



NEWS (page 2)

Congress deems a certain amount of tomato sauce equivalent to vegetables.



FEATURES (page 4-5)

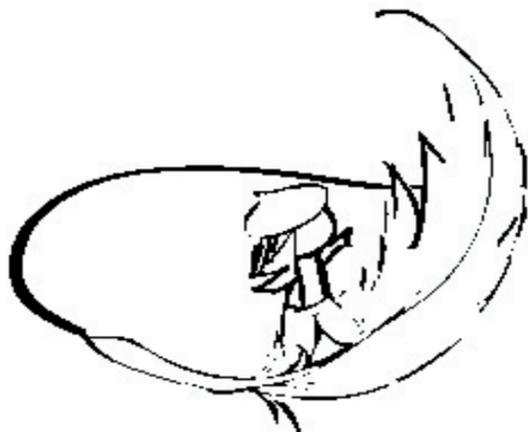
Changes may be implemented in the future of education within a decade.



SPORTS (page 7)

Varsity Wrestling enters league with hopes of seasonal success.

ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL



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Iraqi War Ends with Little Reaction

JENNIFER PIERCE
Copy Editor

On Dec. 18, under the cover of night, the last convoy of American troops left Iraq for Kuwait. Meaning neither victory nor defeat, this action officially marked the end of the Iraqi War that first began in 2003.

Following the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001, an uproar by the American people to take arms immediately ensued.

On March 20, 2003, the U.S. led a coalition of 49 countries to overthrow the government in Iraq. The Iraqi government was overthrown in three weeks. The U.S. spent the rest of the time rebuilding Iraq as a democracy.

However, the prolonged war and financial struggles caused unrest and the American public cried out for its end. Now that it is over, little to no reaction is being made by the public.

"I feel relieved but without any personal attachment to the

war. [...] I feel disconnected, like there wasn't much to celebrate for [...] because I felt like the plea to 'bring our soldiers back' is outdated and used much too often," senior Gordon Ip said.

In some people's minds, the war never really ended due to the economic crisis that is currently at hand. With over 15 trillion dollars accumulated in debt over the past eight to nine years, the war will continue to cost

Americans after its end. Others are concerned about America's military presence in other overseas countries.

"The reason people aren't making a big commotion about the troops being pulled from Iraq is because we still have troops stationed in Afghanistan, so it still doesn't seem as though the war is over. People are unsure if troops will remain out of Iraq," American Government teacher Kristi La Pointe said.

Even though President Obama has been gradually withdrawing troops since his election in 2008, many people felt the war had gone on too long and the promises to take out troops were empty. "I expected our

government to bring our soldiers back so much earlier and long ago, but it never really happened, so I sort of gave up emotional investment upon that subject," Ip said.

The apparent disinterest and disconnect could have also caused Americans to stop paying attention to what was going on overseas.

"Many people are uninformed and have grown apathetic to the war, so they don't realize that the troops have been pulled out of Iraq," La Pointe said.

Despite the small reaction, how the end of the war affects the future of America is the question on many people's minds. For President Obama, this could mean a more tightly secured election in the upcoming year.

"[The end of the war] took years to happen, as would any political involvement as major as this, but it happened, and I think this actually may have a positive impact on Obama's reelection," senior Josephine Leong said.



The United States had declared an official end to its military campaign in Iraq through the flag-lowering ceremony in Baghdad, Dec. 15

PHOTO courtesy of CNN



Santa Ana winds cause excessive damage within the San Gabriel Valley. A gas station (above) in Pasadena is left in shambles, while trees continued to fall throughout SGV.

PHOTOS courtesy of GETTY IMAGES and the ALHAMBRA SOURCE

Santa Ana Windstorms Wreak Havoc Throughout SoCal

OLIVIA CHEUNG
News Editor

December began with some of the most powerful Santa Ana winds in years, ripping through Utah to Southern California and far western Arizona.

According to the National Weather Service, the Santa Ana winds are strong downslope winds that blow through the Santa Ana Mountains at speeds above 40 mph (64 kph) during the cooler months.

Wind gusts at higher altitudes were the most extreme. Mammoth Mountain in Sierra Nevada had winds as strong as 150 mph. In Los Angeles County, winds were recorded at 97 mph at Whitaker Peak.

"This is probably the worst winds to this area in more than a decade," Bob Spencer, spokesman for L.A. County's public works department, said.

The foothill communities of the San Gabriel Valley were hit the hardest. Alongside L.A.

County, states of emergency were also declared in cities of Alhambra, South Pasadena, Pasadena, San Marino, San Gabriel, Temple City, Sierra Madre, Monrovia, Glendora and Arcadia.

Dozens of schools in Alhambra, Arcadia, Pasadena, South Pasadena, and San Gabriel were cancelled on the following Thursday and Friday as a result of the strong winds.

The aftermath of the winds left hundreds of thousands of Southern California Edison (SCE) customers without power. Most service was restored within a few days following the winds, but over 800 households remained in the dark a week after the windstorm.

Power outages were so widespread that officials in cities of San Marino and Temple City had estimated that more than 75 percent of residents were without electricity.

"It was a horrible experience when we were forced to live without any power for five days," sophomore Stephanie Han said.

In defense, SoCal Edison

points out that the storm was unprecedented and that they were working 24 hours a day.

SoCal Edison President Ron Litzinger apologized in an open letter published as a full-page ad in the L.A. Times.

"We set ambitious goals to return service to [SCE members]," he wrote. "We understand that a number of our customers [were] frustrated, particularly those who [had] been without power for more than five days, and we thank them for their patience. We are working around the clock with crews from as far away as San Diego and Bakersfield to repair the massive storm damage to our power delivery system."

Despite all of the damage, no fatalities have been reported. However, much of L.A. County is a red flag warning, meaning that its conditions could easily cause a wildfire.

"Although I was happy about school's cancellation, the disadvantages overshadow the pros," sophomore Vivian Li said.