



## Vaguely necessary

By JAPNEET KAUR  
Photo editor

## Ignorance still with us

I left the house yesterday in high spirits and a half-Indian outfit, with a light rain falling sporadically. Despite having to double back past what appeared to be half of the neighborhood just hanging out outside because I forgot my umbrella, I was in an excellent mood. I expected nothing more than to get where I was trying to go, maybe take a few pictures and enjoy my walk as well as the time spent at my destination. Little did I know that yesterday would be another one of those days in my life that would be marked by the reminder of all the people in the world who look at me and see nothing but a turban – a terrorist.

I walked past a woman and two children coming home from school, who moved a little to the side to give me some room to walk. I walked past another woman who made eye contact with me and smiled happily, nodding her head. Then I saw two young boys coming from the side – they were further up ahead, so I ended up walking behind them, but not before one of them saw me and nudged the other.

They both started laughing obnoxiously, saying things like “Look at the rag on her head.” I’m almost sure I wasn’t supposed to hear that. We walked on a little, then the second boy suddenly let out with a loud “KABOOM!” Both of them laughed and looked back toward me sneakily. Of course, all that was left to hear was the imitation of machine gun fire, which the second boy so kindly supplied.

The direction we were walking in was narrowing, and one look back at me told them I was headed in the same direction as they were. They veered off to the left and hung back until I was out of sight. Still within hearing range, I managed to hear a few other of the lovely things they were saying about me.

Oh, I feel so special.

Honestly, I don’t know how I’m supposed to feel after being in this kind of a situation so many times throughout my life. I can just hear the people who would read something like this and think that I should get rid of my turban or “go back to my country,” or else expect to be treated like this. Why, though? Why should I be treated differently because I’m practicing my religion in a country that was founded on the principle of freedom of religion?

I’d like to hear from you about this. E-mail your thoughts to [monitor@ohlone.edu](mailto:monitor@ohlone.edu). How you feel about the situation, if you’ve ever been in a similar one – maybe even how you feel if/when you see a turban.

On the bright side, I had a great day regardless – maybe I’m growing numb to ignorant people!

# Festival of future stars

By DEVERY SHEFFER  
Staff writer

About 800 students from 27 different high schools packed almost every building on campus over the weekend, vying for awards in dance, theater and other dramatic productions at the 15<sup>th</sup> annual high school theater festival.

While most of the schools were from the Bay Area, there were a few from other parts of California and even one from out of state, Nevada Union High School.

This two-day event is designed to give high school students a chance to come together at Ohlone to perform skits, monologues and musicals, among others, to several judges and receive helpful feedback on their act.

Tom Blank, Associated Professor of Theater, has been in charge of this festival since day one, 15 years ago. His inspiration for the festival came to him when he saw a similar event at University of Nevada at Las Vegas.

The first day of the festival, the schools performed every act twice. The next day, acts that did well performed again in the outdoor amphitheater for the final round. The award ceremony commenced shortly after in the Epler Gymnasium.

There are 35 categories in which students can participate. They are made up of all aspects of theater including costume design, theatrical lighting, and monologues. Each category is based on different criteria, because each is unique so there is no standard for judgment.

“The arts are very subjective,” Blank explained. So he does his best to mix old-fashioned judges with those with more modern taste and so forth, so that the students can get a wide range of reviews.

One of the judges, Tim Davis, was what they call a floating judge. He served wherever a judge was needed, at first judging original humorous monologues, then moving on to other events.

This year is his fifth year as a judge for the festival. He spent the previous six years helping to run it while he was a student at Ohlone. He has an A.A. degree from Ohlone in Theater Arts.

According to Davis, the festival is a good recruiting tool for the college, as well as a great experience for the high school students. He called it a “very positive festival” because it is very encouraging to the participants. The judgment is all about giving the students constructive criticism and helping them to improve.

An interesting trend that emerged at this festival is what Blank called “tent city.” People started to bring tents about five years ago due to bad weather conditions. Since then, the Palm Bosque has become a designated area for schools to stake their claims. This year it was filled with tents and tables, serving as dressing rooms and meeting points.

Arcadia Conrad could be found prepping her students for performances out in “tent city.” Conrad is a full-time drama teacher from Cupertino High School. This year their school brought about 30 students from their advanced honor theater to participate in the festival. Their

students were involved in a number of categories this year including costume design, the one-act play and humorous monologues.

Conrad feels their school’s strength is in their humor, because she feels her students have a talent for making people laugh. Last year their school brought home seven trophies. Still, “it’s not about the trophies,” said Conrad. “It’s about getting out here and participating.”

High school students could be found all over the campus dressed in all kinds of costumes. “Most kids spend time exploring the campus, [which] is exactly what we want them to do,” said Blank.

Freshman drama students like Hailey Knott couldn’t participate in the competition so they worked as high school student monitors. Knott is from Bishop O’Dowd high school. She ran any grunt work that needed to be done, like getting glasses of water for participants and turning in judge score cards. But primarily her job was to watch the classroom doors to make sure people were going in and out during performances. She described acting as “a really fun way to [make] a total fool of yourself on stage.”

Sophomore Bethany Robinson, on the other hand, was able to take a more active role on the stage. About 25 students from her school, Clayton Valley High School in Concord, attended the festival.

She and her best friend Courtney Gould, also a sophomore, made it to the final round with their performance of the “food fight scene” from the 1962 film “Miracle Worker.” Robinson played the deaf-and-blind Helen Keller and Gould played her stubborn mentor Anne Sullivan in the category for Contemporary Humor Ensemble. Their scene was quite theatrical—it included the two girls slapping one another, the application of apple sauce to one’s face and the emptying of a glass of water of the head of the other.

“I feel we did the best that we could do...[which] is amazing by the way,” she said playfully of their performance in the finals. The judges at the final round gave them good reviews. One said it was the best scene he had seen his two years of judging, while another suggested that they needed to slap harder to add more drama and make the scene more realistic.

Robinson’s costume for the performance was a peach dress accented with lace. It was the same dress her mother wore on her wedding day after the ceremony was over. Robinson was very grateful that her mother let her wear the dress, considering the messy scene.

Robinson and her friend Gould ended up taking second place in their category. Although they did not come in first, they were thrilled to accept their trophy and received a huge applause from their classmates.

The gymnasium was anything but quiet with 800 animated high school students crammed in for the final awards ceremony. They danced and cheered as they caught the flying tee shirts and posters being thrown by Ohlone student monitors.

James Lewis, a liberal arts major at Ohlone, has been Master of

Ceremonies for the festival for the past six years.

He wore a large and colorful jester’s hat and kept the crowd lively with his witty remarks. His favorite part of the whole experience, he said, are the kids

who come back to Ohlone for the festival following years and recognize him, calling it “aphenomenal feeling.”

Over 100 trophies and certificates were awarded at the ceremony. Awards were given both individually and school-wide, the latter category including the Spirit Award, the Judge’s Sweepstake and the Sweepstake award.

Student award winners put on quite a show

for their acceptances, running down the bleachers at full speed and raising their trophies with triumphant skyward thrusts. One dance student from Irvington High School in Fremont did a flip over the bottom stair after his acceptance of his second trophy.

The Spirit Award was given to the school of Robinson and Gould, Clayton Valley High School. They stood out when they went out of their way to help a competing group who showed up late and unprepared. This award represents the sportsmanship of the event—that the schools aren’t here against each other, but here to learn from each other, explained Blank.

The Judge’s Sweepstake award is the second biggest award of the ceremony, representing the highest average of points per performance.

This award was created shortly after the festival first began to celebrate the unsung competitors who work hard but for one reason or another bring small groups to the festival and would never stand a chance to win the judges against dominating schools with 50 or more students competing.

This year that school was Jefferson High School from Daly City. Heike Mansel has been teaching dance at Jefferson for 11 years. She brought her 20 students this year to compete in five dance events. All five groups made it to the finals and three out of the five received trophies for their dance routines in the award ceremony.

The Sweepstakes award came with the biggest trophy. It goes to the school with the highest total points overall. When the students were asked by Lewis for a drum roll, they quickly obliged. The crowd’s drum roll of feet stomping and knee slapping thundered



An actor competes for an award.

through the auditorium in anticipation of the final award.

Bishop O’Dowd, a Catholic private high school in Oakland, dominated the award ceremonies, taking home 17 awards, seven of them being first place. For this they were awarded the Sweepstakes award. All the students rushed from the stands to jump and cheer holding their trophy high in the air.

“Yeah, it’s a competition but it’s also about sharing,” said Blank after the ceremony was over. He pointed out that he particularly appreciates the hard work that Ohlone’s own students put into the festival.

One such student was ASOC Vice President Kevin Feliciano. He was head of festival central for his seventh year in a row. His job was to keep things in order and make sure the students know when and where to go. He was adorned in 1960’s tie-dye shirt and bell bottoms to promote the summer musical “Sweet Charity.”

At the awards ceremony he even got to present the award for Maxi Musical theater to James Monroe High School in North Hills, CA for their performance based on “Little Me”—a coveted award to win, according to Blank.

“[Today is] fun, but the days leading up to it aren’t fun,” explained Feliciano, adding that the planning for this event started back in August.

Blank said he was proud to see Ohlone students rise to the occasion, problem solve and be positive role models for the high school students.

The festival grows more and more each year. This year alone there were three new high schools that joined in the festivities. It has certainly come a long way from the 50 or 60 students it started with 15 years ago, said Blank.

# Tribute to a dance innovator

By **SEAN NERO**  
Staff writer

Acclaimed actress Kres Mersky performed her one-person show "Isadora Duncan: A Unique Recital" on Friday night, April 3, at the Smith Center.

Mersky chronicled the later years of 20<sup>th</sup> century modern dance pioneer Isadora Duncan.

Mersky was portrayed as Duncan, who tried to raise money for her dance school.

Mersky portrayed Duncan at a time in which she was no longer dancing but still very much interested in teaching it.

Duncan was presented as a well-spoken, witty woman with a very

free view on marriage, love, women's rights and life in general.

The show began with Duncan telling the audience of her early childhood living in San Francisco.

Duncan told of her mother's divorce from her father at an early age due to her dad having extramarital affairs and her subsequently being raised to think that her father was a monster.

Duncan said her mother went from a devout Catholic to an atheist following the divorce.

Duncan said her father eventually tried to reconcile with the family but neither her mother nor her three other siblings wanted him in their lives.

Duncan later told of her family's

relocation to Oakland, California after the divorce and how being raised in the Bay Area and seeing the flow of the sea influenced her decision to dance.

Duncan told the audience of her displeasure of ballet likening the dancers to skeletons due to their lifeless movement and emotionless facial expressions, despite the fact that ballet was the dominant form of dance at the time.

Duncan sought to change the public's perception of dance and created modern dance, which she called "Beauty that flows from the inspired human soul."

Mersky (as Duncan) got the audience involved with the act by talking as if the audience were the

people whom she was appealing to for funds for her school.

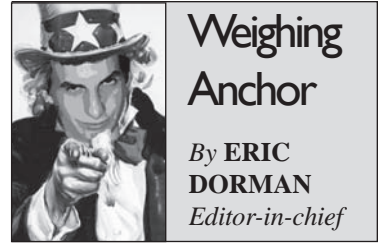
Show attendee Nathan Carney said he "really felt immersed in the play" due to Mersky's use of audience interaction.

Mersky performed the entire show without any costume changes or stagehands.

Mersky also made use of a minimalist stage set consisting of little more than a table, a few chairs and a hatbox containing a few items.

Mersky does these plays across America and in Canada.

The next event at the Smith Center will be held Friday April 17 at 8 p.m. and will feature Billboard chart-topping jazz musician and composer Jay Soto.



**Weighing Anchor**

By **ERIC DORMAN**  
Editor-in-chief

## Greening the future

America: on the decline? For some, it's a question; for others, a statement of fact, but for all it's an issue we can't help but consider. One can draw evidence for or against the idea from almost every quarter, but certainly, it's hard to remain upbeat when looking over federal budgets, like the \$3.8 trillion behemoth President Obama is currently proposing—every year, it seems, we spend more money and see less from it. In the face of this cold reality, it's tempting to try to staunch the flow of greenbacks and support the Capitol Hill Republicans in their attempts to take a hatchet to the "superfluous" spending in the budget, particularly the \$129 billion check ready to be cut for "green" job creation. If we really want to stem the flow of job losses, though, it is imperative that we do just the opposite and recognize green tech for what it is—the single greatest opportunity to resurrect the American brand and regain us our status as a frontrunner in the global arena.

Whether we slowed up or the rest of the world just got faster, America today is no longer that frontrunner. The mainstays of American industry—steel, the automobile, even the semiconductor—have all been usurped by Asian nations, countries filled with hungry, industrious workers who create them faster, better and more cheaply than we do. We live in a global economy, and we're falling behind: we may still be the land of baseball and apple pie, but the apples come from China, the caps are made in Thailand and the steroids are from Cuba. There isn't much we can call our own anymore, and the job losses due to outsourcing reflect that.

We'll never make a microchip or a steel girder more cheaply than China, but if we focus on becoming global experts on renewable energy, we gain a different sort of edge—a mental one. The world will always need energy, but we're quickly running out of our dirty and planet-warming current sources—petroleum and coal. Within the next 50 years, there will be an incredible demand for clean and lasting energy sources—sources, like solar, that need only funds and innovation to develop. When that demand comes, why shouldn't we be the ones with the physical and intellectual supply?

America's current dilemma is due to a simple fact—we've allowed ourselves to become so ensconced in the past, making the cars of the past and thinking in the ways of the past, that we've largely lost sight of the future. Now is the time to change that, and what better way to build a bright future for ourselves than to prepare for that future today?

America: on the decline? Only if we let it.

# Solar-powered boat makes big waves

By **ZUNERA SYED**  
Staff writer

Solar-powered boat owner, Computer Science Professor Jon Degallier, is one of the forward-looking people participating in energy efficient projects.

Degallier likes fixing boats as well as building concrete steps, dams, fishponds etc.

"I have a couple [of] places in the wilderness where I can never run out of projects. I am also crazy about alternate energies."

Degallier bought the 15-to-20-year-old boat two years ago, which had an engine that wouldn't work.

Converting this ordinary boat into a solar-powered one, took Degallier one month, and not much money out of his pocket.

The motor cost \$1,200. The batteries cost \$400. The solar panel cost \$900. Cables and other accessories cost \$400.

"[It's] very cheap considering all of the fuel is now free."

Degallier's boat, named Lake Shrimp, goes from five to seven miles per hour. "It's like a turtle. It's

slow but it gets there," he said.

The boat got its name because "it is small and does not look like much; so the shrimp part of the name is for the ridicule... it actually is quite a jewel on the inside."

Degallier said his boat is "super relaxing" because it moves slowly through the water, making it easier to drive.

He keeps his boat on the water during summer and brings it home during the colder season.

"This will only be my second season so I'm still experimenting."

The boat runs on a mid-sized 24-volt electric motor. "The motor pulls and also turns the boat at various speeds, as controlled by a little remote device, just like for a DVD player," Degallier said.

Two batteries are connected to the motor.

The batteries are charged by a 24-volt solar panel and the solar panel is mounted on the roof.

Degallier said Mark Twain's books about life on the Mississippi River influenced him to build his own kayak when he was younger and paddle down the Mississippi



Photo courtesy of Jon Degallier

## Professor of Computer Science Jon Degallier stands next to his solar-powered houseboat.

from Minnesota to New Orleans. He has been interested in boats ever since.

Degallier initially purchased the houseboat because he couldn't build on the property he owns at Clear Lake, which is very steep and rocky.

"It is basically a 45-degree cliff, with a road on top and a beach at the

bottom; a perfect rock path project for retirement!" Now, when Degallier goes to Clear Lake, he stays on his boat.

Solar power is nothing new, though some might think it is. French inventor Auguste Mouchout was one of the first to convert solar power into mechanical power in the 1860s.

# Psychology class makes comeback

By **ANNA BIARITZ ROLDAN**  
Staff writer

A Psychology and Literature class that had not been offered for six years, is now making a comeback. This fall English professor Cynthia Katona will be teaching the Psychology and Literature class.

Katona said that the class had not run for so long because she rotates a series of English classes semester after semester and simply got busy, but she did say that she is "now excited to have it back!"

Katona started this class 25 years ago and is the only one to teach it. The class will be talking about the close connection between psychology and literature. She gave examples and saying that, "Freud took the name of his famous Oedipus complex from Sophocles' ancient play 'Oedipus Rex.' Juna studied myth, folklore and literature to understand his archetypes." Like the example, English 129 will discuss how fiction is strongly

about the characters, how they act and how they react. According to Katona, "literary critics often subject characters in novels and short stories to Freudian analysis." She added, "I strongly believe that most people read literature because they are interested in human experience and what motivates people and what makes them tick."

Psychology and Literature will discuss topics such as suicide, addiction, humor, anger, alienation, joy, boredom, fear, guilt and anxiety, which are all a part of the human being's psychological nature. These topics will be taken out of poems, short stories, novels and plays. This class can seat 25 students and Katona said "the best thing about this class is the good discussion that comes from a special set of students who come" to her Monday night classes each semester.

The class is worth 3 units that are transferable to both UCs and USCs. It will be held Mondays from 6:30 to 9:50 p.m.

## Contest seeks stories

By **NICOLE JOHNSON**  
Features editor

Students must ready their pens and carry a creative mind for the upcoming seventh annual writing contest. Students can write a fictional or personal essay to submit. Submissions will be accepted beginning April 13 through April 24.

The contest winner will get a prize of \$250 and get their story (or excerpt from it) published in the *Monitor*. The prize will be given in May.

To be eligible to participate, one must have been enrolled in no fewer than three units at Ohlone during the 2008-'09 year.

Only two entries per person will be accepted, with works no longer than 2,000 words. Stories cannot be submitted electronically. Each entry should have a cover page containing the title of the story, the writer's name, telephone number, mailing address and e-mail address.

The pages that contain the text of the story should have only the title of the story and page number.

Stories must be typed and double-spaced, and the pages must be stapled and numbered. The contest will be managed by Carmen Madden, Assistant Professor of English. She oversees the judging of the stories. Stories can be placed in Madden's campus mailbox which is located in Building 1.

Stories can also be mailed to: Carmen Madden, Assistant Professor of English, Ohlone College 43600 Mission Boulevard, Fremont, California 94539

Questions can be directed to Madden at [cmadden@ohlone.edu](mailto:cmadden@ohlone.edu), or by calling 659-6251.