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Back to High School

By Sophie Braccini



Bonnie Hazarabedian views Campo's online registration

Photo Sophie Braccini

Bonnie Hazarabedian feels she has the back-to-high-school routine under control

this year. Son Zachary is entering 10th grade at Campolindo High and she won't

get the surprises she got last year. "First, parents are in for a big sticker shock," remem-

bers Bonnie, "What you have to pay when your children are in middle school is nothing compared with the big check in high school."

Her son plays football and fees can add up rapidly with each sport having a registration fee and Boosters' Club; the same goes for the performing arts program. The other thing she was not prepared for was the haircut. "I didn't know the children's pictures would be taken on Cougar Day," remembers Hazarabedian. This year, the haircut was done ahead of time.

Another big issue is transportation. "There are no school buses for the high schools, so we work a mix of carpooling and public transportation." That means a trip to Loard's. In addition to ice cream, both the Orinda and the Moraga stores sell bus

passes, saving a trip to Walnut Creek.

After Loard's, the next trip will be to Costco. "I buy my kids one meal a week from the school's hot lunch menu," says Hazarabedian, "the rest is prepared at home, so before school starts I go to Costco to stock up on healthy food that can survive hot back-packs and lockers." Her favorites are turkey jerky, fruit juice boxes, granola bars and dried fruits. "Food is a big

item for my son," explains the caring mother, "with football right after school he needs to plan for two lunches."

On the other hand, she luckily bypassed the clothing and accessory headache. "Zach couldn't care less," says his mother, "he's been running around with the same back-pack for years; it's all beaten up, but he wouldn't change it." It will probably be a different story when sister Callie reaches Campo.

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Heading Back to College

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Daniel Johnson, Ben Tyson and Xander Smith leaving for the University of Arizona

Photo Andy Scheck

Along with all the usual back to school items - new sneakers and a backpack there are a few unexpected things on the list for my soon-to-be college sophomore, Ben Tyson. Freshman year was no problem due to the itemized list provided by staff at the University of Arizona. Our son's dorm room was furnished which meant a bed, small closet and a desk, and a tiny refrigerator. This year he'll be living in the aging Kappa Alpha fraternity house, which translates into an empty room. Along with clothing, he'll need: a bed, a window air conditioner, sheets, pillow, desk with the hope that there will be some studying going on and a dresser for his collection of very attractive t-shirts. He already has a cell phone - can't leave home without it, laptop and printer.

Definitely not required,

but on his wish list is a TV and Xbox video game player.

Not to be forgotten: a fat check to pay tuition before classes start, a meal card, a fully loaded ATM card care of Mom and Dad, and possibly most important - a pre-paid Campus Health Center fee. Although we are lucky enough to have good health insurance coverage, the campus health center is not a preferred provider. Not a bad deal for \$80. per semester.

He's already ordered his textbooks electronically, so they'll be waiting for pick-up at the bookstore. How ironic is it, that a used copy of "Essentials of Economics" is not all that economical at \$102.75.

He assures me, "it's all good, I can handle it," referring to a mattress, A/C unit, and furniture hunt. Sleeping on the floor or a fairly nasty frat sofa, might be just

the motivation to purchase furnishings for his new digs.

For students at colleges farther afield, packing wisely for their plane ride is a necessity, especially with new luggage restrictions. Boxes with overflow items can be shipped U.P.S. To be honest, once postage is considered some students choose to pick up inexpensive bedding at their destination. Fortunately across America there is no shortage of stores like Target and Macys for towels, hangers, stackable plastic crates and mattress pads.

The hardest part is saying good-bye. Like many parents we'll worry about safety, money and time management, not to mention alcohol. But it's become abundantly clear that our eldest is ready to start the next chapter of his life - even/especially if it includes toga parties.

Local Lord of the Letters

Submitted



Winner Conrad Bassett-Bouchard left and John Williams of the National Scrabble Association

Moraga resident and UC San Diego sophomore Conrad Bassett-Bouchard returned last week from Orlando, FL where he competed

in and won the 2008 National Scrabble Association Division 2 Championship.

Over 800 top players from all over the world com-

peted in six divisions for prize money and awards in the four day event. Bassett-Bouchard won Division 2 (second highest of the six divisions) and earned \$4,120.00 and a Tiffany plaque for his work, finishing with a 24-4 record which was the highest of anyone in any division. His nearest competitors in Division 2 were Canadians John Stardom of Ottawa, ON and Shannon Burns of Airdrie, AB who finished at 21-7. Each player played seven games each day and players were reseeded after each match to ensure that the best players played each other on the last day.

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