

Alvin really rocks

By Benjamin Colburn
 Honorable Mention
 Opinion Writing
 Division: 3-4 Grade

I went to see the film, "Alvin and the Chipmunks" at the theater and I loved it.

The Chipmunks can really sing and they sing a lot. They are a group of three brothers named Alvin, Simon and Theodore. Their voices are squeaky! They look like very cute and cuddly.

There are little Chipmunk dolls that talk in Spanish when you squeeze them that their manager came up to generate more fans.

A funny thing in the movie is that Chipmunks crave waffles so much that every time they go to the store, they pile the cart full of toaster waffles.

The only thing I don't like about the movie was a character named Ian, the boss of Dave, the Chipmunk's dad. Ian was trying to steal the Chipmunks and make them perform on stage so he could make a lot of money off of them.

I think you should see this movie because it's funny and cool! It's also outrageously cute! You'll be cheered up if you're sad, and you'll be even happier if you're happy.

The author is a third-grader at Foxboro Elementary School in Vacaville.

Burger time!



Want some ketchup with that?

Who wouldn't be hungry after checking out this giant cheeseburger, as photographed by third-grader Beth Fortunato? The image earned her a second-place award in the 3-4 grade division in the photojournalism category of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition. She is a student in Laurie Brunke's classroom at Foxboro Elementary School in Vacaville.

Some students ready to tackle military option

Spencer Schultz plans to join the Marines after graduation. This article was originally published in the Rodriguez High School student newspaper, The Stampede. — Editor

By Spencer Schultz
 First Place, News Writing
 Division: High School

Not all students go to college or enter the job market immediately after high school. Some join the military.

With an unpopular war being waged in Iraq, some students won't give the notion of military service a second thought. But for others, it is an exciting option.

"I stopped trying to bend over backward to recruit kids," said Sgt. Paul Corner, a recruiter for the U.S. Marines. "If they want to join, they will make the decision on their own regardless of what I have to say."

Reasons for signing up vary. For 17-year-old senior Zach Medina, it is purely for the challenge. Zach recently joined the Delayed Entry Program (DEP) for the Navy. He was officially sworn in on July 13 with a four-year contract. He will be in active duty after graduation from high school. He hopes to be on the Navy SEAL team.

"I was originally going to do construction, but I looked into Special Forces and wanted the challenge."

Zach said he spent a lot of time on his decision to join the military rather than attend college.

"I couldn't go to college in my opinion because my grades are not up to par with that lifestyle." He signed up early for one reason only.

"I need to rank up, and joining early allows me to go in with some stripes on my shoulder."

Zach's motivation comes from his other relatives who serve.

He will ship off to Great Lakes, Ill., for boot camp on June 24. He claims he is not afraid.

Senior Daniella Sepulveda is taking a different approach to joining the military. Daniella, a successful cheerleader, joined the Navy on Aug. 29 to live out the dream she has had since the third-grade.

"I feel like I need to prove it to both myself and my grandma," says Daniella, who will ship off to Great Lakes on July 23. She does not plan on doing the "grunt" work. She is joining to reap the

benefits of scholarships and get a free education. Daniella took the ASVAB and was originally locked in to do the job of cryptology technician maintenance, but later she took another placement test, and now is set to enter the nuclear medicine field. She will go to school in sunny Pensacola, Fla.

These enlistees haven't been bowled over with support from their friends. Some react with complete shock, surprise and even disappointment.

"I just completely stopped telling everyone about joining," Daniella said. Others echoed her observation. Daniella does not care what other people think about her joining the military and is proud of her choice.

"I will be going through something that not a lot of people will have the guts to do, that takes pride."

Daniella plans on ranking E-2 into boot camp. She has signed a four-year, active duty contract with the Navy and plans on being an officer someday.

Senior Samantha Figueira decided to join the Marine Corps to "defend our country the best way" she knows how. Samantha said she could not fully explain why she joined the Marines. She just felt like "it was something she had to do."

Samantha plans to play for the Marine Corps marching band, but will have to audition. If she does not make it, she will go into journalism but is very confident that she will make the band. Samantha's friends and family fully support whatever she does.

"I am motivated by all the hikes, runs, and all the support from my family and friends," she said. She leaves for Parris Island, S.C., on June 23.

After boot camp her "A school" will take place in Quantico, Va. Samantha is undecided whether she will eventually attend college in the military, but likes knowing that she has the choice. Although she is excited about her choice, she isn't quite ready for boot camp.

"I admire them and respect them greatly for their desire to serve our country, the military is an excellent option," said Assistant Principle Jaron Barney.

The author is a senior at Rodriguez High School in Fairfield.

Some parents push their children too hard

By Sara Marin
 Honorable Mention/Opinion Writing
 Division: Middle School

Some parents push their kids too much and need to take it easy. Many kids today complain that their parents scold them if they get a bad score. No one is perfect, but some parents think their children have to be perfect.

Many kids in school stress if they don't get a good grade, because their parents will get mad. It is all right to make a mistake once in awhile.

For seven years I was on a competitive team, SASO, and I saw many parents on different teams yell at their kids for not getting a good time on a race. I would feel bad for those children because they would cry.

Since some parents push their children too hard,

their children will have anxiety (a stress problem).

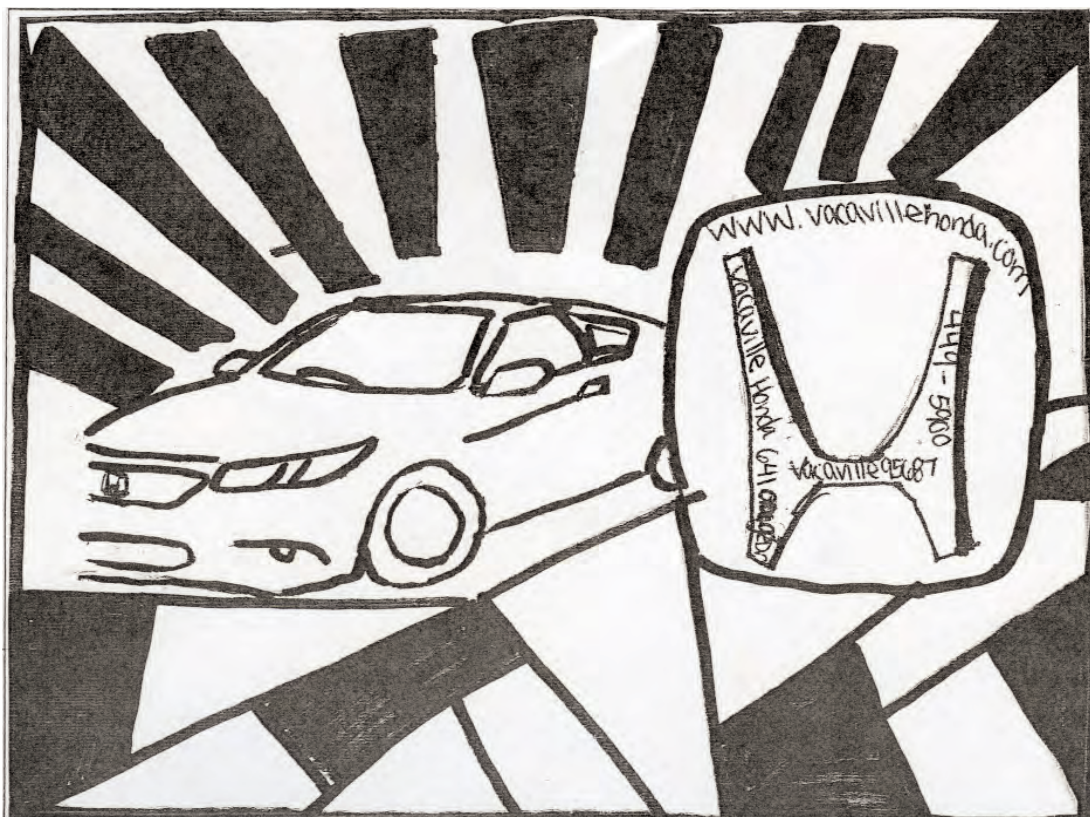
Some parents don't understand how hard our homework can be. They expect their children to be "perfect." This can and will affect many children for their future and today.

Some parents also give really long punishments for just one thing. Kids shouldn't have a long punishment because we have to learn from our mistakes and move on.

Parents should encourage their children to do their best and it is all right to not do well on one assignment. Parents, think about this question: Have you pushed your child too hard, and what does your child think?

The author is a seventh-grader at Holy Spirit School in Fairfield.

Design-an-Ad winner



This dynamic advertisement for Vacaville Honda earned sophomore Sarah Dumlao a second-place honor in the high school division of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition in the Design-an-Ad category. Sarah is a student in Stephanie Oates' classroom at Buckingham Charter Magnet High School in Vacaville.

Puzzles, Games, Comics winner

WORD SEARCH LIST:

Alamo
 Callison
 Elm
 Hemlock
 Notre Dame
 Sierra Vista
 Vaca Christian
 Will C. Wood
 Cambridge
 Fairmont
 Jepson
 Orchard
 Vaca High
 Browns Valley
 Cooper
 Foxboro
 Markham
 Padan
 Vaca Pena

Vacaville Schools

F R D N M E L I C A A O C N
 H E R O C A N N N C R T C O
 O P C T O F R E B C O A V S
 H O S R O W P K H N I M A P
 E O L E V A C A H I G H C E
 M C C D C E R L L A L E A J
 L W T A L D A O L A M R C N
 O N V M L E A S D I M G H M
 C F Y E L L A V S N W O R B
 K H O A T S I V A R R E I S
 P A A I Y F L S F H R N S H
 R A F O X B O R O T E N T M
 I L D S E S S R S N P N I L
 I A N A N E G D I R B M A C
 A O O Y N A F A I R M O N T

Look for that school

This word search for Vacaville schools earned Maria Nuño of Notre Dame School a second-place in The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition in the puzzles and games category in the middle school division. Maria is an eighth-grader in Ms. Battiste's classroom.