

# THE COLLEGIAN

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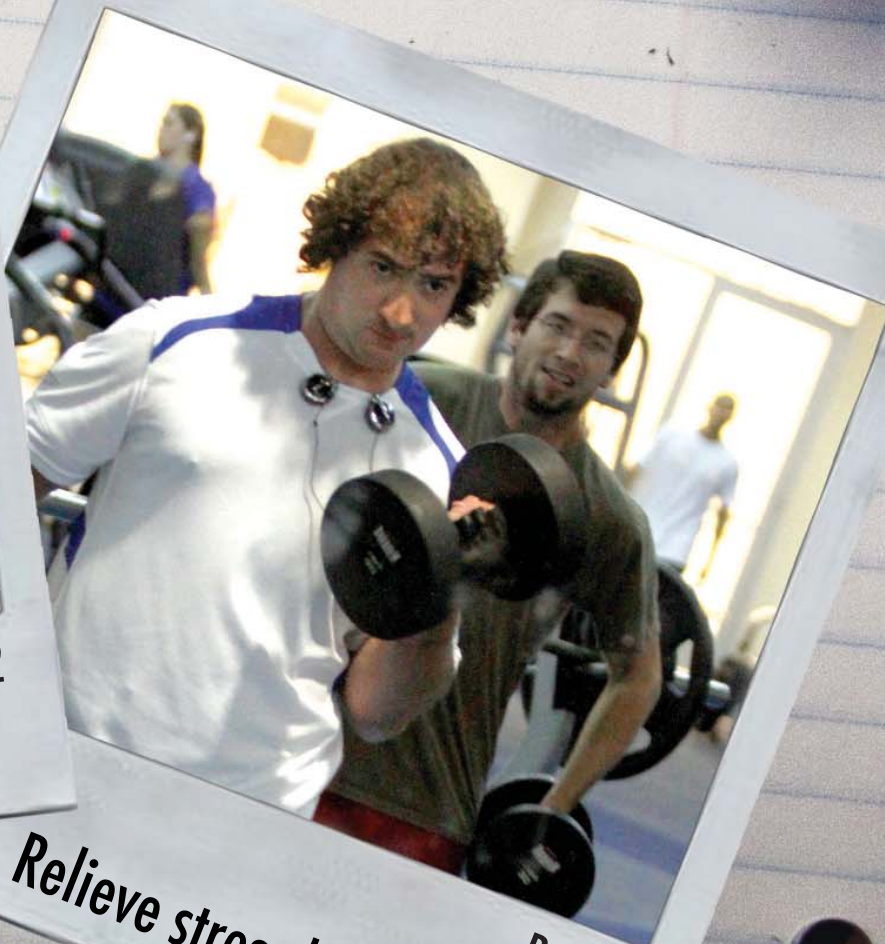
Monday, November 8, 2009

STRESSBUSTERS  
QUITTING



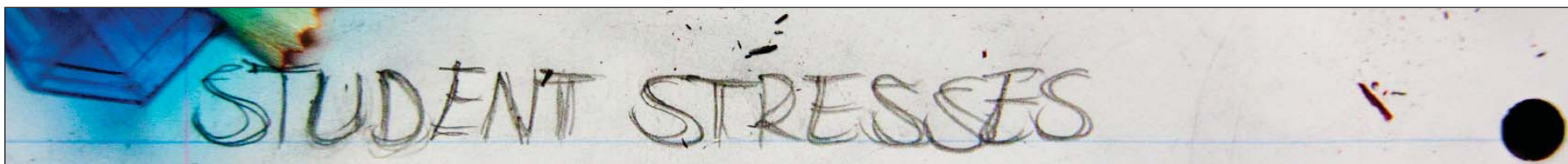
Page 2

**Inside:**  
How insomnia affects stress



Page 3

**Relieve stress by working out**



# Procrastination *America's Favorite Pastime*

By Phillip Lochbaum  
The Collegian

Are you the type of student who has difficulty staying focused on an assignment or class project? Would you rather have an in-depth conversation with your pet instead of studying?

You may be taking part in America's favorite pastime: procrastination.

According to the American Heritage Dictionary, procrastination by definition means "to put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness."

Procrastination is a common problem among many college students.

Criminology major Jesus Ramirez, 22, said that he procrastinates on a daily basis.

"I find it really hard to keep focused when it is so hot outside. The heat just makes me tired, and I feel like going home and

relaxing in the air conditioning," said Ramirez. "I also have a hard time doing homework when it is raining, snowing, windy, sunny, or cloudy outside."

These are a few signs of procrastination:

1. Feeling unmotivated to start a project or assignment.
2. Easily distracted while attempting to study or do homework.
3. Seeking people to talk to whether it be in person, on the phone, or online.
4. Trying to find shapes on the ceiling suddenly becomes very entertaining.
5. Reading this article to avoid starting a term paper that is due soon.

However, according to the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary, there are ways to stop procrastinating:

1. Avoiding distracting devices (phones, video games, etc.)
2. Making a list of daily goals



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and working with others to complete them.

3. Breaking down major goals into smaller and easily achievable tasks.

4. Challenging yourself with hard to reach goals.

5. Creating a work routine in order to keep yourself on track.

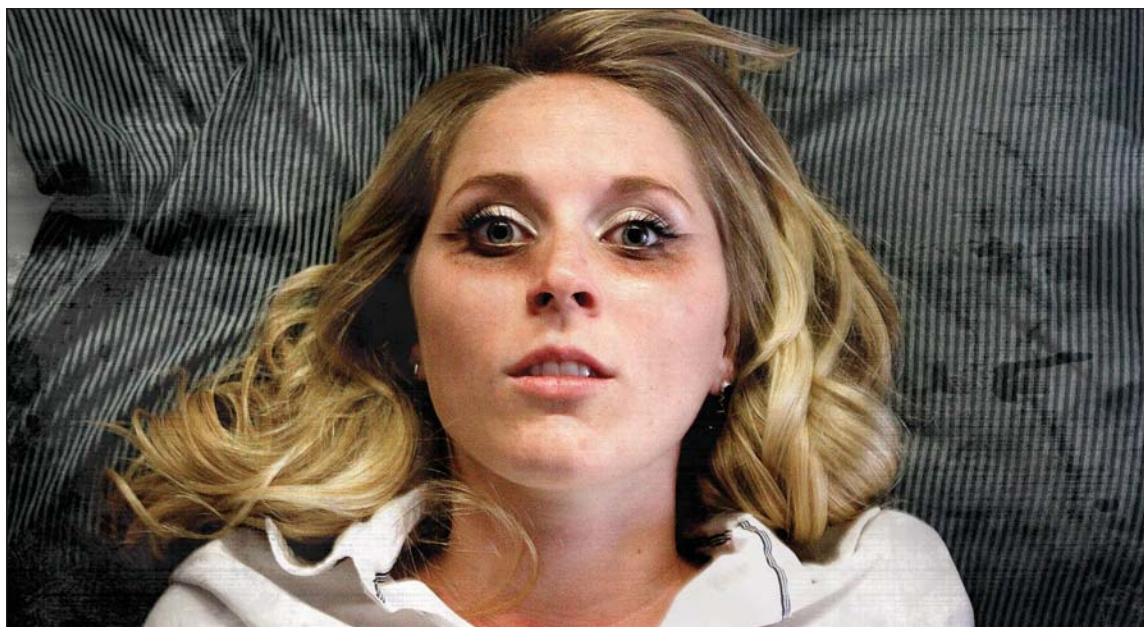
"Everyone gets distracted from doing an important task, every now and then, but I will be able to achieve my goals if I keep focused and block off all my windows!" said Ramirez.

According to the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, "The notion of hope

in academic success has also been discussed as being a factor of procrastination."

Researchers go on to say, "higher hope levels are associated with lower procrastination levels, which can predict the level of a student's GPA."

# Insomnia Insanity



Matt Weir / The Collegian

By Melissa Mata  
The Collegian

It's 3:23 a.m. You're still awake. You have class at 8 a.m. You can't fall asleep. The more you try falling asleep, the more difficult falling asleep becomes. You're not alone.

According to research from the National Center for Sleep Disorders, insomnia is the most common sleep complaint among Americans. A 2003 research plan revealed that 30-40% of adults have dealt with a form of insomnia.

The Mayo Clinic defines insomnia as the inability to fall asleep or remain asleep. If the unhealthy sleep patterns only last a few nights, then it is referred to as acute insomnia. If the symptoms last for more than a month, then it is referred to as chronic insomnia.

Conventional wisdom suggests that college students are sleep deprived, because they are awake for hours doing homework or partying. Dr. Christine Edmondson, a Fresno State psychology professor, said that there are additional reasons for sleep deprivation and insomnia among students.

Dr. Edmondson explained that there are behavioral and psychological causes of insomnia. It may be induced by stimulants like caffeine and nicotine. In addition, students who exercise right before it's time to go to sleep may experience difficulty falling asleep.

"Insomnia may also be a symptom of something else," said Edmondson. Generalized anxiety, clinical depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder all contribute to insomnia prob-

lems. In turn, the insomnia often worsens the mentioned problems and can lead to a plethora of other issues.

"Poor sleep can lead to a number of problems and can affect weight, memory, and mood," said Edmondson.

Because sleep is such an important part of functioning, there are several steps that can help alleviate insomnia.

The National Sleep Foundation (NSF) suggests establishing a regular bedtime routine and establishing a consistent sleep-wake schedule. In addition, consuming less caffeine and avoiding naps during the day can help combat insomnia.

For people who have trouble falling sleep because of stress or anxiety related issues, the NSF recommends relaxation techniques like deep breathing.

# Drinking dangers

By Reganie Smith-Love  
The Collegian

Controlling stress in college can be a daunting task. Many students chose the wrong way to deal with their stress.

Drugs and alcohol are two things students should avoid. Some students think that the use of products like these will help minimize their stress, but in reality they can make the problem worse.

"I think drinking alcohol increases stress. People do it to get things off their mind but while doing that they may be causing stress," freshman Jacqueline Arroela said.

Problems that aren't dealt with are not going to just walk away, and trying to drink them away may lead to some added sources of stress.

Missing a class or work, failing an exam, having health problems, getting into a fight or even being arrested can all result from alcohol abuse. These are typically not events that stop your stress; they add stress.

Many students turn to alcohol to relax at the end of their day. This can be a problem since alcohol impairs judgment and can affect the way in which students perceive their priorities.

If students ignore the important things in their lives, they will find that alcohol only brings them more sadness and stress.

"Alcohol doesn't de-stress you, socializing does. Socializing often times leads to alcohol, which is where I think the confusion lies. Alcohol isn't always necessary," senior Pritesh Whabi said.

According to a handout provided by Dartmouth College, "alcohol impairs the ability to transfer information - learned prior to drinking - from short term to long term memory."

Drinking doesn't have to be a bad thing, but it shouldn't be considered a way to eliminate stress. Students must find other ways to eliminate stress for the sake of their grades, as well as their health.



Illustration by Michael Urbes / The Collegian

## Sweat away stress by getting in shape

By Tara Albert  
The Collegian

As exams, papers and homework pile up, students' stress levels increase and adding anything more to an already packed schedule may seem daunting and nearly impossible.

However, if students put down their books to hit the gym for a few minutes each day, they could diffuse their stress.

"One of the major ways to relieve stress is to exert yourself and exercise," said Bart Ballard, Student Recreation Center Facility Operations assistant director.

Ballard said the Student Recreation Center is a great place for students to exercise and relieve stress, because the facility offers a variety of equipment, classes and training resources.

"I can't think of anything else on campus more important than this building to help keep students healthy," he said.

Nearly 14,000 square feet of the 92,000-square-foot facility are dedicated to cardiovascular and strength training machines, Ballard said.

The Student Recreation Center also provides students with access to personal trainers for a fee and free fitness classes.

Students can also join different skill-level divisions of teams in each of the 15 sports which the intramurals program offers, or students can play, without committing to a team, during the free drop-in sports the Student Recreation Center offers at night,

Ballard said.

Likewise, the Kinesiology Department offers several activity classes that students can take to fill their week with exercise on a regular basis. These classes include jogging, swimming, dancing, strength training and aerobics.

The department also has several healthy-living classes in which students learn how to improve their stress management, diet, muscle strength and endurance, flexibility and cardiorespiratory endurance.

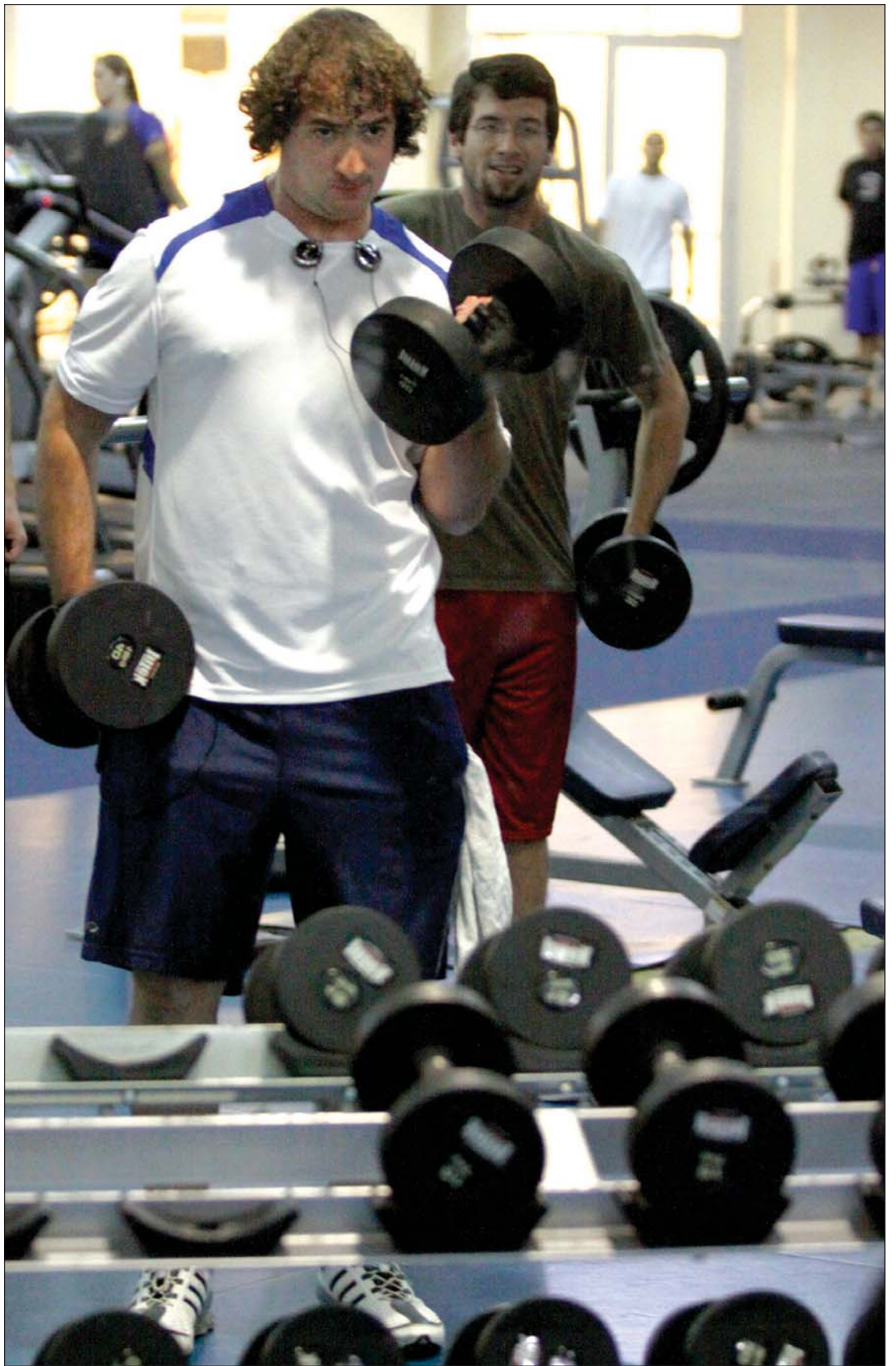
Tim Hamel, a lecturer in the Kinesiology Department, said cardiorespiratory exercises like walking, running and biking are the most effective for relieving stress.

Hamel said that the exercises boost oxygen delivery to muscles in the body and trigger the brain to release mood-enhancing chemicals known as endorphins.

Hamel said students should schedule exercise into their lives on a regular basis to most effectively diffuse their stress. He said that students need to take the initiative to exercise often, expelling the idea that there is not enough time in the day.

"It doesn't take as long as people think," he said.

The American College of Sports Medicine recommends doing moderately intense cardio workouts between 30 minutes and an hour a day, five days a week and eight to 10 strength-training exercises twice a week.



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## When fitting in starts to freak you out

By Karlene Mello  
The Collegian

Millions of people around the world, especially college students, experience social pressure, which is a huge contributor to stress.

Social pressure is caused by a number of things. The media impose this pressure to our society regularly. From fitting in to physical appearance, social pressure causes stress that is

unavoidable.

"Social pressure is inflicted on us by the images portrayed in society," said psychology major Brianna Bracken. "Whether it is in movies, on television, the internet, or in magazines, we are all pressured to live up to this 'standard' that the media has created."

People begin to experience stress because this pressure may seem overwhelming. Accepting the fact that social pressure isn't

going to fade may be the best way to think.

"It is not a huge issue, but rather a fact of life," said psychology professor Aroldo Rodrigues. "We are all susceptible to social influence, and there are numerous attempts being made to influence us."

We are influenced in many ways socially, and for college students, the pressure that causes stress, is caused primarily by the "fitting in" factor.

"Social pressure is hard to deal with especially if you're a college student," said history major Sam Burch. "It's our first time moving away from our parents, and the only influences we have now are the friends we meet and what the media tells us."

Many people are influenced by the pressures that involve good looks and physical appearance.

"A social pressure I have been faced with is the way I am 'supposed' to look," said Bracken.

"The media portrays women in an unrealistic image which then becomes expected by people."

Although we are influenced heavily by social pressure, some believe we can resist it if we put our minds to it.

"We are not invulnerable to social influence," said Rodrigues. "Pay more attention to persuasive attempts and offer more resistance to them when you perceive someone trying to change your behaviors or attitudes."

Social pressures are widespread and can emotionally and physically strain people. They persuade people but also cause stress. Resisting them is hard, but it can be done.

"The media puts a lot of pressure on us, and the media tries to persuade us everyday on what is 'socially acceptable,' but you can't let it get to you," said Burch.

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# Yosemite provides sweet escape

By Elizabeth Thomasian  
The Collegian

While the stresses of school, work and social life are common problems with students, a local escape can help alleviate these difficulties.

Located less than 100 miles from Fresno State's campus, Yosemite National Park is a familiar escape for many students. With over 800 miles of trails and a variety of activities in which to partake, Yosemite holds many opportunities to relieve stress.

"I go to Yosemite on a yearly basis," said

Sydney Coletti a Kinesiology major. "I love visiting the park because it is so close to Fresno, and the scenery and hiking trails are truly beautiful."

Andrew Steele, a Yosemite Division of Interpretation Park Ranger, discussed many programs in which visitors of the park could participate on their visit. "Hiking, biking, horseback riding, rock climbing and even river rafting are activities Yosemite National Park has to offer," Steele said.

Yosemite National Park provides visitors with the necessary equipment and instruction needed for these activities as well.

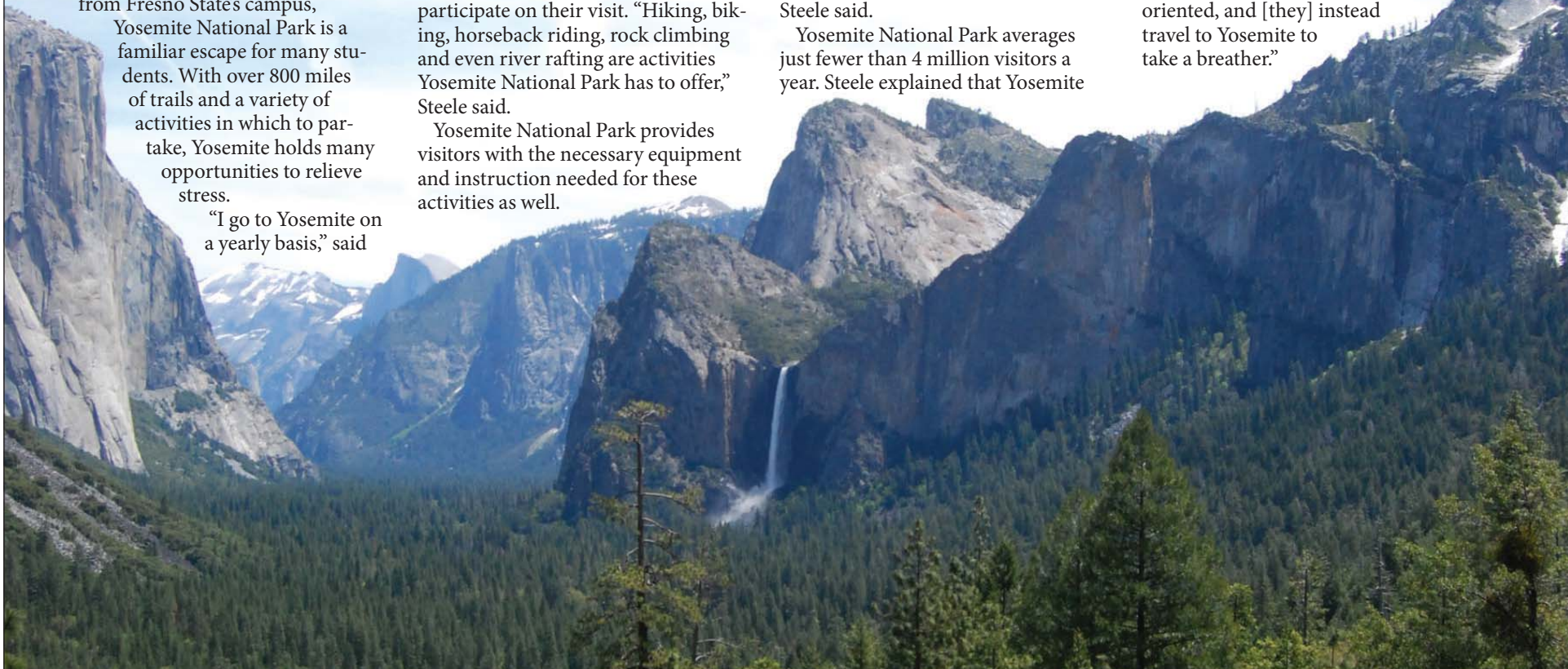
Rock climbing lessons and guided horseback riding tours are available for those lacking equipment or wanting to acquire more knowledge of an activity.

"There are two different bike rental places in Yosemite Valley, and paved bike trails that go around the Valley," Steele said.

Yosemite National Park averages just fewer than 4 million visitors a year. Steele explained that Yosemite

Park has seen at least 3 million people a year since 1987.

"Some people take a pilgrimage to Yosemite once a year to just sit in the meadow with their lawn chair and look up at Half Dome," Steele said. "Returning veterans have their special spot. Their trips are less goal oriented, and [they] instead travel to Yosemite to take a breather."



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