



Concerned parents begin letter-writing campaign

## SDA FUNDING THREATENED

It would be difficult to escape the news of the State of California's current budget crisis. Every evening on the news comes more reports of critical teacher and other school staff layoffs. We are fortunate that the San Dieguito Union High School District is able to weather the storm this year without making such drastic cuts. However, **the education of our children will be impacted.**

How did we get to this budget crisis? The state economy has slowed significantly in the past 9 months. Revenue collections are off by \$5 billion in the last 4 months, with the trend likely to continue throughout 2008. The Governor's proposed budget called for a 10% reduction across the board. This translates into a **\$4.4 billion reduction to K-12 education** and the suspension of Proposition 98, our constitutional guarantee of a floor (not a ceiling) for education funding in the state. Our schools, rather than maintaining funding, will actually get less money next year than they currently do, with **Special Education** and **categorical (specially designated) funding receiving the deepest cuts.**

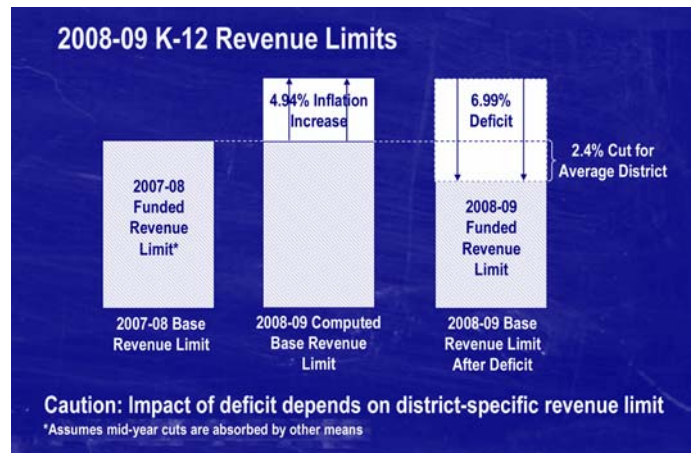
What does this mean to the San Dieguito Union High School District? It pencils out to a **\$3.7 million reduction**, including \$129 per ADA (Average Daily Attendance numbers) from our basic revenue limit funding, \$30 per ADA from special education and \$146 per ADA from categoricals. Multiply these cuts by the 11,000 plus students in our district, and you come up with the total reduction.

At SDA, this means we will probably see **larger class sizes**, since staffing will be stretched tightly. **All departments have been asked to cut their budgets (outside of staffing) by 25%.** Our Foundation will have to work harder to raise more money to provide the excellent education and curriculum support we have become accustomed to at SDA.

**Is there anything you as a parent can do about this situation?** YES! Write to Assemblyman Martin Garrick and State Senator Mark Wyland, as well as Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and tell them that **our kids' education is an investment we cannot afford to cut!** We are endangering the future of our community and our state by not fully funding our children's education. Remind them that you vote, and that there are in excess of 2000 voting parents at our school. Hold our elected representatives accountable, and stop these draconian cuts before they become reality. **Together we can make a difference for our children, and all children in the state of California.**

Sincerely,  
Marla Strich  
SDAF President

**LETTER-WRITING RESOURCES, SAMPLE LETTERS, AND ADDRESSES  
WILL BE POSTED ON THE SDAF WEBSITE, [WWW.SDAFOUNDATION.NET](http://WWW.SDAFOUNDATION.NET).**



Graphic courtesy of SDUHSD

## SDA WINS HIGH SCHOOL YEARBOOK COMPETITION FOR 2ND YEAR

Looks like a dynasty in the making: the yearbook team took the top prize in the county competition for its design and writing skills at a recent awards ceremony. This is the second year in a row they've owned the event. Special congratulations to **Melinda Wilkens**, who does most of the worrying for the rest of her team. She's kind of the Kevin Love of the squad except she's a senior and her fall-away jumper's a little soft. Regular

congratulations to **Nathan Ware**, **Anna Hood** and **Nick Armstrong**. **Ashley Armstrong** also was recognized for her photography. From the newspaper, **Rachel Stine**, **Zach Garcia**, **Erin Donaldson**, and **Jeffrey Leesan** placed in the top ten for news, opinion, and feature writing, plus photography, respectively. **Alex Matthews** was judged the best high school sports writer in the county.

## CAREER COMMUNITY CONNECTION DAY

**Fred D'Ambrosi, Channel 8 News Director** (and former SDA parent), looked over Neal Glasgow's classroom of video/film students. "You don't know who Ted Baxter is?" Looking confused, they shook their heads. D'Ambrosi sighed. "How about Ron Burgundy?" This time most of the kids nodded, except one girl who raised her hand. "Who's Ron Burgundy?" "Ugh," said D'Ambrosi, "I've got to get myself some new cultural references."



*Fred D'Ambrosi, Ch. 8 News Director, speaks in Neal Glasgow's second period video/film class.*

D'Ambrosi was one of many speakers crossing the generational divide on Career Community Connection Day, held on campus March 19. As he went on to explain how TIVO affects Nielsen ratings, many more speakers also brought their life experiences to classrooms, sharing an incredible diversity of careers with SDA students.

Some brought visual -- and edible -- aids. **Dadla Ponizil (of Ponizil Energy)** connected a bicycle to a blender to show Environmental Science classes how much energy a small household appliance uses to make something as simple as a smoothie. "Yummy!" said teacher Cathy Ramos.

Others demonstrated important job skills. **Private investigator Esteban Hernandez** told Spanish IV students about how useful a second language can be in his occupation, and earned an "A" from teacher Sheryl Bode. "Beautiful Spanish!"

Meanwhile, **Kelly Flock, former executive of Sony Online Entertainment, LucasArts and THQ**, got grilled by savvy students interested in the gaming business. Asked one, "With all your moves from company to company, how do you maintain your integrity in the industry?" Mr. Flock deadpanned, "I don't have any."

The issue of integrity settled, Flock told the kids that a well-rounded cultural background is extremely important in game design. "Read as much history and literature as you can. Ingmar Bergman said you can learn how to use a camera in a half hour, but a classical education can take 30 years." Not that technical skills are to be overlooked. "Know how to build a computer from scratch," he said, "and I really hope you know how to type!"

**Encinitas attorney Charles Higgins** (class of 1964) said he wanted to tell the kids in Kerri Leonard's English 9 Honors class not to enter any profession -- including law -- "just because they think they'll make a lot of money, or because they saw a romanticized version of it on TV. They should do what they care about."

**Fulbright Scholar (Japan, 2003), Union-Tribune columnist and 1973 alumnus Peter Rowe** wanted to give his students an idea of what a day in Japan is like, but doubted he had much of an impact on Rie Tsuboi's first period AP Japanese class. "It's too early in the morning -- they were sleepy!" It turns out they were wide awake. "He talked about his experiences in Japan and how much he looks forward to going back," said student Cody Avellon. "I really want to go there, too, so I found it very interesting. We kept talking about what he said after he left."



*Encinitas attorney Charles Higgins (class of 1964) speaks in Kerri Leonard's English 9 Honors class.*



*Kelly Flock, former CEO of Sony Online Entertainment, speaks in Neal Glasgow's third period video/film class.*



*Fulbright Scholar and Union-Tribune Columnist Peter Rowe (class of 1973) speaks in Rie Tsuboi's AP Japanese class.*

## PARENT FORUM: NAVIGATING THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL STRESS

On **Tuesday, April 29 from 6:30 – 8:00 pm**, meet three specialists who will offer insight into "Navigating Through High School Stress," at the next parent forum, in the Library at San Dieguito Academy. The panelists will offer abroad perspective about how to help your teen successfully manage these important high school years. This event is sponsored by the Student Support Services council. All parents are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served. Please contact Nancy Perry-Sheridan at [njps4@yahoo.com](mailto:njps4@yahoo.com)

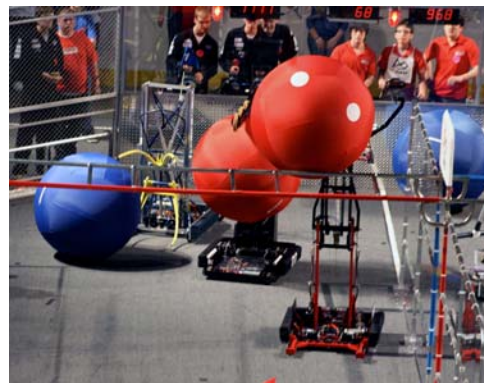
First among SD County teams**TEAM PARADOX ROBOTICS  
COMPETES IN LA REGIONAL**

SDA Robotics "Team Paradox" continued their winning streak at the Los Angeles Regional FIRST Robotics Competition on March 20-22, ending once again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> place alliance and 1<sup>st</sup> among the San Diego County teams.



Team mascot Parrot-Ox, with the head of a parrot and body of an ox.

Fifteen team members attended the event at the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena near USC, along with teachers George Stimson and Jason Berend, several engineer mentors and a handful of parents. The team had a good crowd of supporters in the cheering section, led by the Team Paradox "Parrot-Ox" (this season's new mascot) and other members of the PR squad: Jaclyn Foote, Kelsey Fox, Ally Hyatt, Garrett Jones, Haley Kovacs, Amy Kuo and Julian Noble. The "pit crew" consisted of president Asa Puckette, vice-president Matt Golman, building head Ross Meisenhelder, programmer Bryan Cheng, videographer Sam Hertica, and drivers Alex Dent, Nick Foote and Andrew Hallett.



The game involves movement around a track while moving balls under or over a 6-foot high rack. Photos by Kelsey Fox.

Mechanical problems pushed the team down to 19<sup>th</sup> of 52 teams in the qualifying matches, but they were quickly snatched up in the "alliance choosing" phase by the third-ranked "Torbots" of Torrance, California, so they went on to compete in the final matches anyway. The "NERDS" of Sierra Vista, Arizona, completed the 3-team alliance, which managed to make it to semi-finals and only missed making it to the finals by two points.

# WINTER SPORTS WRAP UP

**BOYS' BASKETBALL**

The 2007/2008 Season for the Boys Varsity basketball team was another step in the right direction. The boys improved from last year with two more victories. The team started strong and then suffered a series of injuries, (broken nose, sprained ankles and torn ligaments) that proved challenging. It was the second year for Coach Ethan Segovia and the first year for Assistant Ruben Rodriguez. The team played hard and had good chemistry on and off the court. Our scoring leader was Senior Sam Friedman and 8th in the Coastal North League, with Seniors Alex Marshall, Adam Schnieder, Jake Friedman and Junior Eric Peck following behind. Senior Mike Broyles was our leading rebounder on both offense and defense.

Also significant was having 11 team members named *Union Tribune* Scholar Athletes on the UT All Academic Team. Two of the boys, Senior Adam Johnson and Junior Eric Peck had over 4.0 averages. Our team will lose 9 talented and valuable seniors this year. Sam and Jake Friedman, Mike Broyles, Adam Schneider, Alex Marshall, Evan Amano, Adam Johnson, Darrell Nourani, and Ricky Campos. We thank them for their dedication to boys basketball at SDA and wish them much success as they graduate and move forward.

**GIRLS' BASKETBALL**

The SDA girls basketball team were league champions in their ninth straight CIF appearance. They ended the season with seventeen wins, including two big wins over Santa Fe Christian, very sweet!

Kristina Wavomba and Kalyn McMackin were

selected for first team and Stephanie Jacobson second team All League. Kristina Wavomba was on the All North County team and was invited to the Senior All-Star game. The *SD Union Tribune* All Academic team included Kristina Wavomba, Stephanie Jacobson, Maggie Berry, Christy Labauch and Rachel Prather.

Two freshmen Catherine Oswald and Iveta Agadzhandva made our team, as did sophomores, Morgan Prest, Kalyn McMackin, Kim-Ashleigh Mostert and Christine Jacobson. Half our team is quite young, Paige Crickmore, Christy Labauch, Maggie Berry were our juniors, so nine players will be back for a run at next year's League Championship. It should be a fun year.

We really did well and best of all, 12 players contributed. This was a very involved, close, fun and tough team. All in all, a great and thrilling season. SDA couldn't have asked for more from these girls.

**BOYS' SOCCER**

The SDA boys soccer teams wrapped up a successful season on the field! The varsity squad participated in the Grossmont Tournament, beating a Division 1 school in the final game. The Mustangs had a great season of play against league rivals and other opponents such as Francis Parker, Santana, Mission Bay, and St. Augustine. In fact, the team beat St. Augustine, something has not happened in at least four years. The team is proud of the 19-0-3 record that they accomplished on the field.

14 Varsity players received all-academic selection from the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. Varsity players were recognized for their play by the Coastal North League. All Coastal League selections include: Nick Lollo, Zach Kutlow, Juan Huizar – first team; Spencer Castrellon, Andres Olvera, Travis Pederson – second team; Coastal League Player of the Year – Nick Lollo.

# BECOMING A PART OF THE MAGIC ...

Story by Ben Johnson and Zach Garcia,

The Academy's ancient theater is hardly new in comparison to Canyon Crest's state-of-the-art facilities. Nor is it very large. La Costa Canyon's theater could house Xerxes and his entire Persian army; San Dieguito's couldn't even fit Sparta's burly 300 in frail plastic chairs, and if a detachment of Arcadians tags along, fill the aisles and call it a full house (and don't tell the fire marshal).



But its actors and actresses love it dearly, enough to give up an important slot in their schedules for the two theater classes new this year. That's right, after-school rehearsals have become classified: embodied in semester classes. The classes, titled drama production and musical theater production, were both created to complement the existing after-school rehearsals that go into creating each show at the Academy.

Sharon Dasho, who has taught theater and directed school productions at the Academy since her arrival in 2004, offered the

classes to give the students time to work on shows during school hours, reducing the amount of time they must work after school. The new classes also helped her increase enrollment in theater classes, as well as devote more time to theatrical design. "We've always had a thriving extracurricular program, but students didn't take the classes," Dasho said. The establishment of in-class working periods allowed Dasho to concentrate her energy exclusively on the theater program. First semester drama production ran alongside the after-school rehearsals for the fall and winter plays, while musical theater production accompanies the second semester's spring musical. Theater students are not required to take both classes, although it is encouraged.



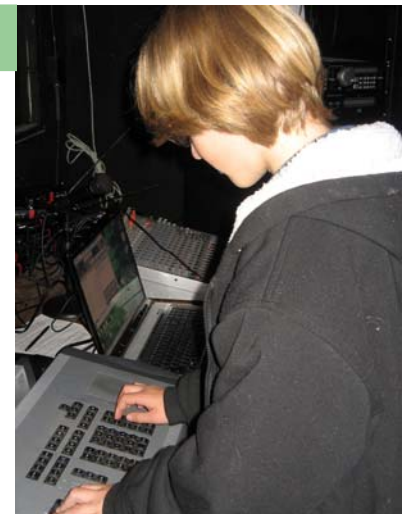
Many will take both, though, because of their love for the camaraderie and fun of creating a show. Senior Paul Benjamin has been involved with SDA's theater department since his freshman year. "Theater is super dank. It's like a brownie topped with fudge, Jesus, and whipped cream," said Benjamin.

Students are trained in a variety of skills while working on plays. "We've hired professional voice coaches, Scott Gregory and Pam Laurent, to work with students every Monday. Zoë [Moacanin, junior] and Jamie [Nieman, sophomore] are working on choreography," said Dasho.



Those under the lights must be supplemented by those behind them; hence, the existence of the "dark side" of theater, the self-proclaimed "pirate techies." Technical theater and costume design classes are offered alongside drama and musical production, taught in the same room by Dasho. Students involved with technical theater work with technical director Scott Grabau on Fridays and Saturdays.

Photos by Ben Johnson



# ...SDA'S THESPIAN SPIRIT PREVAILS



The actors proceed about their work in a creative, playful, and encouraging environment. "Paul Benjamin started randomly translating the play into Spanish. Dan [Troeber] couldn't help but laugh," said junior Sean Hale. "That was fun," said Troeber, junior. "I forgot my cues because they weren't in Spanish."

"There was a part in the opening where I'm supposed to have luggage," said senior Lily Nikzad. "We didn't have the luggage that day, but halfway into the scene Ms. Dasho put it right on the stage. So I'm walking backwards, and I completely tripped on it. I just lay on the floor, laughing." "Lily did a full on faceplant," said Nieman.

Such is the Thespian spirit: the drive to work under all circumstances, coupled with the ability to sublimate anything into fits of giggles. Because they work such long hours together, thespians also find themselves quickly bonded to one another during the rehearsing process. The theater is a place to make friends. "There's a saying, 'families are formed in theater,' and that's what we are, a family," said junior Meghan Hansen. "Even at lunch, everyone hangs out."

A noticeable number of significant relationships spring up during each production, but during the musical, the total reaches numbers unprecedented in recent Academy history. "I met my girlfriend from theater," said Benjamin. "It's like a proud theater tradition, because we're the most attractive people on campus."



The spring musical, "Thoroughly Modern Millie," is set in the Roaring Twenties, the days of Prohibition and flappers. Millie Dillmount, a Kansas farm girl, travels to New York, New York, in search of fame, fortune, and a marriage to her wealthy employer, whoever he may end up being. Contrary to these plans, she falls in love with Jimmy Smith, a poverty-stricken paper clip vendor, but "A Midsummer Night's Dream"-esque antics soon occur, and the protagonists find themselves in a whirl of emotional turmoil amidst a white slavery ring. Unlike opera playbills, you won't find the ending here; see the actual musical on April 24-26 and May 1-3 in the Roundabout Theater to find out.

*An influx of Spartans may currently pose a threat to the seating capacity of the theater, but not for long. Next fall, groundbreaking will occur on behalf of a new performing arts center where the trailers P21-4 are currently located. If you would like to donate to the construction of the new theater, contact Sheila Durkin at SDA Foundation, 760/753-1121 x5085 or [SDAFoundation@sduhsd.net](mailto:SDAFoundation@sduhsd.net).*

**PARENTS: Have you ever wanted to be part of the excitement of a theater production?**

## JOIN THE THEATRE ARTS COUNCIL

This is your chance. Join the Theater Arts Council, a low-key group of parents who support the SDA Theater program. If your student is, or plans to be an actor or techie at SDA, this is a great and fun way to get involved. For more information, contact Terri Lerager at [tlrager@aol.com](mailto:tlrager@aol.com).