

# *The Ginzburg Gazette*

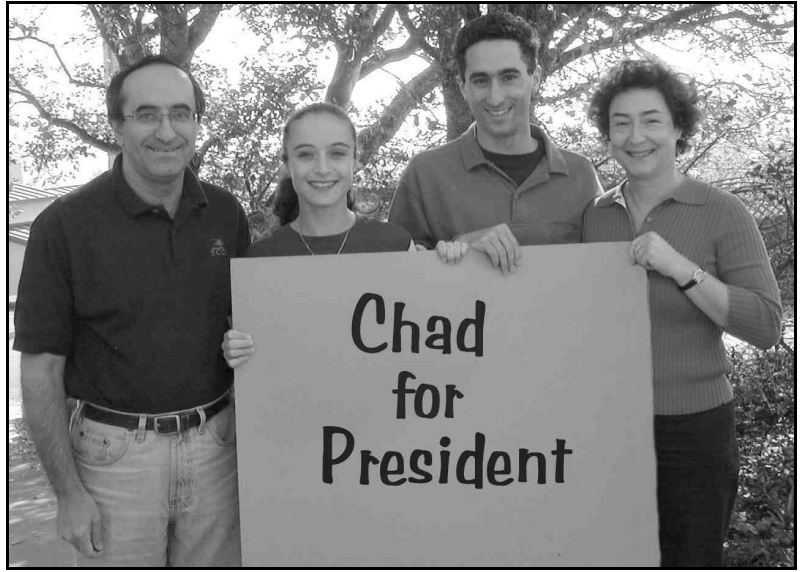
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Circulation of Dozens

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## D e w e y      know      who      W o n ?

Dewey care? Probably not. However, since everyone says we really don't know, we decided as a public service, to take matters into our own hands with a definitive poll. We surveyed 100% of the Ginzburg household. After an initial count, then a re-count, then a hand count followed by foot, nose, ear and eyelash counts, we came to the conclusion that there are lots more eyelashes than any of the others. We feel confident that the U.S. Supreme Court would agree. We ignored objections from the Bush camp, the Gore camp, and Camp Tawonga to bring you this totally unbiased, fair, complete and definitive result.



## Steven Climbs Green Hills

Steven continues to work productively and happily at his job at Green Hills Software in Santa Barbara. In the two years he has been there, the company has grown in both revenue and employees by about 50%. "Our industry is booming, but growing a company this rapidly brings many challenges," said Steven. "When I joined the company, there was very little management structure and most people focused on individual projects. As the company has grown, this has become less and less practical, and as a relatively senior employee, I've had to help plan for the company's continued growth. This has involved everything from studying management theory to drafting a stock option plan."

Steven's duties began with the maintenance of a contract with the German mega-company, Siemens. Since then, he has become responsible for relationships with two other European microprocessor manufacturers. "I spend about half my time programming computers. The rest of my time is spent talking on the phone or exchanging E-Mail with engineers and managers in places like Munich, Grenoble, and London. I also spend a lot of time listening to the concerns of new employees and providing feedback to upper management. I enjoy my work because it has both a technical side and a very human side."

## Allen Over the Hill

After 13 years at SCO, Allen accepted a position with Philips Semiconductors located in San Jose. Allen enjoyed his time with SCO but is looking forward to a change. The new job is in business development in Philips' Emerging Business Unit. It's a brand new area for Allen which involves dealing with network appliances, consumer electronics, and hardware as well as software technologies.

The commute "over the hill" has been tolerable so far, but it's amazing how many people in Silicon Valley now run their lives based on the increasingly congested traffic. Flexible hours and telecommuting mitigate some of the difficulty, but the only true solution would be development of an effective public transportation system.

## Gazette Sports

### New Sports Craze Sweeps the Islands

Allowing our combined entrepreneurial spirits to expand, we launched a new venture. We purchased an apartment in Kona, Hawaii for a vacation rental. The challenge was to turn an unlivable space (think trashed) into a tropical paradise in a mere week. We feel we established a heretofore unknown sport called aerobic shopping whereby one selects furnishings from queen sized beds to slotted spoons, packs them into the rental car, races up three flights of stairs with said purchases and then returns for more. Let us not quibble: 'Shop til you drop' is for wimps who like outlet sales and the crush before Christmas Eve. True competitors simultaneously hire and supervise painters, phone installers, carpet guys and plumbers when not consulting with rental agencies, other tenants, and lime-green geckoes the same week as the International Ironman Events take over the town. The moments before we flew home we exulted, watched the flaming streaks of Hawaiian sunset over the blue Pacific waves while standing in a fully equipped and decorated condo the likes of which Martha Stewart herself would have been proud. [rent this thru Sunquest Properties <http://www.sunquest-hawaii.com>]

### New-Age Bikers Emerge

The last two years have seen Ginzburgs apply long established skills to new directions. The old saw "You never forget how to ride a bicycle" is true enough. Allen and Shirley followed their children's lead and explored the updated world of bicycling. Water bottles and helmets to the ready, we confidently unlocked our anti-theft chains, donned tiny rear-view mirrors clipped to the sunglasses, pulled on our leathery open-fingered gloves and mounted the bikes to the car rack. City street bike lanes are only for the most hardy and experienced -- such as the Olympic hopefuls. Less hazardous for the novice are off-road trails crowded with more wildflowers than wheeled enthusiasts. There, the pedaling is painless and the fresh air delightful.



## Writer's Corner

### Shirley Writes

Shirley's love of writing found new applications beyond correspondence with her many friends via e-mail and regular "snail" mail. She authored a scene for a dramatic multi-media production featuring biographies of little known Jewish heroines -- and then played the role she created. As President of the Board of Hillel, a different audience read and responded generously to her pleas for support of the student community.



### Debbie at School

As all of our regular Gazette readers know, this year marks my last at the University of California, the greatest university in the world. In the waning semesters of my childhood,

creativity occurs only in a rare and coveted moment. The following is the product of such a moment, first written on a tablecloth at a Santa Barbara restaurant. I call my opus "What I learned in College" or "Look Ma, Tuition Dollars at Work."

#### English is interesting

*Science is sweet  
History's mistory's are always neet.  
Phonetics conphuse me but German's a goy  
And business' classes I really unjoy.  
Phisics is phun like chemistry's school  
That's why whe like going to skool.*

## Editorial Comment

### The Mathematics of an Election

by Allen Ginzburg



As the recent presidential election process proceeded, I was amazed at either the lack of understanding or the deliberate ignorance displayed by the media, politicians, and much of the judiciary in insisting on counting every last vote as if it had some real meaning. We heard terms like "full, fair, and accurate count", "voters are being disenfranchised", "every voter should have the expectation that his or her vote counts", etc.

Balderdash.

Every counting system, no matter how high tech, will produce random errors. In such a system, no amount of recounting when the margin is within the intrinsic error range will yield any more information about the vote; it only yields information about the counting system. It's as if we were to determine the election results in Florida by repeatedly flipping an unbiased coin 6 million times. After the first time, for example, heads may lead by 527 flips. We then flip them again, and this time tails leads by 315 flips, and so on. Each time we will get a different result, but no result is any more "accurate" than any other. No amount of flipping will tell us if heads or tails should have won, since in reality each had an equal chance of winning and the "election" is a tie. The continued flipping cannot change that.

The only thing that continued recounting might determine is if there are *systematic* errors, not random ones. Ironically, if there are such errors, one usually uses the fact that the count differs significantly from the random expectation to indicate that there is bias of one sort or another in the system. Thus, if in recounting one were to find a significant shift from the original count, it would indicate that one or the other of the counts was biased. Since humans, unlike machines, are inherently biased, it implies a greater likelihood that a hand recount is biased, and therefore not reliable. If a hand recount matches the initial count within statistical margins then it was unnecessary; if it differs significantly it is probably in error and therefore meaningless.

But what about the controversial "undervotes", those that didn't register at all in the machine count? Don't we need to count them? Are the voters that didn't punch their cards completely being left out? If there are undervotes we would expect that the distribution of such votes would match, to a very close approximation, the votes that were counted. Again, the recount does not provide additional information within the error margin. Therefore, the fairest method would be to use an initial machine count and, to verify the system error margins, a machine recount if the first count is close. If the average of the two counts is closer than the statistical error expectation, we can assume that the election is a dead tie and one must invoke the tie breaking provisions of the law.

So why all the recounting, legal maneuvering, and hair pulling? It has no mathematical purpose so it must have a political one. The correct thing to do in this election would have been to declare Florida a tie and use whatever built-in procedures exist to break the tie. However, this would not sit well with politicians who, by winning the maneuvering, can overcome the brutality of the mathematics. They can't argue with mathematics, so instead need to convince the public that we must base the decision on something that *is* subject to argument like the accuracy of the count. Consequently, we tend to elect the candidate from the party most skilled in manipulation, and political and judicial weaving. Why then should we expect to trust our politicians when we go to so much effort to select them specifically based on their ability to pull the wool over our eyes?

### Advertisement

Looking for a bright young addition to your business? Debbie might be just what you need! As of May, 2001, this talented UC Berkeley graduate will be on the job market.

If you need an entry-level professional, complete with a degree in Mass Communications Theory, please contact her care of the Gazette Editorial Offices (see front page for contact info).

*We wish each and every  
one of you a happy,  
healthful, and prosperous  
new year!*

### Amateur Astronomer Makes Discovery

Allen continued his interest in the hobby of amateur astronomy and discovered that with enough patience, a dark location, special film, a high quality telescope, access to the Cabrillo College photo lab, and some slick, expensive photo digitizing and editing equipment (care of SCO's PR dept.), it is indeed possible to get decent pictures of the night sky. This is a photo of the Orion Nebula (M42) taken during Allen's Astro Photo class at Cabrillo. It was taken on a field trip to Red Rock Canyon State Park in the California desert. Allen and Shirley camped out with the class for two nights waiting for the right conditions. Daytime provided an opportunity to explore this fascinating park with its breathtaking scenery, old mines, and back road adventures.

