthal needs students to support the class.

"Students should sign an interest list indicating that if the digital recording class were formed, they would take it," he says, adding anyone in grades 9-11 can see him about signing up.

When the class is finally available to students next year it will be a great addition to AHS. But for the Seniors who are missing out on the opportunity entirely, the class is only a source of sadness.

Senior Amanda Mehl, who is in the beginning stages of producing a CD for her band, Walpurgis Night, expresses her resentment at the unfortunate timing of the class.

"I'm very upset that I didn't have the opportunity to do that because I think I could have done something with it," says Mehl, disappointed she won't benefit from the potentially free studio access.

"I would die to have a class like that!"



ASG Corner

by Colleen Smallfield

In the midst of planning student activities, Winter Ball and Prom, members of ASG decided to spend time over the holidays to better their communities.

On the first Sunday of Winter Break, ASG members Kelly Proper, Keenan Moore, Helen Lau, Amy Jin, Jennifer Nejad, Sixiao Guo, Tessa Hager-Holson, Kathryn Kirkpatrick, David Song, Elizabeth Nelson and John Kim and AHS Girls' Soccer players Leifa Mayers and Kim Bell volunteered at the South Berkeley Senior Center.

The event provided meals to foster home children and their families through the Better Way Foster Family Program.

Along with the general duties that go along with food service, members also had the unique opportunity to play and communicate with many of the children.

The event also showcased an after school clowning program which provides training in clowning and the arts to under privileged kids.

It seems that many of the members of

ASG got as much from the evening as the kids they fed and talked to.

"The smiles from the kids made it worth it," says Sophomore Hager-Holson. "It was nice to know we were appreciated."

"It was about them [the foster children], sharing, and us giving everything we can."

— Sophomore Tessa Hager-Holson

Along the same line, Hager-Holson stressed the importance of the activity.

"It was about them, sharing, and us giving everything we can," she recalls.

ASG hopes that their involvement encourages other students to improve their communities by volunteering.

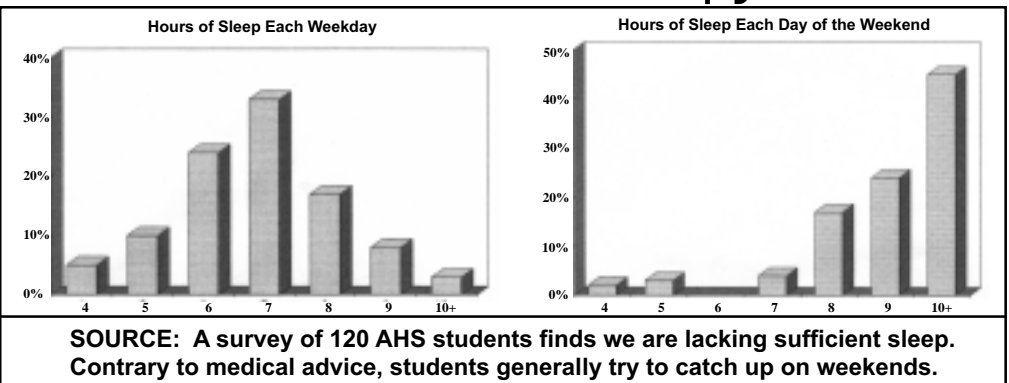
Weeks will include a variety of speakers, facts and other programs dedicated to the theme.

The Junior Class will begin Feb. 25 and focus on Alcohol Abuse.

Freshmen and Sophomore Classes will sponsor a week examining violence during the third week of May while Seniors will sponsor a sexual awareness week in late March.

ASG Adviser Janice Hickey believes that these weeks will be "an incredible opportunity to spread unity, knowledge and goodwill through the AHS campus."

Research Finds Lots of Sleepy Students



► Sleep, from Page 1

"I personally think that an extra 20 minutes would help," Ms. Galindo says.

According to Principal Galindo, any changes regarding school start times would happen next year and would "involve input from the Middle School."

She hopes that by next year both of Albany's secondary schools will begin classes at the same time.

Many students would be thrilled to have a later start time.

Sophomore Nicole Berger says, "I think starting school later in the day is a good thing because I'm totally not a morning person."

Junior Tang Shan, who currently takes three AP courses and gets to bed at around 10:30 every night, disagrees with the majority.

"It's going to make us go to bed later," Shan says. "It's going to wreck everything."

A recent study done by Dr. Mary Carskadon from Brown University shows most teens need around nine hours of sleep every night, far more time to dream than the six to seven hours an average teen actually gets.

When students at Albany were asked if they had trouble getting up in the morning, 93% of Juniors responded yes, a big difference compared to the 70% of Freshmen who had trouble getting up.

When asked if they had ever fallen asleep during class, 90% of Seniors, 73% of Juniors, 63% of Sophomores and 40% of Freshmen said yes.

It's no wonder why Sophomore James Izumizaki believes starting school "later is definitely better."

Parsimony for the People

Friendly Frugality Takes On Weighty Social Issues

by Erin Danielson
and Colleen Smallfield

Whenever we drive by the new Oceanview Playground or see the green lamp posts on lower Solano, we suddenly feel displaced to some suburban wonderland, like Walnut Creek or Orinda.

It seems to this friendly and frugal twosome that our quaint little town of Albany is becoming a place that is far from familiar.

A few years ago, Albany students and citizens alike appreciated the old-fashioned architecture of the high school and other buildings in the city.

Although the refurbished section of Solano is lovely, it seems out of place compared to the rest of the busy thoroughfare.

These days, with the construction of such buildings like the Albany Library and Community Center, the new Middle School and the University Village condominiums, Albany is becoming more and more like every other "modern" city in the country.

It is very hard for any parsimonious person to sit back and watch this transformation taking place without becoming a little peeved.

The lesson to be learned here is that money doesn't always buy beautiful things.

Part of being thrifty is looking



FRUGAL DUO Seniors Erin Danielson and Colleen Smallfield speak out on the sadness of Albany's recent urbanization.

ahead in the future and seeing what is the best way to use your money.

It seems to us that if the Albany higher-ups had sat themselves down and decided on the best course of action to take with the high school, Middle School and other issues, Albany could have maintained its unique architecture and personality.

Basically what we're talking about here is the suburbanization of Albany.

When suburbs first popped up in the early 1950s, the purpose was to create a utopia where the perfect nuclear families of that decade could live.

Is this what Albany is trying to replicate? Create a perfect microcosm in the midst of the bad, bad world in which we live?

The problem with this situation

is there is no such thing as a utopia.

A perfect, safe community cannot be bought with money.

Unfortunately, Albany's entire mindset is changing along with the buildings.

It is almost as if Albany is trying to convince its citizens (current and prospective) that it is a safe community where nothing ever happens.

The SRO decision and the giant iron gate at the Middle School are prime examples of Albany's need to maintain a specific image.

Instead of spending precious tax money keeping the "bad people" out, Albany needs to acknowledge the problems and start fixing them from within.

Be thrifty, people, and save yourselves!

Shadow Day Exposes Students To Bright Future



► *Shadow, from Page 1*

has once again expressed its willingness to help students develop their interests.

"We think it's really important to give kids an opportunity to know what they want to do with their lives," says parent volunteer Gale Williams.

From a teacher's viewpoint, Mrs. De Hart supports the event even if it means some students will

miss a day of school: "I certainly think it's well worth it, if only to teach students what it's like to get up and get to work on time."

Reminiscent of Career Day, Job Shadow Day will expose AHS students to professions as diverse as toy designing and aeronautical engineering.

Senior Silvio Lund, who appreciates physics for its explanation "of the way things work," is paired

with a UC Berkeley aeronautical engineer.

"I want to know what my future holds for me," Lund says. "I don't really care about getting out of school for a day. I just want to know what a day in the life of an aeronautical engineer is like."

For students who are not in Mrs. De Hart's class, some "have come to Amy Hansen on their own to request shadowing," says Ms. Weingrow.

"They offered to find their own mentor and then get back to Ms. Hansen, for final approval of scheduling, etc."

Senior Marion Adams, who will not be participating, still appreciates what the program is trying to accomplish.

"I think you learn a lot more when you're actually with someone who is doing what you want to do," Adams says, "as opposed to you sitting in a classroom learning stuff that has nothing to do with your life."

Science Bowls Again

by Linda Zhou

Do you know the answer to this multiple choice question?

It is believed that carbon-14 in nature is slowly generated by the action of: w) protons on carbon-12; x) electrons on hydrogen; y) cosmic rays on boron; z) neutrons on nitrogen.

For the five members of the 2000 team, this question was no big deal. For them, it was an everyday ho-hum question even though most of the student body probably couldn't answer it correctly to save their lives.

Who are this year's young science sensations?

The returning members of the team, Senior Victor Tsai and Junior Alexander McCormach, won the Regional competition last year and placed fifth in the nation at last year's National competition.

These veteran Science Bowlers have much experience and are eager to contribute their familiarity to this year's crew.

After last year's graduation of Seniors Caleb Lo, Seth Teitler and Peter Rudiak-Gould, the three newly-vacated positions needed to be filled.

So, a search for three highly qualified Science Bowl cadets to replace the old members was on.

After weeks of grueling tests and buzzer rounds, the three hopeful contenders were narrowed down to Juniors Xin Lu and James Liao and Senior Archana Ragnathan.

"The newcomers have a lot of talent," comments returning member McCormach. "We did a lot of testing and they did the best. They round out the team."



Photo by Linda Zhou

MINDS THAT SOAR belong to members of the 2000 Science Bowl Team. From left, James Liao, Victor Tsai, Xin Lu, Alexander McCormach, Archana Ragnathan and adviser Mr. Rich Lohman.

Although this year's team is talented and determined to do well in competition, the pressure to live up to the accomplishment of the previous team is high.

Not only that, it's mighty hard to beat.

The new members know all too well the pressure to live up to certain standards of excellence and the challenges that await them.

Says Ragnathan, "There's a lot of pressure to know the topics well, and the competition is really stiff."

"Very scary..." shudders Lu.

Fortunately, the team members are determined to overcome challenges and work their way to the top.

"I think that with a lot of practice we can win the Regional and do well in the National," predicts McCormach.

"It's a pretty big hurdle to reach but I think we can do it."

Unlike last year's all-male team, this year's group is sprinkled with two females, proving girls can also be prominent in the field of science.

"It's great having girls on the team," says Liao, "because it shows that it's not a guy-dominated thing."

Teamwork creates a strong bond of friendship and trust among the group. They all agree that that is the most important thing when learning to communicate and perform successfully as a group.

"Working with each other, knowing who has the most knowledge in each subject and just learning to get along with each other is essential," says Tsai.

The Regional competition will be held at the Department of Energy, Oakland on Feb. 12.

"I am very impressed with the talent and commitment of these five students," team adviser Mr. Rich Lohman boasts.

"Beyond the math and science knowledge that they collectively have, they are very dedicated to this team and take the initiative to make it successful.

"I feel very privileged to be working with them.

"In fact, they really do all the work in preparing the team and their success will be due entirely to them."

It's pretty obvious that this fine team has what it takes to bring all of AHS glory in the millennium.

Cougar Sound Bites

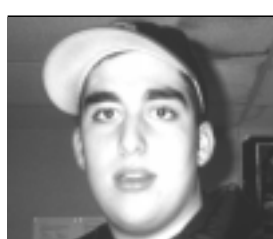
compiled by Nick Bhardwaj

Remember homeroom? For some of us it is only a middle school memory. It used to be a place where you could get information, meet friends and get prepared. Now imagine having a homeroom at Albany High. This is what some people thought of the idea:



"I don't think that having a homeroom is necessary because I know everything already."

— Katie Warwick
10th grade



"If the Administration thinks it would be a more effective way of distributing information, then yes. But the everlasting issue of 'time' plays a role as well."

— Laura Jensen
12th Grade



"I think homerooms might be useful in two significant ways. First, they could provide a forum for student representation, thus better facilitating student government. Second, they could eliminate time taken up during class to communicate information pertaining to non-academic matters."

— Mr. Kenneth Maynor
English Teacher

"I don't want to walk all the way across the school for 15 minutes of class."

— Kate Fahrner
9th grade



"I think we would have to wake up too early so that would be a bad idea."

— James Assia
11th Grade



Girls' Basketball Beats All Odds

by Johnny Din

With the core of last year's squad lost to graduation, the Albany High Girls' Basketball team looks to rebuild and start anew.

The Lady Cougars graduated eight Seniors last year and have only three Varsity players returning in Trina Nagakura, Kelly Chin and Rebecca Zarchy.

"We've lost many Seniors from last year, but hope to rebuild with everyone we have," says Nagakura.

This season is a fresh start for the Cougars with many new faces on the team, including first-year Varsity Coach Al Baker.

In addition, the Lady Cougars welcomed three valuable players — all starters — in Seniors Tera Greene, Alexis Martin and Sophomore Nina Samuel.

Greene, a transfer from San Pedro High in Southern California, plays the center spot.

Martin, a transfer from College Prep High of Oakland, plays power forward.

Berkeley High transfer Nina Samuel guides the team at the point guard position.

Rounding out the starting lineup are returning Varsity guard Chin

New Talent Sparks Success



TERA GREENE (34) soars over her opponent for the jump-ball.

and former Junior Varsity small forward Lily Goldschmidt.

Success has not come easily to the Lady Cougars, but the team still keep their spirits high and work hard in every endeavor.

"Even though things are tough," says Chin, "our team communication is good and we all share a sense of cohesion."

Despite the strong opponents they have faced in the ACCAL, the current Cougar team has already topped the '98-'99 edition, a squad that had a healthy group of eight

experienced Seniors.

"The ladies have already won more games than last year and hope to gain valuable experience this year," adds Coach Baker.

Other members of the Varsity squad include Chia-Ling Teoh, Chia-Shan Teoh, Glory Tang and Stephanie Wissler.

Coach Baker says his ultimate goal is to create long-term success for the basketball program.

He has high hopes that this year will only be the beginning of great things to come.

by Zak Rickards

Sports don't end where the Albany Service Center ends funding. In fact, it is nearly the opposite.

Some students at Albany High have found no interest in wrestling or volleyball, and have taken to the outside community to support their athletic interests.

This is important because, let's face it — not everyone can be a football star or run the fastest mile.

As Senior Yoni Rubinsky puts it: "I knew I wasn't cut out for soccer, or baseball. I tried football, but nothing worked for me. And actually, it didn't matter because my passion has always been on the slopes."

Rubinsky, who has been snowboarding since he was 10, continues: "I know that the school is not about to start a snowboarding team, so I just go do it on my own, and that's fine."

"The school SAVERS Club is a good idea, but it's not for me. I like going off on my own so I can stay focused on what it is that I love to do."

While at his favorite resort, Sugar Bowl, Rubinsky flies down the slopes on his board and pulls his favorite move, the "180 Indie grab."

Aside from pure enjoyment of the sport, Rubinsky has also participated in a variety of different competitions at various resorts in the Tahoe area.

These competitions are based on speed, agility, tricks and talent.

The difference between Rubinsky and other boarders is that he is just up there on the slopes to have fun.

Competition is not his priority.

Unlike Rubinsky, however, Freshman Keri Pock would rather spend her time in the water.

Pock has been swimming with the Albany Blue Dolphins for the past five years.

With practices every day after school from 4:30 - 6:30, it becomes a real commitment as her swimming schedule begins to take over her life.

"It's just a small price to pay for

doing what I love to do," she says.

And Pock does love to swim. Not only does she practice five times a week, but she also has competitions during weekends.

"My favorite stroke would have to be the butterfly," says Pock, who finds the style enjoyable, despite its difficulty.

"It's the mental stability, telling yourself you can succeed in something others find difficult."

A few months ago, Keri began to see her dreams come true: She swam in her first regional meet.

Although she took third, she worked really hard and says she was proud of how she did.

She is working towards her ultimate goal of swimming in Nationals.

Other swimmers at Albany High include Amy Lee, Kristie Yamasaki, Justin Nakano and Rebekah Bergeman.

Athleticism is a very important factor in today's society, keeping us physically fit. It gives us a better understanding of our bodies.

"I feel that Girls' Soccer is the best sport," says Senior Emily Jackson. "It keeps me totally fit and mentally strong!"

Juniors Elizabeth Carey, Kyle Kemp, Sara Khosravi and Acacia Quien Also find enjoyment on the soccer field.

Other soccer players include Morgan Theis, Christine Gjerde, Sophia Rivera, Emma Swan and Yvette Cashmere.

These girls take a sport which is offered at Albany High to its limits... they play club soccer together on their team "Albany United."

It's been said that teens need to exercise. These students are just a few who realize this and have taken to getting fit on their own.

When it's nearly impossible to have a sport for everyone to participate in, you can still be an athlete in many different kinds of community activities.

Especially at a school as small AHS.

Sometimes you just have to be like Rubinsky and Pock and many many others alike — and find a sport out of the ordinary.

Tournament Win Previews League Success

by Tim Onweller

Having recently started league play, members the Albany High Boys' Basketball team should have confidence in themselves.

With a 9-9 record that includes a first place finish in the inaugural Head-Royce Holiday Roundball Classic, the Cougars are on the right path to excel during the season.

The Cougars won the tournament on Dec. 30 with a 67-32 victory over Gustine High in the championship game.

Previously, they beat Redwood Christian 94-45 in the opening round and Head-Royce 45-44 in the semifinals.



SENIOR FORWARD ERIC McClain prepares to break a Chieftan's ankle with a crossover.

Hara, along with Ken Mimoto, went on to earn All-Tournament awards.

The player of the tournament, however, was Jon Ball. Earning Tournament MVP, he did the job on both sides of the floor and led the Cougars throughout.

Competition in the tournament could have been better, but it did prepare the Cougars for the tough opponents they will face in the ACCAL.

Within a matter of two weeks, Albany faced the top four league teams, knocking off Richmond at home in the process.

If such success is preview of the rest of the season, the Cougars should end up in striking distance of the top competitors in league.

Over the three games played, Cougars' forward Andrew Hara dominated with 18, 17 and 22 points, respectively.

New Middle School's Gym Closure Affects High School Students Too

► Gym, from Page 1

Concerned parents and teachers first met in the Little Theater on Nov. 18 to discuss the potentially serious problem.

Testing results that were due back the day before had not yet been delivered, as the laboratory had experienced "equipment problems."

Students, who have physical education and other sports-related activities in the building, are also concerned about safety issues.

It may have given them an excuse not to suit up for P.E. but the price to pay could have been severe.

Just around the corner from Albany Middle School sits a dirt pile of ongoing construction, known to some as Albany High School.

Without a gym, scholar-athletes

from AHS rely on the Middle School for afternoon practices and a place to host home games.

With the gym closed for testing, high school students were once again shipped to far off places for daily practice.

"This is so typical of Albany," says Junior Amy Jin, a member of the Varsity Volleyball team.

"Not only do we have to go to Alameda every day, but just think about the time we spent in the Middle School gym!"

"For weeks we've been practicing in there with no windows and no ventilation. If the air in there is poisonous, we're all in big trouble. I just hope I can still have babies."

Fortunately for Jin and all Albany students, the second round of testing showed that levels of the chemical are suitable for student exposure.

In a letter sent home to students from Superintendent Gary Mills, the Albany Service Center has said it will continue to monitor the gym's air quality within the next six months.

Now that questions have been answered at Albany Middle School, new ones are just around the corner.

Mr. Rich Vila, construction manager for Albany School District projects, announced at the meeting that future construction of the High School gym's floor may be identical to that of the Middle School's.

This statement concerned the listeners at the meeting, as the chemical was thought to be a byproduct of the Middle School gym's subflooring.

One careless move and another newly constructed gym may be closed down for testing.

Free Mud Wrestling

by Chris Colvin

Self-confidence, perhaps, is the one obstacle facing the Varsity Girls' Soccer team. With four difficult games ahead, it's time to focus and prepare mentally for teams like first-place Piedmont.

A good test of their ability to work as a team came recently against Alameda, who served them a first league loss. Their record now stands at 6-1 (7-3 overall).

"Our team has a lot of skill," says Junior forward Kyle Kemp. "If we focus on teamwork, I'm confident that we will win."

Captains Kemp and Senior Leifa Mayers, the leading scorer, drive the potent offense, having slaughtered most teams in the preseason.

Defensive captain Junior Amanda Garcia brings experience and a strong kick to the backfield. With the help of other defenders — Freshman Meryl Phillips, Sophomore Zoe Griffith and Senior

Emma Swan — goalie Lila Keene has shut out numerous teams.

One thing that would help the team realize its playoff goal is to see more fans at their games.

"I don't understand why so many people pay to go to volleyball games," Senior Emily Jackson says, "when they can come watch girls run around in the mud for free!"



COUGAR FORWARD Christine Gjerde in pursuit of a Panther.