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T.R. Lisa Mertins, Hannah's mom and the parent advisor for the newspaper, is having 3 significant art shows of her own work in Orange County this Month. Congratulations and good luck!



T.R. Germany made the first artificial Christmas trees. They were made of goose feathers and dyed green.

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Seniors Debate the Issues



Ian Merkle moderates the first debate.

It is important for educated people to be able to look at issues from both sides and to be able to understand other people's points of view. To that end, the government classes, under the incredible guidance of Mrs. Karen Davidson, have spent 2 chapel periods on Dec. 3 and 10 debating the political issues of the Arizona Illegal Immigration Bill SB 1070 and Welfare Reform. The formats included a moderator with questions about the Arizona bill and a round-table discussion about welfare. The answers were very well prepared and presented. Democracy is alive and well at Mesa Grande Academy.



From left to right: Toby SanChuan, Melanie Cross, Amanda Morgan, Zach Toppenberg, Jordan Curtis, Aaron Ruano, Aubree Stephens, and Jacquie Chevrier



Leo Sun



Karen Arimoto



MGA Reaches Out to International Students By Becky Jacobsson and Roxy Heinrich

Cultural diversity is helping to make MGA a strong school. We started several years ago with one international student, Shuai Wu, who is now a senior. We currently have 11 students from various countries who study with us.

Karen Arimoto in 8th grade comes to us from Japan. Naomi Park and Kevin Park claim South Korea as their homeland. Shearn Chua lives in Singapore, while the remainder of the students, Toby SanChuan, Leo Sun, Hero Fu, Zach Wang, Vicky Jin and Carol Chen, have their main residence in China.

With the exception of Naomi and Kevin, these students are here for golfing programs.

Each has an individual golf program with coaches. Most golfers must be accepted into a coach's training program in order to enter the United States. Some stay in American homes, some live with their parent(s) here, some live with other golf students in a group home. For instance, Shuai lives in Charlie and Kathy Garcia's home, while Shearn, Naomi and Kevin's mothers moved to the U.S. temporarily to get their children through school. All say that their parents give them tremendous support and encouragement in their endeavors here.

In the beginning, golf students came to MGA through the golf program at Oak Valley Golf Club, and several others have been referred to us by word of mouth. Some students became familiar with MGA because they were tutored by Mrs. Jacobsson.

Our program has gradually grown to support a part-time teacher. ESL instruction includes speech, reading, writing and assistance with comprehension in other classes. Mrs. Jacobsson interfaces with other teachers to help students transition into regular curriculum as soon as possible.

Several of the students were asked the following question: 1) Tell us your name (most have adopted an English first name to make it easier for us); 2) Where is your home; 3) What is your favorite things about living in the U.S.; 4) What is your least favorite thing about coping with living here; and 5) How do they celebrate Christmas in your country?

My name is Karen Arimoto. I'm from Kyoto, Japan. I like to talk with my friend and speak English. I like to play outside with kids!!! Eating American food is hard. At Christmas, we exchange presents and Santa Claus comes to my house. I send New Years cards to 200 people. Christmas is busy.

I'm Leo Sun from Shanghai, China. I like playing outside and knowing a lot of students. Studying for health quizzes isn't easy. At Christmas, students exchange presents and eat a lot of food. My mom will cook a lot of delicious food for the household.



Carol Chen

My name is Carol Chen, and I'm from the capital of Fujian Province, Fuzhou, China. My favorite thing about living in the U.S. is the good weather, especially the sunshine in CA. Not living together with my family is my least favorite thing about being in the U.S. On Christmas day people exchange presents and decorate the houses in China.

My name is Vicky Jin. I'm from Qingdao, China. My favorite thing is going on a trip, but my least favorite thing is getting up early in the morning. At Christmas, students exchange presents.

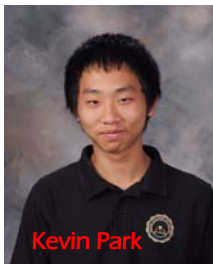


Zach Wang

My name is Zack Wang. I live in the Beijing mountain range in China. My favorite thing is joining a party or school activity and eating BBQ. My least favorite thing is remembering how to spell English words about health, English and history. In China, Christmas day is not important. But we have a holiday called "Spring Day." On that day, all family stays together. We eat a feast and get and send cards. We cut "spring paper" and put it on the wall. We also do some fireworks.



Vicky Jin



Kevin Park



Naomi Park



Shearn Ghua



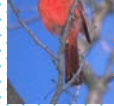
Hero Fu



Toby SanChuan



Shuai Wu



*This is an interview
with Julia and*

What are some of the Christmas traditions in France?

I don't know...yet.

What are your favorite foods over there?

Chocolate, baguettes, and cheese. Duh!

What is the best moment you have experienced while in France?

I have lots of random moments where I just remember that I am in FRANCE for NINE months and it makes me pretty happy.

Have you tried snail yet??? ha-ha.

Non, je ne mange pas les escargots!

What are the best things about going to school in France?

Learning a new language, meeting a lot of awesome people, experiencing a slower-paced lifestyle, and being able to travel all over Europe.

If there were some students that wanted to go to school in France some day what would your advise be?

DO IT. Also, if you get homesick easily, I would advise you to wait until your 2nd or 3rd year of college to go so that you already have a few years away from home under your belt. I feel like I have a new family over here, and if you make the effort to get to know the other students and learn the language, you will have a great time. Also, send out lots of postcards with the return address. You will probably get more packages that way (he he).

Have you made a lot of friends in France?

Yes! I feel so lucky that the group (about 21 students) here gets along so well. It is nice since we are all here because we want to be, and it's such a unique experience that you share with them and no one else.

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Hillary Nieland, Julia Ruybalid, Thomas Blum, Bridget Morgan, and Jazzi Zuppan are currently attending school in Cologne, France. They graduated in 2009 from MGA.

I will definitely have friends for life after the year is over.

What are the dorms like? or living quarters..

I know that the living situations are different at the various schools. In France, the girls dorms are arranged in a circular way on the floor. The middle is open with chairs and it feels like a big house with rooms as opposed to a long hallway. Each room has a shower, toilet, and sink. There are also community showers, toilets, a bath, and a FREE washer and dryer.

Is there anyone you want to say hi to via mga newspaper?? (like a shout out?)

Oh man. I feel so old! To all the seniors, I remember when you were freshmen and I hope you are having a wonderful year. You should most definitely consider taking a year abroad when you go to college. Remember, la vie est belle! ...and Go Lady Cardinals! :)

Julia Ruybalid





What are some of the Christmas traditions in France?

I'm not really sure about Christmas traditions. I know that there is a cake you eat and there is a little toy thingy inside it and whoever gets it in their piece gets to be the king for the day, but I think you do that on January 6, not on Christmas. Other stuff... There are Christmas lights up in the dorm, and lots of stores are decorated for Christmas. My favorite thing is probably that there are lots of Christmas markets where people come and sell all sorts of things, from handmade soaps, candles, and perfumes, to Christmas ornaments, to alpaca wool socks.

What are your favorite foods over there?

My favorite food is probably fondue and falafel galettes. Falafel galettes are a kind of sandwich with lettuce, tomatoes, and really spicy sauce.

What is the best moment you have experienced while in France?



My best moment: There is no way I could choose just one. I've done so many incredible things since I've been here.

Have you tried snail yet??? ha-ha:

Actually, I tried it in the U.S. and loved it! But, I haven't had the chance to try it here yet.

What are the best things about going to school in France?

Best things about going to school in France: obviously that we get to learn French. What better way to learn a language than to learn it in the country? Also, at this particular campus we are really close to Geneva, Switzerland, so instead of just getting immersed in French culture, we also get a lot of Swiss culture. It is really easy to travel in both countries, and to lots of others.

If there were some students that wanted to go to school in France some day what would your advice be?

Advice: Make as many French friends as possible, don't be afraid to make mistakes, and travel as much as possible.

Have you made a lot of friends in France?

All the ACA students are pretty close even though we haven't known each other for very long. Also, we have made friends with a few of the French students, and even some people that we have met in town.



What are the dorms like? or living quarters..

Dorms: The dorms are nice. The girls dorm has their own bathroom and shower in the room. There are a lot more rules than in the U.S., but they are a lot more relaxed.



~Hilary Nieland



T.R.

According to a 1995 survey, 7 out of 10 British dogs get Christmas gifts from their owners.



T.R.

According to the National Christmas Tree Association, Americans buy 37.1 million real Christmas trees Each year.



Senior **Sur-**
vey

Interviewees: Rachel Myhre, Jackie Chevrier, Jace Bauer, Laura Madrigal, Sean Hendrix, and Jadah Michaels

Q1: What is your favorite animal, and, if you could choose, what color would it be?

A1:

Rachel M: Rats and horses, Rats - White and gray, Horses - White.

Jackie C: Giraffe, the color they were born with?

Jace B: My cat Thor, exactly how he is.

Laura M: Sharks - Blue.

Sean H: Humans - Green.

Jadah M: Otters - Orange.



Rachel Myhre

Q2: What is your most embarrassing moment (that you do not feel pressured into sharing)?

A2:



Jadah Michaels

Rachel M: Falling in a volleyball game... on my face. It was really funny though.

Jackie C: I don't think I have one, I don't really get embarrassed.

Jace B: I do dumb things every day... I haven't been embarrassed in years.

Laura M: When I was 14, I laughed so hard I peed my pants, great huh?

Sean H: I was singing a solo for choir tour and my voice cracked... and Jadah laughed really hard.

Jadah M: I was wearing button up pants and I was walking through the hallway to my room. My pants got caught on the knob of a bookcase, and my pants tore off right in front of my brother, Garrett.

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Jackie Chevrier

Q3: What is your favorite song?

A3:

Rachel M: I don't have one.

Jackie C: "Baby" by Justin Beiber.

Jace B: "Time of Your Song" by Matisyahu

Laura M: Anything System of a Down

Sean H: "What If" by Jason Derulo

Jadah M: I don't have one.

Q4: Describe yourself in one or two words...

A4:

Rachel M: Clumsy

Jackie C: Charismatic; Secretly a Vampire

Jace B: Fruit of the Loom Model

Laura M: Comical; Sarcastic

Sean H: Probably Slow

Jadah M: Feisty and Gullible



Laura Madrigal

Q5: What is your favorite TV series?

A5:

Rachel M: Glee

Jackie C: Chuck (and Pushing Daisies)

Jace B: Lie To Me

Laura M: Bones

Sean H: I don't watch TV

Jadah M: Everybody Loves Raymond



Jace Bauer

Q6: What is your favorite part of the human face?

A6:

Rachel M: Eyes.

Jackie C: The eyes.

Jace B: Eyes and teeth.

Laura M: Lips.

Sean H: The eyes.

Jadah M: Eyes.



Sean Hendrix



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fains



BY: Gabriela Galarza

Who is your favorite actor?
Mertins Samerhalde

What is your favorite dessert?
Cupcakes

What is your favorite hobby?
The piano

What is your favorite color?
Black

Where do you like to shop?

For-
Betty

What
is your



ever 21,
Johnson
T.V. show
favorite?

LOST the X-files

Do you have a favorite subject?
None.....Lunch

Who
favor-



is your
ite
teacher?
Simm

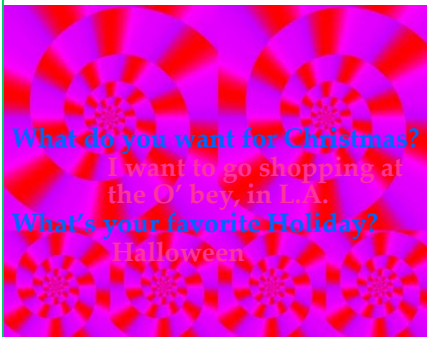
Dawg
Do
know
want
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what you
to study
you get
College?
Art

Maria Flores Interviewed

By

Kira Mitchell



What do you want for Christmas?
I want to go shopping at
the O' boy, in L.A.

What's your favorite Holiday?
Halloween

Q: Why do you like MGA?

A: Because of the nice people.

Q: Why did you come here?

A: It's a good school.

Q: What's your favorite
food?

Alliteration



Santa slapped the sissy serpent.

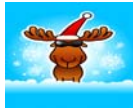
-Pablo Orozco

Christmas clowns carry colorful
cats on Christmas.

-Michael Davis-Small

Santa's super sled slid slowly.

-Charity Underwood



Rudolph the Red-nosed
Reindeer's nose shined with
radiance.

-Krysteena Davis

Christmas can cause cheerful
chatter.

-Adrian Insingo



Santa stuffs stockings with snow.

-Michael Morales

Christmas time is here
Happiness and cheer
Fun for all, the children call
Their favorite time of year
-Johanna Chevrier

It all starts with the lit up tree,
The decorative lights on the house,
And the chilly weather:
It's Christmastime! The best time
of year!
-Abigail Tohm

It's December
The time is near
People to remember
An event to hold dear

- Jeremy Noble



The snowmen with his coal black
eyes
Watches us eat pumpkin pies
He sees the children under the tree
Trying to find out what their gifts
will be
Then when snow flurries all
around
He sees the children sleeping sound
-Mark Soderblom

Christmas is a time for cheer.
It only comes just once a year.
Red, green, gold so bright.
I love to play in the snow till the
Day turns to night.
-Clayton Kruse

Trees are singing.
Bells are ringing.
Lights are twinkling.
Feeling that inkling,
That let's you know...
Christmas has come!

Christmas Aphorisms By MGA Juniors

* Christmas is the only holiday that lets an overweight, white old guy break into your house by chimney and not get arrested stealing cookies and milk.



*How many nuts would a nutcracker crack, if a nutcracker could actually crack nuts?

*Don't eat too much, or you'll hurt Santa's

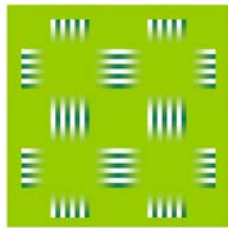
lap.

*Forget the cookies—Santa needs to lose weight—Weight Watchers

*Stores make sales—customers



*If you smell the scent of fruitcake, **RUN!**



*If Jesus wasn't born, Christmas would not exist.

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swered



Seniors answered this question: **What is your favorite Christmas family tradition?**

We open one gift Christmas Eve and it's always pa-

jamás—**Jaci Shankel**

Lamb and mint jelly—**Holli Morro**

Breaking a piñata—**Abby Garcia**

Watching "It's a Wonderful Life"—**Jadah Michaels**

Making candy cane cookies

and taking pictures while

we're making them—

Devon Heinrich

Wearing matching sweaters with my brother—**Tyler Oliverio**

Eating tamales—**Saul Orozco**

Waking up and eating awesome

pancakes or having brunch with our

really good friends who live next

door—**Dustin Fritzsche**

Cinnamon rolls on Christmas morn-

ing—**Taylor Cordry**

Sitting around an outside bonfire

telling jokes or funny stories and

blowing up firecrackers—**Daniel**

Gonzales

Waking up early and opening stock-

ings with my family while sipping

hot chocolate and coffee—**Amanda**

Preston

My family like to do a talent show

for money. Free cash—Whoop

hoo!—**Jackie Chevrier**

Opening South African "Christmas

Poppers" which have little presents

in them—**Ryan Marais**

My favorite festival would be Chi-

nese New Year. People cast the bur-

den of work and go back home for

reunion. People eat together, chat

together, and play together. When I

was a little kid, I loved to see my

elder cousins come back from Uni-

versity and play with me.—**Jingze**

San-



Inspirational Story

By: Kent Nerburn

URL:

http://www.bestinspiration.com/stories/The_Cab_Ride.htm



"Twenty years ago, I drove a cab for a living. It was a cowboy's life, a life for someone who wanted no boss. Because I drove the night shift, my cab became a moving confessional. Passengers climbed in, sat behind me in total anonymity, and told me about their lives. I encountered people whose lives amazed me, ennobled me, made me laugh and weep. But none touched me more than a woman I picked up late one August night.

I was responding to a call from a small brick fourplex in a quiet part of town. I assumed I was being sent to pick up some partiers, or someone who had just had a fight with a lover, or a worker heading to an early shift at some factory for the industrial part of town. When I arrived at 2:30 a.m., the building was dark except for a single light in a ground floor window.

Under such circumstances, many drivers would just honk once or twice, wait a minute, then drive away. But I had seen too many impoverished people who depended on taxis as their only means of transportation. Unless a situation smelled of danger, I always went to the door. This passenger might be someone who needs my assistance, I reasoned to myself. So I walked to the door and knocked.

"Just a minute", answered a frail, elderly voice. I could hear something being dragged across the floor. After a long pause, the door opened. A small woman in her 80s stood before me. She was wearing a print dress and a pill-box hat with a veil pinned on it, like somebody out of a 1940s movie. By her side was a small nylon suitcase. The apartment looked as if no one had lived in it for years. All the furniture was covered with sheets. There were no clocks on the walls, no knickknacks or utensils on the counters. In the corner was a cardboard box filled with photos and glassware.

I quietly reached over and shut off the meter. "What route would you like me to take?" I asked. For the next two hours, we drove through the city. She showed me the building where she had once worked as an elevator operator. We drove through the neighborhood where she and her husband had lived when they were newlyweds. She had me pull up in front of a furniture warehouse that had once been a ballroom where she had gone dancing as a girl. Sometimes she'd ask me to slow in front of a particular building or corner and would sit staring into the darkness, saying nothing.

As the first hint of sun was creasing the horizon, she suddenly said, "I'm tired. Let's go now." We drove in silence to the address she had given me. It was a low building, like a small convalescent home, with a driveway that passed under a portico. Two orderlies came out to the cab as soon as we pulled up. They were solicitous and intent, watching her every move. They must have been expecting her. I opened the trunk and took the small suitcase to the door. The woman was already seated in a wheelchair.

"How much do I owe you?" she asked, reaching into her purse.

"Nothing," I said.

"You have to make a living," she answered.

"There are other passengers," I responded. Almost without thinking, I bent and gave her a hug. She held onto me tightly.

"You gave an old woman a little moment of joy," she said. "Thank you." I squeezed her hand, then walked into the dim morning light. Behind me, a door shut. It was the sound of the closing of a life. I didn't pick up any more passengers that shift. I drove aimlessly, lost in thought.

For the rest of that day, I could hardly talk. What if that woman had gotten an angry driver, or one who was impatient to end his shift? What if I had refused to take the run, or had honked once, then driven away? On a quick review, I don't think that I have done anything more important in my life.

We're conditioned to think that our lives revolve around great moments. But great moments

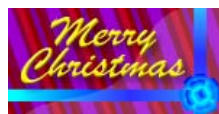


often catch us unaware - beautifully wrapped in what others may consider a "small one."

Christmas Inspiration by Kira Mitchell

About five years ago my grandma's church donated unwrapped toys for kids. That Christmas my family and some friends from church got together, went to San Bernardino and passed out the toys to all the kids. The one thing I will never forget is the faces on the kids when my dad said, "Santa couldn't make it here this year, so he asked us to give you your presents." We got to hand out presents to more than 30 kids in the area.

The next Sabbath some of the kids went to church with my grandma and were telling her how that was probably the first time they got Christmas presents. It felt good to make all those kids



they got that year nothing.



happy, knowing that a present instead of




VOLUME 1, ISSUE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Zach Toppenberg 1/01
- Jeremy Noble 1/02
- Sophia Kirsinas 1/03
- Clayton Cruse 1/12
- Jaci Shankel 1/12
- Ryan Marais 1/15
- Michael Mathis 1/18
- Kylia Clark 1/20
- Jack Nieland 1/23
- Katelynn Boadway 1/25
- Gabriela Galarza 1/25
- Aubree Stephens 1/30



 Barnes and Noble is holding a fundraiser for the MGA Junior Class on Sunday, January 9, 2011. The class will receive between 10-25% of the profits. Besides purchasing in the store that day, you may buy online with a code for the following 5 days. Please help us raise money for the Junior-Senior Banquet with your purchases. Watch for more details to follow.