

The Student Union

A compilation of news by and about young people in the Ojai Valley

In cooperation with: Besant Hill School, Nordhoff High School, Oak Grove School, Ojai Valley School, The Thatcher School and Villanova Preparatory School

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I'm Game: Camera Capturing Wildlife

Caroline Morrow

Ojai Valley School

A bobcat prowls the soccer field at the Upper Campus of Ojai Valley School, shifting its gaze late at night at any slight crunch of the brush.

A fully grown black bear plops into a water trough at the nearby baseball field to cool off after an active, hot summer day.

A young deer casually strolls up to a gate on a dirt road that doubles as the high school cross country course, sniffing the flowers sprouting alongside the road.

With the large number of noteworthy animals that call the Upper Campus home, you'd think the high school students who live and go to school here were tending a zoo. However, all of these animals roaming what is affectionately known as "The Hill" are part of a different kind of exhibit.

Instead of being live in front of smiling faces, they've been captured by game cameras set up in recent years by Advanced Placement Environmental Science students. The game cameras add an innovative aspect to the AP curriculum while pioneering a new way to see wildlife on campus.

Most who study and work at the Upper Campus will never see half of the creatures captured on the cameras, so

these photos provide a taste of what happens in the outdoors when nobody is around and nobody is watching.

Advanced Placement Environmental Science teacher John Wickenhaeuser set up the first camera two years ago as a way of extending and augmenting his curriculum after the AP test. His students would record the species caught on camera and research the animals further, creating a new area of exploration to end the year.

Since then, three more cameras have been added, and the images have been integrated into the AP curriculum as a weekly assignment.

Just this summer — in addition to the bobcat and the deer and bathing bear — the game cameras captured curious coyotes, coveys of quail and a whole collection of crows and carnivores.

"The most exciting [animal] was a mountain lion," said Wickenhaeuser, recounting a spectacular nighttime shot of a fully grown cougar cruising past the Senior Chapel, which overlooks Meditation Mount.

"But the fox was probably the coolest thing we have pictures of," he added, "because it's so cute and it does funny things like walk around the edge of the water trough and pose for the camera."

The cameras, located at

wildlife corridors around campus, are set off by motion, taking a burst of photos when animals cross in front of them.

Last year, the four AP environmental science students — dubbed "the Fearsome Foursome" by Wickenhaeuser — would take class outings to look through the cameras, pouring over hundreds of images of Upper Campus wildlife while getting the chance to track where the animals roamed.

One of the foursome, Gavin Floyd, remembers his favorite assignment: a photo of what appeared to be the back end of the cougar. The angle made it hard to determine the species of the animal. Later, the class found another image with the front end of that same cougar looking into the lens.

"We took time to examine the photo of the first cougar [we saw]," said Floyd, now a freshman at the University of Alabama. "[We] went online and searched for a couple days to see if there was something certain that could prove it was a cougar we caught."

Last year, the game cameras were a supplementary assignment to the curriculum, but this year they are serving a more vital and science-centered purpose, allowing students to record yearlong changes in the animals that

roam campus.

Four groups of students will each be assigned one of the camera's photos to look through, rotating at the start of each week.

Junior Maya Mullins, one of 10 students in this year's AP Environmental Science class, looked through a week's worth of photos from one of the four cameras, chronicling the animals she saw as an introductory assignment to the class. Those animals, like crows landing after flight or a family of bears huddling together in a water trough, shocked her, as she had no idea there was so much wildlife activity on campus.

"I'm excited to see what happens when the temperature changes and the seasons change," Mullins said. "It's really interesting to see what animals are living with us here in Ojai."

For the future, Wickenhaeuser hopes to install a live-feed on campus, so that more members of the campus community can follow the wildlife adventures.

"Before we were just looking for cute animals, but we're now making it more scientific," Wickenhaeuser said. "We can get an idea of what animals are out at what time, what they're doing, and what their seasonal variations might be."



A game camera at Ojai Valley School's upper campus catches a black bear cooling off after a hot summer day.

Photo courtesy of Ojai Valley School



A fox strolls past a camera on the Upper Campus of Ojai Valley School.

Photo courtesy of Ojai Valley School

Nordhoff Officials may Revisit Parts of Dress Code

Raya Whittington

Nordhoff High School

Nordhoff High School's (NHS) administration has agreed to revisit the dress code after a number of students complained that they were being unfairly targeted.

Administrators at first defended the dress code but approximately a week after NHS Principal Dave Monson's first interview with The Ranger, another interview was arranged.

"Instead of just talking about it let's do something about it," Monson stated, "Get a group of students who are serious about tackling this issue."

The dress code is regular a topic of conversation and controversy at every high school — but even more so here at Nordhoff when temperatures and humidity rise to uncom-

fortable levels.

Some students have expressed they feel the administration unfairly targets girls more than boys when it comes time to enforce the dress code.

During an earlier interview with The Ranger, NHS assistant principal in charge of discipline Jim Hall was asked to talk about the dress code enforcement and how there has been talk about it being sexist towards girls.

Hall said the dress code was put in place to teach students how to prepare and look professional. School, like a job, should be taken seriously and so should your appearance, he said.

Regarding charges that administrators tend to single out girls, Hall said, "Yes, because of clothing

styles, girls may get dress coded more."

He noted that it's important to respect that men are visual. He said they must respect that, no matter your gender, if students are putting their body on display, it's not others' faults for looking.

When asked to comment on Hall's view, junior Lesley Bernabe said, "Boys can control themselves. They're not children, they're not dogs, they are humans. Just the same as girls can control themselves, guys can control themselves and that has nothing to do with how much you reveal or how much you don't reveal. Guys will look if they want to."

"I don't believe that it's a girl's responsibility to dress in a particular way so not to attract a boy's attention," Monson added. "To me, I

think that was a bad argument that was brought up. That 'hey you know we don't want the girls to dress a certain way because it's distracting the boys.' That is a weak argument and that's not something that I believe in."

Of the controversy surrounding the dress code, a staff member who asked not be named said, "I don't know if I would call the policy sexist. I would say that there are a lot of factors that make it unfair. I think that it's unfair because there are a lot of things out of your control like the heat, what's available, what your parents buy you or what you can buy yourself as opposed to men's fashion and stuff."

"I'm not into body shaming and making anybody feel bad about the way they look based on the clothing

they are wearing," Monson added, "but at the same time, when you are in a setting like this you don't have complete individual freedom. Sometimes your individual freedoms are going to infringe on other people's individual freedoms. We have to understand in a setting like this that sometimes you have to make some sacrifices for the greater good that may not be your own personal preference," he continued. "It's trying to find that balance between individual expression and freedom versus the norms of a group. That is rarely black and white. There are so many areas of gray there. I'm trying to do it respectfully and keep people's feelings in mind."

Administration isn't sure what changes will be made but they promise to revisit the dress code.

Student Becomes Ambassador for new Sport

Jaclyn Sersland

Ojai Valley School

At the start of school last year, Spikeball became a part of life at Ojai Valley School (OVS). On camping trips, electives and for weekend activities, students have started made the sport a part of their OVS experience.

However, OVS senior Peter Weckerle has taken his love for the game above and beyond the confines of OVS by becoming an ambassador for the up-and-coming sport.

Weckerle first played the game at the start of his junior year when OVS Outdoor Education Director Zach Byars invited him to be his partner

in a match. From the first time he played the game, Weckerle was hooked.

In addition to his outdoor duties, Byars teaches history at the Upper Campus. He is known for his love of all things Spikeball, having been the one to introduce the game to OVS students and faculty last year.

Spikeball is a fast-paced game that students can quickly get good at and start to enjoy. The game teaches students how to communicate, and to quickly reach a goal.

"My favorite part about teaching students how to play Spikeball is when it clicks for the first time," Byars said. "The students finally start

to see the movement of the game, and it soon becomes an enjoyable game to watch or play."

After playing whenever he got the chance during the last school year, Weckerle decided to buy his first Spikeball set at the start of summer. At that time, he received an email from the official Spikeball team asking if he was interested in becoming an ambassador for the company.

The Spikeball team is looking for people across the United States who are outgoing, energetic and passionate about the game to help represent the company and spread their enthusiasm to their peers.

Weckerle filled out a short survey and returned it to the team expressing his interest in the position.

"Spikeball is a very unique sport," Weckerle said. "It's not just about being athletic. It's about positioning, strategy and other things that you normally don't need in other sports."

By accepting the ambassador position, Weckerle will help organize Spikeball tournaments and other events near Ojai. He also will be notified if there are nearby events where help is needed to stage tournament play.

Visit www.spikeball.com for more information about the game.



OVS senior Peter Weckerle (center, hitting the ball) demonstrates his love for the game of Spikeball last year during a Spring Break College Tour, where he joined a game against the Harvard Spikeball team.

Photo by Fred Alvarez

Educational Freedom a Foreign Concept for Sun

Georgia Schreiner

Villanova Preparatory School

New country. New language. New, strange people. New world.

I have often wondered why so many students have dared to venture to the United States from other countries on a quest for education. What drives these students to do something such as attend high school in a foreign land with a foreign language and stuffed with foreign people?

With these questions swimming around in my head, I acquired some answers from Cheryl Sun, a sophomore at Villanova Preparatory School, about what her experiences were of education in her homeland compared to the education offered locally.

Sun grew up in Shanghai, China, and attended a public school through eighth grade. In China, she had been struggling with math and physics, and hours and hours of homework left her with no time for sports or personal interests.

Her schedule in China was filled with math and the



Cheryl Sun (left) and Georgia Schreiner talk about Sun's educational experiences.

hard sciences, with no room for electives or social sciences, of which Sun was more interested.

At Villanova, she said she is a thriving student, especially in math and the sciences, with time for the sports she

loves like basketball, as well as trying new sports like volleyball.

However, coming to the

U.S. for high school has not been all ice cream and cake. For Sun, and others from different countries, going through seven-plus hours of school in a non-native language can be challenging.

Sun explained that she took English classes at her old school, however, they did not learn to speak it: only to read and write it.

One aspect of Sun's old school that she misses, is that during the school day, she and her classmates would stay in the same classroom and their teachers would move from class to class.

Sun also said that unlike Villanova, where her classmates differ from hour to hour as she switches classes, in China she would have the same 30 to 40 classmates every day.

Also, contrary to the common practice at Villanova, they almost never did group projects.

A typical seven-class school day in China for Sun started at 7 a.m. and went until 4:30 p.m. She would then have dinner and proceed

to study hall from 6 to 8:15 p.m. However, the meaning of "study hall" in China is different than study hall in the U.S. in that Sun often had additional classes during study hall. In other words, Sun described her school day as being "basically 7 a.m. to 8 p.m." five days a week.

The learning philosophies of her school in China and of Villanova are very different, according to Sun. Her experience throughout primary and middle school was that the mindset of the learning was geared towards training for the placement test that all students must take to rank themselves among the multitude of students in China. She notes that at Villanova, in addition to our academic classes, there is a greater value placed on other activities including sports, extracurriculars like clubs and community service. She greatly values that at Villanova students have the opportunity to develop "on all sides," whereas in China it is largely focused on individual studying.

Photo by Isabel Pascua

Student Opinion

Tragedy Should Teach us That it's OK to Mourn

Caroline Morrow

Ojai Valley School

On Oct. 1, a lone gunman killed 58 people and injured 515 during the Route 91 Harvest Music Festival.

I woke up Monday morning, checked my Snapchat stories and saw the news of this story on every major website. In English class, we talked about the shooting, as it related to our weekend reading of Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery."

A husband and wife were enjoying the country music festival when they heard gunshots from above. The husband was shot in the back

while protecting his wife, as they ran out of the concert. His life's work as a nurse culminates, as he saves one more life: his wife's.

That story isn't made up: a fabrication to add even more tragedy to one of the United States' deadliest mass shootings to date. That is the story of Sonny Melton, a West Tennessean. His wife, Dr. Heather Melton, has spoken out about her husband's final moments in a heartbreaking testimony.

"He saved my life," she told WSMV, a CNN affiliate. "I want everyone to know what a kindhearted, loving

man he was, but at this point, I can barely breathe."

This breathlessness can be felt in every victim's family as they find out about the massacre from articles, workplace conversations or lack of a call back. Just like how one finds out about their dad's car crash from the police knocking at their door at 3 a.m. Just like I found out about my mother's death when I woke up on Labor Day six years ago from my uncle, who had to put on a brave face for me, even though he just found out his sister died.

Whenever a massacre happens, I feel that initial stab

in the heart for the families who won't get to celebrate another birthday, will never get another phone call or will never see their loved one again.

I feel for the 58 families who will hold funerals filled with tearful eulogies and scratchy black dresses. I feel for the daughter who has to finish her math homework with dry eyes, as she's told to "move on with her life." I feel for the wife who has to go to work while she works through how her husband can have an open casket with a bullet hole through his left eye. I feel for the weeks of articles pinning

this shooting on ISIS or a bad father, when all the families want is to bury their loved ones in peace.

Whenever we talk about death, we ignore grief and sadness. As a society, we focus on moving on and waiting for the next tragedy. I hope that those in Las Vegas

take the time to mourn and that this time it sparks conversation about gun control and mental health.

I hope that no more people have to die to learn how to fix our mistakes, but until then, I hope whoever reads this knows that it is okay to feel bad, to mourn.

Student Opinion

Clickbait is a Waste of Our Time

Isabel Pascua

Villanova Preparatory School

Clickbait is one of the most annoying, but highly effective techniques people use to get others to view their content. I'm sure you know, or at least you should, about this strategy. If not, let me elaborate.

Clickbait is titles, headlines, pictures, etc. that aim to attract people's attention and encourage them to open a link. These titles are often misleading and exaggerated, and sometimes have no correlation to the article itself.

An example might be "Surprising pParents With Shocking News" or "Student Jumps out of Austin Hall Window! You Will not Believe What Happened Next!"

I assure you, a student did not jump out of one of our school buildings. I simply created this title to grab your attention.

It's the art of clickbait. So why is clickbait important?

Clickbait is a part of fake news. Many of these pieces lead to disappointment because the value of the content that is promised is never met. We're selling out our time by clicking these useless links.

This can affect students' lives when they research for their work. Say you are reading a character analysis of "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho on a website. As you're reading, you see a link on the sidebar to another page

for "Which Character from The Alchemist Are You?" Because it is so related to this topic, you decide to take this quiz. Then you click another link, then another, and so on and so forth. It's like a domino effect; once you start clicking, you cannot stop! The real question is not "why is clickbait important," but it is "why does it attract us?" Are we actually curious, or are we just bored?

Despite the negative effects of clickbait, it's actually a part of a very important tool in writing.

Clickbait is frustrating, but it is also very useful. The first step to writing a good paper is captivating your audience's attention. Well, the

main purpose of clickbait is to spark one's curiosity.

Clickbait is all over the internet. It's here whether or not you like it

Although clickbait may seem overused, it's still relatively effective especially if you ended up reading this entire article.

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Photo by sophomore Corbin Muller

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Produced by the Ojai Valley News in cooperation with: Besant Hill School, Nordhoff High School, Oak Grove School, Ojai Valley School, The Thacher School and Villanova Preparatory School

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The Student Union is published monthly during the academic school year.

Artist Draws Inspiration From People

Lexi Stone

Nordhoff High School

Hannah Rittmeyer is this month's Ranger newspaper artist of the month.

Rittmeyer is taking art at Nordhoff High School this year. It's her first art class, but she has been interested in taking it for the last three years but it did not fit into her schedule.

Even though she hasn't been in the class, she has been making art since she was 5.

Finger painting was the first art form. "I loved to paint dinosaurs, even though they looked like blobs," she recalled.

At this time in Rittmeyer's life, she draws a lot of abstract human figures. She also enjoys photography.

"I love taking portraits," she said, adding that she bases a lot of her art on pictures that she has taken.

Rittmeyer said she gets ideas for her pictures and drawings from Instagram and Twitter. At times she will text or direct message people on Instagram to take pictures of them. She has her own page for all her photos on Instagram. Her account name is "ixisle."

Rittmeyer is now a senior and wants to take a break after high school and continue her love for art in college.

Rittmeyer has specific ideas about how she produces her art. She said when she sees something she loves she turns it into something more — such as looking at an abstract drawing and turning it into a photo. She finds someone that reminds her of the picture. When

taking the picture, she finds a way to make it look abstract like the drawing.

Rittmeyer said she loves using and working with colors along with black and white. She uses many materials such as colored pencils and pens.

"I would be happy to take pictures of people and show them my work if they just text me or direct message me," she added.

Human Impacts Clear During School's Beach Cleanup

Avery Colborn

Ojai Valley School

Dressed in boots and gloves, and armed with large trash bags, approximately two dozen Ojai Valley School (OVS) students and faculty joined the 33rd Ventura County Coastal Cleanup Day in mid-September, collecting plastic bottles, candy wrappers, cigarettes and other trash they encountered on the beach around Ventura Harbor.

This was the first community service effort of the year for OVS, with students from both the upper and lower campuses and thousands of other volunteers participating.

Students, such as OVS junior Soham Kondle, were able to make connections about the immense impact humans have on the environment.

"There was a direct relationship with the amount of people and where the trash was," Kondle said. "On the sidewalk there was a lot

more trash than on the actual beach."

During the two-hour excursion, Kondle noticed how the wildlife native to California's beaches is affected by trash and debris.

"There was actually a lot of plastic on that beach ... all sorts of stuff that is really harmful for the birds that come," he continued. "There were loads and loads of birds, and loads and loads of trash."

Smaller pieces of plastic and debris, sometimes referred to as "microtrash," is as harmful to wildlife as large pieces, because it is often confused for bugs or food particles, and then eaten.

OVS biology teacher Lisa Boyd was one of the trip's faculty advisors, said she was proud of the students' efforts.

"I found a couple of spots where there were little, tiny pieces of Styrofoam® ... and I felt good about that because it was hard work," Boyd said.



OVS students from both the Upper and Lower campuses showed up in mid-September to do their part in the 33rd annual Ventura County Coastal Cleanup.

Photo by Lisa Boyd

"I felt like if I'm looking out for the wildlife, finding little pieces of Styrofoam® is prob-

ably a good thing."

From as early as kindergarten, OVS students are

taught the importance of protecting and restoring the environment, but for some,

this was their first time participating in a beach cleanup event.

The weekend trip served as a way for students to apply what they have learned to a hands-on project that would directly benefit their local community.

At the end of the day, volunteers across Ventura County collected 13,088 pounds of trash and 923 pounds of recyclables.

Kondle noted that although his accomplishments were most definitely beneficial, there is still more to be done in terms of community service, and plenty of opportunities for this in Ojai.

"The ocean is a part of the culture and lifestyle for a lot of people here ... if stuff gets caught from the sand and goes into the water, not only could it harm the environment but it also affects the people who use the ocean too," he said. "There's a lot bigger effect than for just the animals."

Teacher Returns to Nordhoff as Vice Principal

Julian Kimura

Nordhoff High School

After working in the field of education for 14 years, new Nordhoff High School Assistant Principal Jaime Rooney, returns to Nordhoff a seasoned veteran.

"I actually got my start here at Nordhoff where I worked for six years teaching math until I went to Vista Real and I worked there for eight years," said Rooney. "I actually got into education through coaching. At first, I was a soccer coach at Westlake High School in Thousand Oaks. I found that I really liked working with that age group, and that evolved into tutoring, which

then became teaching."

After working as a math teacher for multiple years, Rooney moved up in the ranks becoming the assistant principal at Vista Real.

"One of the big differences between Nordhoff and Vista Real is population. Nordhoff is much larger," said Rooney. "Vista Real also had six different sites around Oxnard and Ventura rather than one central campus."

Rooney said she did not always plan to become a teacher or go into administration. She attended the University of California Santa Barbara and it was only later that she decided to teach.

"I went to UCSB and then Cal Lutheran where I studied psychology and received my teaching and leadership credentials," said Rooney. "Coming in to an administrative position was pretty organic. I had been teaching and I was the department head so I naturally gravitated towards administration."

The return to Nordhoff for Rooney meant her introduction to the many changes to the school that occurred in the eight years she was at Vista Real.

"I think this first year as the assistant principal here at Nordhoff will be more of a learning year. I am going to be working on learn-

ing all the policies and figuring out how I can really help," said Rooney. "Coming back to Nordhoff we have an all new curriculum with the integrated math. The college and career classes also weren't here when I was teaching."

Rooney is no stranger to administration. Much of the time she spent working at Vista Real she worked as an assistant principal, presiding over three of the high school sites.

"As assistant principal, I focus on curriculum and instruction, so basically anything academic. I work closely with the counselors, I work with tutoring, state testing and other things like that," said Rooney. "I

like being able to help all students. When you teach you are sort of limited to the students in your class, but as assistant principal you work more with the school as a whole and you understand the different sub-groups and learn how to help each group all become one campus."

Rooney is not the only person with a new administrative position this year. It is the first year Dave Monson will be principal.

"Mr. Monson is definitely well suited to being a principal, he has great people skills, he is very organized and I believe he is the perfect person for the job," said Rooney. "Overall, I am happy to be back here at Nordhoff."

Perkins Receives Ranger Male Student of the Month Honors

Brayden Rogers

Nordhoff High School

This month's Nordhoff High School Ranger newspaper's male student of the month is Ian Perkins.

Last year, as a junior, his cumulative weighted GPA was 4.3 while taking four advance placement (AP) classes. This year he is taking five AP classes.

He's played basketball at

Nordhoff for three years, and last year was his first year on the varsity team.

"Throughout my NHS career, my favorite teacher has been Ms. Hay because she has always been very encouraging," Perkins stated. "My favorite class has been physics because the labs are very interesting. It also gives you new insights into the world."

Perkins hopes to attend

Stanford University and then wants to major in something in the STEM fields.

"If I do go to Stanford, it would be a great new step in my life but also kind of scary to start a whole new chapter and meet entirely different people and an entirely different community," he explained.

Last summer, Perkins spent time with friends,

played basketball, went to Newport beach, went on vacation to Mexico and went on houseboats with his church.

Outside of school, he likes to hangout with friends and play basketball. His favor-

ite thing about basketball is bonding with teammates. He also plays tennis at NHS and his favorite thing about tennis is Mr. Dickey's jokes.

He said he is inspired by his older brother, Nick Per-

kins.

Excited to finish his Nordhoff High School career, Ian said he looks forward to his last moments with friends because he will be moving so far away.

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Students Rally Around Changes to First Day

Aidan Pasco

Nordhoff High School
Nordhoff High School
officials changed the structure of the first day of school this year.

Instead of a regular first day, Teacher **Bronwen Cull** and other administrators started the year with a rally.

"We had a day full of experiences meant to build community and culture," explained Cull who attended a conference over the summer and brought back a few ideas.

"People at the conference said that students are

not behaved enough for this event, but I knew Nordhoff students are well behaved," Cull added.

Classes were shortened to 30 minutes, all in the morning and at lunch everyone was treated to a barbecue provided by NPA and nutrition services. It was called a "lawn chair lunch" and teachers and students were invited.

There were four different seminars for each class and the seminars were about Nordhoff's four school pillars: scholarship, tradition, opportunity and community. The aim of the seminars was to re-

mind students of the school's expectations, encourage students to take ownership of their high school experience and excite students about getting involved in all things NHS has to offer.

Several staff members, who ran the seminars, said they hope to run them again next year.

"I really liked the change of the first day," said Sophomore **Jonah Hoj**. "I liked how the classes were for 30 minutes so we got the flow of our classes and then the seminars were really nice to have for each class. Also the barbecue



Students and faculty cheer at a pep rally during the first day of school at Nordhoff High School.

Photo by Taylor Erickson

was very nice that we got the free lunches that day and hopefully we do it for more

years to come."

"I liked it better than the last two years because the

seminars were nice for each class and this year's first day was different because more people were brought together," Junior **Gio Torres** stated.

"It was a lot different than previous years," added senior **Parker Johnson**. "I liked it a lot more than getting put right into classes on the first day. It felt more like the school getting together which was a lot different."

The day finished with a mini rally in the gym for the whole school. The leadership introduced the new theme for the year which is "Keys to Kindness."

Oak Grove School Teacher a Big Fan of Telling Stories

Isabella Xiong

Oak Grove School

Storytelling is an ancient tradition. Even with the completely modern society we have today, oral storytelling still has not faded away.

An example is the Ojai Storytelling Festival. Held almost every year, it lasts for four days. This year it took place from Sept. 7 to Sept. 10.

It is an event where all kinds of stories — traditional world folk tales, personal narratives, ghost stories and dark tales — are all presented on stage.

Although this is my sec-

ond year in Ojai, I was not familiar with this festival. I was fortunate though to have had the opportunity to interview one of its biggest fans, **Ashton MacSaylor**, an English teacher who works at Oak Grove School.

"I've come to the festival almost every year since it started," MacSaylor stated.

He mentioned that this year's event was particularly meaningful because the festival stopped for a year and it was such a big effort to bring it back again.

After four days of listening to stories, he said the one

that moved him most this was from Irish storyteller **Niall de Burca** who presented a unique story about a common topic: education.

The story begins in the evening in the house of a farming family in Ireland. The family was welcoming their newborn baby when a teacher who can tell fortunes appears. By looking at the stars, the teacher tells the family the baby girl will live a happy life until her 18th birthday when the devil will come and torment her to death. The only way to keep her alive is to make sure she does not shout

for that whole night. In great fear and anxiety, the family begs the teacher to save their little girl. As a result, the teacher comes every year to teach her stories and quotes from all the greatest people in the world. On her 18th birthday, though, her teacher has already passed away, the girl goes into the woods alone and waits for the devil. No matter how harshly the devil torments her, she stays calm and draws on all the quotes from the great philosophers, stories and songs she learned from her teacher. Eventually, she makes it through till the first

light of dawn and the devil is banished forever.

This story strongly resonated with **MacSaylor**, he said, because it reminded him of his job as a teacher,

"Everyone will have a dark night like that someday in the future. It might not be a devil that torments you, but it must be something that makes you despair and want to give up," MacSaylor said. "At that point, whether you choose to face the challenge courageously or to just give in all depends on how you were raised, on your education."

The story, he added,

reminded him of what he is doing and why he wanted to be a teacher in the first place. The story gave **MacSaylor** a chance to see himself in it.

When asked whether he thinks oral storytelling will disappear in the future, **MacSaylor** confidently said no. In his opinion, people are dazzled by all kinds of technologies nowadays and oral storytelling is reaching its lowest point. Despite this, it still manages to survive, he believes because people are actually raising their consciousness with traditions like oral storytelling.

Second-year NHS teacher earns Ranger recognition

Madison Parnell

Nordhoff High School
The Nordhoff High School Ranger newspaper's female teacher of the month for September is world history and English teacher **Gabrielle Taylor**.

She is a second-year teacher at Nordhoff.

Taylor was born in Pasa-

dena and grew up in Palmdale. From there she went to UCLA for her undergraduate degree. Part of her studied was completed at King's College in London. She earned a degree in history, with a minor in education and comparative literature. Her masters was obtained at UCSB.

At a young age Taylor

wanted to be a teacher like her mother, but said when she got to high school it was her teachers who inspired her. She said she hopes to do the same for her students by maintaining a classroom that is both engaging and judgment free.

"She always motivating us and sometimes she gives us Starburst®," student **Jenna**

Karlsen explained.

Outside of school, **Johnson** likes to go hiking with her boyfriend and her dog. She likes to hangout with her friends in the area, but most of all she likes to travel. She's been to many places, from France to Cambodia.

Taylor believes that everyone should travel at some

point, but knows that for most it's not financially possible, so she and has formed a club called **L.I.V.E.**, to help raise money for students to travel so they don't have to pay the full price themselves.

"L.I.V.E stands for Leadership through International Volunteer Expeditions," Taylor explained. "The idea be-

hind it is to have a student-led organization that is focused on not just traveling for the fun of it, but to be immersed in the culture and to help those less fortunate."

L.I.V.E will be going to Costa Rica and staying in an indigenous community helping the people there next summer for its first trip.

Student Makes a Splash by Working as a Summer Lifeguard at Casitas Waterpark

Julian Kimura

Nordhoff High School

Chanae Turk works her summers as a lifeguard at the Casitas Water Adventure water park where her slightest mistake could potentially mean injury or death for one of the many who visit the park every summer.

"As a lifeguard, I watch over the patrons of the waterpark to make sure that they are safe," Turk said. "We work to prevent people from drowning and help care for them if they have gotten stung by a bee or are hurt. Basically, we are there to make sure that the patrons are happy

throughout the entire day."

In the Lake Casitas Recreation Area, Casitas Water Adventure employs from 60 to 80 lifeguards each summer.

"This is my first year working as a lifeguard," said Turk. "I decided to start working at the waterpark at the end of March because I knew lots of people who worked there who said that they enjoyed it, so I felt that it would be a good fit for me especially because I enjoy working with people."

Turk's older sister, **Sierra Turk**, also works as a lifeguard at the waterpark.

"Sierra had been working there for a while too,

and I had already wanted to get a job because I needed money so I could go out and do things with friends," said Chanae. "I also didn't have much planned for the summer, so I figured I should just spend it doing something fun and productive."

Chanae was recognized in Casitas Water Adventure's "Lifeguard of the Week," program where outstanding lifeguards are awarded the title of Lifeguard of the Week and receive a special, decorative buoy.

"I really didn't expect to win because this was my first year as a lifeguard and my sister did not get lifeguard

of the week until her second year working at the waterpark," said Chanae. "The coordinators said that they gave it to me because I was very reliable and I had a good attitude."

"I would 100 percent recommend this job because it not only teaches you how to be a lifeguard, but it also teaches you social skills and how to effectively communicate," said Chanae. "You get to meet tons of interesting people, the other lifeguards you work with are super nice and you have a great boss."

The director of the Casitas Water Adventure Water park is **Aaron Wall**, who also

worked as a parks service officer.

"I really like **Aaron**, he is really funny and always puts us in a good mood," Chanae said.

Being a lifeguard isn't the only thing Chanae does at the lake, she also works as an assistant water aerobics instructor.

"I love doing water aerobics because the people who come to the class that we work with have a good sense of humor, and I enjoy doing exercise in the morning before working," she noted.

Lifeguards at Casitas Water Adventure work all day during the summer weekdays

and work shifts on the busier weekends.

"If I have the choice of an a.m. or p.m. shift I would choose a.m., so that I would still be available to do something after work," said Chanae, "but to be honest I like working a full day the most. It feels awkward to leave in the middle of the day and I want to work as much as I can.

Once in awhile, sitting on the stand can get a little frustrating, but at the end of the day I always feel proud of myself and I am usually happy with how the day went," Chanae added. "My last day of work was September 16, and I am excited to return next summer."

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