

Hybrid the car of the future

By Brianna Krystek
Honorable Mention,
Opinion Writing
Division: Middle School

Are you tired of paying high prices at the gas pump or sending U.S. dollars to the Middle East? Are you concerned about the environment? Maybe you should consider buying a hybrid electric car.

Many people have different opinions on these two cars. Hybrids use electricity and gas. My opinion is that hybrids are better for the environment. When you use electricity to power the car there is no smog.

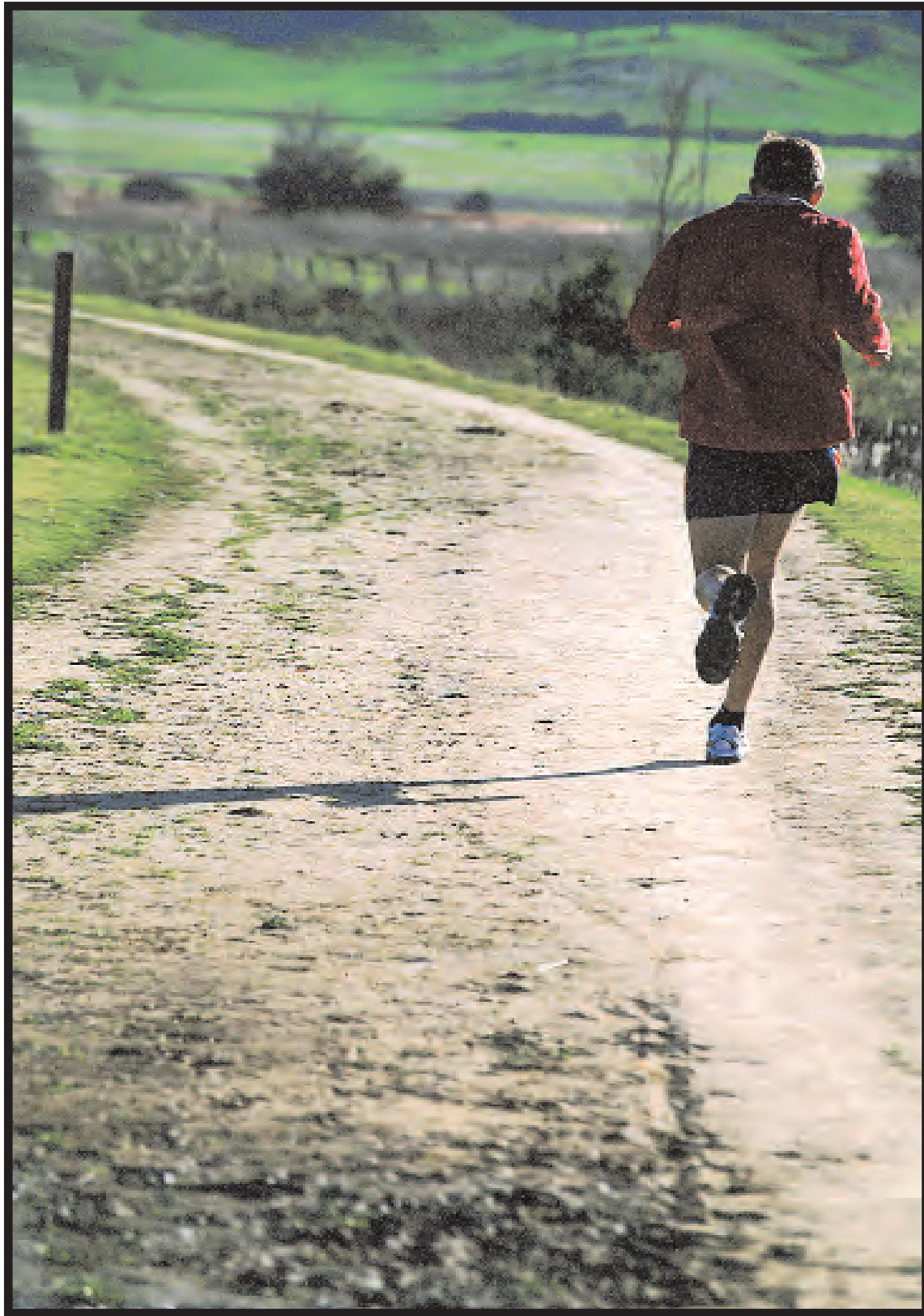
This means hybrids have no exhaust. Hybrids are not polluting the air. Hybrids require no regular maintenance and have an 8- to 10-year warranty on the motor. Gas cars usually have a 5-year warranty and require a regular maintenance.

Hybrids also get breaks on state and federal taxes and lower costs on insurance. Hybrids can also drive in carpools lanes, even if the driver is driving alone! Hybrids are more expensive to buy now because they are new but prices will come down in the future.

In my opinion, hybrids are better for the environment, my country, my wallet and are the way of the future.

The author was a seventh-grader at Holy Spirit School in Fairfield when this article was submitted in February 2008.

A run in the sun



Jogger enjoys a break in the weather

A jogger enjoys the sun at Lagoon Valley on Feb. 5, after a long week of wind and rain in this photo that earned Tiffany Wohler an honorable mention in the high school division of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition in the photojournalism category. Tiffany was a sophomore at Buckingham Charter Magnet High School in Stephanie Oates' classroom when this entry was submitted in February 2008.

Hipwaders features one of our teachers

By Amy Liem
Honorable Mention, Feature Writing
Division: High School

With recent success in children's music on XM radio, you'd think that The Hipwaders is a fairly new band, but that is not the case.

The Hipwaders, which began playing children's rock about four years ago, has released two CDs. The first in 2001, and more "Educated Kid," which was released this year. But this indie children band's radio success is not the only hot topic. Rodriguez High School students may recognize the band's drummer. He's ceramics teacher Nick Baca, who has taught here since 2001.

Mr. Baca is a late addition, joining the Hipwaders two years ago.

"Well, they must have all spontaneously conbusted," Baca replied when asked why the band had trouble with keeping drummers before his arrival. "Drummers are in short supply, so they end up often being in multiple bands and then having scheduling conflicts."

Topping the XM radio charts (beating out Disney stars Hannah Montana, and "High School Musical") with their upbeat and catchy song "Educated Kid," the Hipwaders are proving to be a top contender in the business.

The group second CD is much more developed. It seems to have found its niche.

Honestly, if I were in first grade, I'd love this. "Energetic, unique, and rebels." That's how Mr. Baca described the band. The band's mission, says Mr. Baca, is to bring kids into the world of rock music.

"We believe children's music can be elevated into an art form," said Mr. Baca. "Little Baby Brother" talks about the responsibilities that go with having a younger sibling.

"Don't break my toys, and I'll love you forever."

It's endearing, and reminds me of Tommy and Dill Pickles for fans of the Nickelodeon show "Rugrats."

I enjoy the songs, even if the intended age is 11 and under. Having a 1-year-old niece, I can see the appeal the Hipwaders have on the younger crowd with their pop-ish beats and catchy melodies. They are a bit like The Beatles-meet-the-Wiggles-in-kindergarten. If anything, you'll finish listening to the CD with at least one song fully memorized.

If you want your younger sibling to be an "Educated Kid," then you should consider introducing them to The Hipwaders.

I give this CD 3 stars out of 5, only because, I myself, am no longer in the 11-and-under category, but I still appreciate their efforts trying to make it in a Disney-dominated children's music world. Check out The Hipwaders at <http://www.myspace.com/thehipwaders>.

The author was a senior in Becky Bowen's journalism class at Rodriguez High School in Fairfield when this article was submitted in February 2008.

PS3 is an expensive investment in a game system

By Renick Cleveland
Third Place (Tie), Opinion Writing
Division: 5-6 Grade

It'll blow a hole in your wallet. I think that the PS3 costs way too much and I know a lot of people who agree with me. A lot of people would buy it for the Blue-Ray DVD player because they cost about \$400 on their own.

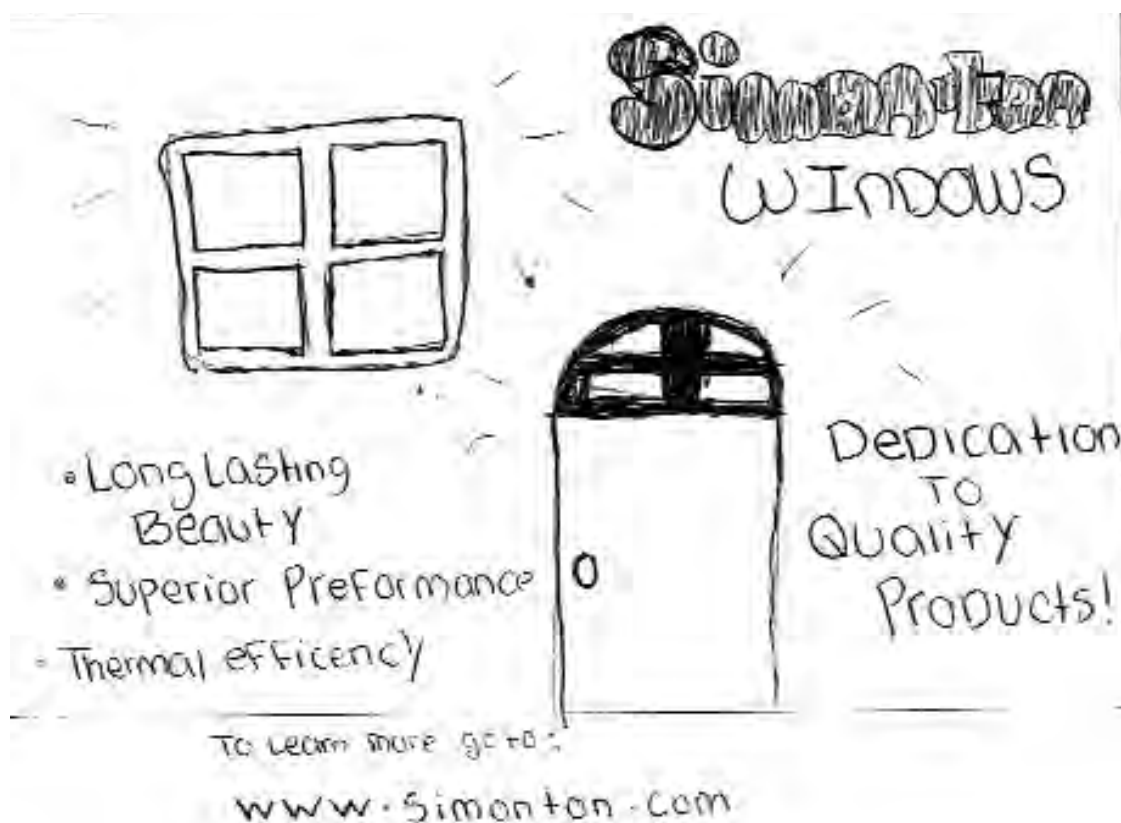
One reason it should drop in price is

because the amount for the games and the system are a lot more than Wii or the Xbox 360. But back to the Blue-Ray. Once they start to come out with a wider selection of Blue-Ray DVDs the Playstation is going to increase in sales. I really think the Blue-Ray DVD player is the only thing keeping this thing on the charts. Because of pricing and the fact that other systems cost less, and that they are starting to get a wider selection

of games, the Playstation should start making games for their system only — instead of coming out with multi-platform games. I would not buy the PS3 until it gets a wider selection of games and more movies, and plus the system will cost less by then.

The author was a fifth-grader at Holy Spirit School in Fairfield when this was submitted in February 2008.

Design-an-Ad winner



This advertisement featuring Simonton Windows earned Amal Oraikat a third-place honor in the high school division of the Design-an-Ad contest in The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition. Amal was a junior at Armijo High School in Lynn Herring's classroom when this entry was submitted in February 2008.

Puzzles, Games, Comics winner

50 STATES

F I Y I C B M I M I C H I G A N E Y L A D I E S L D V B
P A L A B A M A I S O J T F R E S H Z X N B M K L L W Q
R I H T U P J L S A S T E R K W A S J M A J F G O A F L
U N D A H K L A S S G O N H O H K D I B L K L P U F G K
U R Q U T E P S O N B M N P R A M F P N Y N D F I J K U
I O S W R U O K U A I L E R H M I L P C R S U I S M E E
P F L O R I D A R K A N S A S P N O I A A A J U I W R G
K I A B D J P O I Q R I S I I S N F S D M O N T A N A K
G L V I R G I N I A D S E N O H E N S S T U E A N M K G
Y A N M I Y O H C T Y N E I N I S I I A W A H C A D S O
E C O L O R A D O O X D Z G I R O I S T K A D K Y J A P
O S H A R S D H R K P C A R L E T I S K N N C A R E R L
R I N D I A N A E A L S O I L G A Q I U B D O A V V B B
S D H C M H O U G D T I U V I N W E M O H 7 Y P O E E W
D A M O H A L K O H D W P T E O Z W A S H I N G T O N I
L H B D E F J I N T W F R S H R J V Y G C R E N I U R T
C O N N E C T I C U T H K E Z T M L A I Y A H I C N T U
D D T Y R Q W M P O C K H W Y H E O B E N I A M B D Y D
L M A S S A C H U S E T T S S C U E N F A Z Y O R L E S
F B E E M S C E T A S H V Y W A K E N T U C K Y N A S V
I C O P I D N A L S I E D O H R G O C I X E M W E N R B
Q O H T V L L A E I O H I I H O F P M W U T H E J D E C
W O P E N N S Y L V A N I A L L J N E W Y O R K K L J P
A N Z X A K R N E H G E O R G I A C O N N E C T I W O
S O Y A P A T O K A D H T R O N J D J F E R A W A L E D
W F K S O U T H C A R O L I N A R E V N C D A O U R N K

Student Sarah Case managed to get all 50 states included in this word search puzzle that earned her a third-place honor in the 5-6 Grade Division of the puzzles and games contest of The Reporter's Campus Star student journalism competition. Sarah was a sixth-grader in Ms. Battiste's classroom at Notre Dame School when this entry was submitted in February 2008.