

Securing safety, banning bounce

Administration takes understandable initiative in maintaining safety

by **Christine Chang**

On the last day of Back in Action week this January, there was a conspicuous absence of buoyancy. In previous years, students flocked to the Rally Court anticipating colorful air-filled contraptions on which they could jump almost superhuman heights. But after scattered incidents of injuries that occurred during events last year, including a fractured nose, administration warily excluded inflatable games from future school festivities. This was apparent as students came to a seemingly emptier Rally Court this year during Back in Action week. While the ban of bounce houses struck many students as overly protective on administration's part, there's a bit of good reasoning in this move that can't be overlooked.

Granted, high school activities don't exactly translate into day care play sessions. And the last thing thrill-seeking teens need is a baby sitter in disguise. All we asked for was some fun and bounce—a great deal less calamitous than drugs or sex. But upholding the virtue of safety is the notion that getting knocked on the nose isn't the most agreeable price to pay for a lunchtime of frolicking.

In the end, MVHS is still a trusted institution, and in consideration of a student's position, extra caution is much better than lack thereof. As much as banning inflatable games may come across as an extraneous regulation, it is by no means an abuse of power.

Administration is a supporter of festive relief for students, but they are ultimately responsible for us. Dean of Students Michael Hicks asserts that the risk involved with setting up inflatable games on the concrete ground calls for safer alternatives. In all honesty, inflatable games aren't the only forms of entertainment. Exchanging them for something a little less aerobic, say, face painting, isn't apocalyptic.

After all, no parent enjoys getting a call in the middle of a day requesting their presence in the emergency room because the school condoned recreational negligence by setting up inflatables on pavement. While they may tolerate and understand trips to the hospital when the injury came at the cost of a heroic goal save or touchdown, injuries from a clumsy mishap on inflatable structures are arguably less justifiable.

Administration's well-grounded rationale in banning inflatable games isn't only a matter of ensuring safety. Leadership

groups such as Link Commission and Student Life are now impelled to run through new entertainment ideas for bringing together the student body. Whereas inflatable games have served as a conventional but uninventive solution in the past, future activities will involve more innovative and open-ended planning. Now we have more eclectic happenings to anticipate during Freshman Flings or Back in Action weeks. And student groups have some creativity obligations to fill.

Not all sorts of fun have to be big and flashy. In the end, it's probably to our advantage to give up some bounce for safety's sake. Healthcare is expensive enough as it is.

ALTERNATIVE GAMES

Due to some recent injuries caused by inflatable games in the rally court, Administration has decided to ban them from future events. Some of the alternatives currently being considered are:

- **Balloon clown**
- **Carnival games**
- **Eating contests**
- **Handball**
- **Painting**
- **Water in a cup game**