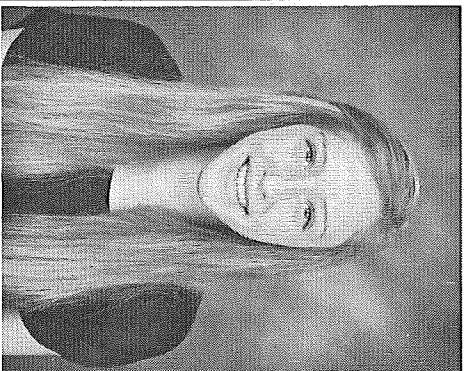


# Star Student of the Month



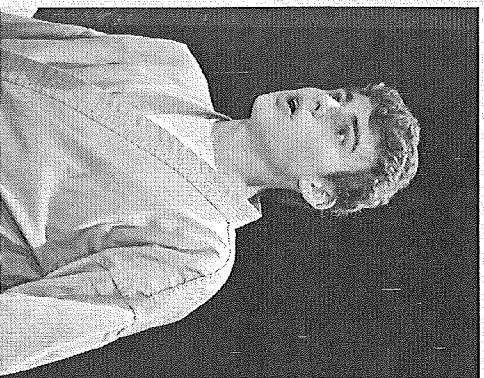
**Juliana Gieglo**

**Favorite Subject:** World History  
**Best Part of High School:** Sense of independence and responsibility

**Role Models:** Grandma and sister  
**Future Plans:** Attend a university out of state for journalism and ophthalmology.



## Clayton Maksymuk



**Favorite Subject:** Math  
**Best Part of High School:** Learning and meeting new people  
**Extracurricular Activities:** Cross country and robotics.  
**Role Models:** Parents  
**Future Plans:** Go to college.

# The Adventures of Jesus Mendez

By: Brendon Jacques  
 Staff Writer

It can be very difficult for people to travel thousands of miles to visit their family, but Jesus Mendez, a freshman at Richmond High School, makes it a priority.

Mendez has just returned from a little town called Urepetiro, Mexico. Jesus, his sister, and her fiancé arrived in the town right before Christmas break and spent two months there before returning back to Michigan. Traveling by bus with only his sister to get to each destination, Mendez was very bored and miserable. He tried passing the time by playing on his electronic devices, but even that started to get old.

Mendez spent most of his time looking out the window and seeing all kinds of different landscapes and buildings as they made their way down. "It seemed like I was on the bus longer than actually being in Mexico," said Mendez. The trip took three days.

Mendez went there to visit his Grandma and also to help his dad build a house for his sister and her fiancé. They were planning to begin a new life down there and were hoping to build the home rather quickly.

Mendez said, "We spent long hours on the house and didn't want to rush because we wanted it to be perfect for my sister and her husband."

The house is fairly large and surrounded by a bunch of friendly neighbors. It has very nice landscape and a big enough back yard to where Mendez's sister plans to grow a garden.

With the base of the house finished when Mendez arrived, he mostly helped his father paint the walls and the ceilings. Mendez said, "It was very cool to learn how to paint. Being able to help my sister and her family start a life makes me feel really good." With his help, Mendez and his father were able to get the bulk of the job done.

Although they spent almost every day of the two months building the home and got a lot done, they were not able to finish. They plan to go back to Mexico and finish

the house sometime in the middle of summer.

Although Mendez did spend a lot of time on the house, he was able to meet with old friends and have a good time.

He spent most of that free time fishing with his good friend Luis, who is 15 years old. They would spend many hours sitting on his grandma's row boat as they caught fish and shared memories.

"Being able to bond with a really good friend that I haven't seen in a while was really nice. I'm so glad we were able to catch up on all the years that we haven't been able to see each other," said Mendez. Mendez has not seen Luis prior to this since Mendez and his family visited his grandma a couple years ago.

Mendez also went to many festivals with his friends and family.

Each city in Mexico will hold festivals around Christmas time to celebrate and be with the people they love. Mendez said, "Being able to celebrate with the people very close to me was very fun. It was also very enjoyable to go to different cities and meet new people as well."

The cities they visited included Mexico City and a lot of small cities.

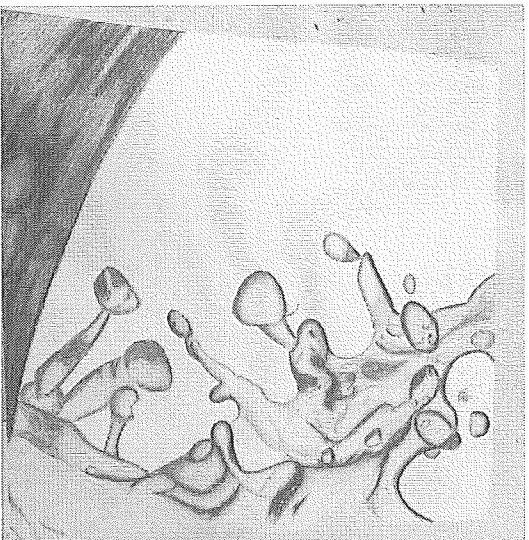
During these all-day festivals, they watched different bands perform. "Music is very big in Mexico and is also a lot different than the music we listen to in the United States," said Mendez.

They also play many carnival games during festivals. The most popular games are the ones where you have to shoot at a target. These types of games begin to get very competitive where they will even bet a lot of money to give to the victor.

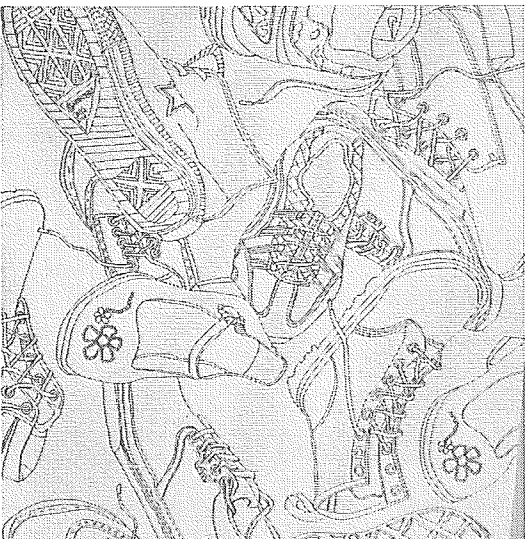
Mendez said, "Competing against my friends and family is my favorite part about festival. Being able to win a little money is very cool as well."

Mexico may be very different than the United States but Mendez said that the foods he eats are very similar. His grandma tries to stick to American customs when  
*Continued on page 15*

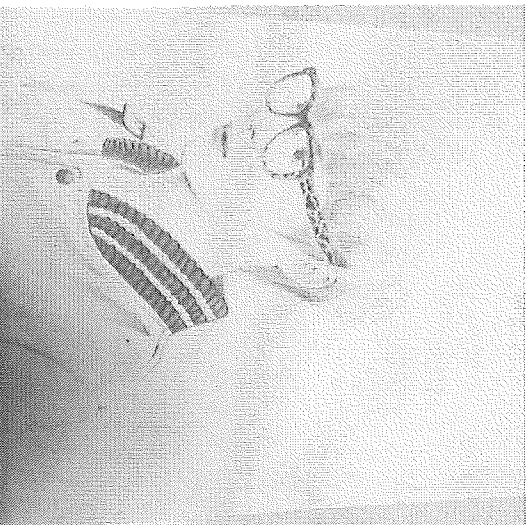
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