

We'll Always Remember **RETREAT** Spiritual Growth

Camp was a spiritually reviving experience for many VCHS students. For others, it was their first time coming to know God. "Retreat is one of the times where I grow closer to God the most. Every year, my relationship with Christ strengthens," Nikhil Sakula said.

Chapel opened each day with the Worship team singing praise and worship. For many, the worship was the highlight of chapel. "My favorite part of chapel was worship," Alexa Sperring said. "When music is involved, it seems to click easier."

Our speaker, Jay Miranda, spoke on letting go and surrendering your worries to God. Miranda's preaching style and presentation was welcomed by many students. "The speaker's videos made the experience both entertaining and less grueling," Alec Gregorich said.

"I got real life stories about how Pastor Jay's life was not the greatest," William Nipper said. "But he managed to have a relationship with God, and if he can, I can."

On Thursday evening, Miranda brought a cross and laid it on the stage. Along with the cross, he brought forth nails and several hammers. He requested that all students hammer a nail into the cross. The nails symbolized each student's struggles and sins; the cross taking them away.

Camp not only served as a restorer of faith, but as a realization to many. "It impacted my walk with God by letting me realize I have to work for my relationship and not think it is going to happen," Nipper said. "You have to work at it."

For Marnika Gates, the strong new awareness wasn't about her own needs to work on her relationship with God, but about God's perspective on us. "God doesn't hate us," Marnika Gates said. "He wants us to be successful and do well; He forgives."

by Emre Basaran



Photo by Taylor Figueira



Photo by Annika Arana



Photo by Annika Arana

Fun with Friends

During the week of September 13-16 students of VCHS travelled to Occidental, California for the annual retreat and had the opportunity to choose two freetime activities provided by Alliance Redwoods. With a variety of activities to choose from like nature hikes, archery, Leap of Faith and Paintball (which was \$25 extra) and average outdoor activities such as basketball or volleyball, there was always something to do during the four hours available to students in Free Time each afternoon.

The freshmen and seniors also had the privilege of having a freshmen-senior bonding time on Wednesday night. "I know a lot of the senior girls and I was excited for senior-freshman bonding because they would not let it be boring" said freshman Cassandra Diaz.

In the Indoor gym, where chapel also took place, Chapel Leadership practiced during some of their free time, while others such as Trevor Knoroski played ping pong in the Recreation Room in another part of the building.

Before freetime officially began each day, rally coordinators Annika Arana and Kelly Siegel set up grade level games. On Wednesday students participated in Ships and Sailors, and some people had evident strategies; others played just for the fun of the game. "During cheer camp we learned you get four people and, stay with them and if not get other people out," Delaney Manuel said.

After chapel Thursday students met at the Slab where Kelly and Annika had the groups of students play a game of Punjabi can-can, a game where people hold small pieces of rope and try to knock people into two or one trash cans. The groups at first were freshmen boys against sophomore boys, then it was junior boys against senior boys, then the girls battled it out in the same group format. The final game was four people from each grade resulting in a final winner, Luke Spinardi. The overall winner for the grade level activity games was in the end the juniors.

by Ali Howard



Photo by Chelsea Gritten



Photo by Thomas Way

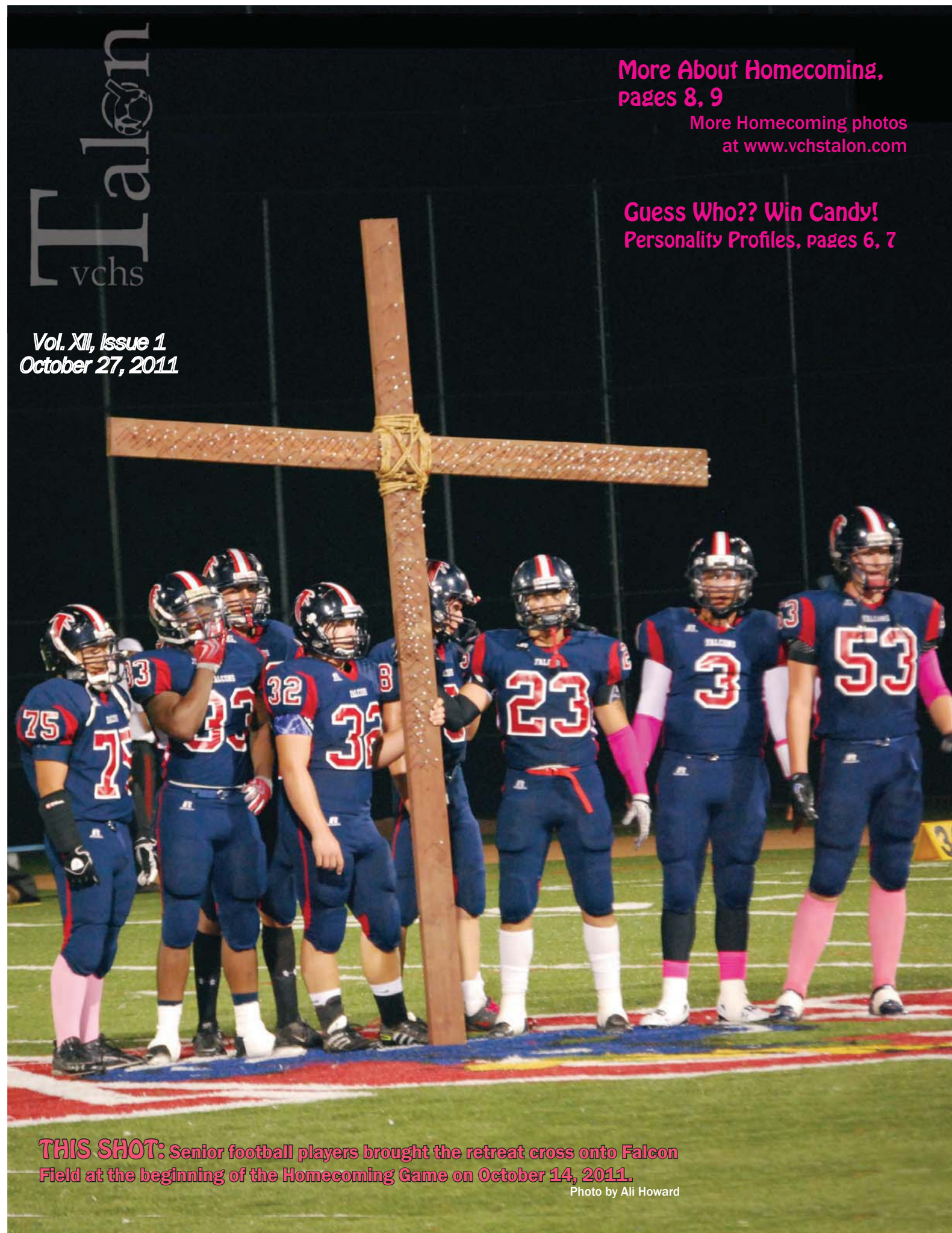
Clockwise from above: Keanna Carter, Marcy MacDonald and Heather Clark enjoy one of Kelly & Annika's games. Mr. Powell, Mr. Jacobs, and Mr. Rowland take on students in a game of hoops. Haley Gibson and Chelsea Gritten twirl on the tire swing. Peyton Silva and friends enjoy the bus ride.



Photo by Sara Erb



Photo by Devyn Baum



Vol. XII, Issue 1
October 27, 2011

More About Homecoming,
pages 8, 9

More Homecoming photos
at www.vchstalon.com

Guess Who?? Win Candy!
Personality Profiles, pages 6, 7

THIS SHOT: Senior football players brought the retreat cross onto Falcon Field at the beginning of the Homecoming Game on October 14, 2011.

Photo by Ali Howard

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Staff Editorials
What the Editorial Board thinks

Death of Dictator Presents Democratic Potential

Colonel Muammar El-Qaddafi, autocratic ruler of Libya for 42 years, was captured by Revolutionary soldiers and killed on October 20, 2011. Qaddafi initially gained control of Libya in a military coup more than forty years ago. Since then, his government became increasingly authoritarian until he was the only one with any power.

Revolutions throughout Arab nations sparked a civil war within Libya which began with a protests among young people. Eventually a "Transitional Council" of leaders was appointed; their soldiers were aided by intervention from the United Nations. In turn, Qaddafi's government was defeated.

With Qaddafi now out of the picture, Libya now has the opportunity to experience democracy firsthand.

These many revolutions and uprisings in the Arab world mark the beginning of a new era. And it is not only Libya. Tunisia, once governed by an authoritarian regime, held its first elections this month for a Constituent Assembly, like the American Congress in duties and powers. An election where opposing political parties could actually exist and take a part in elections without being terrorized – unheard of in this country until now.

The desire for democracy is sweeping through Arab nations. With democracy, citizens want the freedom to have ideas, freedom of speech and dreams. These revolutions mark a turning point in history, a change that will not solely benefit the democratized country, but ourselves as well. Although the process of war is rather tragic, these changes are for the bettering of society and are truly magnificent. In the future, we will be inheriting this world. Nations of democracy will rise. Democracy is the future; we are the future.

"The death of Colonel Gaddafi has brought to a close a very unfortunate chapter in Libya's history," American Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was quoted by *The Guardian*, a newspaper in England. "It also marks the start of a new era for the Libyan people."

Why Does the Talon Matter?

The Talon staff would like to welcome the freshman class – the class of 2015 – as well as students of every grade level who are new to VCHS. Here's your first issue of what we plan to be a monthly publication. What is the VCHS Talon?

The VCHS Talon serves as the students' voice.

It documents major events that take place throughout the school year.

It helps advocate student opinions.

It notifies students for upcoming events so they can prepare wisely.

The State of California grants student journalists considerable freedom of the press, and VCS has also seen the value of an independent, free student press for the high school. The Talon Editorial Board takes very seriously its responsibility to report the truth and to be ethical in all aspects of journalism. Please let us know if we have printed an error of fact, so that we can make the necessary correction in the next issue.

The VCHS Talon needs your feedback – both negative and positive – and also your input. Please write a letter to the Editorial Board if there's an issue you feel strongly about. The three students who make up the current Editorial Board are introduced on page 3.

Student submissions of articles, poems, photos, drawings, cartoons, and ideas are very important to make the VCHS Talon a true voice of the students. To submit anything, send it to journalism@go-vcs.com or bring it to Room 102 and place it in the Talon box, just to the left of the door on the counter. See additional policies to the left on this page.

Our web journalism hub is at www.vchstalon.com, and it is updated with new content in stories, photos, polls, and (very soon) video, every school day beginning this week. We hope you will comment on the stories you read there.

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.
Colossians 3:1



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The Talon, the student newspaper of Vacaville Christian High School, is a public forum for student expression and is published regularly by the Newspaper Production Class and Journalism Class. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the position of the administration, student body or advertisers. The Talon staff welcomes and encourages submitted letters, stories, cartoons, and/or any other student feedback. See guidelines listed below.

Please deliver all submissions to the Talon box in Room 102 by posted deadline. The following policies apply:

1. Unsolicited articles and suggestions for story ideas are welcomed, but no guarantee is made as to whether they will be printed in the Talon.
2. Letters to the Editor are to be signed when submitted to the Staff. Names may be withheld from publication only with the approval of the Editorial Board and Adviser. The Board will select the letters to be published.
3. The paper reserves the right to edit submissions for length, repetition, and suitability of content.

News Briefs

Cookie Sale Wraps Up

During chapel on September 27th, 2011 Otis Spunkmeyer representatives and VCHS board member Scott Jacobs introduced the cookie fundraiser and prizes available to the student body. To promote participation, Otis Spunkmeyer sponsored a cookie eating contest; held throughout elementary, middle school and high school. Each school's Cookie Champion was pitted against each other during the Homecoming all-school rally. Darius Javan represented the high school student body. The participants of the contest were set in a race against each other to be the first to finish all of the cookies set on their plate. Ultimately, Mr. Edgar, VCS staff member representing the elementary school, won the competition.

Students were given a variety of products to sell. Every item available for sale had a common price tag: \$15. Amongst the choices of cookies were chocolate, strawberry shortcake, oatmeal raisin, and several other cookie dough flavors. In addition to cookie dough, apple cinnamon coffee cake and three other products were offered.

Otis Spunkmeyer cookie selling competition came to a close on Monday, October 17th, 2011.

by Emre Basaran

Grandparents honored in chapel, visit classes

Grandparents Day took place on Tuesday, October 18th, 2011. Chapel was dedicated to honoring grandparents. Students Drew Baker, Katie Jones, Raquel Tucker, Anakin Ueng, and Eddie Donofrio spoke.

Drew Baker had many encouraging and positive words about his grandparents. "I'm so grateful for them showing me how great our God is. They will always have a place in my heart." Drew also asserted that his Christian self is a product of his grandparents.

"I'm glad to say that without my grandparents, I would not be the person I am today," Drew Baker said.

The VCHS Choir, led by Leah Salamone, performed "Blessed Are" and "Don't Stop Believing," complete with choreography, in tribute to the grandparents present.

Throughout the remainder of the day, grandparents accompanied their grandchildren



Photo by Nick Russel

Grandparents who had attended many Grandparents Days were given school T-shirts at the close of chapel.

to their classes. In addition, students were permitted to go off campus during lunchtime with their grandparents.

For Katy Jones, her grandparents had words of wisdom. She passed them on to the VCHS student body: "When things don't go as planned, as they often don't; don't give up," Jones said.

by Emre Basaran



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Photo by Zack Sharp

iPads Fuse into School Life

The first year with the iPads is now under way and our fellow students have strong opinions about the change in our way of learning that has followed with them. Darius Javan, for example, is very happy with many of these changes, especially the benefit of ease: "It has benefitted in that there is less to carry and makes it easier to walk around school," Javan said. Many students were quick to praise the iPad for its easy notetaking and better communicating with their teachers through email. "It's easier to organize notes and homework," Samantha Torres said.

Not all of these changes are good though; many students report the hindrances the iPad has had on schoolwork. Samantha Torres pointed out one disadvantage the iPads have added is that Moodle doesn't work very well with them.

Fernando Salas agreed. "The iPad fails at Moodle." Torres added that an additional problem is that the school wi-fi fails from time to time. Other

students and teachers have had trouble with their iPads because of inconsistent wi-fi at home.

Jon Depaul and Luke Spinardi commented that iPads have added a big distraction to the student's day at school. "It hasn't helped on my work management; I tend to get more distracted than focused," Spinardi said.

Students in the halls and in the student lounge like to play games or draw on their iPads during lunch.

Teachers are using apps in their classes. Students in Mr. Gaudard's Bible use Prezi viewer to watch his presentations, and students in Mrs. McFadden's English 11 class are using the iBook version of *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. "I'm very impressed with the tools provided by iBooks, like the dictionary and the notes tool. I really liked using the notes as I was reading the book this summer, preparing to teach the book," Mrs. McFadden said.

by Zack Sharp

What's YOUR favorite app?

Samantha Torres- Zombieville

Luke Spinardi- Call of Duty: Zombies

Darius Javan- Microsoft QuickOffice

Fernando Salas- PDF Notes

Jon Depaul- PDF Notes

Off-Campus Lunch Double for Some Seniors

Off-campus Lunch is not only a fun adventure with friends, it is also a race against time.

Every Wednesday at lunchtime, 11:30, juniors and seniors are allowed to drive themselves to their favorite lunch locations and must return to school before their next class begins at 12:10.

"It's fun going out with friends to go eat wherever we want, but we're always in a rush because we don't want to be late," Samantha Magnaye said.

Not only do students have to get back on time for their next class, but if they do not get back in time, they face losing their off-campus lunch privileges. The first time someone is late, they are not allowed to go off campus for lunch the following week. Two late returns and the will lose off-campus lunch privilege for a month. Lastly, returning to school late three times will cause them to lose their off-campus privilege for the rest of the year.

"It's hard because thirty minutes isn't very long to go to your car, drive there, eat, and come back," Hannah Stadnick said.

Last year, seniors were only allowed one day, but this year, they can also go on Tuesdays. Seniors who do not have a sixth period class can get a signed note from their parent or guardian to stay out until first period.

Overall many students have expressed positive views on their off-campus lunch experiences despite the struggles they face against time.

by Annie Knitter

Courageous Brings Tears & Laughter

"Where are you men of courage?" said Adam Mitchell, one of the main characters of a recently released movie that has been drawing tears from the eyes of many of its viewers.

The makers of Fireproof, Tri-Star Pictures and Sherwood Pictures have teamed up to create an inspirational movie dealing with a problem that Christians struggle with day to day - courage. Hence the title *Courageous*.

Adam Mitchell had a seemingly normal life as a Christian and police officer for the Albany county sheriff's office in Georgia, until he lost something he never thought would be taken from him. Along with his friends and partners, Nathan Hayes, David Thomson, and Shane Fuller, Mitchell battles his loss and tries to help his friends with their struggles.

They all soon realize that they cannot win the struggles of life on their own, and they need help from God, their Father, which also makes them realize another crucial piece of information; they are all fathers. Mitchell decides to take action against a staggering statistic that was brought up by the sheriff in a daily briefing:

the youth of America is failing due to lack of fathers.

These four men, along with another that they meet along the way, battle the streets with not only their police force, but with the power of leading, becoming first a father at home, and supporting the young men in need around them. Joshua 24:15 becomes very important to them: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Courageous can bring tears to your eyes, not only for its ability to touch the hearts of its viewers, but for its humor as well. Many parts of the movie can bring you to tears laughing.

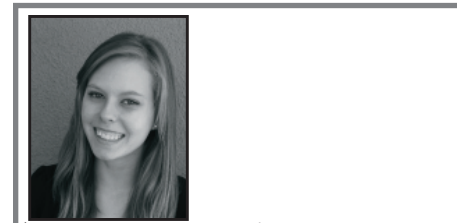
I highly recommend this movie to anyone willing to get a good laugh, or who needs help, not only for students, but for parents as well. There is a good message, but it's handled without beating the audience over the head with preachiness. We see people's real lives, with problems and struggles and failures and successes. That's what makes it so good. Wrapping up the movie, a recent song by Casting Crowns depicts this message clearly: "We were made to be courageous."

by Daniel Ewing



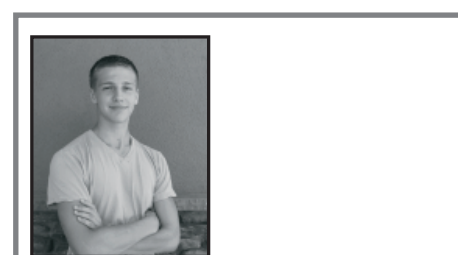
Junior Daniel Ewing:
"Men are like waffles, women are like spaghetti. Its all so clear now..."

About me...
Age: 15
D.O.B. : February 11, 1996
How long attending UCS: 5 years
Favorite Food: Spaghetti
Music style: Dubstep
Pet names: Dog: Gracie, Fish: Zero
Hobbies: Hunting, Fishing, Sleeping



Junior Ali Howard:
"If you live to be a hundred, I want to be a hundred minus a day, so I never live a day with out you"

About me...
Age: 16
D.O.B. : August 11, 1995
How long attending UCS: 5 years
Favorite Food: BBQ
Music style: Country
Pet names: Dog: Chloe, Cat: Indie, and 7 horses
Hobbies: Watching old Disney movies



Junior Emre Basaran:
"You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have"

About me...
Age: 16
D.O.B. : April 29th 1995
How long attending UCS: 4 years
Favorite Food: Seafood
Music style: Alternative and Punk
Pet names: Beyaz
Hobbies: Working out, friends

Wanna

Wanna win a free Snickers bar?

(Writers and subjects of the stories are not eligible to win, but if it's you, still don't tell, it ruins the fun!!!)

'I don't wanna wake up yet, Mom...'

If given the opportunity, would you choose to have school start later?

As all students know, VCHS starts at 7:45. According to this particular student, however, it should start later. "I think it would be helpful if school started around 8:30 or 9:00." She's sure that she's not the only one who feels that way. "If you lined up 50 students from VCHS, they would all agree that school starting later would be very helpful."

She has been going to VCS since she was a

little girl and been a cheerleader more than once. She knows the struggles of being an athlete and how sleep is so important. "I try to get up as late as possible for school, but being late isn't an option."

If school started later, "I would sleep, just like any other teenager in the school." She said. "Or I would refresh my memory on some studying I had done the night before."

Studies show that students who get an average of 8-10 hours of sleep do better in school. This

student, though, only gets an average of 6-7 hours a night. Her schedule is pretty full. "I'm a competitive cheerleader, I still have all my homework once I get home, and I work on the weekends."

It isn't easy to keep up your grades, bring a full amount of energy to cheer practice, and work on the weekends, but you have to love what you do, she added. "If you play a sport like I do, I understand how tired you must get. You have to admit school starting later would help a lot."

by Taylor Shubert

She Was a Junior Olympic Athlete?

One of our students never thought that she would be in the Junior Olympics. She never even knew what the Junior Olympics were until she got invited to participate in the Junior Olympics. And she never thought that she would beat and set the record.

"My father is the one who inspired me to strive for the bestest."

When this student was nine years old, she participated in the Junior Olympics for track. She also was in the Junior Olympics when she was ten and eleven years old and went to three different places in the country for each Junior Olympics. She set her "unbeatable record" in the Junior Olympics when she was nine years old in Detroit,

Michigan. She had been running track since she was six years old and had achieved a lot of gold medals.

"I went to about every track meet possible in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama to train like it was the actual Olympics."

Our mystery student trained a lot for a little girl at the age of nine years old, and she was very tall for her age. People would challenge her age, so she had to carry her birth certificate with her. People would also accuse her of cheating because they did not believe her age. Her coaches helped her through all that and helped her train really hard for her race.

But beside all the drama, she was excited

because she liked to beat people and be at the top. She liked to compete against people that she had raced before so she can "show them up." She got invited to the Junior Olympics because she qualified based on her performance. She was one of the top track runners in the state of Louisiana. "I felt like I was a superstar!"

One of this student's favorite experience was how she had photo shoots with her medal all the time, especially after she had finished running races.

This student no longer runs track because of some knee problems and because of her passion for basketball. She even plans on playing basketball in college.

by Anika Arana

Cross Country Team Goes the Distance

Even though the VHCS cross country team doesn't actually qualify as an official team when participating in meets, our runners have repeatedly placed within the top 10 at most of their meets.

"I'm getting faster; my mile times are getting faster," Solomon Hood said. "As a team we are all getting faster, running longer distances, etc."

To officially be counted as a team while running at a meet, 5 runners are required to represent a school. Unfortunately, VCHS has not had enough runners this year, but a few runners have placed within the top 10 runners on multiple occasions. One of these runners is freshman Payton Spering.

"When I get tired I think the faster I go, the faster I'll be done," Spering said. She has placed first in several of her meets and has improved her times.

High school cross country is divided into two skill levels: varsity runs three miles during a meet,



Photo by Cayla Gutierrez

Team co-captain Justin Ellsworth leads a pack of runners across hilly terrain at Pena Adobe. This meet, on Wednesday October 19, included teams from Bradshaw, Golden Sierra, Highlands, and San Juan. Ellsworth placed 6th overall.

and junior varsity runs two-mile courses.

"Cross country is an amazing way to stay in shape. My endurance has gone up dramatically

and I feel that I am ready for basketball this year," James Aguilar said.

When running cross country, several players have said the main thing that keeps them motivated is either the sense of accomplishment after a hard run, not wanting to come in last, or staying in shape.

"It's fun and it's a great way to keep in shape. The team dynamic is great and we encourage each other a lot," Hood said.

Most people think that cross country and track are the same sport. In reality, they are two very different sports.

"You don't have to do hurdles. It's only running," Spering said.

"We run out in the country and the distances are generally longer and we don't run on a track," Hood said.

The cross country team practices everyday, running anywhere from 4 to 8 miles per practice. They have league meets during the weekdays and invitational meets on Saturdays.

by Tessa Moore

Football Team Meets Tough Teams



Photo by Ed Donofrio

#33 Nigel Powell fights back against the Highlands defender in the October 21 game which ended in a 32 - 67 Falcon loss. Nigel is averaging 7.3 yards per carry in this year, his first on varsity.

Currently holding 4th place in the Sierra Delta League, the VCHS Varsity Football is going strong with a 6-2 overall and a 2-2 league record. The Falcons are in 9th place among D-5 schools of the San Joaquin section.

The Homecoming game was the Falcons' highest scored game of the season, as they beat the San Juan Spartans 65-24. James Aarhus helped the Falcons achieve the victory with three touchdowns and 209 rushing yards in his 13 carries. Homecoming King Justin Bonn kicked off for the Falcons with a total of 261 yards and scored one PAT kick (point after touchdown).

This game unfortunately wasn't pleasant for all the players. Trevor Knoroski had to have the clock stopped a due to a knee injury before sitting out

for a few minutes to ease the pain overall Knoroski scored 6 points for VCS. Other players that had injuries during the game were Tim Beall and Tyler Allen, though both players chipped in a total of 12 tackles.

"You just gotta keep playing and take Ibu-profen. And ice. Don't forget the ice, it's very important," Kyle Pazdel said about injuries, which are pretty common in such a high-contact sport.

The Falcons had their next-to-last home league game of the season on October 21 against the Highlands Scots. The game ended in a disappointing 32 - 67 loss. On October 28, Rio Vista is travelling to Falcon Field for the final home game, at which seniors will be honored.

The team's final league game is away on November 4th against Bradshaw, one of VCS's major rivals. "They have beaten us the past two years and I just really want to beat them," Pazdel said.

by Ali Howard

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Photo by Ed Donofrio

Soccer Ready for Playoffs

The VCHS soccer team heads toward playoffs with several victories, making their current league score 8-0-2. Though the team began their pre-season with a loss to Capital Christian 2-0, they came back strong with a high-scoring tie with Victory, 4-4, and then have enjoyed a seven-game winning streak, leading up to a tie with Highlands on October 17 and wins against San Juan and Bradshaw.

Though there are six new players to the team, their contributions are important. "They are improving well and helping out the team a lot," 3-year varsity player Brent Williams said.

The team had a hard fought game on October 12 against Golden Sierra. The Falcons tipped the

visiting team with a score of 2-1. In the second half Matthew Burnett took a shot to the leg and went down, though he quickly got up and off the field. The shin was bruised, but OK to play on.

After their win, Scott Gardner said, "We always play hard and try our best." He was enthusiastic about the upcoming season.

"Our main strategy is to keep possession of the ball and always go for the goal," Andrew Bliet said. "Even if we miss, it will go in eventually."

Regular season play ended October 26 with a game against Encina, league leaders. Falcons lost, 1-3. Playoffs begin November 3 at home.

by Ed Donofrio

Soccer Scoreboard



Photo by A.J. Hearn

OPPONENT	us	them
Golden Sierra	3	1
Highlands	3	1
Bradshaw	6	0
San Juan	2	0
Encina Prep	2	1
Golden Sierra	2	1
Rio Vista	2	1
Highlands	0	0
Rio Vista	1	0
San Juan	2	0
Bradshaw	5	0
Encina Prep	1	3



Photo by Sara Erb

Lauren Grabowski reaches high to prevent the Golden Sierra point in the Lady Falcons' game on October 18. Golden Sierra, who won the match, holds onto first place in Sierra Delta League. VCHS is in 2nd.

Lady Falcons Shine on Court

The varsity girls volleyball team has a 6-2 league record, and a 16-7 record overall so far in their season. Their most recent game was October 22, against Highlands High School, whom they defeated.

Typically, the varsity match is best 3 out of 5 games, while the JV play best 2 out of 3 games.

Miss Courtney Salamone, former VCHS volleyball player and member of the class of 2008, is the varsity volleyball coach. Lauren Grabowski and Lauren Johnson are the two co-captains for this season, and have been leading the team in many different statistics.

Grabowski leads the varsity team in kills (115 for the season), in blocks, (112 total), and is tied with Cassi Diaz for digs (126 each). Johnson leads the team in aces, with 46.

Though the team is strong, there are areas in which they need to improve. "Definitely court ownership, not just winging it all the time," Charlotte Norris said. "Team wise, we need to trust each other more, and trust that we are going to get the ball."

The JV volleyball team has been doing well this season, but has not played very many

league games yet.

The team captains, Kristina Ryan and Lauren Gottschall, both look up towards the end of the season with high hopes.

"I think we're gonna boss up the whole season," Gottschall said.

Ryan said, "We are gonna play our best, and be beasts."

JV Coach Steve Jacobs has been impressed with the girls' attitudes on the court. "They showed great sportsmanship, for playing an under matched team, they hit balls that they could return," Coach Mr. Steve Jacobs said regarding a game that the JV Lady Falcons played against the San Juan Spartans.

Referees, too, have noticed their great sportsmanship "I think [their sportsmanship] was excellent. And it starts here, it starts with the JV, they were well behaved," Sierra Delta League referee Dennis Hobart said.

by Daniel Ewing

Who?

1. Read the stories below

2. Try to guess who each story is about

3. Submit your answers as a comment on the link to these stories at www.vchstalon.com

4. Be one of the first 5 students or the first teacher to guess all four students correctly and receive a free Snickers bar!!!

Can You Resist Temptations?

This mystery student thinks that peer pressure is making teens collapse and give in to sex, drugs, and alcohol.

"Boys give in the easiest into peer pressure because girls dress too inappropriate, and it tempts the boys," this student said.

The most common place where peer pressure is brought onto the teens and kids is at school. "No one watches what kids do every minute while

they're at school," he said.

"Teens will sometimes give in to the peer pressure because they are convinced it's cool and fun, and they just want to fit in." The student recalled how peer pressure made one of his strongest friends fall and collapse and give in. He said he was devastated. "I was really blown away when he told me. I would have expected him of all people

to be strong and overcome it."

Teens need to find a place to get away from peer pressure and learn to overcome it. "They should go to church, because God will help them and show them the light," he said. He also recommended that kids and teens should just also avoid peer pressure and tell an adult about it and let the adults help them deal with it.

by Nathaniel Black

He Was in the Junior Olympics, too?

In 2008, this mystery student traveled to Chicago to participate in the prestigious Junior Olympics.

The Junior Olympics is for the top athletes from each state in each age group starting from 12 years old. "Basically the Junior Olympics is a skills competition," the student said. "And you want to be the best in your age group."

At the Junior Olympics athletes can participate in three different competitions: track,

basketball, and soccer. "I qualified for both basketball and track but ended up only doing track," he explained. Athletes perform different skills and competitions for each sport they are in, and the results are based on an athlete's cumulative performance in each sport.

Our student said that he would have gotten first in the track competition if he hadn't lost on the long jump. He said that he was mad because he was so close to getting first. He still can't

believe that he didn't get first. "I felt super excited; when I ran all I concentrated on was the finish line," he said.

"I went because it was fun and I wanted to go," he said. This student had a positive review of his experience at the Junior Olympics and he said that if he had another chance to go, he would definitely go again.

by Nick Russell



Photo by Taylor Schubert



Photo by Taylor Schubert



Photo by Emre Basaran



Photo by Ali Howard

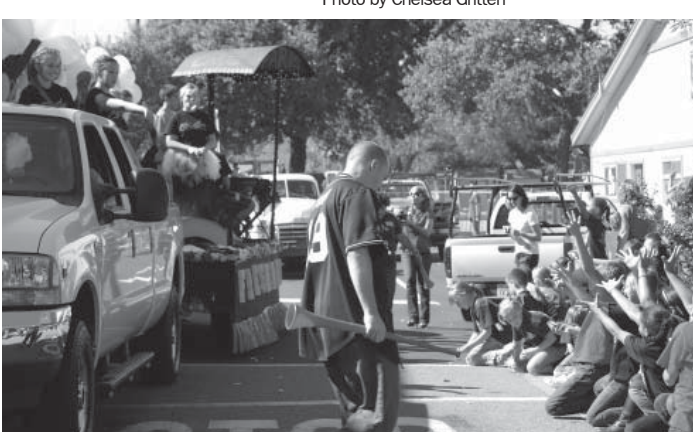


Photo by Emre Basaran



Photo by Chelsea Gritten



Photo by Chelsea Gritten



Photo by Haley Gibson

Spirit Week Wraps up with a Great Friday

All-School Parade, Rally Build Unity

Homecoming Rally took place on the Falcon Field. Elementary, Middle School and High School attended. Annika Arana, and Kelly Siegal had games in store for the day. To commence the rally, a pumpkin-carving contest was initiated. All high school grade levels participated with two pre-chosen representatives. Roses were distributed to girls of the senior class, given by an anonymous donor.

Cheerleading teams from elementary, middle school, and high school performed.

Shortly following, students from each school participated in a relay. Before starting, all participants removed their shoes, and placed them in the center of the relay area. Students were required to spin 10 times, run to the large pile of shoes, find and put on their shoes, and run to the other side. The first team to get all of their shoes on and reach the other side was the winner of the event. High school won the relay.

Afterwards, homecoming nominees were paired together, and required to lick chocolate syrup com-



Photo by Chelsea Gritten



Photo by Ali Howard

pletely off of one side of a slab of Plexiglas. The first pair to clean both sides of Plexiglas, was two senior nominees.

High school sports teams were introduced. Captains from football, boys soccer, cross-country, cheer, JV and varsity Volleyball, and wrestling introduced their teams.

Following the sports teams' recognition, the cookie champions from elementary, middle school, and high school were called forward to participate in the school-wide cookie eating contest. Representing the high school was Darius Javan. An "X factor" was introduced to the competition: Mr. Edgar, also became a competitor. Mr. Edgar was the victor of the competition.

As the finishing game, apple cider-chugging was introduced. Two representatives from each high school class were called forward, the first to completely finish an entire gallon of apple cider, the winner. Juniors won this event.

by Emre Basaran



Photo by Nick Russell



Photo by Nick Russell

Homecoming Dance 'Seemed Too Short'

On Friday, October 14 the homecoming dance was held. Students walked over from the football game to the gym, standing in line outside the doors to either get a wristband or buy a ticket if they hadn't done so during the week. Though the line moved quickly, as Mr. Rowland and Mrs. Salamone checked people in, it was pretty long.

The music was blasting, and there was another line just inside for the photo booth. Funny hats were hanging on a coat rack for students to wear for crazy memories of the dance.

Students had been asked during the week previously, to suggest songs to add to the playlist, and the suggestion sheet was filled up; however, the songs played at the dance seemed familiar to students, with less than half of the list being new songs added to playlists of last year's dances. "I liked the decorations and set

up, but the music choices were awful," Jack Olney said.

Decorations included a city skyline and bridge, complete with lights, and balloons covered the ground. Student Council spent many hours after school and before and after the dance to set up. The Social Chairs Hannah Stadnick and Marcy MacDonald had the biggest burden of getting the dance organized and set up. "I worked through the week, and to set up, I worked before and after the dance for a total of 6 hours."

Pizza bagels and chicken nuggets were available at the kitchen to choose from and bowls of candy were on the tables. "The food was good, better than previous years," Kristina Ryan said.

At 11:30 p.m. the dance was over. Students felt it was short, because the game wasn't over until 9:40 and they had been having so much fun together.

by Kendra Rowland
with additional reporting by Ali Howard and Daniel Ewing