

El Gato

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL

M. Rawlings

LGHS hosts spring spirit activities

by Ainsley Northrop
Editor-in-Chief

From Mar. 3 to Mar. 7, the Los Gatos High School leadership team held its annual spring Spirit Week. Including everything from dress-up days and lunchtime games to a rally and a formal dance, this semester's Spirit Week was one to remember.

Running a spirit week is a difficult task, entailing theme and game selection, hallway preparation, general oversight, and more. In the preceding weeks, students in leadership met outside of school to meticulously plan and work together. This semester, the Associated Student Body (ASB) leadership team decided on the overarching theme of nostalgia and each class then chose an individual concept for their hallway section. To decorate the hallway per LGHS tradition, leadership students came to school the weekend before Spirit Week, dedicating a day to design, artwork, construction, and writing out every LGHS student's name to include on the walls.

Beyond decorating, leadership was responsible for running lunchtime games throughout the week. During each game, students from each grade competed for spirit points, which leadership tallied each day. Sophomore Spirit Representative **Finley Bannon** explained, "Each class is required to put on one game throughout the week, and our game was Hopper Ball Relay. So we had to find three people from each grade to participate." After each game, the winners received both points and a prize, including treats like pizza, Crumbl Cookies, and Chick-fil-A.



GAME ON!: Students play a tense game of Spikeball in front of the school.

At the end of the week, leadership arrived at school two hours early to prepare for the spirit rally, transferring hallway decorations to the bleachers, test-running rally activities, and ensuring everything would run smoothly. ASB Spirit Representative senior **Allie Wen**, who has been in leadership since her freshman year and MC'd this year's rallies, detailed, "Sophomore and junior year I was class spirit [representative] and I was just managing my grade level's hallways and games, but as ASB spirit this year, I've been in charge of more of the overall, whole school events, and incorporating the entire school into the rally and Spirit Weeks." She continued, "Planning the rally involved a lot of coordination between different parts and teams from the school, like cheer, K-Pop Dance Club, and someone we find to perform the national anthem." During the rally, senior **Ryan Lin** wowed the school as he played the national anthem on his violin, and Brass Chaos — a group that swings instruments over each other while blindfolded — left the stands begging for more. The rally concluded with a speech from Principal **Dave Poetzinger** and leadership's announcement that, for the first time ever, the senior and sophomore classes tied for first place.

Spirit Week concluded with the newly instated Spring Formal, which replaced LGHS's typical, themed Sadie Hawkins Dance. Although Spring Formal took a more elegant approach, it still honored the tradition of "girls ask guys."

Wen, reflecting on her final Spirit Week at LGHS, concluded, "I think the most rewarding part is just seeing it all come together and seeing people dress up and appreciate the hallways and have fun at the rally." She advised students to "participate in the days, because even if it feels silly in the moment, they're really fun memories to have and look back on."



DENIM DUDES: Students from multiple grades pose with their spirit wear.

LG orchestras perform in concerts

by Annabelle Pan
Graphics Editor

The Los Gatos High School orchestras were hard at work from January to March, preparing for their third concert cycle of the year. The cycle commenced with the start of the spring semester as students received the new music and began learning.

Their first performance of the spring semester was on Jan. 21 for the Los Gatos Music Festival, where LGHS invited eighth graders in Fisher's orchestras to rehearse with the high schoolers. All three LGHS orchestras — Chamber, Philharmonic, and String — participated in the event, meeting and talking to the eighth graders and telling them about their high school experience.

One month later on Mar. 6, the ensembles prepared to take the stage for their spring concert at the McAfee Center at Saratoga High School. The LGHS orchestras combined with the four Fisher Orchestras — Chamber, Advanced, Intermediate, and Trojan — for a two-hour concert. To start off the concert, a few members of the LGHS Chamber played with the Fisher's Trojan Orchestra, followed by Fisher's other three orchestras, and ending with a performance from the Fisher Chamber ensemble, followed by the three LGHS orchestras. To culminate the evening, LGHS Director **Ameen Ghafourpour** and Fisher Director Aryn Krijnen called all seven ensembles to the stage to perform two pieces together as a grand finale. With the LGHS Chamber and Philharmonic violins playing among the audience, the cellos sitting in arcs on stage, and everyone else on the stands, the students played Spartacus and Waltz No. 2.

Finally, to conclude their spring concert cycle, the LGHS orchestras attended the California Music Educators Association (CMEA) Band and Orchestra Festival. Similar to the Homestead Festival, CMEA gives ensembles the opportunity to perform and receive feedback from talented members of the music community. **Fernanda Cantu Valadez**, a sophomore violinist in Chamber, remarked, "What's great about going to both the Homestead Festival and then CMEA is that you get the chance to have critical feedback at two different points in time, which really lets us see how much we improved. We can compare and contrast really easily between our first and second performance." All three ensembles finished the long and busy cycle with their amazing performances at CMEA and will soon receive new music for their final concert cycle.



CHAMBER CHARM: Chamber Orchestra warms up together for the concert.

Roughly halfway through the cycle, the three LGHS orchestras performed during the Homestead Orchestra Festival on Feb. 8 at Homestead High School. At the festival, the LGHS orchestras sat in the audience and watched three other ensembles perform before warming up and taking the stage. As the students played, three experienced adjudicators gave feedback and scored the ensembles. An adjudicator then took the conductor's podium and went through a short workshop with the students, teaching them how to improve their technique and play their repertoire more stylistically. Sophomore **Dylan Dadgar** commented, "The Homestead Festival was really useful for identifying areas to work on our pieces, and the clinician who worked with us was very good. It was also just very fun, especially watching the other orchestras play."



ACOUSTIC ARMY: LGHS and Fisher orchestras merge for their joint concert.

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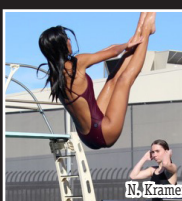
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Los Gatos community cherishes iconic puppy Suki

by **Lucy Panicacci**
Editor-in-Chief

Suki, US History teacher **Tyler McGlashan's** dog, has established herself as a Los Gatos High School legendary figure. McGlashan got Suki five years ago, and since then, Suki has blessed everyone around her with her calm, welcoming presence. In describing Suki's personality, McGlashan has many ways to portray this white, small, and curly bundle of joy. He declared, "She is the greatest princess that ever existed, and she would behave just like that: perfect manners, always attentive and kind, thoughtful, intelligent, sophisticated, demure, and a great listener." Drawing on the idea of reincarnation, McGlashan believes that the spirit of Suki has been reborn from generation to generation over centuries: "She's an old soul. She's wise beyond her years. I think she was a great queen in ancient Egypt, and she's been reincarnating ever since."

On rare occasions in previous years, McGlashan has brought Suki into class with him, where she typically spent the day burrowed up in blankets on his classroom's couch or calmly greeting students. This year, McGlashan started bringing her in more often after he lost his dog walker. Due to new school restrictions, he is currently not allowed to take her to class. However, to mitigate this issue, McGlashan has installed a Suki cam — a live camera inside his house that he can view remotely on his phone — allowing him to check on her throughout the day. Via Suki cam, viewers can often find Suki watching people

on the street walk past from her lookout, appearing lonely and sad all by herself.

When McGlashan did bring Suki to class, he noticed the impact that she had on students. He explained, "I can see everybody's heart rate go down and become relaxed. I can watch the way it just sucks tension out of students. Kids would be frantic, running in, and then they would take a huge deep breath as they sat down next to Suki." Students of McGlashan appreciated seeing Suki in class. Junior **Jaz Charnaw** resolutely stated, "I love that dog. Her personality makes up for the fact that she doesn't have a tail." Junior **Frazer McNelly** liked getting to hold Suki during class. Both Charnaw and McNelly concluded that Suki "definitely promotes learning."

McGlashan still envisions a greater role for Suki at LGHS. One of his ideas includes Suki becoming LGHS's new mascot, painting orange and black stripes on her to match the role. McGlashan stated that as the mascot, Suki can "lead the school as she should, [as the] queen of Los Gatos." In addition, McGlashan suggested an advice column, where Suki can share her eternal wisdom on all sorts of issues. She has already ventured on a backpacking trip with McGlashan, climbing thousands of feet in the rocks and snow of the Sierra Mountains, so she has a lot of experiences to share. A playful, caring, and wise being, McGlashan's dog Suki has made a special impact on the students around her. Stay tuned for a possible Suki advice column to solve all of your biggest dilemmas!



POISED PUPPY: Suki fiercely poses while balancing atop the LGHS cat statue.

Santana Row welcomes several new and exciting stores

by **Sam Gruetter**
Opinion Editor

Recently, the popular outdoor mall Santana Row adopted a myriad of new stores and restaurants into their already extensive list of vendors. Known for its polished architecture and constant bustling streets, Santana Row is a local spot where many people go to enjoy a handcrafted meal or shop at well-known stores, such as Lulumemon or Nike.

One of the most exciting openings in the Row is Augustine, a high-end restaurant that pairs perfectly with the ambiance of the mall itself. Located in Suite 1000, the restaurant has a menu of California cuisine with a "European Influence." Their menu includes dishes such as seafood, caviar, and pastries. In early April, Santana Row will see the introduction of another restaurant, Parranga, this time serving traditional Mexican cuisine. Parranga will commemorate the opening of their fourth location by offering a free taco to the first 200 patrons. Eduardo Rallo, chairman of the company who owns Parranga, describes the cultural immersion the restaurant offers, saying, "Parranga is about bringing an incredibly traditional, Mexico City-style taqueria experience to Santana Row. We believe that great food should be fresh, accessible, and, above all, authentic — and that's exactly what we're offering,"



GO TO THE ROW: A large billboard welcomes shoppers to Santana Row.

On the other end of the spectrum of new vendors at Santana Row, a series of retail stores are also opening up. Many of these new stores are familiar chains; however, some offer more niche merchandise. Among the latter are Sezane and Evereve, two clothing brands that are tailored to niche audiences. Sezane is a French brand that specializes in clothes made in Europe which reflect the current trends and popular styles in Paris. Evereve, located in Suite 1024, is a clothing shop targeted towards women's casual wear, such as denim items and spring dresses.

More familiar stores have also recently entered the sphere of Santana Row, specifically Blue Mercury and Vuori. Blue Mercury is a high-end pharmacy/cosmetics store that has another location in downtown Los Gatos. Its merchandise includes both skincare and makeup products. Additionally, popular and upcoming clothing brand Vuori is planning to expand its current storefront during the spring into H&M's former retail space.

The influx of new stores in Santana Row is a testament to the immense success of the outdoor mall and its undeniable appeal to San Jose locals. Christian Irwin, the vice president of the realty company that designed Santana Row, commented on the mall's success: "San Jose is thriving...The demand for great retail is alive and well." (Sources: Mercury News, Santana Row)

Crossing guards support LG

by **Hayley Strahs and Siyona Singhal**
News Editors

Every day, hundreds, if not thousands, of Los Gatos children walk or bike to school during morning rush hour amidst cars coming from every direction. Luckily, Los Gatos's many crossing guards come to the rescue by ensuring that the streets are safe to cross and connect with the community.

Sue Dutiell, who stands at the intersection between Nino Avenue and Los Gatos Boulevard, originally became a crossing guard because it fit perfectly around her late-night security shifts at Apple headquarters. She explained, "While the kids are going back to school, I'm sleeping." Further down Nino Avenue is Marie, standing between Louise Van Meter Elementary School and Raymond J Fisher Middle School. After her young grandson inspired her to take the job, Marie immersed herself in the wide range of crossing guard responsibilities, from helping special needs kids cross to looking out for suspicious vehicles. However, the real reason that Marie and Dutiell love their job is the special bond that they share with the community members. Marie reflected, "We started out in the mornings in September as strangers, but as the weeks and the months went by, now, we all say good morning to each other...I look like I'm alone out here, but really, I'm not alone."



CAREFUL X-ING: Marie helps kids cross the street to school.

On the other side of Fisher, at the corner of Blossom Hill and Roberts, is Tony Holm. In addition to his two daily shifts, Holm leads a double life as the host of American Danish Radio, a camera person for South Bay Championship Wrestling, and a participant in local Community Emergency

Response Teams. Locals know Holm as a cheerful, positive face in the community; even during the after school rush, he always wishes passersby a good rest of their day.

Past Van Meter on the corner of Caldwell, you will find Tess Coleman. She became a crossing guard for the pay and the flexible hours worked with her schedule. Coleman explained that her favorite part about being a crossing guard is seeing not only the kids every day, but also their parents. She knows the names of pedestrians walking by and always puts in the effort to start a friendly conversation with kids coming back from school. When Coleman returns home, she is welcomed by her three dogs. During the day she goes to church, plays bingo, and spends time with her friends.

On the corner of Shannon near the back of Blossom Hill Elementary School stands Lynette Scott. Scott has been a crossing guard for 13 years, starting simply because she needed a job. Scott explained that she has been a crossing guard for so long because "I love meeting people and taking care of the people that I cross. For me, the best part is seeing my little ones driving when they get older." On the other side of Blossom Hill Elementary School, Cristina Caruccio watches over the intersection between Blossom Hill and Cherry Blossom. Caruccio explained the reason that she became a crossing guard: "It has always kind of appealed to me to spend the time outside and be around kids and as well just having that energy of starting your day with community support." For Carruccio, this job started as a part-time gig while she focused most of her time on her freelance editorial work. Caruccio does a lot of copy editing and proofreading for cookbooks as a pleasant way to end her busy days. However, Caruccio explained that being a crossing guard is now a more prominent part of her life, stating, "I love being with the kids and the energy is so nice in the morning. I just get the chance to get back what I put into the community and it's really fulfilling."

Next time you are waiting at an intersection on your way to school, make sure to give our town's crossing guards a friendly wave and thank them for their contributions to our community.

Local author releases book

by **Kloe Adams**
Editorial Editor

Author Millie Abecassis released her first novel, *Daughters of the Blue Moon*, on Feb. 25. Abecassis participated in her first book signing, reading, and Q&A at local bookstore Beyond Text, where she detailed her life up to and while writing *Daughters of the Blue Moon*. Born and raised in France, Abecassis began learning English at the age of five and immediately fell in love with the language. Since she discovered the fantasy genre in middle school, Abecassis recognized her passion for literature and dedicated her education to furthering her writing career. When she entered high school, Abecassis pursued a high school degree in literature while developing her writing skills outside of school. After high school, Abecassis attended Panthéon-Sorbonne University where she earned degrees in law and philosophy. Upon graduating, Abecassis moved to the United States where she has been living ever since with her family and two cats.

Although Abecassis put writing to the side for numerous years, she commenced work on her first novel-length stories in 2020. When beginning on *Daughters of the Blue Moon*, Abecassis knew she wanted to write a retelling: "I have a framework, an original story to work with, but then I can pretty much do whatever I want with it." Abecassis drew inspiration for her novella from the original *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Le Petit Chaperon Rouge* by Charles Perrault. While studying literature in high school, Abecassis explored the deeper meanings of Perrault's tales: "They all have a moral at the end, trying to teach a lesson to kids. But, some of them are quite dark, which caused them to have a bigger impact on me." While Abecassis believes *Little Red Riding Hood* teaches kids to be wary of interactions with strangers, she also believes the story tells girls and women that sexuality is a bad thing. Abecassis explained, "I wanted to write a story where *Little Red Riding Hood*, instead of being a victim, gets her life back."

While in high school, Abecassis wrote in French until making the switch to English in 2020.

Eventually, she read in English as well. She stated, "I wanted to get into more books that were not available in French. Although it [English] was difficult to comprehend, I picked it up quickly." As Abecassis pursued her writing career with greater dedication, she took the pantsier approach, embracing spontaneity over meticulous planning, to writing. However, she soon found a greater love for the plotter approach, outlining the whole story beforehand. Abecassis shifted to the plotter approach because she got tired of having to rewrite the story when she thought of new, plot-altering details.

Outside of writing new stories, Abecassis promotes independent and small authors. In February 2024, Abecassis launched SmallPitch, a small press-centered pitch event, that focused on small and indie presses, ultimately helping authors find a home for their work. More recently, in October 2024, Abecassis co-launched the Small Spec Book Awards alongside L.N. Holmes to recognize and promote authors writing speculative fiction.

On the horizon, Abecassis has four books lined up to release in 2025 and 2026, exploring genres such as science fiction and mystery, so be sure to keep an eye out as she continues to release powerful and fascinating stories.



STORY TIME: Abecassis proudly smiles with her book.

LGHS choir performs at SJSU Choral Invitational

by Owen Fugit
Editor-in-Chief

On Mar. 7, the LGHS Mixed and Treble Choirs traveled to San Jose State University for their annual Choral Invitational. The event featured select high school ensembles from the San Jose area performing for SJSU's artist-in-residence, Dr. Angel Vázquez-Ramos. After hearing a choir perform, Vázquez-Ramos worked directly with each group on their tone, dynamics, pitch, and stage presence to perfect their repertoire for upcoming shows. SJSU's invitational offered a unique experience to collaborate with a highly qualified university-level choral director and vocal coach in a wonderful space, which students found exciting. Senior **Thien Mai** enjoyed the invitational because "it was fun to [perform] up there in front of other schools...it's a very interesting experience." LGHS used the invitational as an opportunity to perform pieces for their concert held nearly a week after the invitational on Mar. 11.

At the Fisher-Los Gatos combined concert, middle school singers sang for and with their high school counterparts in combined ensembles under the direction of Fisher's **Corey Miller** and LGHS's **Ma. Ricel Riley**. Middle school groups opened the show,

performing six songs in total across three separate choirs: the Treble Choir, featuring upper-register voices, Cambiata, featuring lower-register singers, and Bel Canto, an audition choir for upper-register singers. After the middle school performances, LGHS took the stage, beginning with the Wildcat Tenor-Bass Choir. The A Cappella Club followed and performed two songs that singers learned indepen-



JOIN HANDS: Choir students come together at the event.

dently from regular choir classes during breaks and after school. Both Mixed Choir, an audition choir featuring all voices, and Concert Choir performed together, singing three songs covering vastly different genres. LGHS's award-winning Treble Choir concluded the high school-only choral performances, and the night ended with a special combined performance consisting of singers from all the Fisher choirs and all the LGHS choirs. Senior **Daisy Tuckfield** explained, "I did like the music [because] we had a lot of old favorites...some nostalgic songs from my sophomore year." She added, "It was fun to see how we improved."

Several singers noted how the concert seemed hurried compared to previous concerts. Senior **Shaurya Banjara** said, "Overall, this has been one of the most rushed concerts we've had, but we all did our best near the end...I mean we actually did a pretty good job." Banjara said he enjoyed singing with everyone. One of his favorite songs of the night was a Fisher and LGHS combined choir song, "The Power of the Dream," arranged by Bob Krogstad. Reflecting on the performance with Fisher, junior **Callan Robison** said, "[I believe] Fisher choirs are going to go far, and I can't wait to see them in our choir."

The annual Music Boosters community cookout on May 11 will be the final public choral performance of the year by LGHS choirs, so be sure to attend and support the choral music program at LGHS!



ALL TOGETHER NOW: LGHS singers perform a piece.

Clothing store in LG thrives

by Kloe Adams and Megan Saul
Editorial and Culture Editor

Time Out Clothing, established in 1994, recently celebrated its 31st anniversary in December. Known for its women's apparel, Time Out Clothing offers an abundance of goods, from swimwear to accessories. Unlike most stores that only carry swimwear during warmer months, Time Out dedicates an area solely to bathing suits year-round. Some of the many brands featured in the store include Crown Jewel, Pink Martini, Wooden Ships, and Velvet Heart.



SET-UP: Reynolds-Rowe poses near a clothing display.

Founder, owner, and LGHS alumna Ginger Reynolds-Rowe gained inspiration to open Time Out from her previous job working as a manager at a clothing store. Although the store she worked at featured some specialized swimwear and activewear, it was limited, leading Reynolds-Rowe "to leave and open my own store, with my boss's blessing and support. I entered a lease, and started my own business 31 years ago." Within a year of opening, Reynolds-Rowe experienced immediate success, requiring her to upgrade to a larger space. Eventually, she found the perfect fit about two years later: Time Out's current location on Santa Cruz Avenue. In addition to widening the storefront, Reynolds-Rowe also broadened inventory: "We expanded into baby, kids, and gifts. We have always changed our mix of merchandise over the years as trends and times change."

Being a small business in Los Gatos presents a multitude of challenges, but many benefits as well. Although primarily stable throughout the years, Time Out, like most businesses, has gone through some hardships. For example, the pandemic further

exacerbated issues such as the high rent levels in Los Gatos. She explained, "COVID-19 was maybe the hardest hurdle we have ever experienced, and unfortunately it has changed a lot." COVID-19 affected pivotal aspects of retail, including staffing, the way customers shop, dips in the economy, and recessions in business: all obstacles that Time Out has overcome.

Some of the benefits of owning and being a part of this small business include gaining faithful supporters and getting to know a lot of locals, many of whom have become regulars. Time Out proudly participates in local events such as the Sweetheart Stroll, the Wine Walk, and the Holiday Parade. Reynolds-Rowe stated, "[I am a] big believer in supporting the community by providing the products and services they want. I also believe in giving back to local schools and organizations and getting involved in different ways to support them." As a local business owner and former member of the local Board of Directors, Reynolds-Rowe advocates for the Chamber of Commerce, an organization that focuses on supporting all businesses as well as being connected to the local community and town government.

Along with bolstering the community within Los Gatos, Time Out fosters a community among its employees. Sam In Den Bosch, long-time Time Out employee and LGHS alumna, emphasized, "The workplace community is really nice because I love all of my coworkers. It's a welcoming environment where everyone knows each other very well."

Eager to continue expanding Time Out, Reynolds-Rowe is currently enrolled in a course on digital marketing. So far, she has rebranded the store, creating both a new logo and a new website. Whether you are going on a stroll downtown or browsing online shops, make sure to check out Time Out as you are sure to find something you love.



SIDE BY SIDE: Reynolds-Rowe stands with friends.

Mahan manages homeless

by Kat Littfin
News Editor

Recently, San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan has received backlash from the San Jose community and Santa Clara County leaders for his proposal to criminalize the homeless. According to NBC Bay Area, San Jose has the fourth-largest homeless population in the nation as of 2023. As a result, some citizens have advocated for change; however, even those who want change view Mahan's response as extreme and immoral.

Mahan was appointed mayor in 2023, previously serving as the District 10 councilmember. Before his government involvement, Mahan was the CEO of tech company Brigade Media. Although he is a Democrat, Mahan has often opposed policies encouraged by other Democratic leaders, promoting higher policing and aggressively addressing the crime rates in San Jose. Unlike many liberal leaders, he supported California's Proposition 36, which heightens sentences for repeated minor drug and theft crimes.



DOWNTOWN: Commuters drive through San Jose streets.

San Jose, along with several other major cities in the Bay Area, has a high number of homeless residents. San Jose has about 363 homeless people for every 100,000 people per capita and falls just behind Los Angeles in the rankings of cities with the largest homeless population. Several issues contribute to these extreme statistics, including the high costs of housing and renting in Silicon Valley and unsuccessful attempts to aid and shelter the homeless. Todd Langton, the founder of a

non-profit organization that helps the homeless in Silicon Valley, stated, "The county's and the city's approach is extremely dysfunctional...In Santa Clara County, you have hundreds of different silos of agencies and nonprofits, working separately from each other without any oversight." Langton advocates for a way to aid San Jose's homelessness crisis previously modeled by the city government of Houston, Texas: building permanent housing rather than shelters and subsidizing rent.

Mayor Mahan, however, has proposed a plan that varies significantly from Houston's approach. Rather than providing more housing for the homeless, Mahan has suggested that San Jose arrest homeless residents who refuse shelter. Although it seems counterintuitive that the homeless would refuse shelter, there are many drawbacks regarding the housing and shelter system in San Jose and in general. Many individuals avoid shelters because of their possibly unsafe environments and past issues with such spaces. Shelters also have many rules regarding their residents, forcing some families to separate and enforcing curfews that make it difficult for individuals to work certain jobs. Mahan's approach has also garnered negative attention as it can be impractical and costly. Imprisoning possibly hundreds of homeless people may be a waste of taxpayer money and a great cost to the city. The Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office has responded with trepidation towards Mahan's proposal, stating that it could be ineffective and serve as a distraction from the issue of homelessness in San Jose rather than as a solution.

(Sources: Mercury News, NBC Bay Area, Wikipedia)



PRESENT: Mahan addresses a crowd during a summit.

LGHS FCA hosts speakers and attracts athletes

by Megan Saul
Culture Editor

Clubs are a large part of the culture at Los Gatos High School, and with over 100 of them, there are many from which students may choose. One of the more recent choices in clubs is the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). Although the worldwide nonprofit organization started in 1954, it is only this chapter's second year at LGHS. The mission and goal of FCA is to lead every coach and athlete into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ and His church.

A large board of students leads FCA, including co-presidents junior **Evie Howard** and sophomore **Darcy Armstrong**, vice presidents and juniors **Lydia Chun** and **Alyssa Ackalloor**, social media manager and sophomore **Jackson Cresta**, and senior team players **Zane Frey** and **Kayla Layton**. The presidents delegate the tasks to the other group members. They also coordinate the meetings and recruit guest speakers.

Some recent speakers include professional soccer player Shea Salinas, college golfer Nicola Kaminski, and professional runner Bree Sanders. Chun explained that her favorite speaker was Sanders because of her inspiring story of finishing a 100-mile race despite suffering

an injury at mile 40. As for her favorite speaker, Howard named Dale Gustafson, a football coach. She elaborated, "That huddle [a small group Bible study] was last semester and had a really good turnout. There were a lot of football players, which is good because we try to attract different sports with the different speakers." On Mar. 19, FCA hosted professional soccer player Arnold Matshazi. Reflecting on Matshazi's



MONOLOGUE: Coach Tyler Groenink presents to club members at lunch.

talk, Armstrong said, "He is a super nice and well-spoken guy who shared his experiences in life as he was a professional soccer player in the UK and at San Jose State University. He shared that no matter what, God is with you."

FCA meets every other Thursday during lunchtime. Typically, their meetings begin with a small huddle of around 20 students. During the Valentine's Day meeting, they wrote about what they are grateful for and the importance of being grateful for what you have. The other type of meeting is a large huddle with more students than just club members. Oftentimes, the larger huddles are with a guest speaker who shares their personal experiences with faith playing a role in their athletic careers. Although there are two types of meetings, they always include free pizza, community-building exercises, lessons, testimonies, and messages.

In the future, the FCA board hopes to host a Field of Faith, a large event on the football field offering food trucks and sponsoring a well-known keynote speaker. Howard shared, "I pitched the idea for Brock Purdy. It would be a big event for anyone to come to. That's my goal before I graduate high school."

- Midwest storms cause destruction
- Trump releases private documents

US wildlife officials plan mass killing of barred owl species

By Kloe Adams
Editorial Editor

The spotted owl is federally protected as a threatened species. In 2020, federal officials determined that the animal's continuous decline merited an upgrade to a more critical designation: endangered. Barred owls, native to the eastern United States, encroached into the West Coast territory of two types of spotted owls, northern spotted owls and California spotted owls. Smaller spotted owls struggle to compete with the invading barred owls, which have large broods and need less room to survive than spotted owls.

To save the spotted owls from extinction, US wildlife officials plan to deploy trained shooters into dense West Coast forests, killing up to 470,000 barred owls over three decades. Past efforts to prevent endangerment focused on protecting the forests where the spotted owls lived. However, the proliferation of barred owls is undermining that earlier work. "Without actively managing barred owls, northern spotted owls will likely go extinct in all or the majority of their range, despite decades of collaborative conservation efforts," said Fish and Wildlife Service supervisor Kessina Lee.

Researchers say barred owls move westward by one of two routes: across the Great Plains, where settler-planted trees give them a foot-

hold in new areas, and through Canada's boreal forests, which have become more hospitable as temperatures rise due to climate change.



HOOT: One of the few spotted owls remaining in the US sits in a tree.

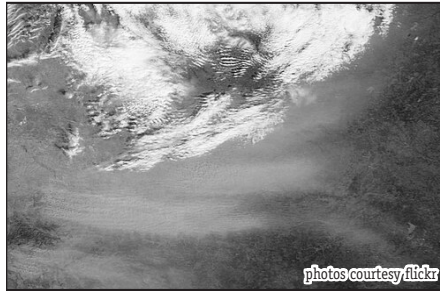
Critics of the barred owl removal plan argue eliminating such a large number of owls would damage the ecosystem. "The practical elements of the plan are unworkable, and its adverse collateral effects would ripple throughout these forest habitats," according to Wayne Pacelle, founder of the advocacy group Animal Wellness Action. Pacelle noted, "The Fish and Wildlife Service is turning from protector of wildlife to persecutor of wildlife." In addition to the mass killing of owls planned to take place, scientists are already killing barred owls in spotted owl habitats for research purposes; 4,500 have been removed since 2009. Targets included barred owls in California's Sierra Nevada region where animals have only recently arrived, and officials want to stop large populations from growing. Conservation groups such as American Bird Conservancy, on the other hand, publicly announced, "Our organizations stand in full support of barred owl removal as a necessary measure, together with increased habitat protections for all remaining mature and old-growth forests." If critics fail to stop the mass killing, the shooting would likely begin next spring, with barred owls lured by megaphones broadcasting owl calls. Hunters would proceed to shoot the owls with shotguns and bury the owl carcasses on site. (Sources: AP, PBS)

Harsh storm destroys the Midwest

By Jordan Park
Sports Editor

A massive cross-country storm system has swept across the Midwest and South, wreaking havoc on numerous communities across multiple states and inflicting significant damage.

Since Mar. 14, the storm system has resulted in at least 40 fatalities across seven states. In the wake of the devastation, the Storm Prediction Center reported that at least 100 tornadoes occurred on Mar. 14 and 15. In total, tornadoes and severe storms alone have resulted in at least 24 fatalities across four states: Alabama, Arkansas, Missouri, and Mississippi. Missouri has reported the highest toll, with 12 fatalities in the state. Throughout the region, the natural disasters obliterated homes and left behind an extensive amount of debris. The storms also destroyed over 500 homes in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, located in the southeastern part of the state. In Alabama, officials recorded two fatalities and damage in 52 out of the state's 67 counties. Tylertown, Mississippi, located near the Louisiana border and home to approximately 1,500 residents, experienced two tornadoes on Mar. 15. The occurrence of innumerable tornadoes is not considered unusual for the area. William Bunting, deputy director of the Storm Prediction Center, commented that the last outbreak in the United States occurred on Mar. 31 and Apr. 1, 2023, resulting in 146 tornadoes and 26 fatalities.



CALAMITY: A bird's-eye view shows the storm's enormity.

As another storm system approaches, severe fire conditions were anticipated to return on Mar. 17 and 18, with strong winds forecasted for eastern New Mexico, central and western Texas, western Oklahoma, and southeastern Colorado. With strong winds and dry conditions increasing the fire hazard on Mar. 17, emergency management officials in Oklahoma advised residents to refrain from activities that could ignite fires, particularly in the western region of the state. The Oklahoma Department of Emergency Management reported on Mar. 16 that at least four people have died in the state due to the fires or high winds, and 142 others have been injured. Oklahoma residents frequently face the threat of tornadoes, but for many, the experience of dealing with wildfires is new.

The strong winds also resulted in dust storms in Texas and Kansas, leading to at least 12 more fatalities. In the area surrounding Lubbock and Amarillo, Texas, officials noted over three dozen vehicle accidents, claiming at least four lives. In western Kansas, eight individuals died in a multi-vehicle collision during a dust storm that resulted in near-zero visibility on Interstate 70 near the Colorado border, according to the Kansas Highway Patrol. Additionally, 46 people were transported to hospitals for treatment.

(Sources: CNN, NY Times)



CRISIS: Tornadoes in the Midwest wreak havoc in vast farmlands.

University student goes missing

By Quinn Hathaway
National/World Editor

On Mar. 6, a University of Pittsburgh student went missing on vacation in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic. Sudiksha Konanki, 20, originally went to Punta Cana for spring break with five friends and went missing on the beach of Riu República Hotel at around 4:15 AM.

In addition to the Dominican investigative forces, US officials are also involved in the search, along with support from India. Konanki is a citizen of India, but a permanent resident of Virginia. The Dominican police conducted repeated interviews with a man identified as a "person of interest." Local officials interviewed Joshua Riibe, 22, regarding his time on the beach with Konanki and discovered that the pair was, according to Riibe, swept out by a wave and struggling for their lives.



DISASTER: Police officials investigate Konanki's absence.

Riibe, a trained lifeguard, reported "trying to get [Konanki] to breathe the whole time. That didn't allow me to breathe all the time, and I swallowed a lot of water. I could have lost consciousness several times. When I finally reached the ground on the beach, I held her in front of me."

Investigators and officials have not yet named the man a suspect. Riibe is currently being "detained under irregular conditions" and cooperating with numerous interviews. Riibe's family expresses remorse for Konanki's situation, stating in an interview that "above all, we wish to contribute to the search efforts and understand the



MYSTERY: Arena Gorda Beach rests calmly before Konanki vanished.

anguish and uncertainty they are going through and we share the hope that Sudiksha will be found as soon as possible." Tina and Albert Riibe, Joshua's parents, also stated, "Our only interest is that due process be respected and that actions be taken with the fairness that the situation requires."

Surveillance footage released shows six women, including Konanki, and two men drinking in the lobby, then heading out to the beach at around 3 AM. Around 4:55 AM, the five other women and one of the men came back to the hotel, with Konanki and the other man staying on the beach, and at 8:55 AM, the other man returned, without Konanki in sight.

As part of the search efforts, Dominican police have enlisted detection dogs, drones, helicopters, and other methods to find Konanki. A Civil Defense spokesman stated, "The search is underway at sea because it's presumed she drowned. According to the boy who was with her, the waves swept her away, but that is under police investigation."

Konanki's parents expressed frustration, with her father saying in an interview, "It's four days, and if she was in water, she would likely have been strewn to shore. She's not found, so we're asking them to investigate multiple options, like kidnapping or abduction." Her father described her as ambitious and in pursuit of a career in medicine, and in Punta Cana for "a nice break." (Sources: AP, CBS, CNN)

ICE officials detain Columbia student for pro-Palestinian demonstrations

By Katie Nelson
Center Editor

On Mar. 8, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents detained Columbia University student Mahmoud Khalil for his leadership role in the pro-Palestinian encampment protests last spring. Agents arrived at Khalil's student apartment building and arrested him, transporting him via van to an immigration facility in New Jersey. He was then flown to Louisiana, where he now awaits trial to determine



UPSET: Protestors show support for Khalil during a street demonstration.

the grounds on which he may be deported. A federal judge has blocked his removal from the country while the court makes a decision, with the first trial of the hearing being held on Mar. 27th.

Khalil, a graduate student with Palestinian ancestry, stood out as a leader of the pro-Palestinian protests on Columbia University's campus.

Khalil started at Columbia in January of 2023 after earning a degree in computer science at Lebanese American University. He is married to a U.S. citizen and has a green card, indicating his status as a permanent resident of the country. He did on-camera interviews and gave speeches during sit-ins and protests, all without wearing a mask, unlike many other individuals involved. Khalil was also an active negotiator with Columbia University Apartheid Divest, the main coalition of protesting groups on campus.

Khalil's lawyers argue that the trial should be held in New York rather than Louisiana, where Khalil was transported. In a detailed report of the arrest, the Justice Department explained that Khalil "could not be housed at Elizabeth Detention Facility long-term due to a bedbug issue, so he remained there until his flight to Louisiana." Despite this claim, the detention center has taken in at least four other individuals since Mar. 6, adding to Khalil's lawyer's assertion that his detention in Louisiana was carried out under "improper motives." If he does go to trial in Louisiana, Khalil will face one of the harshest immigration court circuits in the country.

In his first public statement since the arrest, Khalil said, "My unjust detention is indicative of the anti-Palestinian racism that both the Biden and Trump administrations have demonstrated over the past 16 months as the US has continued to supply Israel with weapons to kill Palestinians and prevented international intervention. For decades, anti-Palestinian racism has driven efforts to

expand U.S. laws and practices that are used to violently repress Palestinians, Arab Americans, and other communities. That is precisely why I am being targeted."

The case is part of a growing number of arrests associated with immigration status in the US President Trump has taken an aggressive stance regarding immigration, already implementing multiple tactics to address the issue. According to the New York City Bar, his campaign has so far included "aggressively pursuing removal of noncitizens, pressuring states and localities to cooperate in immigration enforcement, limiting access to humanitarian forms of relief, and closing the southern border, to name just a few actions to date."

Protests in multiple cities have erupted in anger over Khalil's arrest and will likely continue as the trial develops. (Sources: ABC, AP, BBC, New York City Bar, New York Times)



PRESTIGE: A Columbia graduate school premise sits years after Khalil's graduation.

NTSB considers proposals to restrict helicopter travel

by Sahil Muthukrishnan
Sports Editor

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is considering severely restricting the number of helicopters allowed to fly into Ronald Reagan National Airport (DCA).



WATCH OUT: First responders search plane wreckage for survivors.

The potential restrictions come after the devastating crash over the Potomac River on Jan. 29, when a military helicopter hit a civilian American Airlines jet as it approached DCA. The collision killed 67 people, everyone aboard both vehicles. It was the deadliest plane crash since 2001, when a plane crashed into a New York City neighborhood shortly after takeoff, killing all 260 passengers and five residents. The deadly crash in DC, along with several other

crashes and close calls nationwide, including the the Feb. 6 commuter airplane crash off the Coast of Alaska and the Feb. 19 collision of two small planes in Arizona, have raised the public's concerns about the current situation of air travel.

There have been 19 deadly plane crashes nationally so far in 2025. Jennifer Homendy, the chairwoman of the NTSB, reported that between late 2021 and late 2024, out of the more than 900,000 flights in and out of DCA, there have been more than 15,000 close calls with less than 400 feet of vertical space between a plane and helicopter. She also stated that more than 85 close call misses, where there was less than 200 feet of vertical separation, have occurred at Ronald Reagan National Airport in the same time frame. Homendy expressed disappointment that it took a lethal crash for these statistics to hold weight, noting that the current regulations are "insufficient and pose...risk to aviation safety."

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OVER HERE: Coast Guard recovers items from the plane wreckage.

Archives releases JFK papers

by Margo Rawlings
Editor-in-Chief

On Jan. 23, President Donald Trump signed an executive order to release remaining classified documents related to the assassinations of former President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and activist Martin Luther King Jr. On Mar. 18, the National Archives released almost 80,000 pages of previously classified records regarding JFK's 1963 assassination, as well as 21 documents connected to RFK and 14 documents associated with MLK's assassination. In 1992, although Congress voted to publish the records by 2017, neither the Biden administration nor the first Trump administration declassified them due to national security concerns.



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It is currently unclear how much information within the newly released documents is actually

new; however, the National Archives unredacted text from a 1961 memo on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) that President Kennedy received. The memo consistently generated speculation from conspiracy theorists who believed the CIA was involved in Kennedy's assassination due to the length of the redactions. The memo, which now contains all redactions, including Arthur Schlesinger's, a Kennedy aid, who had critical view of the CIA. Schlesinger condemned the CIA's involvement in foreign affairs, calling for a decrease in undercover agents in foreign countries. Now declassified areas of the memo include the numbers and locations of CIA agents stationed around the world.

Additionally, the National Archives released pages relating to JFK's assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, who many believe to have had connections with the KGB, the USSR's equivalent to the CIA. They include information regarding a KGB official who determined Oswald was never a member of the KGB. This reinforces the often questioned theory that Oswald acted independently in his assassination, without the influence of a greater power.

Other newly released pages include directions to wiretap, information on the CIA's assassination attempts against Fidel Castro, and other directives that the CIA previously kept classified to protect their methods.

Jefferson Morley, a member of the Mary Ferrell Foundation, posted on X, "We now have complete versions of approximately a third of the redacted JFK documents held by the National Archives (1,124 of approximately 3,500 documents). Rampant overclassification of trivial information has been eliminated and there appear to be no redactions, though we have not viewed every document." While there are few redactions in the documents, many of the pages are illegible due to poor photocopying.

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Trump cuts NPS budget

by Kat Littfin
News Editor

President Donald Trump's governmental budget cuts have led to an excision of funding for the long-standing national parks system. In turn, thousands of national parks workers were laid off beginning in February, creating widespread anger and protest among former employees, environmentalists, and frequenters of the parks.



ENJOY THE VIEW: A national park looms overhead.

Former United States President Theodore Roosevelt was a major proponent of the national parks, influenced by famous naturalist John Muir. Inspired by Roosevelt, President Woodrow Wilson signed an act in 1916 formally establishing the National Park System. Since then, the 63 national parks across the US have been an important part of American culture, tourism, and environmentalism. The national parks employ approximately 20 thousand workers nationwide and are otherwise

staffed by volunteers. According to the National Parks Service, in 2023 the parks contributed about 55.6 billion dollars to the United States economy, aiding many local and state economies, and supporting roughly 415 thousand jobs, including workers not employed by the national parks. The service is highly regarded among American citizens; however, it is considered non-essential by the government, resulting in layoffs and severe budget cuts.

The cuts, announced on Feb. 15, resulted in about five percent of workers being laid off. Since the changes were enacted, parkgoers have reported longer lines to enter parks, reduced visitor center hours, public facilities in poor condition, and closure of several trails. The cuts that Trump's Administration made to the National Parks Service are due to the President's effort to examine government spending and eliminate spending in sectors he deems non-essential. Despite the backlash the President and his colleagues have faced, mostly from Democrats and progressives due to the controversial and possibly unconstitutional freezing of government spending, the Senate has passed a bill allowing Trump to continue his actions.

Since February, both national park supporters and those impacted by layoffs have responded angrily to Trump's decision to cut national park spending. Current and former employees have voiced their outrage and supporters of the national parks have staged several protests outside of the parks. Aaron Weiss, the deputy director of a public lands advocacy group stated, "I don't know whether we'll see overflowing latrines, polluted streams, or deadly wildfires first...These terminations are foolish, heartless, and do nothing to make the government more efficient." Other advocacy groups such as the National Parks Conservation Association have hired old national parks employees and continue to resist the termination of spending towards the National Parks Service. (Sources: BBC, USA Today, Wikipedia)

Previously stranded I.S.S. astronauts safely return home

by Nelson Kramer
Humor Editor

On Mar. 18, NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore returned to Earth after an extended stay in the International Space Station (I.S.S.). In June, NASA sent these two astronauts on a Boeing Starliner to the I.S.S. This was part of the ongoing exchange program in which NASA swaps out the astronauts living on the I.S.S. every few months. Williams and Wilmore's journey on the I.S.S. was supposed to last only eight days, but in the end, their travels on the I.S.S. lasted nine months.

Initially, NASA sent Williams and Wilmore to approve the spacecraft for continuous regular crew missions. To reach the I.S.S., which moves at approximately 17,500 miles per hour, their spacecraft, after reaching the point of separation from the launch vehicle, had to accelerate to match that speed. During this process of reaching the I.S.S., some of the space shuttle's boosters malfunctioned, compromising the original plan of the two traveling back on the same shuttle. As a result, NASA deemed that returning the two with the same spacecraft was dangerous and they opted to enlist the help of another company, SpaceX, for a rescue mission.

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SAY CHEESE: I.S.S. astronauts take a picture from their space station.

During those nine months in space, the astronauts performed several research projects, and Williams set a new record for the most spacewalks

for a woman. The two did not suffer while in space, and in spite of the predicament, they still celebrated Christmas as SpaceX sent up Santa hats with some of their food.

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- Erdogan arrests opponent
- Rasool is declared unwelcome in USA

Turkish police accuse presidential candidate of terrorism

by Julia Valencia
People Editor

Just days before he was going to be named one of the top candidates for the upcoming presidential election, Istanbul's mayor, Ekrem Imamoglu, was arrested by Turkish police in his home in the early hours of the morning.

On Mar. 19, Imamoglu was taken into Turkish custody, along with some of his close aides, and was accused of leading a criminal organization. Some are calling it a politically motivated act, as it is widely suspected that the Turkish Parliament is going to call for an early election, even though the current president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan of the Justice and Development Party, is technically in power until 2028.

President Erdogan is currently in his second of two terms that presidents are permitted in Turkey. However, if an early election were to occur in Turkey, President Erdogan would be eligible to run again as his second term has not yet been completed. Though President Erdogan and his political party have not yet produced a candidate that they intend to nominate, Erdogan has been the predominant politician for the party for the past 20 years. Thus, it is assumed that he will be the party's nominee as he has no obvious predecessor.

Video footage released by Imamoglu's team shows him in his closet, getting ready for the arrest. In the video, Imamoglu says, "We are facing great tyranny, but I want you to know that I will not be discouraged." President Erdogan has been suspected of using government institutions to undermine his political opponents in the past, something that Imamoglu's lawyers pointed out. Prosecutors say that Imamoglu engaged in bribery, fraud, money laundering, personal enrichment, and bid rigging. He is also facing charges of helping a terrorist organization that is linked to his coordination from last year's municipal elections. Imamoglu beat a candidate who had full support from President Erdogan. His arrest is following multiple previous charges, dating back to 2022, where he was reprimanded for insulting the judges from the Supreme Electoral Council, the group that oversees elections.

Imamoglu has not yet been charged with anything, but he will likely stay in Turkish custody until authorities pursue their investigation. In light of his arrest, Istanbul's governor, appointed by President Erdogan, banned any public demonstrations in the city for four days, hoping to limit protests about Imamoglu's arrest. This helped but did not fully stop protestors from taking to the streets, and by mid-afternoon, small-scale protests emerged in plazas and streets around Istanbul. Additionally, Turkey has allegedly restricted social

media platforms, like Instagram, TikTok, and X, for all citizens until further notice, according to NetBlocks, an internet monitor. (Sources: AP, CBS, NY Times)



PAY ATTENTION: President Ekram Imamoglu speaks about the future.

North Macedonia Fire kills 59

by Jordan Park
Sports Editor

At least 59 people lost their lives, and 155 were injured in a fire at a nightclub in North Macedonia. According to authorities, the fire is the most devastating national tragedy in recent memory and has left the small southeastern European country in shock.

Club Pulse, the nightclub where the fire erupted early on Mar. 16, is located in Kocani, about 50 miles east of the capital, Skopje. Many had come to the club to watch DNK, a well-known North Macedonian band. According to video footage, sparklers were ignited during the performance. Officials indicated that these sparklers were used illegally and likely triggered the fire, which later caused the roof to ignite. The club lacked sprinklers and the appropriate exit routes and was not located near a fire hydrant, which contributed to the extent of the devastation during the fire. Panche Toshkovski, the country's interior minister, stated, "The pyrotechnic devices used in the nightclub were brought in by the band." Biljana Arsovska, a spokesperson for the public prosecutor, noted that among the

many victims included one member of DNK along with other performers from that evening. She also mentioned that officials had not yet completed the process of identifying all the victims.

According to public prosecutor Ljupco Kocovski, the building that contained Club Pulse was officially registered as an industrial facility rather than a hospitality venue, yet it had still been granted a hospitality permit by the economy ministry. Prime Minister Hristijan Mickoski stated that the club had obtained its license document through bribery. He noted that the document featured the seal of the economic ministry and the signatures of former officials, labeling it as "illegally issued." In a statement on Mar. 16, Mickoski stated, "I will have no mercy" and added, "There is not [a] person in Macedonia who is not broken with a destroyed spirit after this."

So far, the police have detained 15 people, including the manager of the club and the owner's son. Several former or current officials have also been arrested in connection with the case. Prosecutors are looking to arrest former economy minister Kreshnik Bekteshi. Authorities have also detained another former official from the ministry, along with several other officials from different government agencies.

In response to the atrocity, thousands of people gathered in Skopje at the university to honor the fire victims on the afternoon of Mar. 17, the day following the catastrophe. In the following days, thousands have come together at cemeteries throughout North Macedonia to attend the funerals of the many individuals who lost their lives in the fire. This week, protests against corruption have erupted across the country. On Mar. 17, some in Kocani vandalized a pub that they claimed was also operated by the owner of Club Pulse. That same night, others threw rocks and shattered windows at the mayor's office. (Sources: BBC, NY Times)



SAFETY: Fire trucks extinguish flames in North Macedonia.

Solong crash causes an oil spill

by Sahil Muthukrishnan
Sports Editor

On Mar. 10, a crash between the Solong, a Portuguese container ship, and the Stena Immaculate, an American military oil tanker carrying more than 220,000 barrels of jet fuel, caused a large oil spill in the North Sea. The crash and subsequent spill spawned raging fires on both the Solong and the Stena Immaculate.

Though the extent of the environmental impact is still unknown, it is, at the very least, less impactful than a spill involving crude oil. Jet fuel is a light oil, which, while still detrimental to the environment, is not quite as harmful to marine life as crude oil. In addition, the continuous fire on the Solong burned away a lot of the fuel, producing harmful smoke, but overall, it reduced the direct impact on marine life. However, the spill will still significantly impact the marine environment. Citizens are finding pieces of debris from the crash all over beaches in Skegness, England. This debris includes nurdles, small pieces of resin or plastic, that threaten seals, birds, and other wildlife. Pollutants also stick easily to nurdles, making them even worse for the ecosystem.

The United Kingdom's Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), the Pentagon, and some Portuguese agencies are investigating the matter. The Pentagon is involved because the tanker was on a US military outing to deliver its oil to a depot in Yorkshire. The investigation looks to put charges of gross negligence manslaughter onto the captain of the Solong, 59-year-old Vladimir Motin, as one of his 14 crew members, 38-year-old Mark Angelo Pernia, is assumed dead.

The overall incident is a highly unusual one. Each vessel should have at least one crew member in the cabin at all times, and the neglect of this can have disastrous consequences. Vessels

such as these two come equipped with various safety features, including satellite navigation aids, communication systems, automatic identification systems, and hailers. Martyn Boyer, chief executive at Grimsby port, where the sailors sought refuge after the crash, commented, "There's so much sophisticated equipment and gear...How on Earth did it happen?" Motin is set to face trial in London's Old Bailey criminal court on Apr. 14. Fortunately, none of the 23 sailors on the Stena Immaculate are missing or presumed dead.

The property costs for the crash will likely be significant. Steamship Mutual insures the Stena Immaculate, while Skuld insures the Solong. Although neither company has decided to share any details of payments related to this case publicly, some experts estimate the price for the insurers of these vessels could pay upwards of 300 million dollars. (Sources: BBC, CNN, Politico)



OCEAN BLUE: Portuguese Solong sails across the sea.

South African Ambassador removed from USA and more

by Owen Fugit
Editor-in-Chief

Since February, various international developments have severely impacted countries in Africa, both economically and socially, making 2025 a critical year for determining the continent's future.

South African Ambassador to the US declared persona non grata: In a sharp escalation in tensions between the Republic of South Africa and the United States, Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced on X that "South Africa's Ambassador to the United States is no longer welcome in our great country." Rubio labeled South African ambassador Ebrahim Rasool a "race-baiting politician who hates America and hates [the President]." Rubio continued, "We have nothing to discuss with him and so he is considered PERSONA NON GRATA." Upon entering the White House in January, President Trump signed an executive order condemning a recent law passed in South Africa, allowing the government to seize land from certain landlords without compensation. Despite Rasool's unusual expulsion, the government of South Africa said it "remains committed to building a relationship with the United States of America."

United Nations releases critical reports on conflicts in South Sudan: A report published by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan accuses the government of corruption,



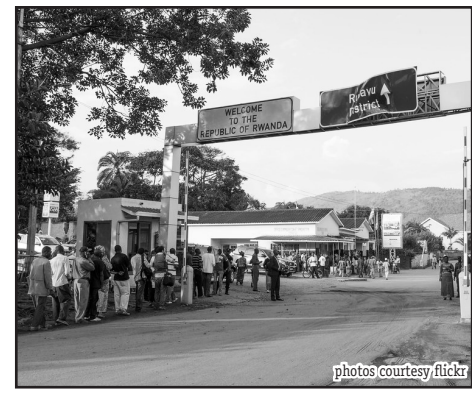
INTERVIEW: Ebrahim Rasool answers the reporters.

repression, and allowing sexual violence and other serious crimes to go unpunished, among other accusations. The report details how governmental actions such as the Sustainable Development Act in

Warrap State, known by locals as the Green Book, allowed for extrajudicial killings, illegal arrests, and brutal punishments for prisoners regardless of crime. In the report, the commission noted that it "found that the national government is responsible for gross human rights violations in Warrap State and must end the extrajudicial killings, while senior state government officials bear responsibility for these serious crimes in 2024." The report points to documented examples of citizens illegally detained and held in shipping containers for days on end as part of the Green Book's enforcement. The investigation notes how, in one case, seven men were found dead inside a shipping container. The governor of Warrap opened an investigation to find a guard or soldier responsible for the deaths, but the investigation returned no results, and the detentions continued.

Rwanda leaves peace talks with DRC: In a shocking announcement, rebel forces, including the notorious M23 Rwandan militia group, pulled out of peace talks with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) less than a day before they were set to take place. This past January, Rwandan-backed rebel forces invaded the east-

ern DRC in a surprise attack, seizing the city of Goma, a regional capital, and displacing thousands of citizens. The peace talks between the two nations fell through when the European Union imposed sanctions on Rwanda due to the nation's alleged involvement in the violence in eastern DRC. (Sources: BBC, Embassy of South Africa, France 24, Reuters, United Nations, Washington International Diplomatic Academy)



CATASTROPHE: Rwandans prepare to leave Goma.

- LGHS students must destigmatize social participation

El Gato encourages normalization of socializing

by **Hayley Strahs, Siyona Singhal, and Jane Wilde**
News Editors and Public Relations Manager

In the past, Los Gatos High School was known for its vivacious student body, spirited football games, and tight-knit community. However, school spirit has taken a noticeable dip; attendance at games is lower, pep rallies have less energy, and overall, students seem more disconnected from their community. Though many students go above and beyond to show their school spirit, the number of Wildcats who do this is rapidly decreasing. Current LGHS students must embrace the community that LG offers and start to destigmatize participation in social events not only for the sake of the community but also for the sake of students' mental wellbeing.

Many factors contribute to the decline in participation in school-sponsored activities. Sophomore **Nova Jayraj** commented on the most recent LGHS Spirit Week, explaining the reason she didn't participate in any of the lunchtime games: "Everyone who participates is super competitive and it's embarrassing when you lose. Everyone is looking at you." Freshman **Cyrus Lavassani** was among the myriad of students who decided not to dress up or participate in Spirit Week. When asked why he didn't dress up, Lavassani said, "I didn't really care. It's not worth dressing up for Spirit Week in my opinion." Sophomore **Farah Thariq** is a member of Leadership at LGHS. Reflecting on student participation in Spirit Week, Thariq stated: "I understand that most people don't want to participate in lunchtime games since they may be embarrassed, but I think that more people should dress up during Spirit Week, especially on Class Color Day." Thariq also elaborated on the current downward trend in Spirit Week participation, explaining, "I can't speak for every class, but I know that for our class less people have been dressing up. People think they're too cool to dress up, which is sad. I don't think that dressing up should be seen as embarrassing because it's just supporting your school and showing school spirit."

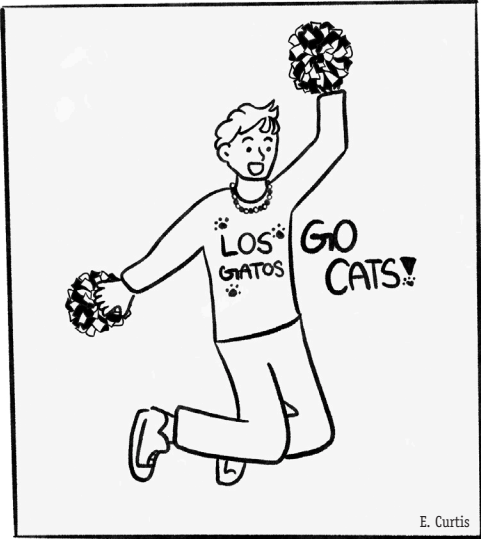
To stimulate Wildcat pride among students, juniors **Tanner Goulden, Owen Campbell, and Noam Ramon** are working to create a communal space for local teens. They are directly involved with the construction of an intergenerational Los Gatos community center. The proposed project will include activities and spaces for people of all ages

and provide both educational and recreational opportunities and classes. Goulden reflected, "I met with [Principal **Dave Poetzinger**], and I think he put it best: in this town, there's not a whole lot of things for teens to do outside of going to school." Along with the growing tendency towards isolation, the lack of activities often dissuades kids from involving themselves in the community. Goulden emphasized that the community center would "give teens things to do, with outdoor sports courts and just a place to meet and have fun...and be loud since it's not a library." Goulden added that he, Campbell, and Ramon "attended a focus group at the library put on by [the LG Thrives Foundation] because they wanted to get some teen voices." After the event, Goulden and his friends formed the LG Community Center Club at school to gather a wide range of student input about the proposed center and what it should offer. "We did this big survey push," explained Goulden, "and we're getting a lot of data. We're speaking to town council members and people in the Thrives Foundation, and we're giving them data and input so that [teens] can have a voice in the community center."

Many students and staff have observed an overall decline in school spirit over the years, such as AP English Language teacher **Kristin Austin**, who described the pandemic's impact on students as "huge." When asked to reflect on the matter, she stated, "Prior to 2020, kids were joyful, and then afterwards, they were definitely less emotive. They didn't show joy. That doesn't mean they didn't feel it, but they were more somber, more withdrawn, less social." As a result of quarantine, people felt more comfortable at home, isolating themselves from potential social opportunities. Austin recalls students wanting to go back in person; however, as soon as they came back, "people were fighting to stay home." The aftermath of COVID-19 has largely contributed to students' desires to stay home as

well as the decline in both academic attendance and school spirit. In terms of spirit, Austin observed a concerning decrease in student body engagement during Spirit Week. She recalled a time where "everybody dressed up and went to the spirit rally," but now, "kids are lining up at the library to avoid being in a social space."

According to the National Library of Medicine, social anxiety in teens has increased roughly 15.84 percent since the pandemic began, providing a plausible explanation for the heightening number of students at LGHS avoiding social events. In conjunction with the increase in social anxiety, it is evident that judgment is a significant factor in the dwindling of school spirit. Austin claims it is not the judgment itself that prevents students from going all-out during Spirit Week, but rather, "it's the fear of judgment that ultimately leads to the lack of spirit in students. So the less likely you are to be social, the more afraid you are. It's a cycle." To ensure LGHS continues to foster community and destigmatize social events, Austin strongly recommends saying



"yes." She stated, "A solution is to say yes every time you get invited to something. Put yourself out there, and if you're ready to do even more than that, start inviting people to do stuff with you. If you go to enough things, not all of them will be rewarding, but some of them will and then it will get easier." Austin emphasized that stepping out of your comfort zone is the key to breaking the anti-social cycle and essential to making strong, valuable connections. Although school events may overwhelm some students', they can be rewarding and enriching with time.

Despite school spirit levels declining overall, some students still take it upon themselves to participate in spirit days and activities. As junior **Evie Ishak** puts it, "Spirit days are like dress-up days, where you aren't judged for dressing up."

For this year's Spring Spirit Week, Ishak and her friends dressed to the nines, thanks to junior **Olivia Lang-Furr's** extensive planning. For Rhyme Without Reason Day, which required the most coordination, Lang-Furr explained, "I started with cows, because I love cows...so we did dairy, fairy, and Harry. My friend [Ishak] was Harry Potter; my friend [junior **Capri Allen**] was a fairy; and then I was a cow." For most LGHS students, Mar. 6 was a regular school day; for Lang-Furr and friends, it was a chance to enjoy themselves and celebrate for no specific reason. Ishak lamented, "It sucks that people think they're too cool [for spirit days], and that's why I get my friends to go all out because at least I know my little pocket [of friends] will be dressing up with me." The whole group agreed that, if nothing else, dress-up days are "just an opportunity to have fun [where] you can dress kind of goofy and [show] school spirit and unity."

Whether or not students choose to dress up for spirit days or not, participation in local events and activities is vital to restoring LGHS's community to one similar to the community fostered pre-COVID. To achieve this, the stigma surrounding avid school spirit has to go. Instead of stimulating fear among its students, LGHS must present participation as the standard in order to unite students under their shared Wildcat identity and become a safe place for kids to express themselves alongside their peers. While future generations will have the LG Community Center to sponsor and spur on social events, nothing is stopping current LGHS students from taking some initiative. Joining interest-based clubs, making an effort to expand social circles, and participating in spirit days are all ways to help bolster unity within our community one step at a time. Students such as Lang-Furr, Ishak, and Goulden, who already integrate into a wide range of local and school activities, report that doing so makes them happy, amidst busy schedules and academics. Both extroverted and introverted students alike stand to gain satisfaction from simply participating in and embracing the Wildcat community.

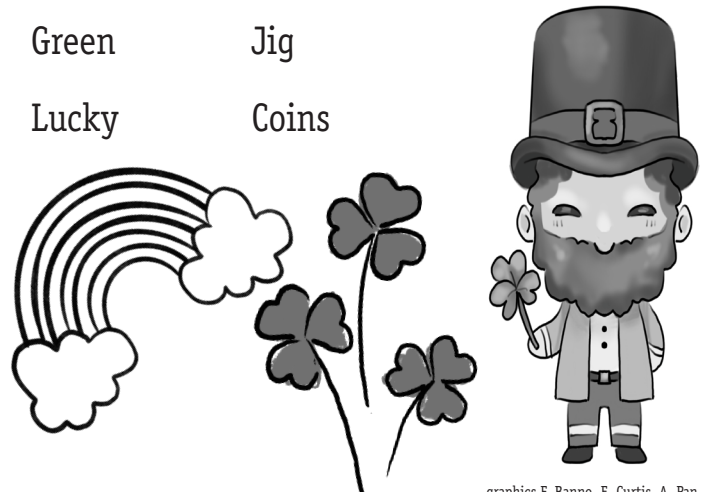
School spirit is not just cheering at football games; it is about bringing together the student body, fostering pride, and creating a sense of belonging in the school. Students should be free to participate in whatever they enjoy without shame. Together we can build a community in which every student feels like they have a place. (Source: NIH)



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- Physical media is more enriching
- Religion should be examined

OPINION

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Saul encourages travelers to improve airport manners

by Megan Saul
Culture Editor



Airports are strange places. Often filled with businessmen, families, and solo travelers with their own agenda of where they need to go and why, airports are frequently chaotic. The main similarity among these travelers is that everyone has to go somewhere at a set time—on a flight filled with other travelers. Because many people at the airport are taking a vacation, people often forget that they are still with other people who deserve respect. Although there isn't a strict set of social rules for people at the airport, travelers must uphold social graces and adhere to basic social etiquette.

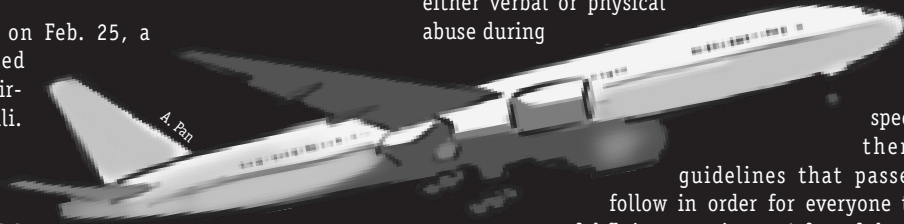
During the COVID-19 pandemic, airports across the world shut down. Among the many negative impacts of COVID-19 has been the loss of social skills, due to people lacking personal time with others. The airport, where it is crucial to interact with other passengers and airport staff, highlights the absence of these skills. The pandemic also increased the number of people scared of flying, which is now approximately 20 percent of all flyers. According to psychologist Martin Seif, "The single

most important criteria for determining how comfortable we are doing something is how often we do it." As a result of travelers' negative reactions to flying following COVID-19, many people have become more hostile and disrespectful to airport workers. According to a podcast by NPR, a few causes of unruly passengers after the pandemic are crowded planes, increased consumption of alcohol, and people having shorter fuses.

Just recently, on Feb. 25, a passenger attacked and assaulted an airport worker in Bali. He grabbed the employee and then slapped, kicked, and pulled her to the ground. The Australian Federal Police's (AFP) Acting Superintendent Aviation Shona Davis stated, "The AFP is committed to working closely with all our partners in the airline industry to intervene if anyone's behavior interferes with the safety of staff, visitors, and passengers in or around the airport. The AFP will not hesitate to prosecute those who break the law and poor behavior will not be tolerated

at airports." Airport personnel would not have to deal with these situations in the first place if people upheld basic etiquette at airports.

Due to travelers' lack of awareness and respect for flight attendants and other airport staff, airports are becoming full of hateful and frustrated people. A study by IBS Software and Aviation Business News revealed that 72 percent of airport staffers have faced either verbal or physical abuse during



their work. Although not specifically stated, there are many guidelines that passengers should follow in order for everyone to have a successful flying experience. A few of these rules include being aware of others when in security lines, having spatial awareness of the small space available within the plane, and being quiet and respectful during the flight.

Politeness to fellow passengers, airport staff, and flight crew as well as basic decorum would greatly improve the entire traveling process for all.

(Sources: AARP, International Airport Review, New York Post, NPR)

Energy drinks are unhealthy

by Jane Wilde
Public Relations Manager



A morning pick-me-up can be refreshing, but many overlook the serious health consequences of continuous consumption of energy drinks, specifically newer market competitors like

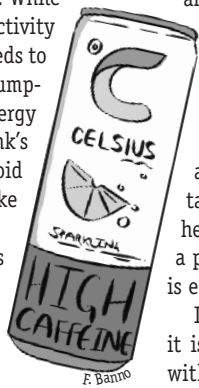
Celsius, a popular energy drink company. While these beverages can enhance physical activity and temporarily boost moods, society needs to stop normalizing excessive caffeine consumption. Additionally, the label on every energy drink should prominently display the drink's caffeine content so consumers may avoid potential health consequences and make informed choices.

Within the last few years, Celsius's popularity and sales have skyrocketed, amounting to a revenue increase of 102 percent since 2023. Much like the electronic smoking industry, Celsius profits off of young adults and caters to them by introducing several appealing flavors, including Tropical Vibe and Peach Vibe. While most energy drinks' caffeine content ranges from 80-160 milligrams, Celsius drinks range from 200-300 milligrams, just barely under the recommended daily caffeine intake. Many are aware of the detrimental effects of caffeine, such as poor sleep, anxiety, and heart palpitations. However, what a lot of consumers don't know is drinking 300 milligrams of caffeine a day can result in gut dysbiosis (imbalanced microorganisms in the small intestine) and even cause permanent damage to one's cardiovascular system. These vascular effects include heightened

risk of heart attack, arrhythmia, and higher stroke probability.

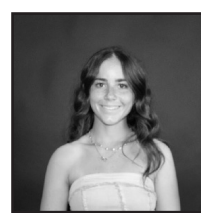
Unlike many energy drinks, Celsius does not display the caffeine content in clearly legible font, but rather in fine print on the nutritional label. This feels like a poor attempt to hide the dangerously addictive amount of caffeine. Caffeine is absorbed in the small intestine and released into the bloodstream, further releasing adrenaline to the brain, making people dependent on it, acting much like any addictive drug. The recent death of a 21-year old college student, who passed away from Panera's charged lemonade, should serve as a cautionary tale of caffeine consumption and labels. The student suffered from cardiac arrhythmia and nowhere on the label did it say it contained 390 milligrams of caffeine, making her unaware of the content. This serves as a prime example of why prominent labeling is essential for consumers' safety.

In short, caffeine is like a drug in that it is highly addictive, can result in intense withdrawals, and causes long term health issues. Regulating caffeine transparency is a serious matter of public health. The media should not normalize the excessive consumption of this drug. Energy drink companies, including Celsius, bear the responsibility of reducing their caffeine levels. In order to eradicate the overconsumption of caffeine, energy drink companies must lower the amount of caffeine in their products and provide a larger, more prominent nutrition label. Transparency in content empowers consumers to make more informed choices. This should not be about profit; this is about guarding public health so society can move past the normalization of excessive caffeine consumption.



Protect freedom of speech

by Margo Rawlings
Editor-in-Chief



One of many causes that President Donald Trump, JD Vance, and other conservatives have rallied their supporters around has been the First Amendment right to freedom

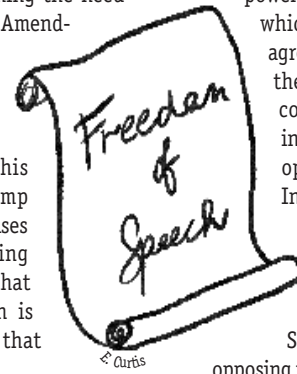
of speech. A long-time core conservative value, Republicans have often criticized the left's censoring of certain speech, championing the need to loosen restrictions on First Amendment rights. Allowing unpopular, disfavored speech has been a fundamental aspect of American culture and an integral part of our democracy. Following his return to office, President Trump abandoned one of the central causes he campaigned on by punishing individuals and organizations that criticize him. This suppression is an alarming Orwellian parallel that Americans must challenge.

In January, Trump signed Executive Order 14149, Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship, which suggested his intent to protect free speech. However, his subsequent actions suggest otherwise. The current administration believes that in order to protect Americans' First Amendment rights, they must abolish words and phrases that don't align with state-sponsored messages. They have persecuted individuals with dissenting opinions and those who have questioned their investigations, including political rivals, members of the former Biden

administration, and journalists. Moreover, the Trump administration has silenced news organizations that refuse to spread misinformation by cutting government funding and labeling them as radical propagandists, such as Voice of America, which the administration effectively shut down. Similarly, President Trump attempted to silence the Associated Press by barring them from press events due to their refusal to refer to the Gulf of Mexico as the Gulf of America.

It is well within the rights of politicians to criticize the media, but by using government power to sideline or silence ideology with which the Trump administration disagrees and to promote its own agenda, the administration crosses a line that compromises its integrity. Restricting the right to freedom of the press opens the door to further censorship. Infringing on values that American democracy has championed for hundreds of years is un-American and does not reflect the image of freedom the United States has always upheld. Welcoming opposing views for open discussion is the basis of democracy. In fact, even Vance recently proclaimed, "You do not have shared values if you're so afraid of your own people that you silence them and shut them up" and yet the Trump administration's recent actions echo this exact fear.

We must mirror the actions of individuals and organizations such as AP and refuse to submit to intimidation. As the people, it is our responsibility to uphold democracy by continuing to voice our opinions and beliefs regardless of popularity or reprimand.



Hastings argues for greater appreciation of physical media

by Megan Hastings
Public Relations Manager



In an era dominated by streaming, where movies and music become readily available by one touch of a screen, the tangible experience of entertainment—watching movies in theaters and listening to music on CDs or vinyl—is less common. Despite its convenience, streaming has had unexpected effects on consumers and artists because of its widespread acceptance. As we embrace this digital shift, it's important to support artists by attending live performances, purchasing physical media, and choosing platforms that fairly compensate creators.

Box office revenue traditionally serves as the main source of funding for filmmakers. The financial success of a movie is directly influenced by ticket sales when it opens in theaters. But with the growth of streaming, a lot of movies now move straight to digital platforms, where they frequently lose money. Since streaming services usually pay a set price to acquire movies, audience involvement is no longer a determining factor in a film's financial success. The financial return for filmmakers is minimal, regardless of how many views a film receives on a streaming service. Independent filmmakers, whose work would have previously flourished due to word-of-mouth in theaters, experience the negative effects of this system the most. The situation is significantly worse for musicians. Artists receive relatively pennies

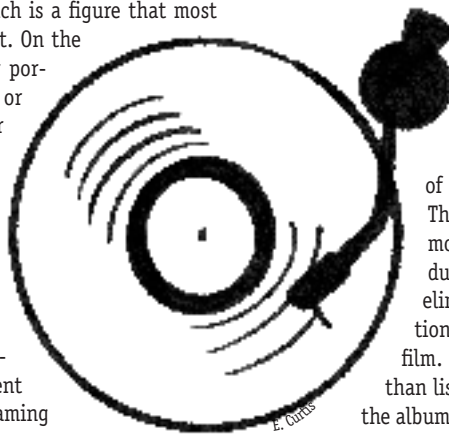
per stream from streaming services like YouTube, Apple Music, and Spotify. For comparison, an artist may only make between 3,000 and 5,000 dollars for every million streams, which is a figure that most independent musicians find difficult to meet. On the other hand, the artist receives a far bigger portion of the sale when customers buy CDs or vinyl records, meaning artists hold greater control over their earnings through physical sales. Revenue from a single record sale can amount to hundreds or even thousands of dollars.

Movies can also vanish overnight on digital platforms. A movie that is accessible on Netflix today could disappear tomorrow due to changes in licensing arrangements. Purchasing a DVD or Blu-ray gives you permanent ownership of the movie, independent of streaming services' changing priorities. Compared to Blu-rays or 4K discs, streaming services' compressed video and audio files have lower resolutions and poorer sound quality. A major loss for movie buffs is this deterioration in quality. For music, listeners hardly ever "own" music these days due to streaming. Rather, they rent access to enormous song catalogs that are always available for removal. Furthermore, algorithm-driven listening patterns promote a culture

of apathy and skipping, making it uncommon to interact deeply with an album. Conversely, vinyl records and CDs promote deliberate listening. As a result, fans and artists develop a closer bond.

Beyond financial and ownership concerns, there is also the simple truth that movies and music are best experienced in ways that engage the senses more fully. The experience of watching a movie in a theater is immersive. The social ambiance, surround sound, and enormous screen create an environment impossible to duplicate at home. Viewing a movie in a cinema eliminates the distractions of phones and notifications, allowing the viewer to focus entirely on the film. Clicking "play" on a streaming app is easier than listening to a vinyl record or CD. You must select the album, put it in the CD player or turntable, and listen intently. This approach fosters a greater appreciation for the music. Digital formats frequently lack the warm, analog sound quality of vinyl albums in particular.

Regaining a meaningful relationship with art is the primary goal of shifting towards physical media, which goes beyond providing financial support. Treating art as disposable and replaceable is a distasteful, passive approach to someone's piece of work.



Teen centers are necessary

by Claudia Casal
Culture Editor



From the 1970s to the early 2010s, Los Gatos teens had a dedicated place to hang out with their friends. The Venue was a place for teens to do just that. It was a community cornerstone for over 40 years as not only a place for musical acts to perform, but more importantly, a safe place for high schoolers to form friendships and express themselves in a town that otherwise offers little to teenagers. Now, more than ever, we need to bring The Venue back.

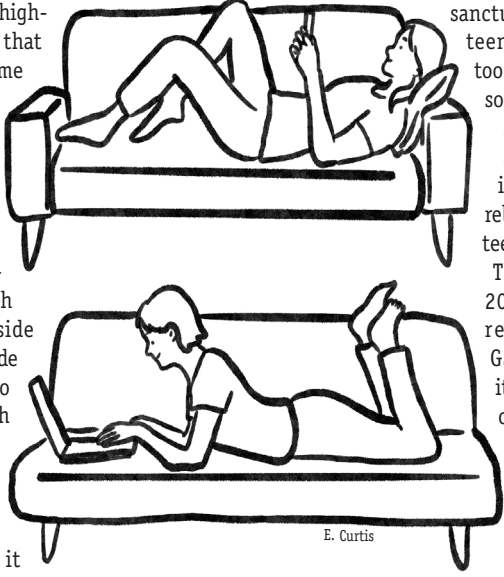
When surveyed by the Times Herald, 76 percent of students from Los Gatos High School said that they simply went home after school. This highlights the problem that many teens like me have – we do not have a place to unwind and relax with our peers. A teen center would allow adolescents to socialize and unwind with their friends outside of school and provide a place for them to spend time with each other outside of their own homes. Teens could go there for multiple reasons, whether it be an extra place to study — beyond the busy library — or just to hang out. Currently, aside from the library, there aren't many places where teens can socialize. Typically, the library is only a hub for quiet study sessions or picking up a book.

After quarantining for two years, teenagers feel more alone than ever according to the Institute for Family studies. A teen center would help them feel more connected.

According to the Department of Justice, teen centers can also provide many teenagers with an alternative to unsafe activities. Teen centers are a place for teenagers to develop interests while meeting and bonding with new people outside of school and extracurriculars. They provide teens with a chance to learn new activities or even receive added support for school assignments and personal problems.

Teen centers are already seeing success across the country. In Kamiah, Idaho, a teen center provided bored teenagers with a place to go, giving them several activities such as ping pong and foosball tables and even gaming consoles. The center became a sanctuary for the Kamiah teens and the parents, too. Knowing that their son or daughter was in a safe spot gave parents a sense of relief and improved the parents' relationships with their teenagers.

The venue closed in 2012 due to budget restraints, so Los Gatos should reopen it to enrich the lives of hundreds of Los Gatos high schoolers. It could feature several games to entertain the teens while also hosting local bands. It wouldn't need to be heavily staffed, as it would only need to be open for few hours after school during the weekdays. (Sources: Department of Justice, Institute for Family Studies, Times Herald)



E. Curtis

Climate change is a major threat

by Siyona Singhal
News Editor



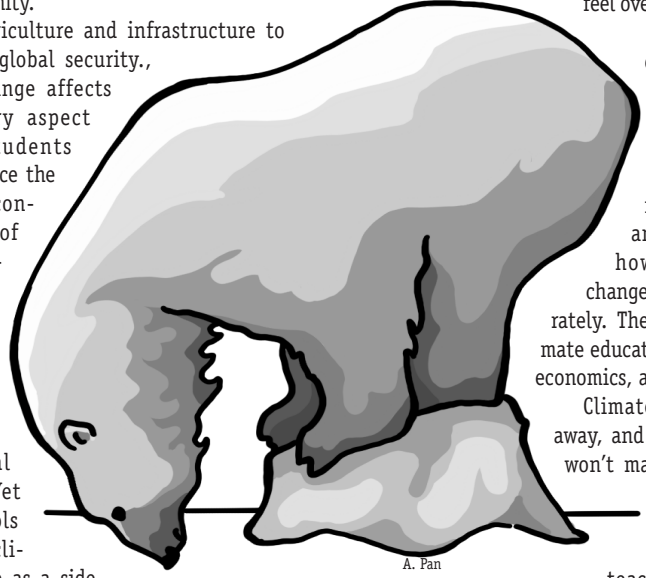
Climate change is no longer a distant threat, it's a present reality. Rising global temperatures, extreme weather events, and melting ice caps are not just headlines; they are facts that impact our daily lives. Despite the overwhelming evidence and growing urgency, climate change remains an overlooked topic in many school curriculums. More schools need to teach students about climate change because learning about climate change isn't just important, it's essential for preparing future generations to understand and combat one of the biggest challenges facing humanity.

From agriculture and infrastructure to health and global security, climate change affects nearly every aspect of life. Students today will face the long-term consequences of environmental damage, including rising sea levels, food insecurity, and increasing natural disasters. Yet many schools still treat climate change as a side topic. According to a 2020 survey by the National Center for Science Education, only 42 percent of teachers feel confident teaching about climate change, often because they lack the proper training or resources. By not making climate change education a priority, schools are doing students a disservice.

Students need to understand not just the science behind climate change but also the social, political, and economic implications. This knowledge is crucial for equipping future leaders, policymakers, and voters with the tools to make informed decisions.

The demand for climate education is already here. According to a 2019 poll by NPR, 80 percent of parents in the U.S. support teaching climate change in schools. Students, too, are becoming increasingly vocal about the need for action. Youth-led movements like Fridays for Future, inspired by climate activist Greta Thunberg, show that young people are eager to engage with environmental issues. Students are not looking for doom and gloom. They want practical knowledge and solutions. Teaching about renewable energy, sustainable practices, and environmental justice would empower students to take action rather than feel overwhelmed by the crisis.

To make climate education more effective, schools could introduce climate change as a core subject, rather than as a side note in science class, and train teachers on how to teach climate change confidently and accurately. They can incorporate climate education into social studies, economics, and literature. Climate change isn't going away, and ignoring it in schools won't make it disappear. Education is one of the most powerful tools for change, and teaching students about climate change gives them the knowledge and confidence to shape a more sustainable future. The next generation will inherit the consequences of today's environmental choices, it's only fair that they're prepared to face them head-on. (Sources: NPR, National Center for Science Education)



A. Pan

Panicacci argues that religious practices need redefining

Lucy Panicacci
Editor-in-Chief



My parents raised me as a Catholic. Growing up, we would attend church regularly on weekends and go on Christmas and Easter. Every week, I went to Sunday school to learn about the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. We prayed before big meals, expressing our gratitude for God. When I went over to my grandparents' house every summer, I sometimes prayed the rosary with them, which they did every night, before I went to bed. Yet, as I've grown older, I fail to feel a connection to Catholicism. On the now rare occasions that I attend church, I don't feel a sense of faith and belief in the readings. However, I wish that I could be a more religious person.

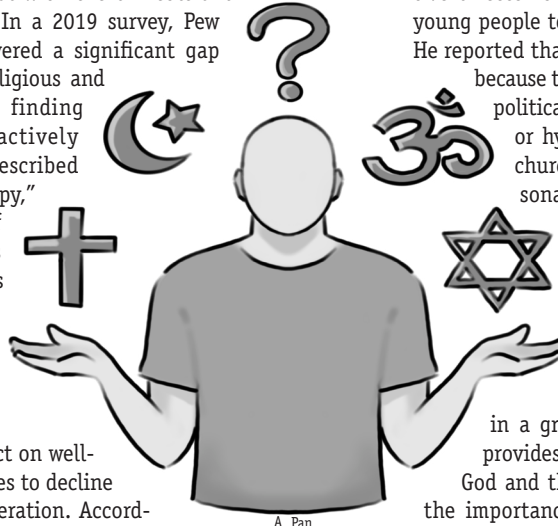
Believing in a religion provides a core sense of comfort. Although I don't have a deep faith in Catholicism, I understand the peaceful presence of attending church. Whether or not I consider the teachings as the truth, an hour of prayer and listening to the live choir and music creates a grounding experience from which I emerge in a calmer state. In addition, Catholicism gives explanations for the many unknowns in life. It presents a way to cope with times of suffering and a soothing idea of the afterlife. A sense of security in life comes from the idea of a greater being watching over you. As an agnostic,

I have to find this safety within my own will, using my own mental fortitude to deal with the difficult and stressful parts of life. In a 2019 survey, Pew Research Center uncovered a significant gap in the happiness of religious and non-religious people, finding that 36 percent of actively religious Americans described themselves as "very happy," while only 25 percent of non-religious Americans described themselves as "very happy." Religion allows its believers to have an unwavering pillar of support in their lives.

In spite of the impact on well-being, religion continues to decline among the current generation. According to a 2022 Pew study, 64 percent of Americans identified themselves as Christians in 2020. However, Pew Research projects that percent to dip below 50, reaching as low as 35 percent, by 2070. Currently, 34 percent of Gen Z

say they are religiously unaffiliated. Scott McConnell, the executive director of Lifeway Research, connected the decline among young people to a lack of acceptance in the church environment. He reported that a majority of young adults surveyed dropped out because they disagreed with the church's stance on social and political issues or found church members to be "judgmental or hypocritical." My own disconnect with the Catholic church began when officials started to critique my personal beliefs for reasons that I could not see as immoral or unethical. The church could only explain its judgment through a vague Bible verse. I saw how people I knew used religion as a way to cast hate upon other people. This judgment created a stark divide in my perception of the loving, accepting community that Catholicism often champions.

I would like to be able to hold to the belief in a greater being for the comfort and stability that it provides, yet I find myself ever questioning my faith in God and the beliefs of the Catholic Church. I still recognize the importance of religion in many people's everyday lives. I met one of my lifelong friends through Sunday school. However, from my experience, it is clear current religious practices need redefining. (Sources: American Survey, The Guardian, Pew Research Center)



A. Pan

Strahs believes society should take more advantage of AI

by Hayley Strahs
News Editor



Once a terrifying concept of science fiction, artificial intelligence (AI) has taken the world by storm with its human-like capabilities. However, even with AI's capacity to streamline administrative tasks and hold conversations, recent developments have led to criticism of the technology as a whole. Many people are quick to dismiss — or even denounce — AI because of its perceived threat to managerial and creative careers. Nonetheless, with programs such as ChatGPT and Claude on the rise, refusing to recognize and adopt the ethical uses of AI is impractical and, in some cases, outright irresponsible.

Similarly, AI's deceitful capabilities have sparked numerous disputes within the arts. After controversy regarding two films — Emilia Perez and The Brutalist—and their use of AI to enhance actors' voices, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is considering requiring film companies to disclose any use of the technology before their work receives any Oscar nominations. Despite audience displeasure and low IMDb ratings, the producers of each film argue that altering actors' voices enhances the cultural authenticity of the films — a take with which many viewers

disagree. As of right now, the general consensus is that any AI usage, no matter the reasoning behind it, renders a film inauthentic and unethical. However, with a lack of official AI legislation, the distinction between ethical and unethical AI remains problematic. Unfortunately, the full bans for that many critics advocate completely eliminate AI's potential to help up-and-coming artists and cinematographers. While few studios have done so, taking advantage of AI's brainstorming and editing capabilities could even assist producers with preproduction and easy-to-miss revisions of script drafts. As long as the work itself is still that of the studio's, using AI for quick edits should not render a film fraudulent,

unlike Emilia Perez and The Brutalist, which both used AI to heavily alter on-screen performances. Especially in smaller studios, or among freelance artists, AI's ability to provide minor feedback can simulate that of a paid editor when one isn't economically feasible. Critics must realize that entirely banning the use of AI in film is not the answer and does not stand to benefit anyone. Instead, specific distinctions on what are and aren't ethical uses can help producers utilize AI without exploiting its abilities.

Similar to other formative innovations like cell phones and cars, we can — and should — responsibly incorporate AI into daily life. If the technology is anything like phones, it is only a matter of time before AI expands into even more facets of society. In other words, AI is here to stay whether we like it or not, so why not take advantage of it? The next time you need a beta reader or some inspiration for your next art project, consider using AI: the technology of the future. (Sources: Digital Marketing Institute, Fast Company, NY Film Academy)



A. Pan



EI GATO'S GARDEN

Rules: Each player rolls a die and moves forward. Follow the instructions on the square and repeat.

**START
HERE**

Oh my days! You found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. Move forward one space!

Stand up, do a heel click, and move three spaces ahead. Stay jolly!

Shucks! You got pranked on April Fools' Day. Move back one space.

Yum! You made a delicious dinner of corned beef and cabbage! Go forward two spaces.

Yippee! You finally got to shed the sweater for a few days and wear shorts and a T-shirt! Move forward two spaces!

Oh joy! You spent a wonderful afternoon frolicking in the luscious green fields. Move forward three spaces!

Take your ginger self back to the start! Who has time for your leprechaun shenanigans?

Spring cleaning! You tidied up your house right when the weather got better. Great job! Move forward one space.

Ouch, someone pinched you! Looks like someone forgot to wear green on St. Patrick's Day. Move back two spaces and go put on some green.

You thought April Fools' and St. Patrick's Day were the same thing. Your Leprechaun is NOT happy with you. Start over and this time, get your holidays straight.

Good riddance! You cleaned your room and got ready for a fresh start this season. Move forward two spaces.

CRASH! You fell over! Caught you! Leprechaun! Move back two spaces and make a wish! Move forward two spaces and your wish will come true!

ME OF SPRING

ward according to whichever number they roll.
eat until one player reaches the end of the board.



Congratulations! You successfully tanned over the weekend AND studied! Move forward two spaces!

Oh no! Instead of catching a leprechaun, your trap caught the family hamster, and your parents are not happy. Move back three spaces.

Darn it! You got a flat tire on your bike ride. Move back one space.

aning!
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when the
warmer.
ove for-
space.

You found a four-leaf clover on the front lawn. Move forward four spaces. How lucky!

Oh no! You haven't started studying for any of your upcoming AP tests. Move back two spaces.

Oh boy, you yourself a leprechaun! Now you can catch one. Jump forward three spaces to claim your prize.

Uh oh! The beautiful spring flowers in your garden died. Move back three spaces.

AHH! You forgot that you have an essay due tomorrow morning, and now you are going to have to pull an all-nighter. Go back two spaces.

Spring Break is right around the corner! Move forward one space!

FINISH!

Gruetter reviews Oscar-winning film Anora

by Sam Gruetter
Opinion Editor

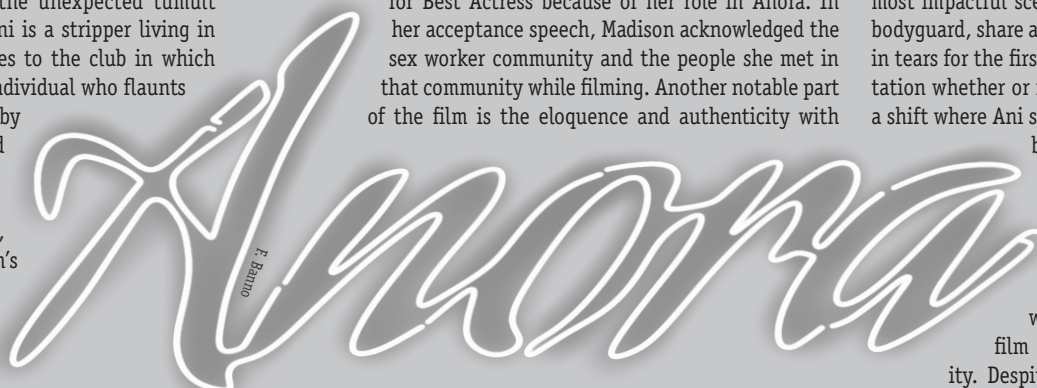
On Oct. 18, 2024, theaters began showing *Anora*, a movie featuring rising actress Mikey Madison as the lead Anora. The film details the tumultuous relationship between Anora, or Ani, and Ivan Zakharov, played by Mark Eydelshteyn. The movie teases the viewer with the promise of a rom-com for the first 50 minutes, but quickly overshadows this with reality for the duration of the movie, simulating the unexpected tumult Ani endures when her life is upended. Ani is a stripper living in Brooklyn, who meets Ivan when he comes to the club in which she works. Ivan is an extremely opulent individual who flaunts his wealth in an attempt to impress Ani by bringing her to his lavish mansion and taking her on exotic vacations. On one of their vacations to Vegas, the couple marry, ensuring Ani a life of financial security, but also dependency on Ivan. Once Ivan's parents hear about their marriage, they immediately disapprove and get the marriage annulled, immediately turning the relationship hostile and leaving

Anora with no evidence of the extravagant lifestyle in which she was briefly immersed. The most notable aspect of this film is the authenticity with which Madison conducts herself while playing the role. In order to prepare for playing Ani, Madison watched many strippers and engrossed herself in the culture of sex work within Brooklyn, even down to the tattoos many strippers have. Madison's impeccable acting and tireless preparation paid off when she won an Oscar for Best Actress because of her role in *Anora*. In her acceptance speech, Madison acknowledged the sex worker community and the people she met in that community while filming. Another notable part of the film is the eloquence and authenticity with

which it approaches intimate scenes. It is unavoidable that there would be numerous intimate scenes because of Ani's profession as a sex worker; however, these scenes help convey the unfortunate reality that Ani has to use sex, and the promise of it, to make social progress.

Another part that contributes to the original and exceptional viewing experience of *Anora* is the small details and scenes that convey its message about the profession of sex work. Arguably, the most impactful scene is the final one, where Ani and Igor, Ivan's bodyguard, share an intimate moment, Ani ultimately breaks down in tears for the first time in the movie, and it is left up to interpretation whether or not she and Igor have sex. This moment signals a shift where Ani stops associating intimacy with transactions and begins being more vulnerable.

Anora took home many well-deserved accolades on the night of the Oscars. The film won Best Picture, Best Actress, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, Best Film Editing, and Best Supporting Actor. This was a rather unexpected turn of events, as the film had a minimal budget and very little publicity. Despite all odds, it now boasts impressive acclaim.



Paris fashion season begins

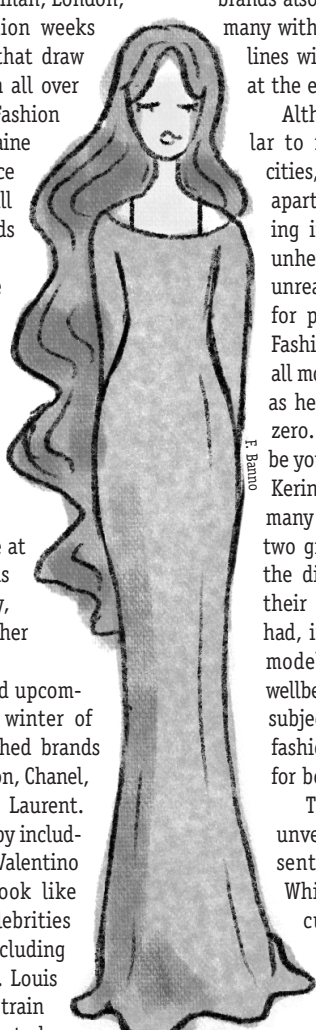
by Megan Saul
Culture Editor

Within the fashion industry, there are several weeks when well-known fashion designers display their newest collections, called fashion week. With events in New York City, Milan, London, Paris, Berlin, and more, fashion weeks are highly publicized events that draw in celebrities and models from all over the world. Recently, the Paris Fashion Week, known in French as *Semaine de la mode de Paris*, took place from Mar. 3-11. It was a week full of exhibiting new fashion trends and show-stopping looks. The Fédération de la Haute Couture et de la Mode runs the fashion industry in France and, therefore, runs the majority of fashion week activities. These events include haute couture and ready-to-wear shows, totaling 72 runway shows. Within Paris, the different events took place at the Louvre Museum, the Palais de Tokyo, the Musée d'Orsay, the Grand Palais, and many other notable venues. This fashion week displayed upcoming fashion for the fall and winter of 2025-2026. The most established brands included Valentino, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Givenchy, Miu Miu, and Saint Laurent. Many fashion shows competed by including shocking scenery, such as Valentino designing their runway to look like a public bathroom. Many celebrities posed with this backdrop, including Jared Leto and Chappell Roan. Louis Vuitton's show, located at the train station Gare du Nord, presented many sporty, practical pieces that one might wear when traveling. Givenchy's collection was full of sheer and blazer looks from creative director Sarah Burton's first lines. The Miu Miu show, put on by Miuccia Prada, displayed

streetwear looks that blended modern styles with 1950s fashion. Lastly, Saint Laurent's runway show closed Paris Fashion Week. These looks were on the simpler side, highlighting the silhouettes of the clothing garments. Several other smaller brands also presented at Paris Fashion Week, many with hopes of sharing their upcoming lines with the influential people present at the events.

Although Paris Fashion Week is similar to fashion weeks located in other cities, there are a few rules that set it apart. Specifically, because the modeling industry is known for promoting unhealthy body images that can create unrealistic expectations and pressures for people, specifically women, Paris Fashion Week made a rule in 2015 that all models have to be medically certified as healthy and wear at least a US size zero. In a similar vein, no models can be younger than 16 years old. LVMH and Kering, two large parent companies of many sought-after brands, stated, "The two groups are placing respect for and the dignity of women at the heart of their values: that's why we've always had, in particular, the wellbeing of the models we work with in mind...The wellbeing of our models is a fundamental subject." These regulations set for this fashion week make the event healthier for both the viewers and the models.

This year's Paris Fashion Week unveiled many new pieces that presented popular styles and designs. While many of these looks are not currently released, viewers can expect to see them and other similar looks during the upcoming fall and winter months. As this was only one of the many fashion weeks, be sure to tune in for the anticipated fashion week located in London from Jun. 12-15. (Sources: CNN, Fédération de la Haute Couture, The Guardian, The Sunday Times, Vogue)



Latvian movie Flow gains worldwide success

by Kat Littfin
News Editor

Earlier this month, many were surprised when the Academy Awards announced the selection of *Flow*, a low-budget Latvian animation about a cat's journey with its animal friends, for Best Animated Feature. The movie beat front-runners Pixar's *Inside Out 2* and *The Wild Robot* to become Latvia's first film to win an Academy Award. A feature film with an inspiring production process, important themes, and global acclaim, *Flow* is a must-watch for people of all ages.

Directed by Gints Zibalodis, *Flow*, the English translation of the Latvian title *Straume*, follows the journey of a solitary and skittish black cat in a post-apocalyptic society as a sudden flood displaces the cat and other animals. As the cat's fear of water sends it searching for refuge to higher ground, an affable capybara, who happens to be sailing a boat, rescues the cat just before the flood engulfs it. Along their journey, a troop of other assorted animals joins the pair, including a steadfastly loyal golden retriever, a wise and assertive secretary bird, a hoarding lemur, and a whale who saves the cat from drowning and becomes an important character at the end of the movie. The animals face many challenges as the water continues to rise and destroy their habitats and the habitats of less friendly animals. By the end of the movie, the flood subsides, and while the land animals can return to their homes and thrive, marine animals, including the friendly whale, perish.

Zibalodis began the production of *Flow* in 2019, using the free animation software Blender. *Flow*'s production was impressively inexpensive in comparison to other animations nominated for Best Animated Feature, as Zibalodis did much of the work for the film himself, helped only by a small team and later larger companies for post-production.

Matiss Kanza aided Zibalodis in writing *Flow*, and companies Take Five and Sacre Bleu helped with animation and sound engineering starting in 2022. The movie features no dialogue but instead a cacophony of animal noises and an instrumental soundtrack composed by Zibalodis and Rihards Zalupe. The sound engineer Gurwal Coic-Gallas recorded the sounds of his cat Miut and animals at the zoo. For some of the animals, Coic-Gallas and Zibalodis had to be more creative, using a camel for the sounds of the capybara and a pitched-down tiger for the sounds of the whale. Impressively, the animation was not storyboarded, and it features no deleted scenes.

Though outwardly the animation seems surface-level, the story explores deeper topics and symbols. A significant theme illustrated in the film is fear and the support of friendship. The cat must overcome its fear of water in many instances, but often its fear becomes paralyzing. In the end, only the cat's animal friends can save it. In an interview, Zibalodis stated, "There are certain things we can change about ourselves... but there's still some anxieties we feel... I wanted to show how the cat does improve on its fears, but it still has these deep down... And I wanted to show how that's okay and maybe there's others who can support that." Furthermore, the film touches upon environmentalism, as the extreme shifts in weather and rising sea levels mirror the global warming observed today. The film also features many shots of natural beauty.

Flow has been wildly successful globally, especially for a Latvian film. The animation was so popular that Latvia erected a statue of the cat in its capital city, Riga. The film debuted at the famed Cannes Film Festival, where it received high praise before winning the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature. If you are curious about this highly acclaimed animation that merited a statue in a nation's capital, watch *Flow*, available for streaming on HBO Max. (Sources: Wikipedia, Animation Scoop)



Lumineers album Automatic is a hit

by Kayla Mitchell
Media Production Editor

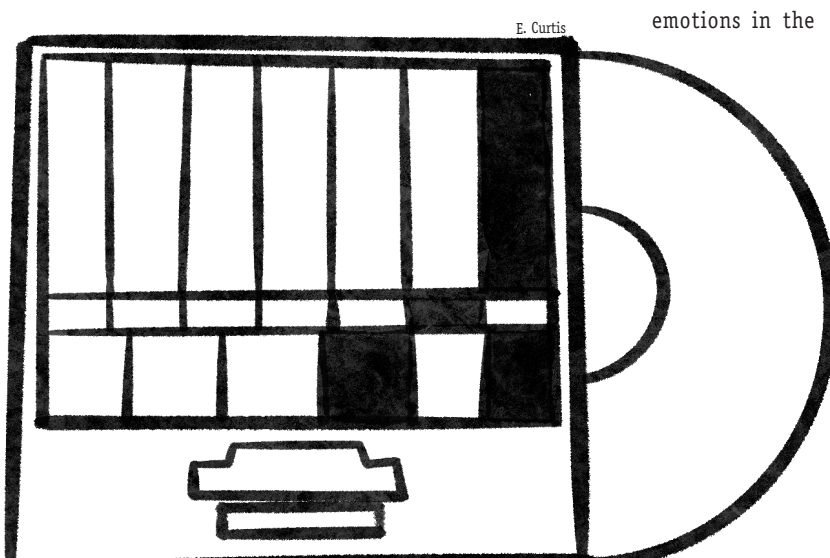
On Feb. 14, the American folk-rock band The Lumineers released their new album, *Automatic*. This album marks Jeremiah Fraites and Wesley Schultz's fifth album since their self-titled debut in 2012. The duo is known for their bright, catchy tunes and meaningful lyrics that convey important messages from their lives. The Lumineers gained popularity in 2016 after the release of their song *Cleopatra* and since then have released many top songs, including *Ho Hey* and *Ophelia*. The duo continued their usual themes of upbeat melodies but decided to be more raw and expressive in their new album.

The tracks on the album *Automatic* express the meaningful relationship between Fraites and Schultz as friends and bandmates. The Lumineers announced the album with the two singles, *You're All I Got* and *So Long*. The band members took inspiration from their experiences during the pandemic when both artists' families were forced to adjust to the struggles of their new lives. By combining their experiences with par-

enthood during the global disaster, the duo created the heartfelt lyrics included in their new album. In a press conference, Fraites described the mood of the album: "[Automatic holds] a palpable sense of connection between Wes and me. There's lots of love on this record." The emotions in the

album are best expressed through the two singles released before the rest of the album. In *You're All I Got*, Schultz pushes his vocals to their limits, creating the desperate and vulnerable tone of the song. According to Schultz, "It's on the edge of where I can hit a note, so you feel that tension. When you're saying to someone, 'You're all I got,' it carries that same raw emotion."

The album is composed of 11 tracks and lasts for a total of 32 minutes. The first song on the album, titled *Same Old Song*, returned The Lumineers to No. 1 on the Billboard's Alternative Airplay chart for the sixth time. The song tells the story of a struggling young artist who cannot afford their rent, feels insecure about their talent, has their instruments stolen, and is left questioning the meaning of life while still maintaining their dreams of making it big as an artist. Fans appreciate the thought put into the lyrics and song title, which reads as SOS, expressing the pain of the narrator and the overall pain of the story. Along with the album, the band announced the *Automatic World Tour* beginning on Jul. 3, where the artists will be performing across the US and in Canada at the end of the trip. Tickets are currently on sale for the band's performance on Aug. 5 in San Francisco at the Chase Center. The Lumineers' new album masterfully blends deep melancholy emotions with their signature warmth and optimism, creating a touching, uplifting musical journey. (Source: American Songwriter)



- Pan rates the months ahead
- Kramer details junior year struggles

HUMOR

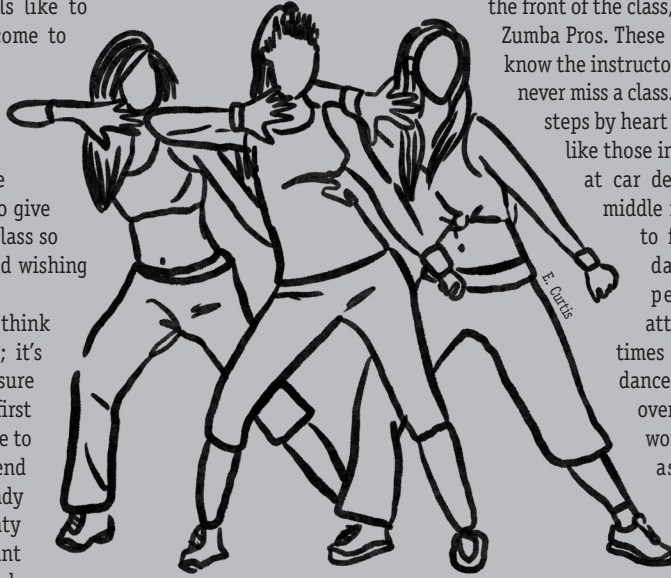
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Singhal details her experience taking a Zumba class

by **Siyona Singhal**
News Editor

If you've ever wondered what it feels like to simultaneously have fun and suffer, welcome to Zumba. It's the workout that promises to help you "dance your way to fitness." In reality, you're more likely to find yourself gasping for air, questioning your rhythm, and wondering if your limbs have always been this uncoordinated. I'm here to give you some tips to survive your first Zumba class so you don't end up the way I did: sweaty and wishing I had stayed home and watched Netflix.

First, bring a bottle of water. You may think that you're not going to get that thirsty; it's just dancing, after all, but allow me to reassure you that you definitely will need it. In my first Zumba experience, I thought it would be fine to leave my water bottle at home, but by the end of the class, I was so dehydrated I was ready to drink my own sweat, which I had plenty of. So trust me when I say that you will want to bring a bottle filled with a refreshing drink.



Another important tip is to be aware of the Zumba hierarchy. The Zumba classroom follows a very specific social pyramid. At the front of the class, you will find your Zumba Pros. These are the ladies who know the instructor by name and will never miss a class. They know all the steps by heart and make you feel like those inflatable tube men at car dealerships. In the middle rows, you're going to find the mediocre dancers. These are people who may attend Zumba a few times a month and can dance without tripping over themselves. They won't be as advanced as the pros, but they can hold their own. In the back row, you're going

to find the beginners. These are people who thought Zumba would be an easy class to get some steps in, blissfully unaware that the next hour will make them want to lie down indefinitely. These people are going to trip over their own feet and face the wrong direction. They will run into at least one other person and hit another person in the face.

You need to wear the proper clothing and footwear. Do not show up in a hoodie and sweatpants or you will sweat so hard you won't be able to see. Instead, wear a short-sleeved shirt and some shorts to make sure you don't pass out from heat exhaustion. In terms of footwear, your five-year-old Converse are not going to hold up. Wear real tennis shoes to avoid blisters and chronic foot problems. Also, get shoes with grippy soles so you don't faceplant mid-pivot.

Lastly, the most important thing you're going to need is a positive attitude. Zumba is not for the weak, but with a little enthusiasm, you can make it through the whole class. As intimidating as the dance moves may seem, with enough zeal and a splash of confidence, you can make any flailing arm movement look planned. Just fake it till you make it and try to smile through the pain.

Bring all of these things, and you might just survive your first Zumba class with your ego (mostly) intact. Who knows? You might even start looking forward to your next session. Or at least the part where you get to collapse on the floor afterward.

Fugit debates weather dilemmas

by **Owen Fugit**
Editor-in-Chief

When living in Los Gatos, it seems like springtime always brings new, exciting things. From AP tests to Spirit Week, there's always something thrilling going on between March and June. However, we often overlook one crucial aspect of the springtime: weather. In Los Gatos, we are accustomed to sunshine and cloudless skies almost every day of the year, but in the springtime, we experience a multitude of weather phenomena in just

F. Banno



a few short weeks. Today, I will be ranking my top springtime weather choices as part of the inaugural El Gato News 2025 Spring Season Weather Review (EGN2025SSWR)!
Cirrostratus and altostratus clouds: If you are not familiar with cloud types (why would you not be?), these clouds are the long, thin kind of ugly clouds that blanket Los Gatos from time to time. In my opinion, these are some of the worst weather events because they are just so basic, which is why I propose we use the resources of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to erase these clouds. I am not too certain of what the specific measures to take would be, but I am sure someone out there knows how to solve this problem. I hate cirro and altostratus clouds, which is why I rank them as a D-tier weather event.

Warm front: Do I even need to elaborate? Warm fronts are one of the best weather surprises to happen each spring; seeing a nice 73 degrees in the weather app a day after Antarctic temperatures hit downtown Los Gatos is the best feeling ever. A

perfectly timed warm front can make any week better. Be warned, though; warm fronts in springtime are often fleeting. Don't get too comfortable with the warm weather because as soon as you buy a new pair of shorts, I promise the weather will go back to rainy, cold, and generally unpleasant. I love warm fronts and would rank them higher if they lasted longer than they currently do. With that being said, I put warm fronts firmly in the A-tier.

Rainstorm vs. sun: This is a weather event I named, but it is fairly self-explanatory. It's a battle between good and evil, where the rainstorm must fight punishing breezes and superheated rays from the sun to dominate Los Gatos. This always makes for an interesting viewing experience because it combines extreme weather with all the excitement of the Ultimate Fighting Championship in a winner-take-all showdown right outside my

Calculus class ten minutes before the bell rings and I have to walk home. Not surprisingly, I am always rooting for the sunshine to come out on top, but sometimes things just do not work out that way. Sometimes the weather takes revenge on me for supporting the wrong side, raining so hard I have to drain the pockets in my raincoat when I finally make it home. Due to the sheer excitement and energy of this weather event, I place it in the S-tier. You can also set up a friendly bet with your friends to see which side will win, and you can even use the weather app to determine your odds.

PAN RANKS THE MONTHS OF THE YEAR

by **Annabelle Pan**
Graphics Editor

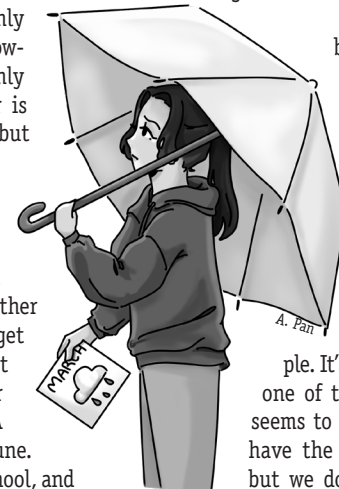
We're smack in the middle of the worst month in the year: March. It has 31 days, only one day off of break, and it's the halfway point of the second semester. To make matters worse, March is both rainy and cold. Go one month back to February and it's cold. One month forward to April and it's rainy. But March has the worst of both. Clearly, March sucks.

October is a similarly awful month for the same reasons. It's yet another month with 31 days and only one day of school break. Halloween and Inktober are the only redeemable factors. October is slightly better than March but not by much.

July is arguably the best month. You get a whole month off of school with no homework, time to hang out with friends, and warm weather for the beach. Sure, it can get a bit too warm at times, but it's a small price to pay for 31 days free of schoolwork. A runner-up for first place is June. You only have one week of school, and then it's summer. Although that week is finals week, school ends earlier on those days, and Friday is off. In June, you can still walk around without sweating like a pig and enjoy the summer air instead of staying inside with the air conditioning on full-blast as many do in July. June would be the perfect month if finals weren't the first thing.

Another good month for students is December. The only downsides are finals week and

the cold weather. Otherwise, you get holiday after holiday, two weeks off of school and the end of the first semester. Suffering through the stress and pain of finals week is honestly worth it to reach winter break. With each December comes a new year with twelve more months of opportunities...at least, that's how optimists think. As a pessimist, every new year seems to announce the continuation of school, an increase in stress, and more work, and that is precisely why January is not on my list of good months.



Although June and December are on opposite sides of the month spectrum, they are usually seen as the best months. Their existence balances out the terrible, long months of arduous work that are called March and October. All of the months scattered in between are mediocre, with their own pros and cons.

Take February, for example. It's cold and sometimes wet, and one of the months when everyone just seems to get sick one after another. You have the whole week off for Ski Week, but we don't even get a President's Day weekend anymore now that the holiday is merged with our week off. February is just a "meh" month.

Out of all the summer months, August is the worst, but it's still better than many other months of the year. You still have one or two weeks left of break, but with the start of the school year, you are thrown headfirst into another year of work, and each year just gets harder than the previous.

Nelson explains her unique alarm system

by **Katie Nelson**
Center Editor

I have always been a Clock App person through and through. Every single morning, my phone starts blaring Body Like A Back Road by Sam Hunt across my room and I rush over and aggressively hit snooze. I snooze two or three times, depending on my morning mood. I also have many alarms locked and loaded in case I need just a few extra minutes, because that will definitely make up for the three hours of sleep lost the night before.

Right now, I have a 7:00 alarm, a 7:03 alarm, a 7:05 alarm, a 7:06 alarm, a 7:08 alarm... you get the idea. There's a lot, and they add up because I never delete any of them. For the purpose of this article I decided to count how many alarms I have on my clock app; safe to say, I was shocked: 113 alarms.

That might sound excessive, but I could never bring myself to delete any alarms. When I scroll through, I remember why I

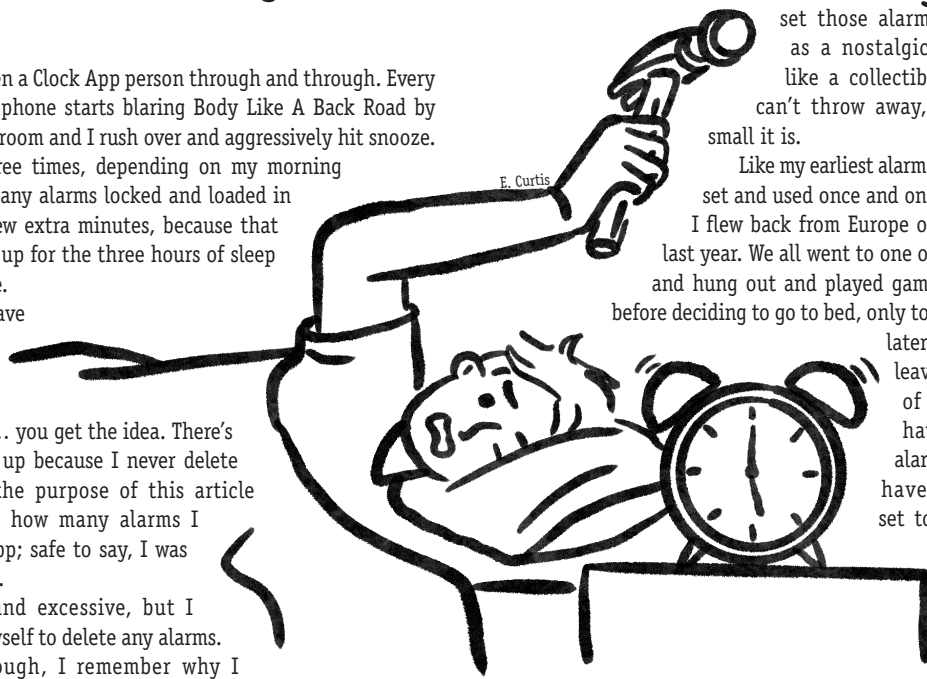
set those alarms, and it serves as a nostalgic token. They're like a collectible that you just can't throw away, no matter how small it is.

Like my earliest alarm—set for 3:00—was set and used once and one time only when I flew back from Europe on the school trip last year. We all went to one of the hotel rooms and hung out and played games until 1:00 AM before deciding to go to bed, only to get up two hours later to pack up and leave—shortest sleep of my life. I also have the 6:35 AM alarm, which should have actually been set to 5:35 to get up for my morning game at the Junior Olympics two summers ago.

How I messed up so horrendously and set my alarm to an hour later, I'm not sure, but the outcome was almost catastrophic. 6:35 AM was our departure time, and I woke up at 6:35. I'm still shocked by my ability to throw everything together and make it out to the van. (Shout-out to my coach for forgetting the van keys which gave me a couple extra minutes).

I also refuse to change my alarm clock sounds, but that's for a more logical reason than failing to prune some of my random alarm times. There have been times when I fiddle with my alarm clock sound and it won't go off. I don't know what happens, but I've been traumatized a few times by messing with it to change the song and it's failing me. So I will leave it Body Like A Backroad, which is so random and not even a song that strikes me as a good wake-up call, now every time I hear the beginning of the song, all I can think of is the dreaded feeling of getting up in the morning.

Some people may think it's a bad habit that it takes me so many alarms to wake up. I would argue that it's actually amazing because you cannot tell me there's a better feeling than waking up and realizing you have a few more minutes of bliss. Not to mention that those extra minutes and seconds of beauty sleep I'm getting are a big contributor to my effortlessness during the school day. And then again I get to enjoy the satisfaction of being cozy in my bed, something I can't do if I'm completely asleep. That semi-consciousness of REM sleep is perfection.



Northrop proposes ways to stay active

by Ainsley Northrop
Editor-in-Chief

We've all had that moment when we realize that maybe, just maybe, we need to start being more active. Whether you made a New Year's resolution to work out more or a spur-of-the-moment decision to shake up your typical routine, here are some state-of-the-art ideas for being active on a budget.

Guest passes are your best friend.

Coming from someone who has never owned a gym membership and yet, has managed to go to the gym a solid number of times, guest passes are the way to go. By using a guest pass, you not only save money, but also have a friend with you the whole time. Now you have someone to motivate you and a new gym to explore. You can even go with multiple friends and see which of their gyms is your favorite! Enjoy free access to everything from StairMasters to massage chairs and frolic through the facility to your heart's content – all for the price of FREE.99. The only downside is you might not get to pick what time you work out... but who's complaining?

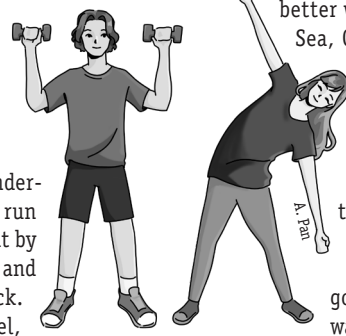
Watch some videos.

This may give you COVID flashbacks, but watching workout videos never fails (at least most of the time). Search up your

favorite pilates instructor or even try the Chloe Ting Two Week Ab Challenge. This can be a bit embarrassing, but that's okay. Just be sneaky. Complete the workout in your room in the middle of the night when your family least expects it. Soon, they will wonder how you are so fit, and they will never see you falling over as you attempt leg circles to random instrumental tunes! If you can't do an exercise, don't worry about it – the video will keep going, so you are basically still completing the full workout.

You have a driveway – use it!

Running on your driveway is SO underrated. I mean, think about it: you won't run through town and see people, you are right by your home so you won't have to run back, and it is basically like your own personal track. You may look like a hamster on a wheel, but never fear. I'm sure that whoever walks by will respect your dedication. Plus, if you live in the mountains like me and have a driveway that seems to span for miles, you can finally put it to good use. If you have a Ring or door camera, though, make sure to cover it up; the last thing you want is a



video of you running...Trust me, I hold the video of my sister doing this over her head all the time.

Sign up to be a choreographer.

Every day, I am thankful for my job as a choreographer because not only do I get to work with kids, but I get to dance. What better way is there to work out? I dance to Let It Go, Under the Sea, Circle of Life, and so much more. And I dance alongside both casts of kids, so I do double the dancing I would do if I were in a show myself. It's a win-win. I literally get paid to be active.

Get creative.

There is no better way to stay active than to be adventurous. Walk into El Gato Advisor Paris DeSoto's Zumba classes and dance your heart out; your new, middle-aged classmates will become your biggest supporters. Actually go on Economics teacher David Homa's assigned weekly walks, trek up the LGHS stairs with your backpack on (even one flight is guaranteed to leave you winded), have a dance party with your friends, or even watch some aesthetic workout TikToks (that counts because they're inspirational, right?).

I hope you enjoyed these hacks for staying active on a budget. Get excited for your new era of activeness!

KRAMER ANALYZES JUNIOR YEAR

by Nelson Kramer
Humor Editor

Becoming a junior in high school was the biggest culture shock I have ever experienced. If nothing else would convince freshman Nelson, who romanticized getting more involved in school, I think the second semester of junior year would do the trick.

I feel cheated, deceived, and forlorn as I sit in my room writing this while my world comes crashing down a little more each hour. "Want to go to bed?" Nope, the anxiety that you have suppressed all day finally hits you. "A shower will make me feel better." Nah man, you forgot to study for that big unit test, and now it's manifested itself into a sleep paralysis demon. "Maybe plan a day ahead of time and get to studying right after school." Dude, what time? No matter what happens, no matter how hard you plan, struggle, lock in, study, and further question yourself internally, you won't win; you can't win.

How can anyone possibly manage to be a second-semester junior and also be a functioning human being at the same time? While you show this article to your therapist—whom you have no time for—as it perfectly voices the pain you struggle to express, I want to talk about the next "boss level" challenge for the class of 2026: the SATs.

First things first: there's prepping for this stupid test. Raise your hand if you actually have the time to sit down and study. Anyone who raises their hand can stop reading this article right now; I hope they feel excluded. The pres-

sure from AP classes in the second semester does not mix well with starting college applications, let alone SATs. I literally have an ulcer on the right underbelly of my stomach because of a regular junior-year schedule.

Let's not forget the copious amounts of college emails, which are building a literal wall in my email box. "Oh, you took the PSAT once?" Get ready for emails from every college in the United States. I mean, c'mon. If I wanted to know about Ohio Valley University... Oh wait, I don't.

Who was going to tell me that this wasn't even the worst semester? I found out a few weeks ago that the first semester of senior year is five times hotter than the hell I am currently experiencing. This reminds me of the time I got hurt in preseason training for track and field (tell me you're a weakling without telling me you're a weakling).

When the SAT is finally all over, you get the mid-score that you've always wanted, and here comes college.

Whoops, all that time you spent studying for the SAT you really should have used to start a non-profit organization, and while you were doing that, solving world hunger was kind of the bare minimum. What's next? Will I be the first person West Valley Community College rejects? Maybe it's just me, but I think a gap year traveling through India sounds pretty good or maybe going straight to military boot camp after graduation; I hope you know I have no intention of coming back.



A. Pan

CURTIS AND HASTINGS DISCUSS COLLEGE DECISIONS

by Megan Hastings and Emery Curtis
Public Relations Manager and Graphics Editor

You spent months agonizing over your Common App essay, carefully crafting the perfect response to "Tell us about a time you failed" (even though your biggest failure was forgetting your Quizlet password before an APUSH test). And now, after all that stress, the moment of truth has arrived, the email you have been dreading. Wasting upward of 30 minutes trying to remember your portal password and/or resetting your account, you see an update was posted to your portal. Your heart pounds as you open it. And as your eyes scan the letter, the words "we deeply regret to inform you" stare back. But hold on. There's no way this is real. Maybe they sent the wrong email? Maybe your name got mixed up with someone else's? You check the website, your spam folder, and even that one email account you made in 5th grade and haven't used since. Surely, this is all a terrible mistake.

Stage 1: Anger. Once reality sinks in, you try to be cool. So you didn't get in? Big whoop. It's obviously not because of you. It's because of some random admissions officer who probably read your essay while sipping their third cold brew and mis-clicked "reject" instead of "accept." Or perhaps they were having a bad day and woke up with hate in their heart. Those are the only logical explanations. You start spiraling. "I bet they just wanted more students from Alaska this year." You worked hard, you wrote an essay about your personal growth after being cut from the JV bowling team, and this is how they repay you? You start Googling the acceptance rates from past years, calculating exactly how many people took your spot.

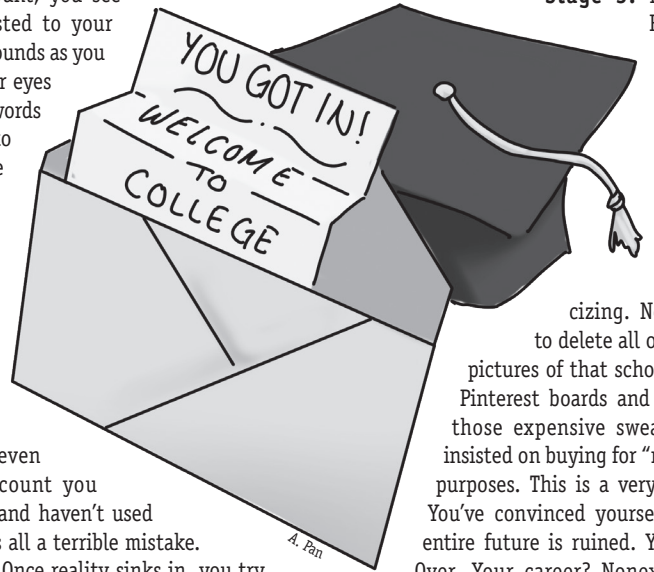
Stage 2: Bargaining. Okay, maybe there's a chance. What if you just show up on campus and

start attending classes until they let you in? You even consider sending them a strongly worded email, rejecting their rejection email! "After careful consideration, I regret to inform you that I am unable to accept your refusal to offer me admission in the fall. This year I have been fortunate enough to receive rejection letters from the best and brightest universities in the country. I am unable to accept yours. Therefore, I will be seeing you next year as part of the freshman class."

Stage 3: Depression.

Reality sets in. It's official; you won't be attending the school you had spent years romanticizing. Now it's time to delete all of the pinned pictures of that school from your Pinterest boards and throw away those expensive sweatshirts you insisted on buying for "manifesting" purposes. This is a very dark place. You've convinced yourself that your entire future is ruined. Your dreams? Over. Your career? Nonexistent. You picture yourself still living in your childhood bedroom at age 35, working a part-time job at a fast-food restaurant while your high school classmates are out changing the world. Your parents try to cheer you up: "You're going to do great wherever you go!" but all you hear is "we are deeply, deeply disappointed in you."

Stage 4: Acceptance. You didn't even want to go to that school anyway! It's almost like your phone knows what happened because then you start getting "why I left" videos on TikTok about that university. It's so refreshing knowing it actually sucks to be on that campus. "The dining food is bad," "There are so many rules!" and "Their school colors are ugly" are all you need to hear to be okay. Besides, you've got ten more emails waiting for you.



A. Pan

BANNO HUMBLER GIFT-CARD-GIVERS AT BIRTHDAY PARTIES

by Fuyu Banno
Graphics Editor

Although gift cards are the holy grail when you don't know what to get your friend for their birthday, it also is like typing "lol" at the end of a sentence when you don't know what else to say. In other words, it shows you do not know what else to get them. Tsk, tsk, I know you can do better than that. Although I am also a culprit of gifting my friends gift cards, I've slowly learned to transition away from giving them a gift card and toward something, ANYTHING else. Through this process, I've learned a thing



F. Banno

or two about how to up your gift giving ... and also make it personal. No matter how broke you are or how little time you have, here are some ways to personalize your presents.

Collage of 0.5 photos of your friend: All those pictures go to waste just sitting there on your phone, so why not make it a huge display! This is the perfect DIY for those who may be artsy and like to get their hands dirty. Get your scissors and glue stick ready to make those big forehead photos into a

beautiful masterpiece!

Yearbook photos of them in fourth grade: A reminder to your friend that they cannot leave the past behind. Just imagine your friend waking up to a glorious photo of them and their awkwardness

piercing through the picture. A quick tip is to make sure you print it in 24 by 30 inches for maximum splendor. Make sure you pair it with a nice sleek black frame from TJ Maxx.

Lifesize cardboard cutout of their crush: If your friend obsesses over seeing their crush for a whopping half a second during the day, make it so that they can always see them 24/7, right in the comfort of their room. A bonus is that it's as big as the red flag that's hovering over the crush's face that your friend just can't seem to see.

A plushie of YOU: This one I especially recommend if your friend lives on the other side of the world. A perfect reminder that your bestie is not alone. If they ever feel sad and depressed, they can hug you...even if it looks like someone photoshopped a picture of you into a Squishmallow. No more crying into a pillow, when they can cry into a plushie of your beautiful face!

Custom made M&Ms...with your friend's face printed on it: Yearbook photos, life-size cardboards, a plushie...what else could we print photos onto? That's right, everyone's favorite chocolate snack...M&Ms!!! Perhaps when a picture of your friend is printed on, the artificial coloring will taste a little less artificial.

If you ever take up my advice, I can almost guarantee that it will leave your friend speechless (not specifying whether in a good way or bad way). If you ever do see yourself reaching for the gift card and calling it a day, seriously: think again. You can do so much better.

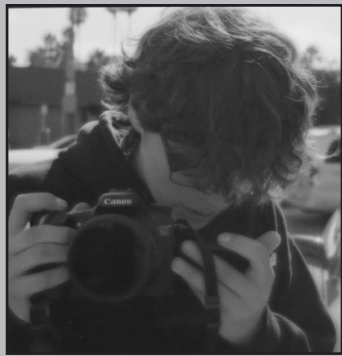
JUNIOR ACHILLE FIN EXPLORES ALL ASPECTS OF THE ARTS

by **Claudia Casal**
Culture Editor

Achille Fin is all about making the most of his many interests in his junior year at Los Gatos High School. From violin to photography, Fin is dedicated to his many passions.

One of the best examples of this dedication is Fin's pursuit of music – through both his personal study and his time in the Los Gatos High School's orchestra as a violinist. His musical talents stem from his experience with the piano, starting at age four, and have grown exponentially as he is constantly immersed in music. He currently finds the most joy in learning new music with his friends and enjoys the easy-going atmosphere of the orchestra class.

As a prominent figure in the high school's Photography Club, you can typically find Fin along Highway 9, hanging out with his friends and waiting to take the perfect picture of vintage and rare cars. Fin recounted, "I started going up to Highway 9 because of its really nice roads and curves. I started taking photos of these cool cars so I can capture the moment



and remember it." Recently gifted a Canon EOS 70D, which allows him to take even more detailed photos, Fin is quickly improving upon his photography skills. He hopes to bring these skills next year as a future yearbook staff member.

Regarding his love for cars more generally, Fin finds that manual cars suit him best:

"It's indescribable, you have a lot more control over the car and working as an apprentice in a mechanic shop just gives me appreciation of the precision they use every single day." He fondly recounted stories of learning to drive stick-shift with his friend, reflecting on how these experiences have enhanced their friendship. Fin hopes someday to drive a car or a motorcycle of his own to cruise down Highway 9.

Aside from these creative pursuits, you can find Fin on the lacrosse field as an attacker. As the season progresses, Fin rel-

ishes in the JV team's chemistry, demonstrated in their recent win against Mitty 15-1.

Fin also has a more domestic side. Over the pandemic, he discovered a new interest with his dad as they both learned how to make pasta. Fin finds the repetitive aspects of pasta making therapeutic. As he explained, "Making pasta from scratch is really worth it. It tastes way better. I really like how it opens your mind and you can think of whatever you want or just listen to music." Out of the many different pasta styles he has tried, the long, flat shape of tagliatelle is his favorite, as he finds it to adhere his favorite homemade carbonara sauce nicely.

When asked about his future plans, Fin stated that he is getting ready to apply to California colleges in the fall, looking to enroll in a UC's business or accounting program. With such a wide variety of talents and interests, Fin is looking towards a bright future, always following his golden rule: "The worst thing you can do is not try; there is absolutely no downside to trying."



EDIGER EXCELS IN HIS SENIOR YEAR SOPHOMORE SAEZ TRAVELS GLOBALLY

by **Emery Curtis**
Graphics Editor

Volleyball runs in the family for LGHS senior **Grayson Ediger**. Inspired by his aunt, who played Division I at Duke, Ediger picked up the sport and never looked back. Years later, volleyball has become an essential part of his life. In fact, one of Ediger's all-time favorite memories is a one-handed block at his first club tournament that had his entire team storming the court. "That moment was unreal," he recalled. "I'll never forget the energy."

Ediger also runs a successful graphic design business and an Instagram account with over 15 thousand followers. What started as a side project of editing music videos quickly turned into a serious creative pursuit. "I wanted to learn a new software, so I picked up Photoshop," he explained. Already familiar with After Effects, the transition came naturally, and soon enough, his skills took off. Now, his work is deeply inspired by archive fashion and experimental designers like Maison Margiela and Issey Miyake. He reasoned, "I love how they play with texture." Minimalist legends like Dieter Rams, vintage technology ads, and even interior design also influences Ediger's design philosophy.

While many designers stick strictly to digital work, Ediger takes a hands-on approach, bringing his pieces to life in a tangible way. "I build most of my work in Photoshop, but I use Illustrator for

anything vector-based," he explained. Ediger does not just stop at creating on a screen; he adds his work to shirts and posters. He detailed, "I print my work, cut it up to create unique textures and compositions, and then scan it back in."

The journey hasn't always been easy, but Ediger credits his success to staying consistent. "Progress always starts slow, but consistency is everything," he said. His dedication has led to dream collaborations with brands like Huni and Minted New York, and Ediger has future aspirations of working in high fashion alongside names like Rick Owens and Maison Margiela. His advice to anyone beginning in this field or interested in graphic design? "Just post everything. A lot of people hesitate because they don't think their work is good enough, but you never know what's going to blow up."

Ediger is currently in Honors Graphic Design as well as some other challenging AP classes. He revealed that he could balance his heavy workload with these two passions because of how independent they are from each other: "I think the fact that they don't overlap makes it easier." He continued, "Each one gives me a mental break from the other, so I always have the energy to keep going." Ediger is planning to study marketing, likely at University of British Columbia or Purdue, and while graphic design isn't yet a full-time career path, he is open to where it takes him. "If I can figure out a way to scale it, it could become one."



by **Megan Saul and Kat Littfin**
Culture and News Editors

Sophomore **Capucine Saez** has a wide variety of skills and interests. With big academic goals and aspirations, a passion for travel, and skills in drawing and weightlifting, Saez is set up for success.

At LGHS, Saez has a diverse course load. She takes French 4 Honors and Algebra 2, and despite both classes being at least one course above grade level, they are her favorite courses. French is an especially interesting class for Saez because both of her parents are native French speakers, so the class allows her to build on her French skills. She described how French has improved her travel experience and her bond with her family, stating, "When I go to France over the summer, I can speak French a lot better. And it just connects me more to France. Also, I can speak better to my parents when I'm at home." Saez's future academic sights are set on pursuing a math or law degree. Her brother, who currently attends Columbia University, has influenced her to aspire to go to an Ivy League school, especially Columbia, to follow in his footsteps, or, if she chooses to study law, Harvard.

Since an early age, Saez has been traveling around the world. She was born in China and lived there for the first few years of her life, yet her first memories are from when she lived in San Diego. After a few years in Southern California, her family finally relocated to the Bay Area. Saez and her family travel often – she even took her first steps on a beach in

Bali. As previously mentioned, every summer, Saez visits her family's apartment in France. And, as Saez's older sister lives in Belgium, she had the opportunity to visit her, and it has since become one of her favorite places. Saez hopes to travel more later in life, with Italy at the top of her bucket list.

Stating that Saez is a renaissance woman is an understatement. Some of her seemingly endless activities include drawing, running, and weightlifting. Although Saez isn't currently enrolled in an art class, she often draws outside of school as a way to relax and as a form of expression. Her inspirations come from what she sees around her, specifically people and the environment. Saez often works out at the end of her day to clear her mind. The level of difficulty in her classes has notably ramped up this year, so she mainly focuses on the movements and quality of her workout over the quantity of it, aiming to go to the gym whenever she gets the chance.

Although Saez is only a sophomore, she is full of knowledge and wisdom. When asked what motto she lives by, she shared, "Go for your big dream because your little dreams will always be there at the end. Just shoot for the stars." Keep an eye out for this sophomore in the classroom, the gym, or a plane flying across the world because you don't want to miss the great feats she is going to accomplish.



FRESHMAN ARIANNA PAPAGEORGE CAN DO IT ALL

by **Megan Saul and Kloe Adams**
Culture and Editorial Editors

Freshman **Arianna Papageorge** is making leaps and bounds in her high school career, demonstrating a vast aptitude for field hockey, lacrosse, and leadership. Whether on the field or coordinating school events, Papageorge is a force to be reckoned with.

Papageorge began preparing to join the LGHS field hockey team before she came to the high school, participating in the winter camps during her eighth-grade year. Although the sport was new, Papageorge "just kept doing it," remarking that "it was so fun." Working her way up to tryouts in the fall semester, Papageorge made the JV team as a midfielder. At the start of the year, Papageorge noted the difficulty of balancing classes and running leadership events on top of being involved in a sport; however, the hard work paid off. Papageorge's biggest lesson learned? "It is always good to be early." Currently, Papageorge participates in the off-season practices, where she continues to improve her skills.

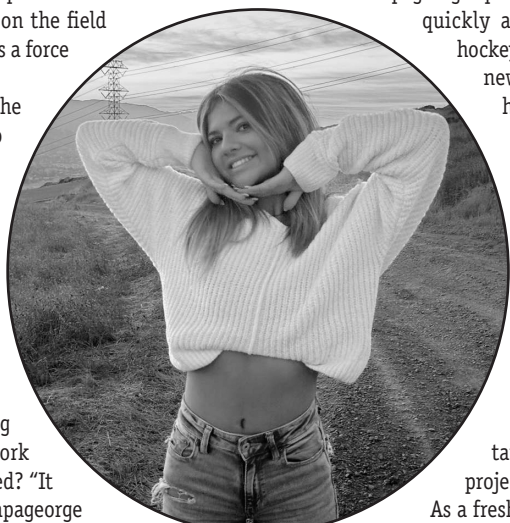
Unsure if she would play a spring sport, Papageorge went to lacrosse preseason practice on a whim and never looked back. Papageorge's friends urged her to attend a preseason practice just to try it out, even

though Papageorge had never touched a stick before. She explained, "My friend gave me her stick, and it was so much fun. I look forward to going to practice every day now." Despite lacking experience, Papageorge quickly picked up new skills and progressed quickly alongside her teammates. Through field hockey and lacrosse, Papageorge has met many new people, helping her acclimate to the high school environment. "I felt way more comfortable, especially during the first couple of months. The upperclassmen ensured that I belonged despite being a new addition to the teams," she said.

When she is not on the lower field practicing her skills, Papageorge is rocking it in her classes. She says her favorite classes are English 9 Honors and Leadership. Papageorge remarked that in **Tonya McQuade's** English class, she is very knowledgeable on the topics taught and can be extremely creative with projects. Her creativity extends to Leadership. As a freshman in the class, Papageorge participates in a job rotation system where the newcomers try out different positions within the leadership class. She is currently the class president. So far, her favorite parts of Leadership have been organizing the freshman fall spirit hallway and becoming friends with students of all grades. She said, "It's really fun to be involved with

everything and always doing stuff for the school." Next year, she hopes to be a spirit representative.

Although balancing the workload that comes with freshman year along with two sports is a challenge, Papageorge has gracefully adapted to it, even making time for various other activities. She often spends time with friends, going to the beach, and talking to her older brothers, who have helped her adjust to high school. The next time you see this exuberant and spirited freshman around school, don't hesitate to say hi, as she will surely say hi back.



- March Madness tips off with a bang
- LG lacrosse starts off strong

SPORTS

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NCAA's March Madness excites college basketball fans across US

by Atharava Pandey
National/World Editor

On Selection Sunday, Mar. 16, the official March Madness bracket came out to the public. March Madness is an NCAA college basketball tournament that has 64 colleges play in a single-elimination format. It is one of the most popular events in American sports. With so many good teams this year, March Madness promises to be a blast for viewers all around the country.

Duke University is the number one seed on the eastern side of the bracket. Duke lost a lot of talent to the NBA this year, including Jared McCain. However, they have not missed a beat, arguably performing even better than last year. With freshman superstar Cooper Flagg, Duke went 31-3 this year. Although there are injury concerns surrounding Flagg, the medical staff has reported that he will be ready for the tournament, priming Duke for a championship run.

Auburn has been the best team in college basketball this season, claiming the number one overall seed in the bracket. Auburn went 28-5 this year in one of the NCAA's most competitive conferences. They are one of the most elite 3-point defenses in the country and also boast the second-most efficient offense. Auburn will look to make a

deep run this year after their disappointing tournament loss to Yale last time around.

According to most analysts' predictions, Florida is the favorite to win the entire championship. The Gators went 30-4 this year, having a better overall record than Auburn but a worse conference record. They are the second-most picked team on ESPN's bracket challenge to go the distance. Florida is above 35 on the efficiency margin, a good predictor of future March Madness champions. The Gators are primed to win it all.

Houston is considered by many to be the weakest top seed out of the four, yet they still have a good shot at winning it all. Houston had the number one seed in their section last year as well, yet lost their Sweet 16 matchup to Duke. Their offense was ice-cold in that game, missing half of their free throws. Their early exit last year may fuel them to go further this season.

Although these four teams are the favorites to win it this year, the exciting March Madness format means anything can happen. UConn has won the previous two tournaments and has a historic chance to win three in a row. Although their team is playing significantly worse this year, it would be dangerous to rule them out.

There are also teams like Alabama and Tennessee who went far last year and will be contenders.

The beauty of March Madness is that no team is a definitive favorite. Even the No. 16 seed can beat the No. 1 seed on any given day. With the games starting on Mar. 20, all 64 teams are preparing for a great tournament. There will be underdogs punching above their weight and favorites coming up short. This year's March Madness will be one to watch.

(Sources: ESPN, NY Times, USA Today, Yahoo Today)



TIGERS ROAR: Neville Arena is the home court of the fiery Auburn University Tigers.

Paribas Open ends in upsets

by Kayla Mitchell
Media Production Editor

Every year, top tennis professionals travel to the California desert to compete in the BNP Paribas Open. As of last Sunday, the sun has set on another tournament in tennis paradise, and the tournament was not lacking any excitement. Young stars earned themselves new fame, top players left injured, and some tennis favorites received backlash from their fans. Many surprising results and amazing upsets made the 2025 BNP Paribas Open a tournament to remember.

The biggest upset of the tournament was the title-winning 17-year-old Mirra Andreeva. Currently ranked No. 9 in the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) rankings, Andreeva took the tournament by storm, knocking out world No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka and No. 2 Iga Swiatek on the way to earning her title. The young star made history, becoming the youngest champion to win the tournament since Serena Williams. She also became the third player in this century to earn a ten-match win streak before turning 21. By far the most impressive accomplishment was claiming a place alongside legends Steffi Graf and Serena Williams as one of the three players below the age of 18 to defeat the world No. 1 and No. 2 on the way to a title.

showing, defeating world No. 12 Holger Rune, 6-2. Draper went into the tournament at No. 13 in the ATP rankings, but after his success at BNP moved up to world No. 7. Now at the highest ranking in his entire career, the British star is hoping to continue his momentum into the French Open in May.

Top tennis stars Novak Djokovic and Iga Swiatek did not present their top level at the Paribas Open this year. Djokovic made his 16th appearance at the tournament since his debut as a teenager in 2006. The previous world No. 1 lost the second round in a tough 3-set match against Botić van de Zandschulp. WTA No. 2 Iga Swiatek's poor behavior overshadowed her brilliant run to the semifinals of the singles draw. During recent tournaments, fans have noticed multiple unsportsmanlike acts by the professional. A clip of Swiatek hitting a ball at an innocent ball boy and getting booed during her semifinal match against Andreeva has spread all over the internet. While her performance on the court was at her usual high level, the Paribas Open viewers were not pleased with Swiatek's abuse of the ball kid and the mental tactics used against her opponents.

The 2025 BNP Paribas Open was an exciting start to the tennis season and proof that new stars are making their way onto the tennis landscape. Since departing from tennis paradise, the ATP and WTA players are ramping up their in-season training to prepare for the next big tournament. (Source: BNP Paribas Open)



BASELINE: Italian superstar Andreeva serves her opponent.



GARDEN: The Indian Wells Garden hosts the BNP Paribas Open.

Britain's 23-year-old Jack Draper fought his way through a tough draw to claim the BNP Paribas trophy. Draper's eye-opening victory against world No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz shot him into the finals and gained him a lot of attention from tennis fans. In the finals of the tournament, Draper had an amazing

Skiers battle for Crystal Globes

by Margo Rawlings
Editor-in-Chief

As the alpine skiing season comes to a close, the International Ski and Snowboard Federation (FIS) Alpine Ski World Cup Finals are fast approaching. This year, Sun Valley, Idaho will host the finals for the first time in FIS history. After over four months of competition, the top 25 male and female skiers in each discipline will compete in Sun Valley. At the conclusion of the races, the top six skiers in each discipline will receive small Crystal Globes; additionally, the skier with the most overall points will win the Overall World Cup title and the large globe. The remaining competitors are striving to better their point totals to boost their starting positions next season.

Due to unusual snowfall and high winds, the Idaho resort cancelled the downhill races scheduled for Mar. 22, resulting in automatic victories for the men's and women's point leaders. In the women's circuit, Italian Federica Brignone will win her first career small downhill globe as well as her second overall title. Since Brignone currently leads Swiss skier Lara Gut-Behrami by 382 points in the overall standings, it is mathematically impossible for Gut-Behrami to surpass her as race winners receive 100 points per race and there are three races remaining. Moreover, with a 16-point advantage over Austria's Cornelia Huetter in the downhill standings, the race's cancellation secured Brignone's triumph. Similarly, in the men's circuit, Marco Odermatt of Switzerland will also win his second downhill globe due to his 83-point lead in the downhill classification.

As of Mar. 22, however, the men's overall winner is yet to be decided. Strong contenders include Odermatt, Norwegian Henrik Kristoffersen, and Swiss Loic Meillard. Odermatt currently holds 1,596 points, giving him a strong lead over Kristoffersen (1006) and Meillard (931). The remaining disciplines include Super-G on Mar. 23 and the slalom events from Mar. 25-27.



CHAMPION: Brignone flashes a smile after a successful race.

In the men's slalom, Kristoffersen heads the leaderboard by 47 points with Meillard in second place. If Meillard takes first place in the final and Kristoffersen places fourth or lower, Meillard will win his first slalom globe and increase his cut some of the point differential between him and Odermatt.

In the women's slalom, fans favor Croatian Zrinka Ljusic or Swiss Camille Rast to take home the women's globe. Although both athletes began the 2024-25 season without a World Cup win, they currently lead the slalom classification with 515 points and 474 points, respectively.

It's safe to say that this year's World Cup finals will be exciting for spectators and athletes alike as they are a culmination of months of hard work. Fans can also tune in to watch the freestyle finals currently taking place in Idre Fjäll, Sweden.

(Sources: FIS Ski, France24, NBC Sports, YahooSports)



SHRED: Odermatt celebrates his Giant Slalom win in 2023.

NBA teams fly up league standings following All-Star Weekend

by Rory Zeman
Media Production Editor

As the NBA enters the final stretch of its season, teams are making final pushes to rise up in the standings as far as possible. Furthermore, multiple races between players vying for end-of-season awards are as tight as ever. Here's a look at the NBA as it nears the season's end.

To start, the power rankings in the NBA have dramatically changed for many teams after the trade deadline. Most notably, the Golden State Warriors have shot up the power rankings, rising to the number four spot. This comes after the Warriors acquired superstar Jimmy Butler from the Miami Heat at the trade deadline in early February. Since then, the Warriors have been nearly flawless and have gone from the ninth seed in the West up to the sixth seed with a comfortable lead

in front of the ninth seed. Furthermore, the Los Angeles Lakers, after completing one of the largest trades in NBA history by acquiring Luka Dončić from the Dallas Mavericks, have moved up to the fifth spot in the power rankings, even with some losses due to a LeBron James injury. Additionally, the Minnesota Timberwolves have moved to the sixth spot in the power rankings, mainly because the Timberwolves have, based on opponent win percentages, the league's easiest schedule for the remainder of the year and have capitalized on this situation. However, Minnesota remains in a tight race with the Warriors for the sixth seed, as the seventh seed would mean a spot in the play-in tournament, while the alternative sixth seed means automatic entry to the playoffs. Despite all of the post-trade deadline movement, the top three power rankings have remained the same: the Cleveland Cavaliers, the Oklahoma City Thunder, and the Boston Celtics.

As for awards, the defensive player of the year is a tight race among a few likely contenders, namely Rudy Gobert of the Timberwolves, Lu Dort of the Thunder, and Draymond Green of the Warriors. For the Sixth Man of the Year award, the clear favorite is Celtics bench leader Payton Pritchard, who is averaging an impressive 14 points per game on a 42 percent three-point percentage while being a bench player. Finally, the MVP award is the tightest it's been all season, with the top two spots on the ladder switching nearly every single week. Thunder star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and reigning MVP from the Denver Nuggets Nikola Jokic have been contending for the award since the beginning of the season. Gilgeous-Alexander, who is averaging 33 points per game and leading the league in scoring, is currently in the second

spot and has led the Thunder to a commanding lead in the western standings. Jokic, who is a three-time MVP winner and is averaging a 29-point-per-game triple-double, leads the MVP ladder. With such a vacillating race, there is no telling who will take home the MVP or any of the other awards, as the most important and competitive stretch of the season still remains.

(Sources: CNN, NBA)



AND-ONE: Top two Most Valuable Player candidate Jokic attempts a free throw.



FROM THREE: Golden State Warrior star Stephen Curry shoots a difficult three.

Varsity Girls' and Boys' Basketball teams conclude season

by **Sahil Muthukrishnan**
Sports Editor

The LGHS Varsity Basketball season has come to a close after an exciting fall season including postseason play.

Boys' varsity had an exciting league season but fell in a tough-fought overtime battle to Homestead, 63-69, in their first game in the Division 1 Central Coast Section (CCS) Boys' Basketball Championships. The team played valiantly, keeping it close until overtime.

After going undefeated in the league this season, the Girls' Varsity Basketball team had an incredible postseason run, continuing their six-game streak and winning the CCS Division I finals. They fell 58-40 to California High School in the first round of the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) State Championships. During CCS, the Wildcats defeated formidable teams, including the Branham Bears



CHASE IT DOWN: Sleiman dribbles decisively down the court for a point.

and the Salinas Cowboys. Varsity decisively defeated Menlo-Atherton 42-30 in the CCS Division I championship game to advance to CIF Division II. Though they eventually lost, it is hard to consider this year's season anything other than a success.

Junior **Lola Cuevas**, a guard and next year's senior captain, commented, "We peaked at the right time. We had a really rough preseason, but it was very evident that we were getting better. So when the league came around, we were prepared. That carried through CCS." The team's switch from pool play to win-or-go-home games has not been an easy one. Cuevas stated, "The last couple of years we have gone to open division, so it's pool play, but now that this year we were in division one, where one loss sends you back. So it's been a challenge just telling [ourselves] that it's just like any other game." Cuevas is optimistic about next year's team, though she highlighted how amazing this season's senior players performed. She emphasized, "It's so awesome to be on the floor with all the seniors, and just hear their leadership in whatever way that is. Some lead by example; some lead vocally. So it's really cool to have learned from them for three years, and to see them showcase their skills during CCS this year."

Sophomore forward **Safiya Sleiman** is excited for next year's team, though she knows it will be a bit of an adjustment, as she explained: "We're definitely gonna be a lot smaller height-wise, but I think we'll still be able to get up and down the court fast and kind of just play a very fast-paced game and dominate." The

varsity girls' team is headed by seasoned Coach **Sara Quilici Giles**. Sleiman commented, "Coach Sara always encourages us to dominate the details, and that's something I can use on and off the court."

Basketball season has officially come to a close at LG. Though it had its ups and downs, it has been a great year for both teams, so if you see a player in the halls congratulate them. Next season is sure to be even more exciting. Go Wildcats!



CHAMPIONS: The Los Gatos Wildcats pose with their first place CCS trophy.

LGHS volleyball commences

by **Isabella Langner**
People Editor

On Feb. 24, the LGHS Boys' Volleyball Team hosted their first non-league game against Archbishop Mitty. Following the match, they played Saint Francis and Branham. Both of these resulted in losses, but LGHS volleyball went to an impressive five sets versus Saint Francis. On Mar. 8, LGHS Boys' Varsity Volleyball participated in a tournament in San Mateo. They beat Hillsdale 2-0 to start out the day. In a close competition versus International, LGHS volleyball lost 2-1. However, they bounced back to beat Aragon 2-0 and then Saint Ignatius 2-1. These results gave LGHS Boys' Varsity Volleyball a record of 3-1 in the tournament, placing them second overall. In previous seasons, the team hadn't performed as well at tournaments as they would have liked, making a successful performance at a tournament a main goal for a lot of players. Junior **Gracin Ting** attributed the success to "new players who are very talented."

The team's chemistry plays a key role in the series of accomplishments they made this season. From bonding in practice, long days at tournaments, and gatherings after school, the varsity boys have become a cohesive team. Junior **Sean Slover** shared, "We had a team bonding recently which made us feel a lot closer."



SMASH: Senior **Markus McGrath** spikes the ball over the net.

Another contributor to their success is practice with each day, players spending two hours in the gym, first working on skill work and then moving onto six on six scrimmages. Ting described, "It helps us simulate real game scenarios." They often listen to music when allowed to improve their energy.



SETTING UP SUCCESS: Junior **Ali Acka** sets the ball to Slover.

Their first league game took place on Mar. 12 against Lynbrook, and the players expected to be a challenge. Ting said, "They are be pretty good, but I think we played really good at this tournament so if we continue that then we should be fine." This momentum led them to a 3-0 win against Lynbrook and two days later, a 3-1 win versus Cupertino. Their next match was on Mar. 19 at home versus Harker, a game many players claimed they were looking forward to. Slover added, "I have a few friends on Harker and they are a good team. One of their coaches is my club coach so it'll be a fun game." The match unfortunately ended in a 2-3 loss for Harker, but LGHS put up a tough fight, forcing the game to go all the way to five sets. However, the team bounced back with another 3-0 victory over Lynbrook, refusing to give up any sets to the opposing team. Their next match is scheduled for Apr. 1 at Soquel High School.

So far, the team has reached their goal of performing well in tournaments and has only continued to improve. With a 3-1 record in league, LGHS Boys' Volleyball is set up for a successful season, and all players contributing equally.

Girls' softball finds success

by **Britt Melinauskas**
Sports Editor

On Mar. 4, the LGHS softball team faced its first non-league opponent, Archbishop Mitty, where both the varsity and JV teams experienced tough losses. The varsity team lost 0-2, and the JV team fell short with a 9-13 defeat. These challenging preseason matches set high expectations for the team moving forward. Two days later, on Mar. 6, the varsity team battled Hildale but fell 3-7, while the JV team bounced



FASTBALL: Norquist tosses a quick and aggressive pitch.

back with a strong 6-4 victory. On Mar. 9, the teams faced Valley Christian, where the varsity team struggled, losing 0-6. However, the JV team delivered an impressive performance, pulling off a dominant 14-1 win, showcasing their resilience and potential for the rest of the season. Varsity centerfielder, junior **Sophia Krish** stated, "Our preseason opponents have been all pretty strong teams. And it has encouraged us to up our game and really play our best going into the season, and really prepared us well."

Despite the setbacks, varsity first baseman and outfielder, sophomore **Kendall Feichtmeir**, explained, "It helped us realize what we need

to work on. We are not as focused as we should be, but we are working on that, and I have a feeling it is going to get a lot better, because we are more invested in winning." Krish expressed, "We are currently working on getting our team to work together and play together. I think we are all individually super talented players, so I think we need to really focus on working as a team."

When asked about the varsity team's current challenges, Krish explained, "Some of our players are injured, and we are working through our little mini-injuries. And I would say, I guess it's not so much a setback, but because it is obviously a new season, and we are working with some new players and strengthening our team chemistry."

Furthermore, the varsity team competed in the Watsonville High School Tournament, going up against Greenfield, Mercy, and Watsonville, with final scores of 24-0, 17-0, and 8-0. Sophomore **Ava Norquist** threw a no-hitter against Watsonville High, and sophomore **Danica DeSantis** pitched a perfect game against Greenfield High.

On Mar. 20, the varsity team faced off against the Homestead Mustangs in their first league match of the season. The game ended with a dominant 10-1 victory, setting an early tone for the team's season and elevating them to the top of the league standings. The win was a clear statement of intent, signaling their readiness for the challenges ahead. Meanwhile, the JV team geared up for their own first league match on Mar. 25, against the Los Altos Eagles. With a focus on building momentum, the team was eager to make their mark and set the stage for a successful season ahead.

LGHS Girls' Softball, with a 4-3 record for varsity and 2-1 for JV, is priming themselves for a promising season, where each setback and success fuels further competition and sets new goals for the remainder of the season.

(Source: MaxPreps)

Los Gatos Winter Guard and Percussion triumphs

by **Hayley Strahs**
News Editor

As their seasons come to a close, winter guard and winter percussion are putting their all into the final few weeks of competition.

On Mar. 1, winter percussion attended Northern California Percussion Alliance's (NCPA) American Canyon High School show, LGHS's first percussion-only competition of the season. Senior and front ensemble section leader **Brody Horwitz** particularly enjoyed "seeing so many different schools and their interpretations of either songs or popular media." Horwitz also noted the nearby Raising Cane's Restaurant as a positive aspect of the competition.

Having finished their show, The Golden Path, winter percussion spends their rehearsals refining small details like "tracking, which involves [moving their] feet to the music to solidify feet timing to make



PRESSURE IS ON: Winter percussion performs in the Los Gatos gym.

sure they can play the music in time," according to bass technician **Lucas Kornilov**. In addition, percussion often splits into sections for "subs time" before they come together at the end to perform full runs and portions of the show.

On Mar. 8, LGHS Winter Guard attended Winter Guard International's (WGI) Union City Regional at James Logan High School. Unlike previous competitions, students had the opportunity to watch both school-affiliated and independent ensembles from across northern California. After the competition, Junior **Natasha Harnish** remarked, "It was cool to see [other groups] perform." With a score of 72.8, LGHS placed fifth out of 15 competitors in the Scholastic Regional A division during the preliminary round. The following weekend, on Mar. 15, LGHS Percussion attended the percussion counterpart of the regional and placed third in prelims, scoring 68.5. Senior and new member **Adam Younis** described the competition as an "interesting, large, spacious environment to explore other shows and [meet] people from other schools."

While percussion competed at WGI Union City, guard attended California Color Guard Circuit's (CCGC) Dublin competition at Dublin High School. "Now that we've completed the show," said sophomore **Sam Ematrudo**, "the energy [at rehearsal] is really focused. We're trying to do the best we can at competitions." Guard's hard work did not go to waste: LGHS took first place in the Scholastic Regional AA division and received their highest score of the season.

CCGC Championships on Mar. 29 will conclude the winter guard and percussion seasons. At championships, every group in the circuit will perform in the final CCGC show of 2025. Junior **Siya Gupte** explained, "[Championships] is our last time ever performing this program together and spending the full day together watching shows.

And then, we have a full retreat together." Full retreat, a custom that honors the end of a season, involves every member of each guard lining up for the awards ceremony while fully decked out in glow stick jewelry. In contrast, percussion will have a swift transition between competitions: after performing at CCGC Championships, they will head to James Logan High School for another NCPA show.

However, the end of competition season does not equate to the end of winter guard and percussion. On Mar. 31, the ensembles, along with Raymond J Fisher Middle School's Winter Guard, will perform one last run of their respective shows at Friends and Family Night in the large gym.



WINNERS: Winter guard team poses after placing first in a Dublin competition.



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LGHS Boys' Tennis begins competing in matches

by Kayla Mitchell
Media Production Editor

With tryouts officially over, Los Gatos Boys' Tennis have begun to compete in its first matches of the year. The season started off slowly, with tough weather delaying tryouts and canceling multiple team practices, but over the past few weeks, the schedule has amped up. The boys' varsity team has competed in three matches so far this spring, quickly earning themselves a winning record of 2-1. Excited about their new teammates and talent joining the team this year, LGHS boys' tennis is ready for a successful season.



IN ACTION: Junior **Ethan Beal** winds up to return a serve to the opposing player.

Due to rain canceling the boys' first match of the season against Leigh High School, the varsity and JV teams started off their season with a home match against Santa Clara. Hoping to cultivate the excitement of the players, coach **Justin Stenger** decided to make the match special by allowing almost all of the seniors on the team to compete in the lineup. Coach Stenger explained, "I thought it would be an awesome experience for the team to bond at the beginning of the season and to show the fresh talent we got, how the tennis team is such a strong community." The match went to the Los Gatos boys with an easy 6-1 victory over the Santa Clara team.

Rough weather canceled the boys' match on Mar. 5 against Fremont High School, so the team played their second match against Cupertino High School. The strong Cupertino team moved down from a higher division this season, and Coach Stenger warned the players that Cupertino would be one of LGHS's biggest tennis rivals this season. The LGHS boys' suffered a narrow loss 3-4 to the other team but did not let the tough result damage their determination. Coach Stenger reflected on the match saying, "The loss definitely hurt because it was so close, but we get to play every team twice, so we will be ready for them the next time we compete." While such a narrow loss to a rival team early in the season seems disheartening, the LGHS team is using the match to learn and improve for the next face-off.

Even though the boys' season is just beginning, Coach Stenger is already impressed with the energy and hard work the players are putting into the team. With an astounding number of valuable players at tryouts and returning players ready to compete again, the new group is motivated to do better than previous years. Stenger applauds the boys for the energy they bring to their matches and practices. Boys' tennis usually hosts a match at home once a week directly after school, so come out and support this hard-working team.



ACE: Senior **Rushil Sharma** prepares to strike the ball back over the net.

POM: Cici Sun commits to Stanford University fencing

by Britt Melinauskas
Sports Editor

Senior **Cici Sun** remains an undeniable presence on her club fencing team, exemplifying unparalleled skill and exceptional leadership. As she approaches the final chapter of her high school career, Sun poises herself for greatness, leaving a lasting impact on her team as she continues her fencing journey at Stanford University. Sun has constantly balanced her extraordinary fencing talent with a commitment to academic excellence, showcasing her ability to thrive in both athletic competition and intellectual endeavors. Sun began her fencing journey at the age of seven and has spent over a decade refining her skills, earning the respect of her peers through her unmatched dedication to the sport. Sun explains her introduction to fencing, noting that she first encountered it when "[My parents and I] passed by a fencing club, and my parents said how I should try it out. So I did, and after that I never stopped." Since then, Sun has continued her career through the Silicon Valley Fencing Center, an award-winning fencing organization that consistently competes in national championships, placing its fencers at the top in the nation. Sun's rigorous academic course load, including challenging classes in Philosophy and Ethics, AP Calculus AB, AP US Government, AP Chemistry, and AP Physics C, showcases her intellectual



GO TREES: Sun poses in Stanford merchandise to announce her commitment.

versatility and played a pivotal role in her attraction to Stanford University. When asked about the appeal of Stanford, Sun stated, "I think everything was perfect; the location, the school, the programs, the team, the coach, everything's just the best fit for me, and I love the campus as well. It feels like a place where I can truly grow, not just as an athlete but also as a person, and I'm

excited for all the opportunities ahead." At Stanford, Sun intends to pursue a major in electrical engineering, merging her passion for technology and innovation with her academic drive.

A significant source of inspiration for Sun came from the upperclassmen at the Silicon Valley Fencing Center. As she explained: "I was really inspired by one of them who also committed to Stanford. She was always a good person, she had good academics, good values, and a dedicated fencer, making her an idol to look up to." When discussing her achievements, Sun highlighted that her most significant accomplishments include "several national medals I got in the Junior International Event and additional international medals I got in one of the Manchester events." This year, Sun will fence at nationals in April and over the summer to conclude her career at Silicon Valley. Her journey reflects not only her athleticism but also the influence of a supportive community that shaped her growth. Sun is eager to carry forward the lessons and values she learned at the center as she embarks on the next chapter of her fencing career.

Sun's feats in fencing and academics are a testament to her unwavering devotion, ambition, and perseverance. Inspired by her role models at the Silicon Valley Fencing Center and driven by her pursuit of excellence in both academics and athletics, Sun has excelled in everything she sets her mind to.

Baseball season continues

by Chloe Wilson
Humor Editor

On Mar. 15, two varsity baseball teams, the Los Gatos Wildcats and the St. Ignatius College Preparatory Wildcats, competed, with Los Gatos emerging victorious. Junior **Ethan Williams** played a major role in leading the score of 1-0. Nonetheless, it is clear that this win was a team effort, with performances from all positions. Senior **Zach Biller** was one of them, recording a run, stealing a base, and going 1-for-2 at the plate. Another notable performance was from junior **Lucas Carlisle**, who had his first RBI (runs batted in) of the season. The defense also played a key role in the victory, with standout plays from the outfielders and infielders, while the whole team helped to secure the win.

The previous time these two teams faced each other was in 2023, and St. Ignatius led the scoreboards, coming out with a score of 2-0. There is no doubt that this was a big win for the Los Gatos Wildcats. According to senior **Cooper Bannon** and juniors **Gavin Jordan** and **Hudson Schrader**, St. Ignatius was the team they were all most looking forward to playing, and they did not come up short.

As for the preseason, the varsity team has a current record of 6-2, playing teams from different divisions. Jordan pointed out, "It's been difficult to play the West Catholic teams; they have all been pretty good." The team's two losses have been to Junipero Serra High School (in the West Catholic Athletic League) and Leigh High School.

The team has various goals, as Bannon explained, "I mean every year it's going to be to win CCS, this year especially, as we are probably the best we have been in the last three years." The team's loss in the first round of the Central Coast Section (CCS) last

year to Carmel High School is not something to repeat. Bannon added, "Really, just getting past the first game of CCS is what we need."

Concerning the team's dynamics, Schrader said, "We have really good chemistry and are all really good friends. We have played baseball together for a long time, and have grown up together." It is clear that this chemistry contributes significantly to the Wildcats' success. Bannon added, "It's great. I mean it's the same group of guys that we have had for 10 years plus." Jordan summarized the team's bond: "I'd say 11 out of 10 for team chemistry."



CHAMPS: LG baseball players gather to celebrate a victory.

The preseason schedule continues to show both success and struggle, as the Cats beat Leland High School 6-0. However, the game against Hollister High School ended with a tough loss of 9-3. Los Gatos had its first league game against the Los Altos High School Eagles, a team that currently holds an impressive 6-1 record. Be sure to catch an upcoming game! (Source: MaxPreps)

LG lacrosse finds success

by Atharava Pandey
National/World Editor

Los Gatos Boys' Varsity Lacrosse has excelled against their current opponents. They have won memorable games, such as against Christopher High School, where the Wildcats led by a score of 11-6, and against Carmel High School, with a final score of 15-3, showcasing their dominance. The team also played an impressive game against Menlo-Atherton but ultimately fell short 11-10. The varsity team currently has a 3-3 conference record and a 1-0 league record. The lacrosse season for the varsity boys is ramping up quickly, and they look to perform well in the rest of the season. The JV and varsity teams played Palo Alto High School on Mar. 25 and will play Soquel High School on Mar. 27.

The junior varsity girls' season has just begun. Although they lost to Hillsdale High School on Mar. 3, the team has taken valuable lessons from this result, fueling their competitive spirit to perform even better. The junior varsity boys have started off strong this season with two decisive wins. They beat Carmel High School by a score of 20-0 on Mar. 6 and beat Menlo-Atherton High School 20-10 on Mar. 11. When asked about how the season is going so far, freshman **Justin Buran** said, "It's been great. So far, we have won all of our games, and it's been really fun playing with my teammates. Our goalie has been great, and our defense has been playing well."

The varsity girls are working hard and are warming up well for the upcoming season. The team has had to deal with a lot of adversity this season, yet has never given up, always showing faith. According to junior **Kirra Bannon**, the

biggest challenge this season has been "rebuilding from last season because we lost a lot of our seniors and a lot of our defense, but we have been doing good at rebuilding." The varsity team opened up with games against Hillsdale High School and St. Francis High School, two tough opponents. The team played really well but unfortunately could not get the desired results. However, with the work being put in, it is inevitable that the team will see success.

As for the rest of the season, Bannon said the team is "definitely looking forward to Stevenson. They were one of the hardest teams we played last year." Varsity girls will play on Mar. 28 versus Wilcox High School at Helm Field.

LG lacrosse is in full swing, and with all four teams working extremely hard, they will be tough to beat. The teams leave everything out on the field and show relentless determination to win. Be sure to come out and support our lacrosse teams as they fight hard for victory!



FOCUSED: An LG lacrosse player takes a shot on goal.