

El Gato

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL

H. Strahs

LGHS hosts Unplugged Talent Show

by **Siyona Singhal**
News Editor

On Sept. 26, LGHS hosted its annual Unplugged Talent Show, an all-acoustic show in which students took part in various performances. The talent show showcased LG's musical talent and brought together students, teachers, and families for an evening of fun and entertainment.

As the show started, darkness fell over the theater, the audience hummed with anticipation, and a single spotlight lit up the stage. Seniors **Ryan Idemoto** and **Kiana Behnami** entered the spotlight and began introducing the night's acts. One by one, singers, dancers, poets, and musicians went on stage, each performance as mindblowing as the last.



SING IT: Deschaux-Beaume performs alongside other LGHS music students.

Senior **Ryan Lin**, a passionate violin player, was among the many students who performed at the show. He and piano enthusiast **Ishaan Allen** played the song Thunderstruck by ACDC. Lin described how the song "[starts] off kind of classical...and then it goes all out." He remarked that he wanted his performance to have theatrics and twists, which is why Lin and Allen chose the song they did. Lin has been playing violin for eight years and is currently a part of the LGHS chamber orchestra, which he really enjoys.

Junior **Nicolas Deschaux-Beaume** captivated the audience with his impressive act. He went on stage with a jazz band composed of LGHS students and sang two songs: Livin' la Vida Loca by Ricky Martin and Sunday Morning by Maroon Five. Deschaux-Beaume is also in the LGHS choir. He found his passion for music thanks to his brother and grandpa. He remembered how "[he] and [his] grandpa used to play jazz on his guitar every night"

Senior **Janie Vidovich**, president of the K-Pop Dance Club, delivered an unforgettable performance, showcasing her skills and passion for dance. Vidovich and other members of her club did a cover of Fatal Trouble by Enhypen. Vidovich explained her favorite part about being in the show: "Just being able to perform, and just show our love for K-pop to everybody, and just seeing everybody so happy to see us."

Sophomore **Nova Jayaraj** was an audience member during the show. She discussed how she admired that "everyone on stage was there to do the things they loved together. Everyone was cheering each other on and the vibes were immaculate." She declared that she definitely plans to attend again next year and cannot wait to see what it will have in store.

This year's LGHS talent show was a fantastic showcase of diverse talents and a vibrant reminder of the creative spirit within our community. From mesmerizing musical performances to jaw-dropping dance routines, the event highlighted the wide range of skills and passions of our students. The enthusiasm and support from both the performers and the audience created an atmosphere of unity and celebration, making it a memorable evening for everyone involved.



ENCORE: All Unplugged participants return to the stage for their final bow.

GLOW connects women in STEM

by **Megan Saul**
Culture Editor

At Los Gatos High School, there are over 110 clubs focused on academics, volunteering, and hobbies. One of the academic clubs is the GLOW Club, run by co-presidents junior **Alena Narkaitis** and junior **Hailey Jang** and vice-president junior **Karis Chan**. The name of this club stands for Girls' Learning Opportunities in Women's STEM.



HELPING HANDS: Narkaitis and Chan volunteer at Family Supportive Housing.

GLOW's mission is to foster a passion for STEM at LGHS and connect with younger students in the community. The club does this by holding open lessons on STEM topics after school in **Lalitha Maruvada's** room. During these classes, members of the club focus on teaching three specific branches of the STEM field: math, computer science, and science; this allows club members to focus on furthering their own and others' interests in a specific field of study about which they are passionate. Narkaitis leads the computer science branch; Jang leads the math section; and Chan teaches science. Narkaitis said, "We craft the materials ourselves and present it in a fun and engaging way to middle and elementary schoolers." Although the club members hope to improve the students' skills in these subjects, they also aim to showcase how young women can change the world and make it a better place. Through connecting with the Rotary Club of Los Gatos, they are engaging students from Blossom Hill Elementary School and Raymond J. Fisher Middle School.

Besides the STEM and academic aspects of GLOW, educating and spending time with young girls is another important aspect of the club. Narkaitis said, "My favorite part of the club is working with the children because I have a little brother with whom I'm unable to help with his studies because he lives in another country. I just like helping kids, especially women to foster their interests because that is something I didn't have while growing up."

Narkaitis decided to found this club after noticing bias against women in the STEM field. She said, "Even though we live in an environment where a lot of people are in technology, because it's Silicon Valley, there is still a lot of bias against women. I felt it personally when I told people from my family and strangers what I was doing and many asked why I am doing this because I'm a girl. They said, 'You're a girl, you don't need to do STEM.'" She hopes that through her club she can foster an interest in science for girls within our community and help challenge the stigma against women in the STEM field.

So far, GLOW has hosted one meeting to introduce the club to the younger students. The club holds meetings every other week after school and will continue throughout the remainder of the school year. If you are interested in participating in this club, there are plentiful tasks, including making materials for lessons and volunteering opportunities to teach the lessons. In the future and as the year progresses, the GLOW Club hopes to encourage more students to attend their meetings and engage more schools in their lessons.

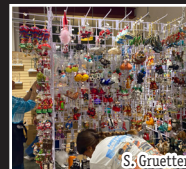


WELCOME TO THE CLUB: Jang and Chan recruit members for GLOW on Club Day.

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TOM: Horror lover Mr. Bowman inspires his students

by Britt Melinauskas and Katie Nelson

Sports and Center Editors

Beginning his ninth year at Los Gatos High School, tenth grade English teacher **Blaine Bowman** has continued to impact students significantly, fostering their love for reading and writing through his discussion-based classes and his engaging curriculum.

Bowman explained his love for teaching the books in the tenth grade curriculum. He said, "I love *Lord of the Flies*, and what you can bring in with psychology and just looking at human nature [in] *Of Mice and Men*... I feel like it's an easily digestible book that students find interesting, even if they don't like reading." By bringing in his own interests and personalizing the curriculum, Bowman hopes that his excitement for the material carries over to his students as well.

Before teaching, Bowman attended the University of California Santa Cruz and San Jose State University. He first developed a passion for teaching once he got to college because passionate professors made the material relevant to Bowman. Bowman's first love was in the film industry, yet his fondness for Santa Cruz facilitated his decision to stay in the area and teach in local districts. Bowman was so intent on teaching in the area that he had his LGHS interview just hours after his son's birth.

Bowman emphasizes the importance of discussion in both his regular and honors curriculum. When asked how he facilitates

positive debate, he said the key is "making the students feel comfortable with what we're talking about - that they understand the book and feel that their ideas are relevant and important." Along with careful class readings of several novels, Bowman uses pop culture to show why the books they read are pertinent and noteworthy.



MINI-ME: Bowman smiles alongside his son in his poster-filled classroom.

Throughout the past three weeks, Bowman has participated in a competition through *Rue Morgue* magazine, in which votes from friends, family, and students have propelled him into the finalist round, with around 20 people nationally competing for the final prize. Bowman explained that the prize includes meeting actor Kane Hodder — who plays Jason in many of the *Friday the 13th* movies — and 13,000 dollars, which he plans to put towards his son's trust fund. Bowman explained that his chances have dipped a bit now that he is up against some prominent influencers. Still, he has enjoyed the competition journey and all the support he has received, adding that he owes much of his success to his former and current students. He said, "[My students] have all rallied around [me]. It's been really sweet. On Facebook too, just some old friends that I haven't really interacted with... I've just seen them rallying around me and it feels good to get the support and that people know that I love horror movies and love my son."

Bowman reflected that he is always trying to do his best to "teach as if I was teaching to a teenage me who didn't want to be in high school [and] didn't want to read the books... I hope that I can engage some students that usually wouldn't be engaged." In college, Bowman's engagement shifted in his own learning and inspired him to pursue teaching. He added, "[In high school] I hated speaking in front of class, but I'm glad that I found a voice... the best thing I could do is try to make the classroom seem safe, [so] the students know everyone's voice is welcome."

California endures record-breaking hot temperatures

by Chloe Wilson

Humor Editor

California has had record-breaking high temperatures this October, and at least three students in Riverside, CA, have been hospitalized due to this historic heat wave. As many citizens consider the danger of this event, these heat-related injuries show just how severe this climate crisis is. Following a track meet in Riverside on Oct. 1, paramedics took three athletes to the hospital. The temperature in Riverside was over 100 degrees. The medical staff performed an analysis on a total of five patients to check for injuries; ultimately, three athletes were hospitalized. Due to these late fall temperatures, officials say the heat is "a significant threat to property or life."

Medical staff expect these three students to be okay according to the race organizer. Eric Reynolds, a cross country coach at Woodcrest Christian School. He said, "They were all individuals that crossed the line after they ran their two-mile race and collapsed a little bit." Shockingly, more than 20 percent of Californian schools have no air conditioning or heating systems. California's governor, Gavin Newsom,

recently signed a bill that aims to protect students from extreme weather conditions. Yahushua Robinson died at age 12 last year after he collapsed while running in his physical education class on a day when temperatures reached 107 degrees. This student inspired the naming of the bill. However, Newsom vetoed the Climate Resilient Schools Act last month, a bill that would have produced a "roadmap" for schools to access federal funding to improve facilities.

On a more local scale, San Francisco recorded its hottest temperature ever on Tuesday, Oct. 8. San Rafael hit the highest temperature in the whole Bay Area, at 107 degrees. Santa Rosa, in Sonoma County, reached 102 degrees. Additionally, the town of Kentfield, in Marin County, reached 102, with the previous high being 97 in 1930. In downtown San Francisco, the temperature reached 97 degrees, which topped its previous record of 92 in 2023. San Jose also beat its record 2023 temperature hitting 103 degrees. In the Sacramento area, this heat wave advisory lasted longer than other areas and it was in effect until 11 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 6. Contradicting Northern California's early snow advisory weeks ago, the record-breaking temperatures this heat wave

has brought to the Bay Area are above normal and clearly slightly unexpected.

Following a downward trend, this heatwave was expected to conclude shortly after Monday, Oct. 7. With the weather finally starting to adjust accordingly to the fall season, there may be a chance of showers later in October. (Sources: CBS, Fox, USA Today)



SUNNY DAYS: The California sun blazes as the temperature heightens.

CA bans legacy admissions

by Jordan Park

Sports Editor

On Oct. 7, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed legislation banning private California universities from giving special consideration to applicants with family or relatives with close connections to schools, a practice commonly referred to as legacy admissions.



HEAR YE: Governor Gavin Newsom speaks at a conference.

The state's public university system eliminated legacy admissions decades ago, but private institutions continued to show favoritism toward the descendants of alumni or major donors. Historically, numerous selective colleges have provided special consideration to the children or grandchildren of alumni to strengthen endorsements that support various campus programs and help lower-income students afford tuition. Within the United States, legacy admissions are still extremely prevalent in the college admissions process. Conversely, the state of Maryland bans legacy preferences at private and public institutions. Similar rules exist in Illinois, Virginia, and Colorado, which ban legacy admissions though solely at public universities and colleges.

On Oct. 7, the day Governor Newsom signed legislation, Stanford and the University of Southern California (USC), both affected by the ban, promptly reacted to the prohibition. Stanford noted that the legislation does not take effect until fall 2025 and that they will continue to review their admissions policies. In a statement, USC promised that all of its admitted students met the institute's rigorous academic standards. The statement went on to express that USC will continue to recruit and admit students in accordance with the law.

This recent law results from the hard work and perseverance of Assemblyman Phil Ting, a San Francisco Democrat and author of bill AB 1780, banning legacy admissions in California. "If we value diversity in higher education, we must level the playing field," stated Assemblyman Ting. He went on to say, "Hard work, good grades and a well-rounded background should earn you a spot in the incoming class — not the size of the check your family can write or who you're related to." Although his efforts eventually succeeded, his earlier attempts with such a bill were unsuccessful, as seen in the Varsity Blue Scandal of 2019, where parents tried to obtain admissions for their children through a series of bribes and false records. Assemblyman Ting unsuccessfully attempted to push through a bill banning legacy admissions, but he still successfully implemented a measure in which private institutions were required to report the number of students accepted due to legacy admissions. Stanford and USC reported that about 14 percent of the students admitted in the fall of 2022 had legacy connections. That emerging data ultimately helped pioneer the recent bill. In support of the ban, Governor Newsom stated that "merit, skill, and hard work should determine college admissions. The California dream shouldn't be accessible to just a lucky few, which is why we're opening the door to higher education wide enough for everyone, fairly."

The new regulations will take effect on Sept. 1, 2025, and many anticipate that the new process will impact admissions for the incoming class in the fall of 2026. (Sources: Official California website, NY Times)



GO TROJANS: A USC student walks by the main building.

LGHS Choir starts fresh

by Owen Fugit

Editor-in-Chief

The LGHS Choral Department held its first concert of the year on Oct. 17. Featuring student soloists, songs that involved multiple choirs, and a wide variety of music styles, the Choral Department started the year off strong. LGHS junior **Nico Deschaux-Beaume** explained how the choirs have been working tirelessly in preparation for the concert. "[We have been working] since the beginning of the year. First day we walked in, we picked up some music, started learning it right there and then." The Choral Department also held its second annual choir camp earlier this year, organized by students with a record turnout of more than 90 singers.



JENGA: Choir students form a pyramid during camp.

For the Oct. 17 concert, the choirs performed 11 songs in total, including *Rasa Sayang*, which Deschaux-Beaume noted was a "very challenging song in another language, [with] very hard rhythm patterns and notes." He was grateful that they got started with the piece early in the year because it gave him more time to master the music. His favorite song was *Tshotsholoza*, which he described as "a very fun African piece." Deschaux-Beaume is a member of the tenor-bass vocal range chorus group, which performed *Tshotsholoza* as well as various other pieces during the concert. The concert took place at the McAfee Performing Arts and Lecture Center at Saratoga High School. This venue hosts all LGHS choir concerts, as well as the band and orchestra concerts.

Earlier this year, the LGHS Choral Department hosted its second annual choir camp, facilitated in part by both Deschaux-Beaume and fellow LGHS junior and three-year choir singer, **Callan Robison**. Both Deschaux-Beaume and Robison are members of the Choir Leadership Council, which is in charge of planning and running events within the Choral Department. Choir Director **Maricel Riley** oversees the Council, comprised of students from all choirs across many different grade levels. Robison explained that planning for the Choir Camp event began in earnest "about three to four weeks beforehand," and required Choir Leadership to come in early and set up for the Sept. 14 event. Robison is the Choir Leadership Secretary, which means he takes "notes during all the meetings and makes sure that all the things that I take notes on, for example, future events or whatever actually happen." This role also includes "following up with people like, 'Hey, you told me in these notes that I took that you were going to do this. Have you done it?'" Robison noted that the setup for choir camp was more challenging "because this year we didn't have a pool like we did last year, so we had to split up the recreational time into many more different stations, as opposed to just swimming together."

The Choral Department is hosting its next concert in December, but between now and then, LGHS is sending 17 highly skilled singers to the Regional Honors Choir in November. They will learn six new pieces of music and work with college-level coaches and choral directors over three days to perform in a public concert at Mission Santa Clara on Nov. 9.



CONCERT: The McAfee Center is settled outside of SHS.

LGHS Band & Jazz Programs kick off performances

by Hayley Strahs and Annabelle Pan

News and Graphics Editors

Over the past three weeks, the LGHS Band Program, Jazz Program, and Orchestra Program all held their first official concerts of the school year.

LGHS kicked off its concert series with the Oct. 3 Jazz Band concert in the LGHS Theater. Before the whole Jazz Band took the stage, the LGHS Tri-M Jazz Combo, featuring students across all grades, performed its short, yet mighty set. Classic jazz songs like Misty, Girl from Ipanema, Blue Monk, and Have You Met Miss Jones comprised the group's set. Sophomore **Adrián Vieyra** plays the saxophone in the Tri-M Jazz Combo and performed solos in all of its songs. "I kind of wanted to pick my own stuff and do more improv," Vieyra explained. "We haven't [done] improv in jazz yet, officially." After the Tri-M Jazz Combo, the entire Jazz Band played songs across various time periods and styles, from the popular (You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman, to the inventive Brass Machine, composed by Mark Taylor. Each song featured engaging solos from numerous jazz band students, including junior vocalist **Evie Ishak** who is enrolled in both Jazz Band and Treble Choir.



BAND TOGETHER: Students play various musical pieces.

Oct. 10 marks the first orchestra concert of the 2024-25 school year, led by the orchestra director **Armeen Ghafourpour**. String orchestra, the open enrollment orchestra, started off the night with Symphony Concertante by Joseph Bologne and finished with Jorge Vargas's La Bruja, a piece that spotlights every section. Freshman **Ari Kho**, a cellist

in String, said his favorite piece is the "Concertante because it's fast and fun to play." Up next was the Philharmonic Orchestra, the middle-level audition group, who played three pieces, including a beautiful, melodic piece called Pavane by Gabriel Faure. Sophomore **Nolan Lin** is the violin concertmaster of Philharmonic; of the piece, Lin said, "I like Pavane the most because it sounds nice and reminds me of my friend." Chamber Orchestra began their energetic performance with Waltz, a piece composed by Aram Khachaturian. After playing the melodic Reverie by Claude Debussy, Chamber ended the night with Prelude and Fiesta by Eric Morales and surprised the audience with coordinated stomps to accent the musical notes.

On Oct. 15, the McAfee Center hosted all three LGHS Concert Bands. The Symphonic Band kicked off the concert with composer Yo Goto's Lighthearted March, which featured both high and low brass sections. After playing Robert Sheldon's Gently I Wander, the band performed Roshanne Etezady's action-packed Jumpscare Tango. Freshman clarinet soloist **Ben Holland** described the piece as "[sections of the band] passing a part back and forth," similar to the motions of a tango dance. Next, the

all-upperclassmen Crescent Ensemble took the stage. Members performed three songs, including the triumphant One Final Mission, heavily featuring brass and woodwind instruments. Finally, Wind Ensemble, the most advanced band, performed their four-song set and resoundingly concluded the concert with Harrison J. Collins's spirited Fanfare for Wild Youthful Occasions.



SOUND CHECK: Students warm up for a performance.

Local Color helps artists

by Katie Nelson

Center Editor

Founded in 2015, Local Color is an organization based in San Jose that aims to provide equitable pathways for artistic expression through public events, showcases, and support of local artists. The program is a great way for high school students to launch their art into the real world or experience other local art through fun and interactive events.



ARTISTS: Volunteers begin to paint a mural on a wall.

Local Color is a women-powered organization founded by Erin Salazar, who is now the Executive Director. She explained that the founding of the organization came organically after receiving too many mural commissions to do herself. She started giving the jobs to friends, which soon turned into project managing for a small fee. She added that the passing of both of her parents led to "a lot of soul searching. I gave up bartending and threw myself into nonprofit work. I felt like I could be more impactful working for other artists than just working for myself."

The mission statement of Local Color, Salazar described, is "to build equitable pathways for creatives to thrive. We are a woman-powered organization who meets our mission by facilitating equitably paid projects for artists; acquiring and developing affordable workspace for local creatives; and coaching and supporting local artists as they launch, maintain, and grow their arts and social entrepreneurship practices to be sustainable; while celebrating, educating, and advocate for the value of the artist in the community."

Local Color has facilitated over 270 murals, opened up 70,000 square feet of studio space, and allocated over 1.5 million dollars to artists. Art,

Salazar explained, has the power to foster a sense of "identity, belonging, and pride...When people see their experiences reflected in local art, it helps build a sense of ownership and pride in their community." She added that the Local Color events provide opportunities for "different groups to meet, share ideas, and bridge cultural divides."

Large events put on by the Local Color team takes lots of coordination and curation. For example, Salazar explained that lots of things come together for an event like the Lowrider Art Showcase at the Villa Montalvo estate last September, such as "managing logistics such as permits, sponsorships and event promotion...On the day of the event, coordinating volunteers, setting up displays, and ensuring cultural respect are key to a successful and meaningful showcase."

Local Color is special because it is an organization for artists, by artists. What sets it apart, according to Salazar, is the "Holistic approach to supporting artists and fostering vibrant public spaces...the organization values community collaboration, with projects and events that actively engage the public, transform neighborhoods, and reflect the cultural identity of San Jose."



WORKSHOP: Volunteers help at a button-making stand.

Local Color does far more than just art events and showcases; they support budding local artists in many ways. Their Youth Empowerment Series (YES) as well as Local Color Co-Labs are built to empower next generation artists through partnerships, funding sources, and community groups that are dedicated to the new artists. Coming up Nov. 16th is a POSTER show at a noble workshop and gallery. Follow @localcolorsj on Instagram for more updates.

Domus starts the holidays

by Kloe Adams and Jordan Park

Editorial and Sports Editors

Domus, the beloved home goods store on North Santa Cruz Ave, is kicking off the holiday season with its annual Christmas ornament rollout and a store chock full of unique seasonal items. Known for its lighthearted and fun products, Domus and its employees are gearing up to spread the holiday cheer.



FESTIVE: A Christmas tree stands proud in the store.

The store's festive fall decor marks the first sign of the holiday season. From glass pumpkins and fall leaves to ghost figurines and spooky witches, Domus goes above and beyond for the holidays. On Sept. 29, the store hosted its annual Christmas ornament rollout, in which employees spent multiple hours decorating the store for Christmas and creating new holiday displays, including their famous four-walled hanging array of ornaments. On Sept. 30, customers could purchase ornaments in-store. Store owner Margaret Leto described the holiday preparations as exciting but noted, "A lot of thought and planning needs to go into changes for the holiday season." However, it's not just the holiday season that requires an abundance of hard work, as the store changes its displays quite frequently. As Leto pointed out, "It is important that our store has a new and different look every seven to ten days, so that means the main displays need to be changed out." For the holiday season, that means constantly rearranging and designing new and intriguing displays.

Customers deemed Domus "a very fun place to shop," which is evident from its whimsical and cozy environment that draws people in and leaves every customer with a special memory. Many customers have shopped at the store for years, so it's easy to see how Domus plays a role in their holiday traditions. Leto explained the store's role in these traditions, "There are many customers who buy Christmas ornaments every year at Domus to give to friends and/or family members. There are customers who will only buy their boxed Christmas cards from Domus. In Domus, there is always a season/reason to celebrate." Acknowledging that customers come to Domus for goods that are not typically available at other stores, Leto commented: "Every holiday season, customers come to Domus for unique and reasonably priced items. They want to see new, different, and practical items that they can't find at other big box retailers. That is why I spend literally hours every day going on buying trips throughout the United States and Europe."



KITCHENWARE: Fall themed dishes are on display.

Working hard every day for Domus, Leto demonstrates immense love not only for her store but also for giving each customer a fulfilling shopping experience. Leto expressed her passion for the store: "I love seeing the store change with the seasons. My favorite part is the changing colors: winter with its subdued colors for everything from dinnerware to flowers to table linens." So, whether it is pumpkin-themed kitchenware or a last-minute Christmas gift, Domus has you covered and is definitely an essential visit in downtown Los Gatos.

News-in-Brief: Pug-O-Ween celebration and more

E-bikes cause controversy: E-bike accidents have recently spiked throughout the last years in the Bay Area as e-bike sales and popularity increases. A UC San Francisco study in 2022 found that the average age for e-bike injuries was 39 years old, and the same study found a 100 percent increase in e-bike accidents compared to earlier years. The injury rate is most likely due to the law, California Vehicle Code Section 21212, that allows e-bike riders of 18 years or older to ride without a helmet and to ride faster bikes. As a response to the injuries, California is proposing and passing new laws to place restrictions and regulations on e-bikes, but some question the effectiveness of these laws.

(Source: NBC)

- **Claudia Casal**, Culture Editor

Wildfires pose a threat to California: California's Park Fire was the fourth-largest wildfire in state history and the largest allegedly caused by arson. In its first two days, the Park Fire destroyed more than 130 structures and burned over 175,000 acres of land, with temperatures reaching well over 100 degrees.

The Park Fire, lasting over two months, set the state record for most acres burned due to arson at 430,000 acres. In total, wildfires have burned over one million acres of land in the state this year, with nearly half caused by arson. The increase in arson incidents may be linked to the growing heat and dry conditions, which pose a growing issue for California. (Sources: LA Times, NY Post)

- **Atharava Pandey**, National/World Editor

Dogs dress up for Pug-O-Ween: A non-profit animal rescue focused on pug fostering and adoptions, the Tiny Paws Pug Rescue held its annual Pug-O-Ween event on Oct. 5 at Roaring Camp Railroad in Felton, CA. Here, hundreds of furry friends and their families, all wearing Halloween costumes, gathered for games, competitions, and more. Highlights of the event included a cake walk, the Pug-O-Lympics Race, and a costume contest in which pugs and their owners competed to determine the scariest, funniest, and most creative costumes. Attendees visited various vendor booths featuring art, dog accessories, and Kona Ice. The event concluded with a raffle and a group train ride through the forest. Pug-O-Ween brought pug-lovers from

across the state together, raising money and bolstering publicity for the shelter, while providing the dog and human attendees with an unforgettable day.

- **Ainsley Northrop**, Editor-in-Chief



CUTENESS OVERLOAD: A bulldog lounges in its super adorable bat costume.

- Man genetically engineers sheep
- Port workers go on strike

Montana rancher creates genetically modified sheep

By Isabella Langner
People Editor

Arthur Schubarth, an 81-year-old rancher in Montana, was sentenced to federal prison on Jul. 11 for cloning endangered sheep and trafficking parts from Asia and to other states. He admitted guilt to two crimes: conspiracy to violate the Lacey Act and substantively violating the Lacey Act through Sun River Enterprises LLC. The Lacey Act is a law that bans the trafficking of illegally possessed wildlife, fish, and plants. The rancher will remain in prison for six months and then spend three years under supervised release. His punishment also includes paying a 20 thousand dollar fine to the Lacey Act Reward Fund and four thousand dollars to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

In this chain of events, beginning in 2013 and concluding in 2021, Schubarth conspired with other individuals to create a hybrid sheep that would acquire more money from other breeders and captive hunting facilities. These facilities allow hunters to shoot animals that are fenced in. According to the Humane Society of the United States, "The animals are often semi-tame. Some have even been hand-raised or bottle-fed by humans." To begin the scheme, Schubarth illegally brought parts from the Marco Polo

Argali sheep, one of the largest sheep species in the world. They can weigh 300 pounds or more with horns longer than five feet. He then sent genetic material from argali parts to a lab to develop cloned embryos. Schubarth paid a deposit of four thousand two hundred dollars for the embryos' creation. At Schubarth Ranch, a 215-acre plot of land in Vaughn, Montana, the rancher and his comrades used artificial breeding to implant 165 cloned embryos into a female sheep. The sheep produced a single male Marco Polo argali named Montana Mountain King or MMK by Schubarth.

Argali sheep are native to the Pamir region of central Asia and prohibited in the state of Montana to protect native sheep from hybridization and disease. They are also protected internationally by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), and domestically by the Endangered Species Act.

He used MMK to impregnate other female sheep that were illegally owned in Montana to create hybrids. To move these sheep through the United States, he forged veterinary inspection certificates. Schubarth also illegally bought the genetic material of Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep and sold them to other states. Additionally, he sold MMK's semen to other breeders as well as one direct offspring of MMK for ten thousand dollars. Edward

Grace, the assistant director of the US Fish and Wildlife Services Office of Law Enforcement, stated, "This case exemplifies the serious threat that wildlife trafficking poses to our native species and ecosystems. Mr. Schubarth's actions not only violated multiple laws designed to protect wildlife, but also risked introducing diseases and compromising the genetic integrity of our wild sheep populations."

(Sources: Smithsonian Magazine, The Guardian, USA Today)



BLEAT: A herd of Marco Polo Argali sheep roam a Himalayan mountain range.

Hurricane hits Florida NY mayor faces charges

By Katie Borders
National/World Editor

On Wednesday, Oct. 9, Hurricane Milton hit Florida, causing substantial damage to the coast and surrounding cities and producing numerous tornadoes in the aftermath. The hurricane was a Category 3 storm, first hitting Siesta Key and then leading to major evacuation efforts in the nearby populated Tampa, St. Petersburg area. It also led to heavy rainfall and strong winds. Over two million homes and public places experienced power outages amid evacuation and recovery efforts, most commonly in Hardee County. So far, the death toll is at least 14 and many others have been injured by the destruction of Hurricane Milton.

Before the hurricane even reached shore, it brought fierce winds of about 105 miles per hour and tornadoes, destroying over 125 homes and leaving devastating damage to the surrounding areas. At least 20 tornadoes accompanied Hurricane Milton on Oct. 9, occurring in Siesta Key and along the coast of Florida. With Florida residents having one to two weeks to recover from the tragedy and damage of Hurricane Helen, a Category 4 storm that resulted in a death toll of 230, Hurricane Milton has left an immense impact on the already grieving and struggling communities of Florida.

Florida raised its alarms quickly in the face of grim Hurricane Milton's arrival, with some fleeing while others were recommended to stay and wait



DESTRUCTION: Storm severely damage homes in Florida.

out the storm once evacuation efforts became ill-advised as the hurricane reached shore.

Florida launched numerous efforts to help the people affected by Hurricane Milton, including 9,000 National Guard members in the state and surrounding areas and over 50,000 utility workers. The counties issued mandatory evacuation orders prior to the storm to the 7.2 million people in the counties affected. President Joe Biden called Hurricane Milton "the storm of the century" and extended support to the people of Florida who were and have been affected by the Category 3 storm. The Pentagon arranged for 20 million meals as well as 40 million liters of water to be delivered to the affected areas by rescue teams and helicopters.

Among the damages to the areas affected, the Tropicana Field, the Tampa Bay Rays' stadium, suffered major damages when the winds of Hurricane Milton ripped off its roof. Tampa additionally received three to five inches of water per hour after Hurricane Milton made landfall.

On Thursday, Oct. 10, Hurricane Milton weakened from a Category 3 storm to a Category 2 storm and continued to weaken, as the residents of Florida in the surrounding area prepared to overcome the catastrophe and destruction that Hurricane Milton dealt.

(Sources: AP, CBS News, USA Today)

By Kat Littfin
News Editor

On Sept. 26, the District Attorney's Office charged New York Mayor Eric Adams with bribery, campaign finance, and conspiracy offenses. Adams began his governmental career working in the New York Police Department (NYPD), where he gradually gained rank, eventually becoming a State Senator, then becoming Brooklyn Borough President, and finally becoming the 110th mayor of New York City in 2022. The democratic mayor gained popularity for his diligence during the COVID-19 pandemic, as he focused many of his policies on service workers and his advocacy for public health policy after his type 2 diabetes diagnosis. Though Adams was initially popular, speculation about criminal dealings in foreign affairs and election campaigns turned many New York citizens against Adams. With his indictment, many are calling for his removal.

The legal demise of the New York mayor began in late 2023, when federal agents raided individuals closely associated with Adams and his mayoral campaign, including his top fundraiser. Later in the investigation, agents seized Adam's phone, a measure convincing many that the investigation was serious. Although Adams and his attorneys stood by his innocence, almost a year later, the court declared Adams guilty.

The charges against Adams resulted from him and his campaign obtaining illegal campaign contributions. The contributors were primarily foreign political figures and wealthy businessmen. Additionally, Adams and his administration attempted to conceal his wrongdoing from the public and law enforcement. The official press release of Adam's indictment dates his criminal activity back to 2014 when he resided as Brooklyn Borough President. He accepted luxury travel benefits from a Turkish government official, who wanted to gain political influence over Adams. As Adams's career grew,

he accepted more bribes and benefits from foreign officials and granted them favorable treatment in return. In his mayoral campaign, Adams and his administration convinced wealthy businesses to funnel money into his election campaign, bypassing federal and New York laws capping the amount of money that could be donated to an election campaign. Furthermore, Turkish officials leveraged their persistent donations to Adams to force him to get the New York Fire Department to bypass a safety inspection on a Turkish conciliar building, violating New York safety codes.

Adams continues to deny the charges brought against him, and he claims that the legal system is corrupt and framing him. Adams's indictment shocked and dismayed the citizens of New York and Americans everywhere, and many called for his resignation. When asked about Adams's indictment, FBI Assistant Director James E. Dennehy stated, "Public service is a profound responsibility... When that's perverted by greed and dishonesty, it robs us of our trust. This is a reminder that no one is above the law or beyond reproach."

(Sources: Fox News, NPR, NYC.gov, The Department of Justice)



OPINIONATED: Mayor Adams speaks at an official event.

Vice Presidential candidates converse in their first debate

By Sahil Muthukrishnan
Sports Editor

On Oct. 1, the Democratic vice presidential candidate Timothy J. Walz and Republican vice presidential candidate James D. (JD) Vance faced off in their first vice presidential debate. CBS News hosted the debate in Studio 24 of the historic CBS News Broadcasting Center in New York. New York has not hosted a presidential or vice presidential debate since the 1960s. Anchors Norah O'Donnell and Margaret Brennan moderated the debate. More than 43 million people across the country tuned in to watch.

The debate began with the candidates' introductions and a cordial handshake between the two men. The moderators posed questions about the candidates' policies and those of their presidential counterparts. Each candidate responded to questions with a two-minute answer. After their response, the second candidate could rebut the previous one's answer. The candidates then each received one additional minute to expand upon their points at the moderators' discretion. In his opening comments, Minnesotan Senator Walz opened by attacking former President Donald Trump's qualification for office, stating, "Those...closest to Donald Trump...understand how dangerous he is...his Chief of Staff, John Kelly, said that he [is] the most flawed human being he'd ever met...both of his Secretaries of Defense...said he should be nowhere near the White House." Walz praised Vice President Kamala Harris for her handling of the current



FACE OFF: Tim Walz and JD Vance discuss national issues in their VP debate.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Senator Vance used his response time to introduce himself to the American people and denounce Harris while uplifting Trump, answering, "Donald Trump...delivered stability in the world...he did it by establishing effective deterrence...Iran,

which launched this attack, has received over \$100 billion...thanks to the...Harris administration...They use [this] to buy weapons that they're now launching against our allies and, God forbid, potentially launching against the United States."

Walz and Vance also battled over the issue of immigration. Vance opened by critiquing Harris, saying, "We have a historic immigration crisis because Kamala Harris...said...she wanted to undo all of Donald Trump's border policies. 94 executive orders suspending deportations, decriminalizing illegal aliens, massively increasing the asylum fraud that exists in our system, that has opened the floodgates." Walz then fired back, defending Harris: "Kamala Harris was the Attorney General of the largest state and a border state in California. She's the only person in this race who prosecuted transnational gangs for human trafficking and drug interventions." The candidates went on to debate other keys topics including abortion and the economy.

Notably, this vice presidential debate was considered more respectful than the presidential debate between Former President Trump and Vice President Harris, giving many hope that debates going forward will be handled more cordially. The general consensus was that both candidates made strong cases for their election. The debate about which party won was split, but most agreed that neither won decisively. As recent polls between Harris and Trump remain close, this year's race will surely be exciting.

(Sources: BBC, NY Times, NPR)

The Trump and Harris competition remains tight

by **Rory Zeman**
Media Production Editor

On Nov. 5, American citizens will participate in one of the tightest elections yet, voting for a new president, congress members, senators, and governors. Although the presidential race is a heated and somewhat daunting topic, there is still much to consider regarding which electoral votes will decide the election. Also, it is important to note which areas of the country the respective political parties need to win to control other facets of government. Here is a preview of what to look out for on Election Day and which states and districts will prove pivotal in the election cycle.



ELECTION APPROACHING: Trump campaigns in Rochester, NH.

Ultimately, the election comes down to just eight states: Nevada, Arizona, Georgia, North Carolina, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Nebraska's second electoral district. In the 2020

election, President Joe Biden won all of these states except North Carolina. As of Oct. 9, the latest NY Times polls have Vice President Kamala Harris winning by a small margin of three percent; however, the polls underestimated former President Donald Trump in the last two elections.

Experts expect an incredibly small margin of victory in the state elections. As a result, both candidates are vigorously campaigning in the swing states. Since taking over the Democratic ticket, Harris has raised over one billion dollars for her campaign and used a fair amount of it to campaign in the swing states, mainly Arizona and Pennsylvania, where she, along with Governor Tim Walz, have held many rallies. Likewise, Trump has focused his campaigning in these states, going as far as to host Elon Musk at a rally in Butler, Pennsylvania, the site where an assassin shot Trump. Pennsylvania, the biggest of the swing states in terms of electoral votes, will likely become the deciding factor in the election. Its importance owes to the fact that it is necessary for a candidate to win the majority of other states if they lose just Pennsylvania.

Despite the paramount importance of the presidential election, the congressional elections and the state-level elections will also play a major role in the shift of power in the government. One of the most significant elections is the race between Democrat Sherrod Brown and Republican Bernie Moreno for the Senate in Ohio, a state that has shifted its partisanship numerous times in the last few election cycles. This seat is critical for Democrats to keep the majority in the Senate. Furthermore, races for seats in the House of Representatives in states such as Michigan, New York, Washington, and Nebraska could shift the tide of conservatism in the House. Finally, the race for governor in

North Carolina between Republican Mark Robinson, who has been controversial due to his past of verbal bigotry, praise of slavery, and references to himself as a "Black Nazi," and Democrat Roy Cooper is also extremely close. Trump backed Robinson, labeling him as "Martin Luther King on steroids." These small races may seem to be in the shadow of the presidential election, but they are equally consequential.

(Sources: CNN, NBC, NPR, NY Times)



REMINDER: Sign calls people to register to vote for the election.

NY observation deck opens

by **Annabelle Pan**
Graphics Editor

On Oct. 1, Skylift opened to the public in New York City. Located at Top of the Rock's Observation Deck on the 70th floor, Skylift stands on a four-tiered base covered in LED pixel flutes and gives viewers an unobstructed view of the New York City skyline. Skylift begins when visitors step onto a revolving glass platform that sends them three stories above Top of the Rock's Observation Deck. As it rises, the platform revolves 360 degrees and shows visitors a panoramic view of the city.



DON'T FALL: Observers stand on observation deck.

Visitors have a full view of NYC's most famous landmarks, like Central Park, and are allowed to take their own pictures on phones and cameras. Skylift is open every day from morning to midnight, rain or shine, but the best view of the city is after sunset. After the sun goes down, the city begins lighting up. During the ride, Skylift takes a video of each guest surrounded by the NYC skyline that can be purchased at the gift shop.

Excluding the time it takes for Skylift to reach the top and return to the bottom, the ride lasts five minutes. There are no height restrictions, and everything is wheelchair accessible. Only 13 guests can go at a time, and all minors must be accompanied by an adult. Participants can buy tickets ahead

of time or in person, with each ticket priced at 35 dollars for all ages. There are also VIP tickets for quicker entry and priority elevator access.

People can purchase tickets to Skylift alongside tickets to another experience at Top of the Rock: the Beam. The Beam recreates a 1932 photograph called "Lunch Atop a Skyscraper," showing workers eating lunch on a beam 850 feet above the ground. Visitors sit strapped to the steel beam and are lifted 12 feet above the Observation Deck and rotated 180 degrees for a full view of NYC.

For visitors with a fear of heights, Top of the Rock offers other views of the skyline slightly closer to the ground. They have other observation decks on different floors, with terraces facing in all directions to provide the same 360-degree view of Skylift. The 70th floor even has an open-air observation deck perfect for taking pictures of the skyline unobstructed. Top of the Rock also has food and drinks. On the 67th floor, visitors can enter the Weather Room, a café and bar. The Weather Room is an indoor viewing space where visitors can enjoy cocktails, wine, bagels, sandwiches, and desserts while looking at the NYC view. Top of the Rock has a gift shop where visitors can buy their Skylift pictures and Top of the Rock merchandise, including mugs, hoodies, puzzles, pins, ornaments, and more. Top of the Rock has some of the best views of NYC, making it one of the biggest tourist attractions in New York. (Sources: NBC, Rockefeller Center)



CITY LIFE: Look out on NYC from Top of the Rock.

Port workers go on a strike

by **Atharava Pandey**
National/World Editor

On Tuesday, Oct. 1, dockworkers and longshoremen on the East Coast officially went on strike against the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). This marked their first strike in nearly 50 years. Thousands of workers at 14 major ports left their jobs on Tuesday morning. They demanded substantial compensation increases and protections from automation. Due to ocean carriers' record profits since the pandemic, workers want a fairer share of the money. They also called for contractual protection from robotic welders, painters, and other machines. The offer of ILA member Jack Pennington asked to "increase wages by nearly 50 percent, triple employer contributions to employee retirement plans, strengthen our health care options, and retain the current language around automation and semi-automation." The strike could cost as much as five billion dollars a day since nearly two out of three containers that leave the US come through these Eastern ports. The port strike could result in significant ramifications on the US economy if prolonged.

Biden is one of the few presidents who embraces unions and organized labor. According to The Hill, Biden believes, "Collective bargaining is the best way for workers to get the pay and benefits they deserve." Biden emphasized both the large profits made by the shipping firms and the sacrifices made by port workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. He urged the United States Maritime Alliance (USMX) to make a fair offer to ILA. The port workers hoped that their strike would garner as much success as some of the other strikes in the last few years, like the 2023 strike of the UAW and the 2023 strike of the screenwriters.

Automation, the use of technology to carry out tasks with less human involvement, took

center stage in the port negotiations. At a port, automation would mean swapping out manually operated cranes with electrically powered cranes. ILA President Harold Daggett is "steadfastly against any form of automation — full or semi — that replaces jobs or historical work functions." However, some port stakeholders believe that automation improves worker safety, resolves chain issues, and increases efficiency.



STRIKE: East Coast port workers strike against ILA.

On Oct. 3, the striking members of the ILA settled and announced they would be returning to work on Oct. 4. Their agreement includes a four-dollar-per-hour raise for each year of the six-year contract. The union also agreed to extend its contract with the USMX. President Biden stated, "Today's tentative agreement on a record wage and an extension of the collective bargaining process represents critical progress towards a strong contract."

The ILA successfully negotiated a historic 61.5 percent wage increase spread out over six years. This quick resolution also stopped the possibility of a disastrous holiday season for retailers. The strike temporarily succeeded in fighting automation and may lead to a better working environment for port workers. (Sources: ABC, CNN, The Hill)

The Supreme Court hears new cases in 2024-2025 term

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

On Oct. 7, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) began its 2024-2025 term, where it will hear cases ranging from gun laws to LGBTQ rights. Even though the new term has just begun, the court has already started making decisions, most notably its decision not to hear a case brought by the Biden administration regarding emergency room abortions in Texas. In essence, this decision not to hear the case upheld the ruling of a smaller circuit appeals court in favor of Texas. While not exactly a headline-making case in its own right, this refusal indicates that this upcoming term will spark controversy. In their term, the court is going to hear nearly 30 cases, with the first case on Oct. 8. In the latest surveys by Gallup, only 43 percent of Americans approve of the court, the lowest approval rating since 2016. The court has seen a sharp uptick in public disapproval based in large part on the lack of ethics and enforcement on members of the court. SCOTUS is the only court in the nation without a binding code of ethics, causing many in the general public to question the judges. In a recent report published by ProPublica, Justice Clarence Thomas was revealed to have received expensive gifts from donors, such as the real estate magnate Harlan Crow. The report highlighted the need for an enforceable code of ethics for the court. More recently, the court published its code of conduct, which falls short of the enforcement goal many hoped for,

but all the justices on the court have signed onto this code, signaling their commitment to ethical practices.



SERIOUS ALL AROUND: Politicians discuss issues in the Supreme Court.

The court is already hearing important cases, even in its first week in session. One such case follows up on a case from the court's previous term. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) classified ghost gun kits as firearms in 2022. A "ghost gun" is a do-it-yourself gun kit that people can buy anonymously. The guns from these kits do not have serial numbers, which means they cannot be traced. More than 300 homicides have been linked to ghost guns since 2017. In that time, the use of ghost guns in crimes has risen more than one thousand percent. To combat this, ATF reclassified ghost

guns as firearms, which prompted the kit manufacturers to sue ATF for overstepping its regulatory powers. The lawsuit made its way to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which struck down the regulation. The Biden Administration then appealed to the Supreme Court in 2023, where the court held the ruling until further discussion at the start of their new term. This ruling will have widespread effects on the firearms industry if the court strikes down ATF's decision and could change the regulation of firearms in the future. The Supreme Court has a long and impactful term cut out for them this year, with many difficult decisions to come.

(Sources: Brennan Center, CBS, CNBC, Gallup, NBC, Oyez, ProPublica, Reuters, Supreme Court of the United States, NPR)



UNDER LAW: Supreme Court building stands proud in Washington, DC.

- Mexico elects female president
- Iran attacks Nevatim Air Base

Sheinbaum becomes the first female president of Mexico

by Julia Valencia
People Editor

Mexico swore in its first female president in history, Claudia Sheinbaum, on Oct. 1. She also marks the first Mexican president of mainly Jewish heritage to hold office. Sheinbaum was born and raised in Mexico City. After graduating with her undergraduate degree from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, she moved to get her energy engineering degree at University of California, Berkeley.

In 2000, Sheinbaum entered the world of politics as Mexico City's Environment Secretary. From there, she joined the International Panel of Climate Change in 2006, in which her team received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007. After that, she held two



GOOD TIMES: Sheinbaum gives a speech in front of Mexican public.

other roles as the head of the Tlalpan district of Mexico City and later as the head of government of Mexico City, the first woman to have both of these jobs. She relinquished her role as head of government in 2023, so that she could run for president.

Sheinbaum is entering her role as President at a difficult time. Along with the seemingly unending rise in debt, Mexico is actively recovering its southern coast from the horrific damage caused by hurricanes Otis and John. Additionally, drug cartels have maintained significant control over large parts of Mexico for the past several decades.

Sheinbaum is a part of the Morena party, which is one of the four dominating political parties found in Mexico. She dominated polls back in June, earning almost 60 percent of cast votes. She increased in popularity after vowing that she would continue her political mentor and former President López Obrador's policies if she was voted into office.

Obrador maintained popularity during his nearly six years of presidency and focused on increasing military strength along with decreasing gang activity. Though Sheinbaum mentioned her hopes to lower violence related to drug cartels that plague Mexico, she very briefly went over it and did not share her plan of action to tackle it. However, she mentioned, "There will be no return to the irresponsible drug war."



CELEBRATION: Sheinbaum raises her fist after winning the election.

President Sheinbaum is bringing her scientific background of engineering to her presidential term, declaring, "I believe in science." She takes a hard stance on the immediate need to address the growing problem of climate change. In her inauguration speech, Sheinbaum said that she would limit oil production to 1.8 million barrels per day and that she is "going to promote energy efficiency and the transition toward renewable sources of energy." Sheinbaum is looking ahead to Mexico's future, hoping to make it a safer place for everyone and create a lasting, permanent impact for generations to come. (Sources: AP, CNN)

Student-filled bus catches fire

by Aliya Koshaliev
Media Production Editor

On Oct. 1, a bus from Thailand's Uthai Thani province carrying teachers and their students caught fire, killing 23 people. Out of the 45 passengers on the bus, six of them were teachers, and the remaining 29 were either elementary or junior high students.

According to Acting Police Commissioner Kitrat Phanphet, the bus caught fire due to the right front tire exploding and the driver losing control and crashing into the roadside barrier. This incident occurred around noon in the Pathum Thani Province, the northern suburb of Thailand's capital. Due to the intensity of the flames, few people escaped: 16 students and three teachers, while the remaining 23 passengers died in the fire. First responders put out the fire in less than an hour but had to wait hours to board the bus since the heat inside the vehicle could have caused more explosions. Authorities later reported that two children died in hospital care.

According to Piyalak Thinkaew, a rescuer from the Ruam Katanyu Foundation, first responders found most of the bodies in the middle and back



CATASTROPHE: School bus in Thailand burns in the highway.

of the vehicle, leading them to assume the fire started in the front of the bus and the victims moved back to avoid the flames. The police said they would charge the bus company and any individuals involved if there is evidence against them.

Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who started her term in August, was overcome with emotion during a press conference at the Government House and burst into tears. Shinawatra posted on the social media platform X, offering her condolences and pledging the government would cover all medical expenses. Later, she visited the injured victims in the hospitals.

On Oct. 2, the bus driver surrendered himself to Thai police, who later identified him as Saman Chanput. The police charged him with reckless driving, causing deaths and injuries, failing to stop to help others, and failing to report the accident. Chanput claimed the bus lost balance on its front right tire, causing it to hit another car and scrape a concrete highway barrier, which caused the sparks that led to the fire. He then ran to grab a fire extinguisher but fled because the flames were too strong.

Loved ones of the victims and Buddhist monks waited past midnight for forensic officers to receive the bodies, which were transported in large convoys. The monks received the bodies at Wat Khao Phraya Sangkharam, the temple in the students' hometown. The temple hosted a mass cremation ceremony on Oct. 8, with monks and mourners weeping at the ceremony.

According to the World Health Organization, around 20,000 people die annually in road accidents in Thailand. The tragedy sparked outrage across the nation, with citizens criticizing the safety of the roads and vehicles, noting Thailand's notorious traffic-related accidents. (Sources: AP News, CNN, NPR)

Israel-Palestine War continues

by Kat Littfin
News Editor

Oct. 7, 2024 marked the one-year anniversary of the major escalation of a century-long conflict between Palestine and Israel. On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas, a Palestinian terrorist organization with a majority in the Palestinian parliament, fired rockets at Israel and stormed Israeli cities along the Gaza Strip. The following day, Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu, the far-right president of Israel, declared war on Hamas. The Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) ordered a siege on Gaza soon after and led a ground invasion against Hamas in the Gaza territory on Oct. 27, displacing many Palestinian inhabitants. Many of these people have been kidnapped. As of September of this year, 43,000 people have been killed, including around 41,000 Palestinians and almost 2,000 Israeli people.

Palestine comprises two regions: Gaza, which Israel surrounds entirely except for its coastal border, and the West Bank, which borders Israel to the east and Jordan to the west. The geographical location of Gaza allows Israel to surround the territory, and in the early months of the war, Israel made efforts to cut off supply and aid into Gaza. The Israeli government hoped to pressure Hamas to return the Israeli hostages. The two governments arranged several hostage-prisoner exchanges after November when Israel's ground invasion of Gaza ceased. In the following months, Israel pulled troops out of Gaza; however, President Netanyahu stood firm that he would not sign a ceasefire. Therefore, Israel continued to carry out aerial bombings of the region, including major cities and hospitals. Palestinians now report a lack of resources and an escalating death rate, while the IDF and President Netanyahu are steadfast in their efforts against Hamas' terrorism. More recently, however, Israel's military efforts have been focused

more on Lebanon. On Sept. 19, pagers belonging to members of Hezbollah, an anti-Israeli group in Lebanon, exploded, causing many injuries and killing at least 12. Since then, Israel has continued to attack Lebanon by placing Israeli peacekeepers along the Lebanese-Israeli border and launching air strikes. Lebanon has since launched drone attacks on Israel in retaliation.

The Israel-Palestine War has had a tremendous effect internationally. Countries that border Israel and Palestine, including Egypt and Jordan, worry about the increase of Palestinian immigrants as the war continues, while other Middle Eastern countries, including Lebanon, contain a large population with mounting anger against Israel. Many Western countries, including, the UK, the US, and France, continue to aid Israel financially and verbally. The conflict has become an important factor in elections, especially in the US, where President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are pressuring Israel to sign a ceasefire agreement. In contrast, conservatives, including Donald Trump, claim to be taking a more pro-Israel stance. (Sources: Council on Foreign Relations, The Associated Press)



FIGHTING INJUSTICE: People protest against the war.

Iran launches missile attack on Nevatim Air Base in Israel

by Dylan Wadhwa
Opinion Editor

Commercial satellite images revealed the significant damage caused by a missile strike launched by Iran against Nevatim Air Base in southern Israel. Researchers from the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey identified over 30 impact points around the airbase.

These developments follow an escalation pattern steadily becoming more prominent recently. This marks the second time in six months that Iran has used missiles to directly attack an enemy. The missile launch was a clear response to Israel's direct invasion of Iran's closest ally, Hezbollah, in Lebanon a few days prior on October 2, 2024.

The satellite images captured scenes of damaged buildings, roads, housing spaces, and even a crater in one of Nevatim's runways. Israel's military reported that the missile strike did not destroy any of its fighter jets and reassured the public that Nevatim Air Base continues to function normally. Lieutenant Colonel Peter Lerner, an Israeli military spokesperson, stated that despite the strike, "Our air force and air force bases remain operational" and emphasized that missile defenses intercepted many



UNDER ATTACK: Iranian missile flies through the sky.

of the incoming missiles. The Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) said that Iran launched around 180 ballistic missiles, but their defense systems, including the advanced Arrow 2 and Arrow 3 interceptors, managed to neutralize a significant number of them. Additionally, US naval forces played a role, firing a dozen interceptors to support Israel's defenses. After years of indirect conflict, Israel and Iran appear to be on the brink of a direct confrontation.

For decades, both countries maintained a silent battle, with Israel carrying out cold operations targeting Iranian interests, while Iran relied on its regional allies such as Hezbollah to strike Israeli targets. However, in order to not upset Israeli allies such as the U.S., Iran has largely stayed out of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict aside from providing weapons to Palestinian forces.

While this attack raised some questions about Iran's missile abilities in battle, both countries are assessing the situation. Israeli officials are expected to look at how their defense systems performed and formulate adjustments to strengthen their defenses against future threats from regional enemies. Many analysts believe that Israel will come back with a counterattack, hoping to potentially silence Iran's role in the war and take a clear upper stance against Palestinian forces.

The US urged Israel to exercise caution, looking at the relatively small amount of damage caused by the most recent missile attack. In a statement, the White House announced that G7 leaders "unequivocally condemned Iran's attack against Israel," with President Biden reiterating America's "full solidarity and support to Israel and its people." However, Israeli

officials mentioned their frustration with previous calls against aggression, especially after Iran's attack in April on Syria, which many now believe was met with an overly cautious response.

While the US continues to advise Israel to be more cautious about how their forces approach the war, only time will tell if Israel will be able to maintain restraint in the events following. (Sources: CNN, NBC, NPR, NY Times)



TIME TO WORK: Israeli people enter Nevatim Air Base.

EDITORIAL

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- El Gato argues for a closer examination of party culture

El Gato advocates for a closer look into party culture

by Megan Hastings, Nelson Kramer and Samantha Gruetter
Public Relations Manager, Humor Editor, and Opinion Editor

A familiar and symbolic object for many Los Gatos High School students is a poster that teachers display on their walls. It reads, "88 percent of Los Gatos students don't need alcohol to have fun, as reported in the California Healthy Kids Survey." However, this poster overlooks the concerning 12 percent of students who reported alcohol as a necessity for having a good time, a statistic that would support many people's perception of LGHS as a "party school" compared to other Bay Area high schools. It also represents a significant amount of the student body that engages in illegal activities, one being underage drinking. Students need to avoid this common practice and treat it as an unusual behavior, one that adheres strictly to a majority percent of students. LGHS students need to practice abstaining from and stop normalizing illegal party behaviors such as drug and alcohol consumption, and if they do decide to engage in them, they need to acknowledge the risks of their behaviors and proceed in the safest way possible.

The alarmingly common presence of alcohol at LGHS parties poses serious dangers, making it challenging for students to steer clear of underage drinking. While students often use parties as a

chance to relax and have fun, alcohol can quickly turn good times into unsafe situations. The reality of these parties and underage drinking is that it often puts students at risk. As a result of drinking

to the California Students Healthy Kids survey, an alarming 17 percent of LGHS juniors reported engaging in binge drinking compared to the five percent country-wide average. According to the

National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, in 2011 alone, about 188 thousand people younger than age 21 visited an emergency room for alcohol-related injuries. These statistics reflect the prominent role that alcohol plays at parties and how severe the risks of underage drinking can be.

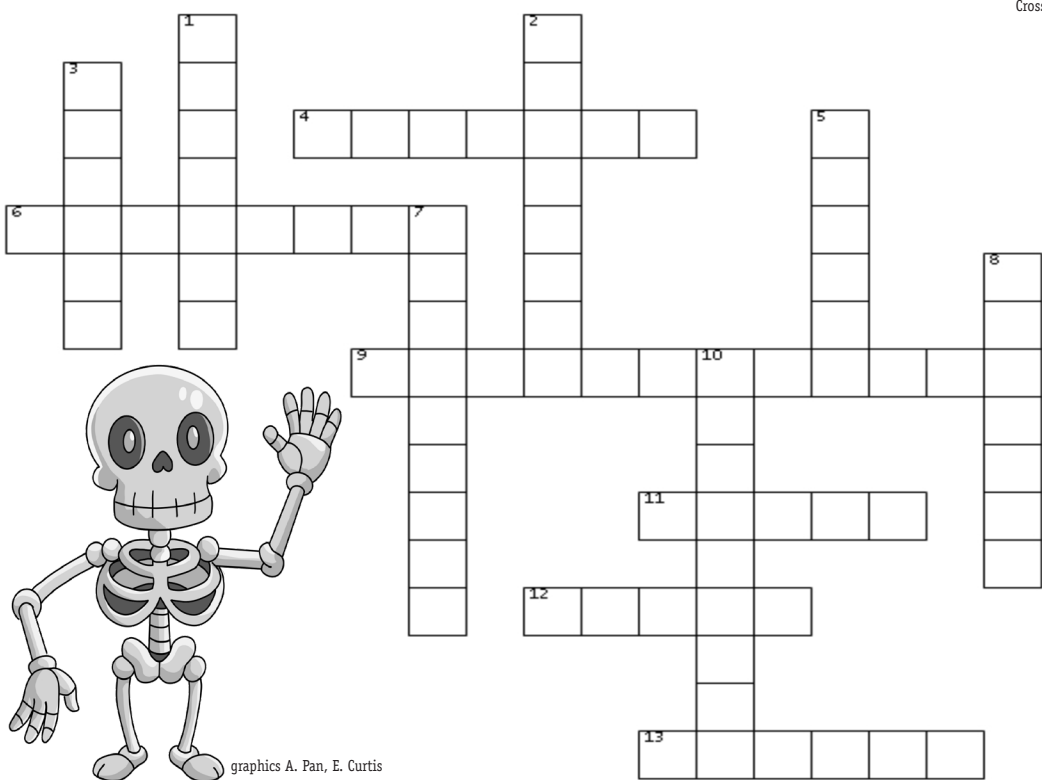
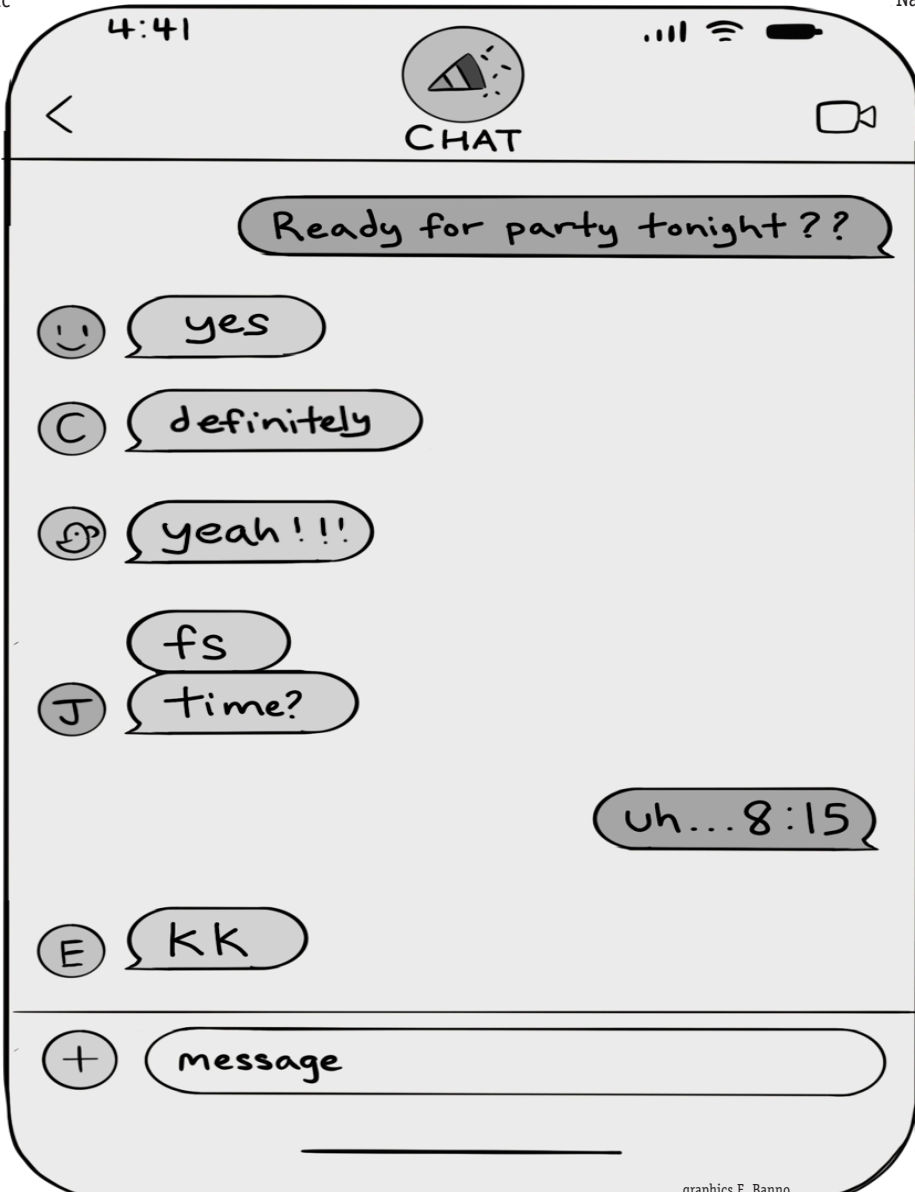
Party culture has permeated large aspects of LGHS student life, turning weekend get-togethers into a social norm. In hallways and classrooms alike, it's not uncommon to overhear students talking openly about a wild party they attended over the weekend. Students sharing pictures and videos of alcohol consumption on social media is representative of standard partying habits. Snapchat stories of students sharing locations and addresses for people to visit and public posts of underage students with alcohol in their hands perpetuates the widespread myth that the majority of students engage in illegal behav-

iors and further normalizes these behaviors. Though not all, many students feel pressured to participate in similar actions to earn popularity and social approval as a result of this online sharing. Not only do these posts encourage

other students, but they work against the statistic that 88 percent of students don't need alcohol to have fun. This kind of behavior damages students' digital footprints. With pictures and videos showing up through a simple search for a name, students risk their reputations, chances of getting into colleges, and future employment opportunities. Many people prioritize short-term gains of fitting in through shared posts and tags on social media over their long-term ideals and well-being, which can lead to hazardous behavior under pressure to maintain a particular image.

While underage drinking and dangerous party habits are harmful behaviors, it is common for students to participate in these activities, and if they do, they need to form a plan on how to get home safely and not put others at risk. One way students can prevent potential harm to themselves and others is to use rideshare programs that guarantee rides with a sober driver. One of these programs is Safe Rides, a program not affiliated with the high school that responds to texts asking for rides on Fridays and Saturdays. The president of Safe Rides, LGHS Junior, **Alisa Freeman**, described the program, saying, "I think that most of the people using it are either making the smarter choice than they would have if they didn't call Saferides, or they're saving their parents a late night drive." Students making the choice to call Saferides or another rideshare service, such as Uber or Lyft, avoid potentially impaired drivers from getting behind the wheel, minimizing the collateral damage of underage drinking. Students should also make sure their phones are charged, determine a designated meeting spot if anybody gets lost, and set up a buddy system where teens travel in pairs to avoid being alone in potentially vulnerable states.

In order to foster an impactful shift in mindset in the way students and administrators view partying and underage drinking at Los Gatos students must make meaningful behavioral changes. This means students establish the notion that underage drinking is neither safe nor commonplace, whether they do this in-person or on social media. However, if students do decide to engage in these behaviors, they must do so safely and take measures to ensure they do not perpetuate the negative assumptions many make about LGHS's students' party habits. (Sources: California Healthy Kids Survey, National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System)



Crossword N. Kramer

Across

- They leave behind victims, not just chills
- What you hide under when scared
- Famous monster stitched together from parts
- The spirit left behind after death
- Wrapped up tightly, comes from Egypt
- Boils on a witch's stove

Down

- Time of year when day equals night
- Bare bones of the body
- Small, grotesque, mischievous creatures
- What you get from a sudden scare
- Guardian of the corn maze
- Guiding light, sometimes carried by Jack
- Terror that visits during sleep



Answers: 4. Killers 6. Blankets 9. Frankensteins 11. Ghost 12. Mummy 13. Kettle 1. Equinox 2. Skeleton 3. Goblin 5. Fright 7. Scarecrow 8. Lantern 10. Nightmare

EL GATO

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- STUNT should replace cheer
- Parents should limit screen time

OPINION

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Panicacci urges the return of former Jamba Juice store

by Lucy Panicacci
Editor-in-Chief



On May 9, 2024, I went on a routine trip to Jamba Juice, hoping to grab a smoothie before going to the library to study for upcoming AP tests. However, when I arrived, somebody had taken down the sign and brown paper blocked the windows. On the door, the owners left a note announcing the permanent closure of this location. Shocked and saddened, I sent a photo to my family group chat, to which my dad replied, "No way. I don't know what's going on with this world." Approved in 1996, the Los Gatos Jamba stood at 628 Blossom Hill Road for over 20 years before inexplicably shutting down. For the betterment of the community, we should bring this Jamba Juice location back.

The location of the LG Jamba was conveniently placed; it was only a five minute drive from Los Gatos High School and a three minute drive from Fisher Middle School. This location made it easy to grab a smoothie after school, practice, or a game. The LG Jamba never failed to fill up around 3 PM, as middle schoolers made the short walk from Fisher. With its closure, the closest Jamba Juice is now a ten-minute drive away from the high school.

Considering the price for a medium smoothie is 12 dollars, this longer distance becomes inconvenient and impractical due to the gas usage, making Starbucks or Sharetea a more convenient option.

Beyond its convenient location, many LGHS students miss the classic Jamba flavor. Senior Taryn Smith reasoned, "It just adds to the variety of that square. You got Starbucks, if you are feeling like Starbucks, but if you're not, you can go to Jamba Juice, and for food, you've got Chipotle." Smith added, "[The closest Jamba Juice] is right next to Crumbl Cookies and I feel tempted. I can't feel tempted when I want to try to be healthy and have a smoothie." Senior Annika Norquist also shared her love for the LG Jamba, stating, "The times when literally nothing else sounds good other than a fruit smoothie, that is when I need my Jamba Juice." Norquist agrees that the nearest Jamba in Camden Park is too far.

While I do wish for the return of the LG Jamba Juice, the numerous service concerns at the location cannot go unnoticed. The Yelp listing has two and a half stars, and most of the reviews within the last year were one star. The negative reviews complain of the long wait times and poor service from young employees. User Lalita D. gave a one star review, stating,



"While waiting, one of the employees screamed bloody murder, and it turns out one of them accidentally cut their finger while making a wheatgrass shot, and started making fun of how there'd be blood in the next few orders." While reviews like this cause concern for health and safety, better leadership and hiring processes could have helped mediate the poor service. It is unknown if the Jamba Juice closed due to health concerns. As of Dec. 7, 2023, the location passed a health inspection with a score of 93 and no major violations.

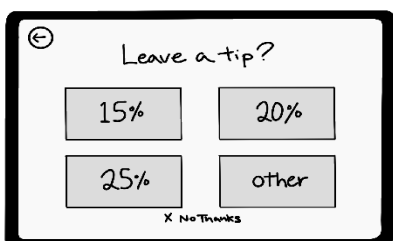
A popular LG staple, Jamba Juice must be brought back. Jamba Juice not only acts as a convenient location for healthy smoothies, but also provides a better variety of drink options as yet another boba place, Boba Guys, opened downtown. When I was a kid, I would always go to the LG Jamba after soccer games for a Strawberries Wild smoothie and Pirate's Booty — a beloved tradition. As the same location I went to from elementary school through high school, the LG Jamba will not and should not be forgotten.
(Sources: County of Santa Clara, Yelp)

Regulate tipping in stores

by Katie Nelson
Center Editor



One of my greatest pet peeves is walking into a store, ordering takeout or simply selecting options from a menu, and being asked to tip. The option for tipping has exploded in the last decade, especially with new technologies that make payment quick and simple, to the point where it has become excessive and bothersome. Yet, I always feel guilty for not tipping and confused by when it is expected to do so. Businesses need to acknowledge that the tipping culture has gotten out of control and resolve the issue by reducing the use of the touchpad tip system and establishing more defined standards surrounding the tipping culture.



F. Banno

The impression that tips are getting increasingly out of hand is not an uncommon sentiment. According to Pew Research, people have termed the increase in tipping "tipflation" and 72 percent of American adults say that tipping is expected in more places than five years ago. However, this "tipflation" leaves holes in the expectations surrounding tipping. The new touchpads in food and retail places often give the option for a tip or even place a default tip on purchases. There is often confusion about unclear standards surrounding tipping. For example, Pew Research also states around two-in-ten Americans (21 percent) say tipping is more of a choice, while 29 percent say it's more of an obligation.

The largest share (49 percent) says it depends on the situation, underscoring the lack of a single set of rules or expectations.

Many states allow employers to claim a tip credit. This means that restaurants and other businesses pay less than the minimum wage, so long as the tips make up for or exceed the difference. However, California banned this practice, so all tips to employers are in addition to the minimum wage. Given this, being prompted for a tip on a touchpad often feels unnecessary. Tips come from a mindset that exceptional service is rare and therefore should be rewarded as such. Do people have to be tipped to do their jobs? It establishes the attitude that employees being kind, helpful, and professional to their customers is not the minimum expectation.

Additionally, there is a sense of shame when not tipping that could be avoided. The expected tip at restaurants has increased from 15 to 20 percent; for an expensive meal, this tip can represent a significant amount of money. According to a report from PYMNTS.com and Lending Club, "What was once a question of etiquette is becoming for many Americans a question of affordability. Inflation still lingers, and just last month nearly two-thirds of Americans reported they're already living paycheck to paycheck." Because of the already inflated cost of purchases, businesses must consider whether or not the tipping prompt is truly benefiting their service as a whole: is it adding money, or is it causing discomfort and irritation among customers? If these changes are considered, it will help create a more standard, achievable, and equitable tip system for U.S. consumers.
(Sources: CNBC, Pew Research Center, Seven Shifts)

STUNT supersedes cheer

by Quinn Hathaway
National/World Editor



Society has often viewed cheerleading as a sport meant only to support male athletes on the field or on the court. However, a new version of cheer, STUNT, was created in 2011. While the two activities are both seen in today's society, STUNT needs to be popularized above traditional cheer because of its higher level of athleticism and unilateral attention from the audience.

The National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) describes STUNT as "a female sport developed by USA Cheer [that is] based on the skills found in cheerleading". STUNT is an NCAA-approved "emerging" sport. From its inception, STUNT's popularity has skyrocketed many cheerleaders in the US.

STUNT removes the crowd-pleasing element common in cheerleading and hones in on both athletic and technical skills. STUNT encompasses many different skills, including pyramids, group jumps, tumbling, and basket tosses, and routines are performed head to head against the opponent. There are four quarters of play, each including different athletic elements and the winner is based off of skill execution. In comparison to classic cheer, STUNT is almost entirely technical and athletic skill based.

However, STUNT is lesser known than traditional cheer despite its athletic emphasis. This

needs to change because traditional cheerleading is outdated. For instance, one large sport cheerleading supports is American Football. When I think of Friday Night Lights, I think of monotonous football, the hyped-up student section, and cheerleaders strutting around on the sidelines with pompoms. However, the cheer team is often overlooked, due to sharing the field with the football team. They perform for the whole game, yet they only truly get the spotlight when the game is stopped or at halftime. STUNT, however, devotes all the focus onto the cheerleaders, as there is no other competing sport present.

STUNT has not been introduced at all schools in the US, but several that are testing it have noticed a significant positive increase in cheerleading culture. Freedom High School, in Oakland, California, about following STUNT's introduction, a senior cheerleader stated, "The football players are asking us when our next game is and if we won last night. They are giving us high fives." The positive energy STUNT brought to Freedom High School shows how cheerleading can change to shift the focus on the technical ability of the cheerleaders, and eliminates distractions like football games.

Overall, STUNT's higher level of athleticism and positive impact on general cheerleading as a sport proves that the US needs to evaluate what constitutes cheer. STUNT is a more modern and more athletic alternative to traditional cheerleading, and cheer would be changed for the better if STUNT became the default version of cheerleading.
(Sources: nfhs.org, stuntthesport.org, ncasports.org, ue.org, USA Cheer)



E. Curtis

Wilson claims Netflix's Monsters series is inaccurate

by Chloe Wilson
Humor Editor



Trigger Warning: This article contains references to sexual assault and abuse.

Netflix released Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story, a docuseries detailing the cases of the Menendez brothers earlier this month, catalyzing a resurgence in the public interest in their cases. The brothers, Lyle and Erik, who murdered their parents Kitty and José Menendez in 1989, have called this new interpretation of their case a "blatant lie." They claim that this limited series does not show an accurate portrayal of the events and circumstances that led to their parents' murders. The brothers claimed to have killed their parents due to ongoing sexual, physical, and mental abuse. Though the recent series mentions these horrific allegations, it seems that the show's creator, Ryan Murphy, wanted to tell their story from his biased perspective instead of using information that the brothers have shared about their story.

On social media, the Menendez family described this storytelling as "phobic, gross, anachronistic," and "riddled with mistruths and outright falsehoods." Defending his name after all of the criticism he's received, Murphy explained, "I would say 60 to 65 percent of our show in the scripts, and in the

film form, center around the abuse and what they claim happened to them." Moreover, Murphy stated that he doesn't think the family "understands" his series and that Erik has "issued a statement without having seen the show." But even with Erik's having not seen the show, the information spread through the series is a clear misrepresentation of what allegedly happened to the brothers, and what they shared during their trials.

This series could have been an impactful, moving adaptation of the Menendez brothers case. Instead, Murphy made many mistakes along the way, leading to what some might deem a misinterpreted drama. One aspect watchers all over the world might have noticed is that Murphy repeatedly suggests that the brothers had an incestuous relationship. However, there has never been any evidence proving so, and both brothers have forcefully denied it. Erik's wife, Tammi posted on X that Lyle was a victim of "caricature" that most viewers could see as being "rooted in blatant lies." The film was, according to Erik, a "vile and appalling character portrayal of Lyle and me." It is evident that

Ryan Murphy tweaked the brothers' alleged experiences into something that would look more lurid or more engaging on camera.

If Ryan Murphy's excuse for the misinformation displayed in this show pertains to his artistic expression, that is problematic at best. Murphy may argue that he dramatized some aspects to pull in viewers, but this comes at a cost. Rejecting the defensive statements that the brothers made during their trials is not artistic expression, it's defamation. Murphy has also stated that this docuseries is a "Rashomon kind of approach." He mentions Akira Kurosawa's famous film which offers different points of view about a sexual assault case. Yet filming scenes that simply just show false accusations that have been made against the brothers, such as their having a romantic relationship, is about neither artistic approach nor multiple points of view; rather, Murphy is enhancing slander for the sole purpose of entertainment. Sensationalizing sexual abuse victims on trial, Ryan Murphy's series undercuts the importance of this very sensitive issue.
(Sources: IMDb, Vox, People)



A. Pan

Social media fuels bullying

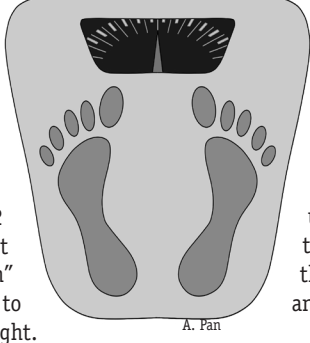
by Hayley Strahs
News Editor



With dark humor at an all-time high, social media has blurred the line between comedy and hate speech, specifically regarding plus-size people. Instagram Reels, Meta's short-form video platform, is notorious for their lax comment moderation, leading thousands of users to turn off comments completely. Recently, researchers at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) stated that "cyberbullying increased the risk of thoughts of suicide and attempts," in children ages fourteen to eighteen. However, what makes weight-related bullying especially dangerous is the notion that leaving hurtful remarks will motivate plus-size creators to lose weight, leading commenters to justify their actions under the guise of providing help.

Obesity is a pertinent struggle in the United States. In 2023, heart disease was the number one cause of death for Americans, and obesity raises the likelihood of it by 32 percent. However, "I'm just looking out for their health" still is not a valid reason to bully someone for their weight.

Medical professionals diagnose obesity using body mass index (BMI), which does not account for body fat concentration and muscle density, explaining why BMI has absurdly (or inaccurately or infamously) classified many Olympic athletes as obese. In addition, dismal obesity statistics are all over the news, making weight loss a sensitive issue for many. It is unlikely that someone with a hazardous case of obesity would remain unaware of



A. Pan

their condition. Healthy weight loss can and does often take years and requires a total lifestyle transformation, making it nearly impossible to determine the actions an individual might be taking in their own life. All it takes is one mean remark to crush someone's motivation for weight loss, which will probably have lasting, long-term negative effects.

Recently, mukbang YouTube star Nicholas Perry, known online as Nikocado Avocado, took it upon himself to create a social experiment regarding the treatment of overweight people online—or so people think. On Sep. 6, Perry posted a video entitled Two Steps Ahead in which he revealed that he prerecorded two years' worth of YouTube videos and in that time, lost 250 pounds for a "social experiment." During those two years, fans of the Nikocado Avocado YouTube channel have insensitively bashed Perry for his weight, unaware of the fact that he was hard at work diligently losing hundreds of pounds. Whether or not he lost the weight naturally or through surgery, it is impossible to deny that dropping 250 pounds requires a serious lifestyle shift. The details of Perry's "social experiment" remain unknown, but many fans speculate that his goal was to compare how the internet treats skinny people and overweight people differently.

It is impossible to know every detail about someone's life, and what may be going on behind the scenes. Weight-related remarks, even simple "advice," have a greater propensity to decimate motivation rather than improve it. Instead of ruining a social media user's self-confidence, simply scroll away. (Sources: Healthline, John Hopkins Medicine, National Institutes of Health, University of Rochester, US News)

Filibuster requires reforms

by Margo Rawlings
Editor-in-Chief



Recently, the usefulness of the Senate's filibuster resurfaced as a topic of discussion among politicians and the American electorate. Politicians designed the filibuster, which they first used in Congress at the end of the 1800s. Congressmen use the filibuster to delay the vote on a measure from ensuing by continuing debate. One of the filibuster's most famous uses was in the delay of the Civil Rights Act of 1957. Many politicians have called for the removal of the filibuster in the passing of certain, or even all, pieces of legislation, but without the filibuster, a crucial aspect of Congress may disappear.

The filibuster facilitates bipartisan conversation in the Senate that gives both the majority and minority equal opportunity to debate matters. To end the filibuster and begin voting on a measure, two-thirds of the Senate must agree to end the debate. With a 60-vote requirement, congressmen must work together to create legislation that satisfies the desires of both parties, as the filibuster essentially requires all legislation to have a supermajority to pass. In removing such a requirement, the need for compromise and cooperation becomes optional, and the Senate becomes a one-party legislative body, where the majority party dominates. Along with a lack of compromise, the US system of checks and balances would be disrupted because the major-

ity would hold increased power over the minority, allowing for the passage to voting for any laws as long as any one party has even one more senator than the other. In today's Senate, where Democrats hold the majority by a slim one-vote margin, it is unfair for such a large minority to have no say in different matters.

Moreover, the filibuster is crucial to slowing the passing of legislation, which gives senators time to relay the details of a bill to their constituents. A second purpose of this practice is to allow the electorate enough time to review the proposed legislation themselves and to convey their opinions to senators, who can then create new legislation that better represents the constituents' opinions. With the removal of the filibuster, the Senate and the House of Representatives would assume the same purpose, eliminating the necessity for debate, which is core to the functioning of the Senate, and American democracy as a whole.

The US Senate should continue using the filibuster but must make certain reforms to ensure its integrity. Specifically at the end of the Jim Crow era, Southern Democrats halted many bills supporting civil rights using the filibuster, bills that majorities in Congress supported, as well as the White House. For example, Congress did not pass the Emmett Till Antilynching Act until 2022 after 240 attempts. This tactic extends to the present

day, where many initiatives, including those to prevent climate change, have been rejected through the filibuster. To avoid the use of the filibuster in this manner, the Senate must weaken the power of the filibuster by banning it for particular motions, such as the motion to proceed, meaning to bring the matter to the floor. This would preserve Senates' ability to continue debates on legislation, without delaying the start of the debate.

(Sources: Britannica, Brookings, New York Times, U.S. Senate)



E. Curtis

Singhal advocates for screen time limits for children

by Siyona Singhal
News Editor



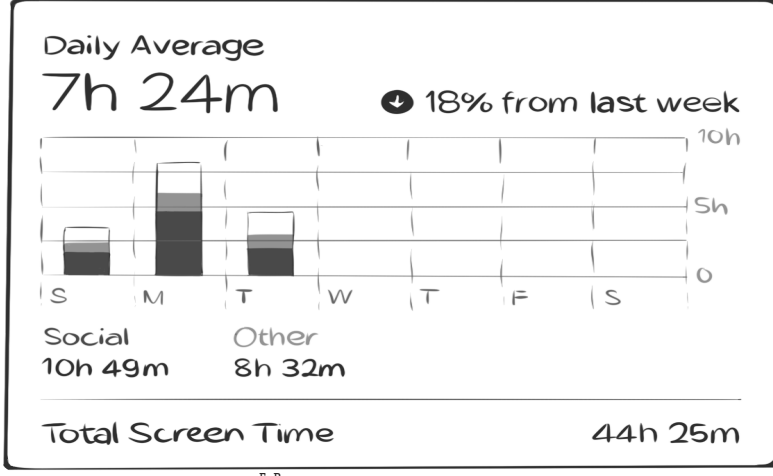
Young children today are surrounded by devices. While these devices are great for entertainment and education, too much screen time can have a largely negative effect on a child's mental and physical health. Parents must create a healthy balance for their children between using devices and experiencing the real world by setting firm screen time limits and offering healthy alternatives, like playing with toys or playing outside.

The effects of excess screen time are detrimental to growing children. According to the National Library of Medicine, too much screen time can affect a child's cognitive and linguistic development alongside their social and emotional development. Prolonged screen usage can also lead to obesity, less sleep, and depression. A study JAMA Pediatrics published, analyzing 7,097 children, reported that anywhere from one to four hours of screen time per day for children under the age of one is linked with higher risks of developmental delays in communication, motor and social skills, as well as problem-solving ability.

It is clear that when young children spend too much time looking at screens, they experience serious and harmful consequences, which is why it is important that parents set boundaries for their children. They must ensure their children are involved in other healthy activities and spending

time in the real world instead of being online. The start of reducing screen time for children is reducing the amount of time adults spend on their devices. Data reveals that 72.9 percent of parents use screens around their kids. According to UCSF Pediatrics Professor Dr. Jason Nagata, "Even if parents think their kids are not paying attention, the data shows one of the biggest predictors of preteen screen use is what their parents do with screens in front of them." Parents must practice what they preach.

In addition, parents should introduce their children to other healthy activities. They should give their kids books, coloring materials,



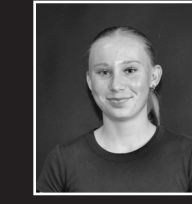
F. Banno

or toys that they can play with in the real world. Encourage children to spend time outside or with friends. While these are all great options, parents don't need to feel pressured to keep their children entertained at all times. According to Dr. John Hutton, associate professor of general and community pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, "Longer term, one of the real goals is for kids just to be able to sit quietly in their own thoughts...When they're allowed to be a little bit bored for a second, they get a little uncomfortable, but then they're like, 'OK, I want to make myself more comfortable.' And that's how creativity happens." It's easy to give kids a screen to keep them entertained and in their own world, but parents must stay mindful and aware of the amount of time their children spend on electronics.

(Sources: CNN, National Library of Medicine)

Gruetter emphasizes the need for support programs

by Sam Gruetter
Opinion Editor



There are many widely-attended sobriety programs throughout the United States, with over one million attendees in 2020 alone. These programs address a wide scope of substance abuse disorders, but most commonly narcotics (Narcotics Anonymous) and alcohol (Alcoholics Anonymous). However, there are very few groups to support the families and loved ones of those who are suffering from addiction. Those that are in place often focus on what the family members can do for the addicts, as opposed to providing emotional support for the family members themselves. Therefore, nonprofits such as Al-Anon, an organization that hosts meetings for the loved ones of addicts, should put more emphasis on supporting the mental health of their attendees instead of coaching them on how to support addicts.

While substance abuse treatment programs provide significant help for those suffering from addiction, they often tend to overlook the impact these disorders have on those around addicts, solely prioritizing sobriety. The 12-steps program details the religious steps an addict must take to achieve sobriety. The third step states "Decided to turn our will and our lives over

to the care of God as we understood Him." This step shows the prioritization of God in AA, however, family and friends are never mentioned in the 12-steps program. While the main goal of an addict is recovery, it is important to acknowledge that that cannot be the sole goal, it is the bare minimum, and addicts should include repairing relationships and making time for their loved ones as priorities.

There are groups in place that cater to the loved ones of addicts, however, their purpose is to further journeys of sobriety, as opposed to supporting each member. The most common one being Al-Anon. Their website describes the group's mission stating "Individuals come away with the tools and knowledge to better understand the warning signs and lifelong effects of an AUD." Their mission shows that the goal of the program is to help the attendees to better recognize the signs of addiction and support those that are experiencing it. However, with their large following and significant resources, they should shift their focus to the mental health of their participants. There are many programs in place to support the addicts, yet very few to make sure those witnessing a loved one

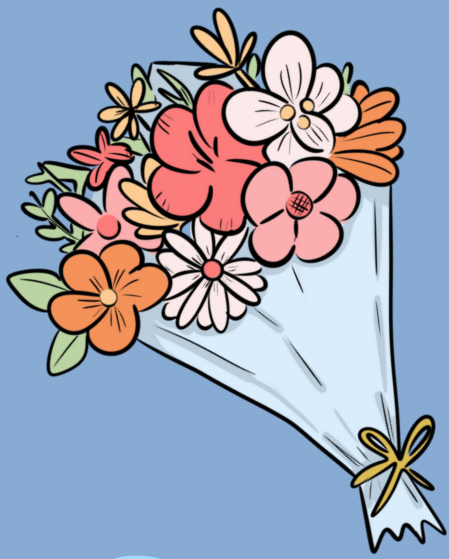
in active addiction is getting the support they need. According to the American Addiction Center "In 2023, an estimated 54.2 million people aged 12 and older needed treatment for a substance use disorder in the past year." This makes the amount of people who are witnessing these traumatic events almost double.

These programs are also widely attended, totaling 24 thousand members in Al-Anon in 2021. Additionally, many attendees come because of people they are extremely close to. Around 49 of members surveyed came to Al-Anon because of a romantic partner's alcoholism or addiction, 14 percent due to a parent's, and 19 percent due to a child's. The high attendance rate and close connection between attendees and addicts highlight the large impact these programs have. This impact also shows the good these programs could do for the families of addicts, and by extension the addicts themselves if they were to focus less on supporting addicts and more on supporting their loved ones.

(Sources: Alcohol Rehab Guide, Wikipedia, American Addiction Centers, Alcoholics Anonymous, Al Anon)



A. Pan



HOMECOMING IS

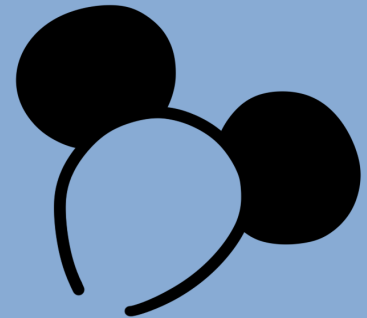
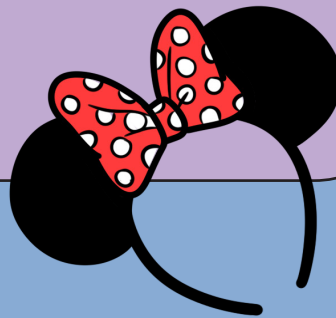
Having trouble thinking of pro

some cute and h

Disney

Who doesn't want to feel like a Disney character? Transform your time at the dance into a magical fairytale with a Disney-inspired homecoming proposal! One of my personal favorite proposals is inspired by the movie Up. It includes a poster saying "Are you UP for HOCO?" along with a bunch of balloons. Other Disney-inspired homecoming proposals include "Light up My Night at HOCO," inspired by Tangled and my all-time favorite, "Life is a Highway... I Want to Ride It with You to HOCO," based on the movie Cars. Enchant your homecoming with some inspiration from Disney!

- Megan Saul, Culture Editor



Brainrot

Does your date spend hours scrolling on TikTok every day? If so, they will love a brainrot homecoming proposal. Not only will your date appreciate your proposal, but it might also give them a chuckle or two. A brainrot poster gives you so many options to choose from, but here are some of my favorites: 1) Do you want to be part of my symphony at HOCO? 2) What would you do if you said okay so I said yes would go to HOCO? 3) Please can we go to Ellie and Mason HOCO *purple heart*. If you want to go the extra mile, try combining multiple memes into one poster. Either way, you can't go wrong. With a brainrot poster, you will show your date how much you care about making them laugh.

- Lucy Panicacci, Editor-in-Chief

MAMA idk *what I do*

 if you didn't go to
♥ Ellie and Mason ♥

 HOCO w/ me 

Musical

One of the most common homecoming proposals featured in movies and TV shows is asking somebody through song. Consider a flash mob in one of their classes or a serenade to them if you want a guaranteed yes to your homecoming ask. Asking someone through song is personal, too; you can amend the lyrics or song however you want, resulting in the perfect, undeniable ask. Whether you are Heath Ledger in Ten Things I Hate About You or Chris Evans in Not Another High School Movie, asking someone through a song is always a fun and exciting way to secure your date.

- Sam Gruetter, Opinion Editor

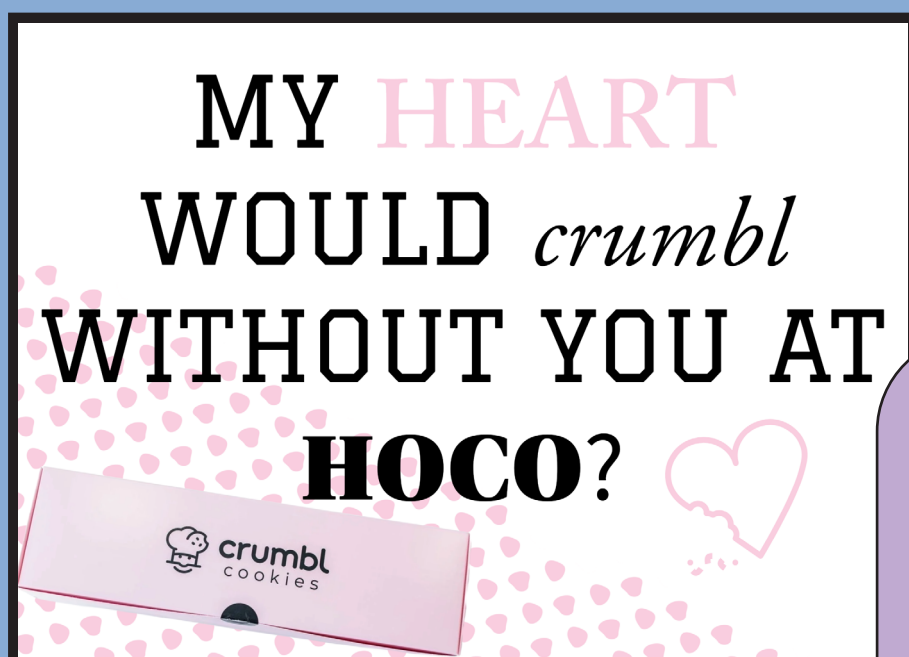


IS APPROACHING!

proposal ideas? Look no further for hilarious inspiration!



Food



Do you have your eyes on someone who loves a sweet-treat? This homecoming proposal will secure the yes answer. Get a sign and some pink paint and pair it with a box of the weekly Crumbl Cookies. Let them know that your heart will Crumbl without your date at HOCO. Not into sweet treats? Grab some Chick-fil-A and ask, "Will you be my chick at HOCO?" There is no way a food lover could say no.

- Emery Curtis, Graphics Editor

Lyric-based

Want to incorporate music into your homecoming proposal, but you aren't the best singer out there? Decorate a sign with your date's favorite music artist or song. Make a cute, catchy phrase asking your date to homecoming that includes the song's name or its lyrics. This proposal will show how close you are to your partner and that you care about their likes and interests. Here's some Zach Bryan inspo to get you started: "It just dawned on me that we would look great together at homecoming!" or "Hey Driver, take me down a road that leads to homecoming!"

- Kayla Mitchell, Media Production Editor



HEY DRIVER, TAKE ME DOWN A ROAD THAT LEADS TO HOMECOMING!

- Actress Maggie Smith passes away
- Nelson reviews new fall Trader Joe's foods

CULTURE

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Adams details new Netflix documentary Will & Harper

by Kloe Adams
Editorial Editor

Will and Harper is a documentary that premiered on Netflix on Sept. 27. The documentary features actor and comedian Will Ferrell and one of his good friends, Harper Steele, as they go on a roadtrip across the United States. Steele began transitioning from a man to a woman in 2022, and the documentary focuses on the aftermath of this transition. Steele began writing for Saturday Night Live in 1995 and worked there for 13 years, eventually becoming head writer. While working for Saturday Night Live, Steele met Ferrell and they grew close. In 2022, when Steele came out as transgender, Ferrell was immediately accepting of Steele and decided to propose a road trip across the country, allowing Steele to experience all of her favorite places.

Ferrell got straight to the point as soon as he was on screen. Will he have to become friends with Steele all over again? Is Steele's personality the same as before she transitioned? Steele was not afraid to answer. Whether it was questions about her surgeries,

sexuality, or name, Steele was open and honest. Her remarkable transparency invites viewers into conversations that may be otherwise challenging and uncomfortable to talk about. Some of the topics touched upon included sexuality, gender, and transitioning surgeries. By sharing her story, not only does Steele dismantle the stigma surrounding transgender people, but she also furthers her relationship with Ferrell. Though they have known each other for 30 years, Ferrell gained a new, deeper understanding of the woman Steele had to hide for the majority of her life.



E. Curtis

While Steele experiences many positive interactions with people throughout the documentary, the director, Josh Greenbaum, also includes multiple negative interactions. One in particular involved Steele and Ferrell going out to dinner. While out, they were surrounded by people taking photos and videos. Later, many

comments were released online including "Don't you mean Mr. Harper Steele?" and "I wonder if [Ferrell] can figure out he's eating with a man." Ferrell takes personal responsibility for putting Steele into that vulnerable position and even begins to cry. Steele, not angry with Ferrell in any way, also begins to cry as she reassures Ferrell that it was not his fault. This raw moment shared between the two reveals how Steele and Ferrell's relationship has difficult moments, but the openness and authenticity of the relationship only strengthens their friendship.

Will and Harper offers a comedic yet moving exploration of the life of a transgender woman facing the world post-transition. Relationships also play a big role throughout the documentary, especially the friendship between Ferrell and Steele. As the documentary began showing the credits, a theme song for Ferrell and Steele began playing called Harper and Will Go West which was written by both their friend, Kristin Wiig. The song was an emotional and lighthearted way to end the documentary leaving the catchy chorus "a friend is a friend is a friend" stuck in everyone's head.

Actress Maggie Smith passes away at 89

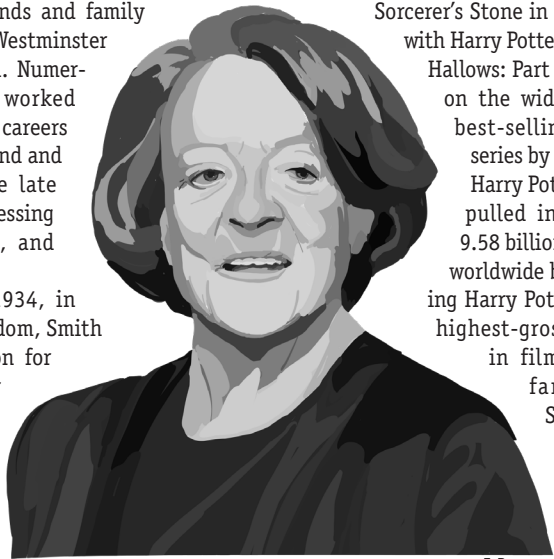
by Katie Borders
News Editor

Renowned British actress Maggie Smith passed away peacefully on Sept. 27, surrounded by friends and family at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London. Numerous co-stars who worked with Smith in their careers came out to commend and pay tribute to the late public figure, expressing their sorrow, love, and respect for Smith.

Born Dec. 28, 1934, in Ilford, United Kingdom, Smith pursued her passion for the theatre in her later adolescent years, working her way through productions like Cinderella and Twelfth Night

through the Oxford Playhouse, eventually transitioning from her Broadway debut to acting in the film business. In 1962, Smith won her first Best Actress Evening Standard award for her major roles in the production The Private Ear and The Public Eye.

In 1956, Smith transitioned to the film industry, a pivotal moment in her career. Rising throughout her life to prominence and recognition in the film industry, Smith received numerous awards to distinguish herself. Winner of two Academy Awards, five BAFTAs, three Golden Globes, four Primetime Emmy Awards (three of which were for her remarkable role in the hit Downton Abbey show), five Screen Actors Guild Awards, a Tony Award, and four Oscar nominations for her roles in four distinguished films, Smith was an exceptionally dedicated and talented presence in the film industry.



F. Banno

Smith reached international fame for her ten-year stint as the iconic Professor McGonagall in the blockbuster Harry Potter movie franchise, beginning with Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone in 2001 and ending with Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part II in 2011. Based on the widely popular and best-selling Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling, the Harry Potter franchise has pulled in an astounding 9.58 billion dollars through worldwide box offices, ranking Harry Potter as one of the highest-grossing franchises in film history. Many fans agree that Smith's remarkable and lively representation of the beloved book character brought

McGonagall to life as one of the most memorable and beloved side characters in Harry Potter. Among the many who have come forward to pay tribute in honor of Smith are King Charles III, Keir Starmer, the prime minister of England, and her fellow actors. Commending Smith's career and unforgettable personality, King Charles described her as a "national treasure" while Daniel Radcliffe, a co-star of hers from the Harry Potter franchise, recalled her "fierce intellect" and "sharp tongue."

Smith touched the hearts of many and will be remembered for her extraordinary career and impact on the film industry. Known for her wit and charm, Smith once said, "It's true I don't tolerate fools, but then they don't tolerate me, so I am spiky. Maybe that's why I'm quite good at playing spiky elderly ladies."

(Sources: BBC, IMDb, Statista, Wikipedia)

Melinauskas and Wilson review classic Halloween films

by Britt Melinauskas and Chloe Wilson
Sports and Humor Editors

Whether you prefer to cozy up and watch a stress-free, classic autumn film, or you would like to be scared during every scene, there is no doubt that these classics are the perfect start to the autumn season. From the heartfelt Halloweentown to the infamous Nightmare on Elm Street, these films are recognizable, eerie, and the perfect introduction to the fall season.

Let's talk about horror films. With one of the most recognizable theme songs, the first Halloween is a top-tier thriller. Micheal Myers's infamous mask and jumpsuit set the scene for a perfectly creepy horror movie. With the storyline of an escaped murderer stalking a justifiably terrified babysitter, director John Carpenter created an ideal film. One, two Freddy's coming for you... Coming in at a close second, we have Nightmare on Elm Street. The vengeful spirit of Freddy Krueger makes his way into teenagers' dreams to terrorize and kill them. Every time you see that red and green striped sweater, beware of Krueger's terrifying, mysterious ways.

The 2009 film Coraline, directed by Henry Selick, features Dakota Fanning as Coraline. She embarks on the eerie adventure to the "Other World" where she faces the decision of becoming a sewn puppet or returning to her bland yet genuine life. The Nightmare Before Christmas is similar to Coraline, initially written by the well-known Tim Burton and directed by Henry Selick. The notorious This Is Halloween

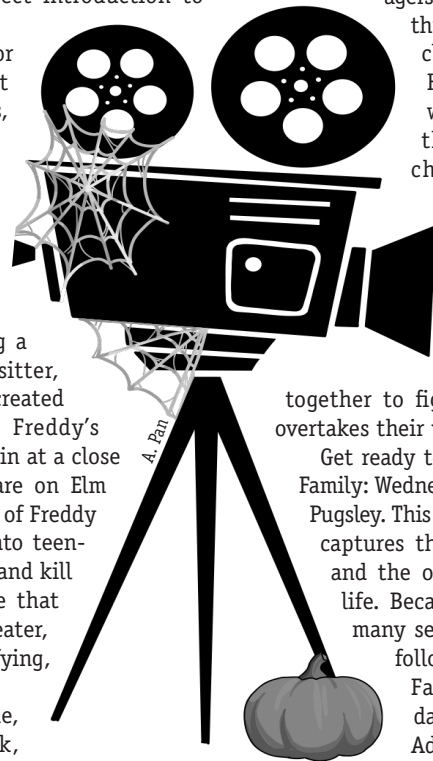
opening theme song sets the film in the right tone of holiday spirit. The main character, Jack Skellington, experiences a crisis between the boredom of being the Pumpkin King and his desire for freedom, which affects his love interest as well.

Now, taking a trip to the notorious witch town of Salem, Hocus Pocus is a spooky tale of three witches and some curious teenagers. Directed by Kenny Ortega,

this film features everything classically associated with Halloween: black cats, witches, and zombies. In the film Halloweentown, children are raised in a home where celebrating Halloween is strictly forbidden. After following their grandma to a mysterious town, they quickly find their family's secret and work together to fight against the evil that overtakes their village.

Get ready to meet the wacky Addams Family: Wednesday, Morticia, Gomez, and Pugsley. This 1991 Barry Sonnenfeld film captures their delightfully dark tale and the offbeat family in everyday life. Because of this film's success, many sequels and franchises have followed the original Addams Family, such as Wednesday, Addams Family Values, Addams Family Reunion, and The Addams Family 2.

Halloween, Nightmare on Elm Street, Coraline, The Nightmare Before Christmas, Hocus Pocus, Halloweentown, and The Addams Family flawlessly capture the Halloween spirit. If you're looking to get into the Halloween spirit, look no further - just watch these movies!

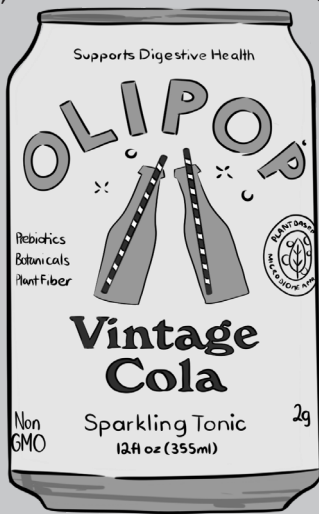


A. Pani

El Gato recommends: Olipop, concerts, and more

My most recent obsession is the soda OLIPOP. This probiotic drink comes in many different flavors, including Strawberry Vanilla, Peaches and Cream, and Classic Root Beer, but my favorite is Vintage Cola. The mix of vanilla and cinnamon makes Vintage Cola a refreshing drink on a hot day. It is currently my go-to after a long practice. OLIPOP conveniently only has two to five grams of sugar, offering a healthy alternative to traditional soda. If you ever want to give it a try, you can find OLIPOP at Safeway or Whole Foods.

-Lucy Panicci, Editor-in-Chief
Music legends Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga recently released their new hit single, Die With a Smile, after a prolonged absence



from the music industry. The track peaked at number three on the Billboard Hot 100 in just one week. It's a perfect blend of Bruno Mars' laid-back style and Lady Gaga's incredible vocal range. Whether you're singing in the shower, screaming your heart out on the highway, or needing some motivation to tackle a mountain of homework, Die With a Smile is the perfect addition to any playlist.

-Jordan Park, Sports Editor
Recently resurfacing in the world of television, Showtime's Dexter released on Netflix during the summer of 2024. The show quickly became a hit on various social media platforms, reviving the 2006 show's popularity. The show features Dexter Morgan, a blood spatter analyst for Miami Metro Police by day and a serial killer by night. Dexter is the epitome of suspense, complex-

ity, and stupid decision-making that will have you screaming "WHY?" at your TV screen. Make sure to check out Dexter on Netflix to satisfy your cravings for a scary, emotionally-straining plot this Halloween season.

-Rory Zeman, Media Production Editor
Life is all about making memories, and there's no better place to do this than at a concert with your family or friends. Concerts are a great way to boost your mood after a long week as you dance and feel the energy of the crowd. Get ready with your friends, take cute pictures, and sing your heart out to your favorite artists' songs.

Some upcoming concerts nearby are G-Eazy on Oct. 24 in Berkeley, David Kushner on Nov. 23 in Oakland, and Billie Eilish on Dec. 10-11 in San Jose. Gather a group of friends, buy your tickets, and make some memories you won't forget!

-Kayla Mitchell, Media Production Editor



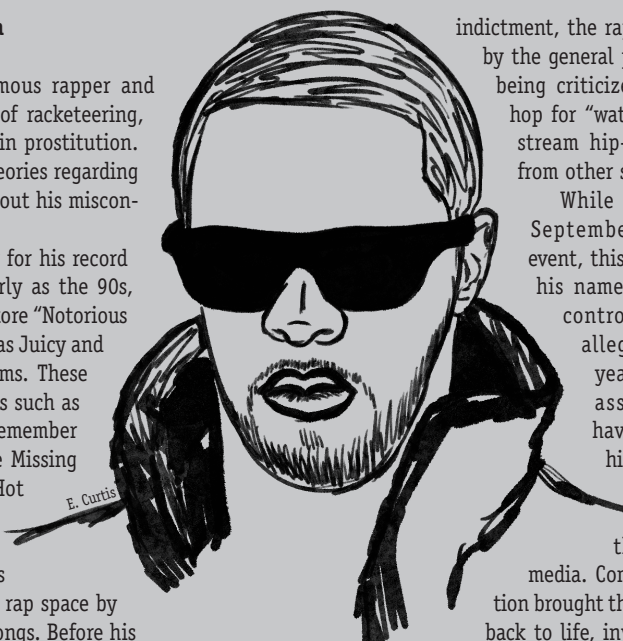
graphics F. Banno

Rapper Sean “P. Diddy” Combs faces criminal charges

by Sahil Muthukrishnan and Dylan Wadhwa
Sports and National/World Editors

On Sept. 16, federal agents arrested famous rapper and producer Sean “P. Diddy” Combs on charges of racketeering, sex trafficking, and transportation to engage in prostitution. Combs’s crimes shocked many and spawned theories regarding who, if anyone, in the music industry knew about his misconduct before his indictment.

For years, Combs was a respected producer for his record label Bad Boy Records. He had success as early as the 90s, famously signing rapper Christopher George Latore “Notorious B.I.G.” Wallace and producing smash hits such as Juicy and Hypnotize. Combs also released his own albums. These included No Way Out, an album with many hits such as I’ll Be Missing You, a single Combs made to remember Wallace who had recently passed away. I’ll Be Missing You debuted at number one on the Billboard Hot 100, becoming the first rap song to do so. Over time, Combs amassed a large amount of money from his music, becoming one of hip-hop’s first billionaires. He carved out a niche in the rap space by utilizing sample beats and hooks from other songs. Before his



indictment, the rapper was well-liked by the general public, largely only being criticized by fans of hip-hop for “watering down” mainstream hip-hop with samples from other songs.

While Combs’s arrest in September was a seismic event, this isn’t the first time his name has been tied to controversy or criminal allegations. Over the years, several sexual assault allegations have surfaced against him, with many going unaddressed or dismissed by the public and the media. Combs’s current situation brought these past allegations back to life, inviting many people

to rethink how the allegations were handled by authorities in the first place. Some of Combs’s allegations go back to over 30 years ago, while some were filed much more recently. In 2023, R&B singer Casandra Ventura filed a lawsuit accusing Sean Combs of subjecting her to trafficking, rape, and physical abuse over the course of a decade. The latest lawsuit against Combs, filed on Feb. 26, 2024, in New York by producer Rodney “Lil Rod” Jones, claims that he was “subjected to unwanted advances by Combs’s associates at his direction” and forced into engaging with sex workers that Combs had hired. Authorities searched Combs’s Los Angeles and Miami estates and found firearms and more than 1,000 bottles of “baby oil and other lubricants.” If convicted, Combs could face life in prison, which would undoubtedly mark the end of his career in the music industry.

Combs arrest serves as a testament to the power of fame and influence within today’s society. His actions against innocent women are inexcusable, using the resources disposable to him, he has built a so-called sex empire that has persisted for nearly four decades. It is also shocking that Combs was able to get away with his misdeeds for so long, especially considering the allegations previously made against him.

(Sources: The Snapper, NPR, NY Times)

Banno and Pan participate in Inktober

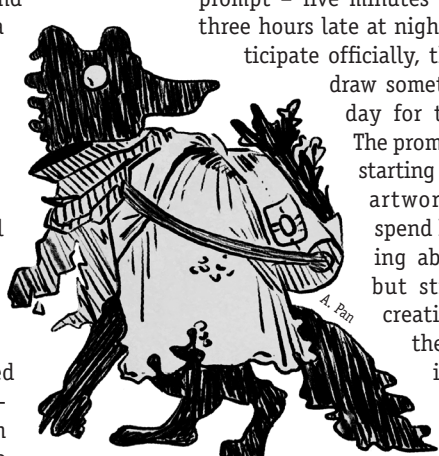
By Annabelle Pan and Fuyu Banno
Graphic Editors

Inktober is an art challenge that takes place throughout October with thousands of artists participating around the world. Inktober is a daily art challenge created by illustrator and animator Jake Parker in 2009 that encourages artists across the globe to draw something in ink every day of October. The official Inktober website posts prompts for what to draw that change every year. Although some may consider it as an outdated Tumblr 2000s trend, Inktober is much more than that, due to its appeal to a large audience, the challenge it provides the artist, and the creativity participants can expand on outside of the drawing.

Possibly the biggest appeal of Inktober is that it is one of the few art challenges in which artists of any skill level may participate. It does not matter if the artist’s skillset is limited to stick figures or if they are a professional-level artist. The simplicity of the Inktober prompts allow artists to choose between drawing exactly what the prompt asks to do or being creative with it. Another thing that makes Inktober so universally loved is that it only requires one tool: ink, anything from a simple ink pen to an elaborate glass dipping pen. Artists do not have to spend hundreds of dollars to participate because of the simple requirements for tools.

The balance between the guidelines and creative freedom makes Inktober a healthy challenge for artists. They have free reign over how much time they spend on each prompt – five minutes here and there, or three hours late at night. However, to participate officially, the individual must draw something in pen every day for the entire month. The prompts give the artist a starting point for each day’s artwork so they won’t spend hours procrastinating about what to draw but still have room for creativity. For example, the prompt of day 1 is backpack. The drawing should include a backpack, but the artist has the freedom to choose the type of backpack, the characters, the background, and more.

It is important to remember that Inktober isn’t just about drawings. It is about the engagement that comes along with making art as well. Just like any important project, to enhance the Inktober experience, consider everything from the work environment to the snacks. Decorate the drawing space with fairy lights, pumpkins, or other fall decorations to add an extra autumn flair to the Inktober challenge. For all artists who may not have joined this year’s Inktober challenge from the first day it is not too late to start. Pick up a pen and participate in the Inktober festivities!



NELSON REVIEWS FALL TJS

by Katie Nelson
Center Editor

If you’re like me, getting into the fall spirit requires a run to Trader Joe’s. With lots of seasonal foods, Trader Joe’s is the place to go for some autumn snacks and treats. Here are some of the must-haves that should make it onto your next Trader Joe’s shopping list.

Pumpkin Pancake and Waffle Mix: This pancake-waffle mix makes it into the cart every time. Not only does the mix speed up the breakfast process, but it has the perfect amount of pumpkin flavor paired with cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger spices. They’re quick, easy to make, and turn out light and fluffy every time. Make these for a power-up breakfast before heading to the pumpkin patch.

Pumpkin Flavored Joe-Joes: Similar to an Oreo, this is a seasonal spin on the classic Joe-Joe’s treat. The Joe-Joe’s creation includes a smooth pumpkin creme between two vanilla shortbread cookies. A perfect go-to for any holiday party!

Cinnamon Bun Spread: You can use this versatile spread for far more than baking cinnamon rolls. The delicious composition of fall spices paired with vanilla and honey make it a fantastic spread for toast, on pastries, and in cakes. I’ve even seen it put in coffee! Loved by many, rush to get this before the shelves are empty!

Butternut Squash Mac-n-Cheese: This mac-n-cheese was surprisingly delicious. The three-cheese blend pairs perfectly with the nutty butternut

squash and tangy autumn spices. It’s a great pick-me-up meal that takes only a few minutes of magic in the microwave. I will absolutely be buying this again!

Fall Chips: Be sure to grab a bag (or three) from the selection of Trader Joe’s seasonal chips. The leaf-shaped tortilla chips are crispy and lightly salted, and the simple deliciousness of Boo chips is undisputable.

Apple Cider: Cozy up with a blanket and a mug of their delectable spiced cider. An annual favorite in my family, we unanimously agree that TJ’s makes the best store-bought cider. Made of freshly pressed apples and coupled with our favorite fall spices, this is a must-have for any fall movie night!

Petite Pumpkin Spice Cookies: Returning for their ninth season, these petite pumpkin cookies are El Gato tested and approved! These pumpkin shortbread cookies are coated in a yogurt-based icing and topped with sprinkles shaped like pumpkins, of course.

Caramel Apple Mochi: This one made the list for its unique flavor and spin on this classic fall combo. The center is apple ice cream swirled with caramel and wrapped in caramel colored rice dough. A yummy fall snack that offers some innovative flavors to the pumpkin palette.

Unfortunately, I’m unable to cover the plethora of seasonal items at Trader Joe’s in one article, but a shout out to all the other delicious things including the pumpkin bagels, spiced cider pumpkin yogurt, apple cider donuts, pumpkin spice snickerdoodle mix, pumpkin sheet cake, pumpkin sticky toffee cakes, and pumpkin cranberry crisps: we still love you all.



Strahs and Wadhwa criticize Talk Tuah podcast

By Hayley Strahs and Dylan Wadhwa
News and Opinion Editors

Talk Tuah with Hailey Welch is already one of the most popular podcasts on both Spotify and Apple Music, despite its first episode premiering in September. However, regardless many listeners’ low expectations, Welch manages to combine anecdotes about her absurd rise to fame with inspiring advice in all facets of life.

The name “Talk Tuah” is a play on the phrase that made Welch go viral in the first place. During a street interview in Nashville, Tennessee, Welch proudly shouted the absurd phrase, “hawk tuah, spit on that thang,” unaware that the video of her would pass eight million views. After weeks of hiding, Welch announced that she was quitting her job and moving to Los Angeles to monetize her newfound fame.

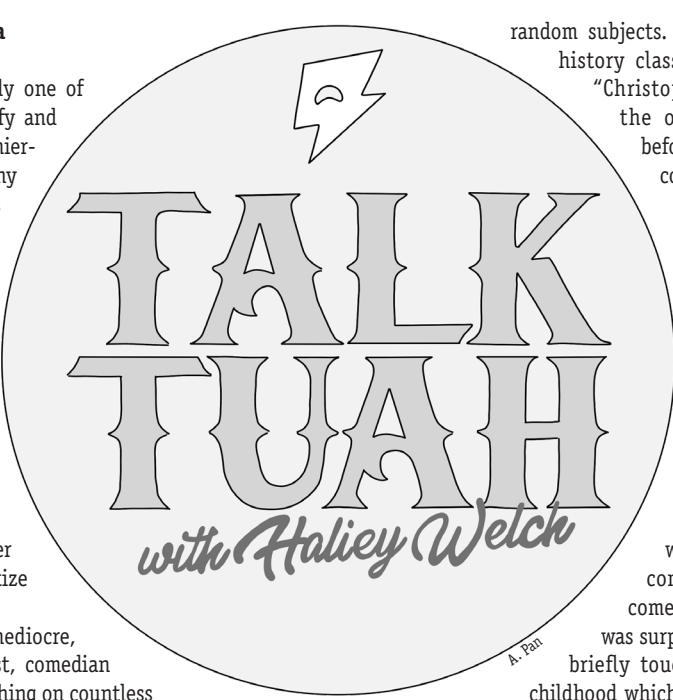
The first episode of Talk Tuah was mediocre, at best. Welch and her first podcast guest, comedian Whitney Cummings, spent the episode touching on countless

random subjects. While discussing K-12 history class, Welch claimed that “Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean blue in 1962,” before someone else had to correct her, which summarizes the quality of this podcast. Due to the nature of Hawk Tuah’s origin, raunchy jokes are essential to Talk Tuah. However, similar to Hawk Tuah itself, the jokes she makes throughout the episode are equally unfunny. When she wasn’t busy failing at comedy or fawning over comedian Matt Rife, Welch was surprisingly down to earth, briefly touching on her difficult childhood which greatly contrasts with

the rest of the episode. However, Welch’s lackluster humor and lack of common knowledge overshadowed any quality statements made throughout the episode.

If the first episode of Talk Tuah just barely lived up to viewers’ expectations, then the next episode demolished them. In the second episode, Welch and Co. visited Belfast, Tennessee, to see her hometown and spend an afternoon talking with her grandma. Welch and Grandma reminisced about the night that skyrocketed Welch to fame, the aftermath of that interview, and how drastically it has altered Welch’s life since. Grandma also gives advice to younger ladies regarding relationships and marriage, stating, “Y’all wait till you’re about 37...40... What about never? Never? That’d be better.” Welch also reflects on the pressure and personal turmoil she experienced during this time, even consulting an attorney, but then acknowledges how happy she is at the current point in her life. Following this episode, Episode three kicks off with Welch introducing yet another special guest: Kaitlyn Bristowe. Welch and Bristow dive into a range of topics, from Bristow’s past working in the restaurant industry to her experiences on The Bachelorette. Additionally, Welch adds her own unentertaining stories to the conversation, discussing viral moments from her life as well as her current relationship with a mysterious man named “Pookie.”

Although Welch attempts to bring new life into the show in later episodes, Welch’s bland personality and lack of character depth hinder the podcast’s ability to stay engaging to listeners.



- Adams inspires new comedians
- Kramer describes his overcommitments

HUMOR

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STRAHS AND WILSON DISCUSS ROBLOX

Hayley Strahs and Chloe Wilson
News and Humor Editors

Roblox, the game that plagued many of our childhoods, experienced a resurgence over the summer. If you've recently become addicted to the popular site, do not fear. Join us for a blast to the past, or the future, as we recap and review our favorite games on the site.

Epic Minigames - 9.9/10: With rounds rarely exceeding five minutes, Epic Minigames is the quasi-arcade of Roblox. If you couldn't tell from the name, Epic Minigames is home to over 100 games, ranging from the collaborative Protect the Statue to the free-for-all Slippery Sledding. Whether you need a dopamine hit between classes or a night-long destresser, Epic Minigames is objectively perfect. The only downside to this masterpiece is that for 199 Robux, you can pick the minigame fifteen times, causing eight-year-olds across the globe to force lobbies to play Laser Tag for hours on end.

Royale High - 6/10: Royale High is a modern ghost town. The once-flourishing paradise of badly rendered ballrooms, sub-par flying mechanics, and questionable role-playing faded away. Left in its place remains only a shell

of what it used to be: a pay-to-win copy-paste of every other high school simulator. Royale High OGs mourn the loss of Enchantix High and Fantasia Hotel, the two auxiliary servers of the main game which were arguably even better than the former legend.

Dress to Impress - 12/10: The Roblox resurgence is nothing without Dress to Impress. From genuine fashion stand-offs to Pokemon look-alike competitions, Dress to Impress is an exhilarating representation of modern creative expression. Currently standing as one of the most popular games on the site, Dress to Impress's large number of server occupants speaks for itself: the game is a flawless favorite of many.

Bloxburg - 6/10: Though many say Bloxburg contributed to the peak of the Roblox era, its downfall has greatly affected the rating displayed.

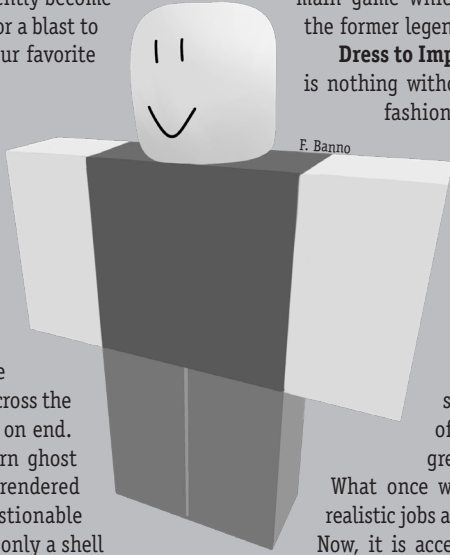
What once was an amazing building game with realistic jobs and families is now a free-to-use mess. Now, it is accessible to just anyone and not only

paying subscribers! Yes, realism is important in this game category, but paying hospital bills is sickening. Hopefully, the new creators will soon realize what they have done to what once was a vital part of many Robloxians' childhoods.

Natural Disaster Survival - 8/10: As an enjoyable, nostalgic game, Natural Disaster Survival is an experience one could spend hours playing. However, it is highly dated and has repetitive disasters, with the same map every time. Having said that, the creators should not change it because of its sentimental value to a huge population of early 2000s kids. With three billion visits since its release in 2011, Natural Disaster Survival is a classic.

Hide-n-Seek Extreme - 9/10: This Roblox game doesn't just consist of simplistic rounds of Hide-n-Seek. With creative maps, high-tech advancements, and endless possibilities, this game could be considered one for the thriller genre. From simply reading the name, the title warns you of what you're in for. With only one point docked off, the only critique I have for this game is that the maps are simply too big, which makes the rounds too extensive.

To wrap it up briefly, these games have forever changed lives. We hope that this bit of nostalgia has brought you back to playing these games with your friends. As a crucial shaper of our childhood, Roblox simply will not fall off but will continue to influence players everywhere.



Fugit lists senior year pet peeves

by Owen Fugit
Editor-in-Chief

As a senior, I think it's safe for me to say that I have some experience when it comes to high school. I am what some would call a veteran or maybe even a survivor. But before I pass on into the afterlife (whatever happens after graduation), I would like to instill some wisdom in the underclassmen. Maybe wisdom is the wrong word. Complaints might be better. I would like to pass on the complaints I have about high school to the underclassmen, so they won't do these things, or at least try to stop doing them.

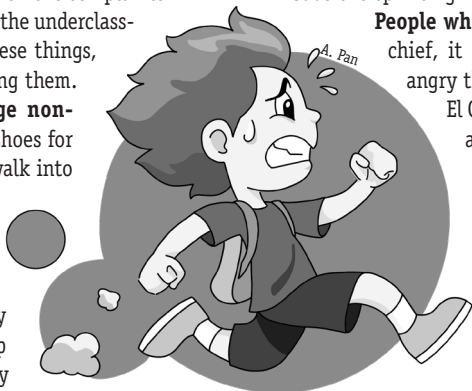
Talking about college non-stop: Put yourself in my shoes for one second, please. You walk into class, and the first thing you hear is "I'm writing 70 essays," followed by "I'm writing 90," which is commonly followed by a question about sleep habits. Now, in the early morning, the birds are singing, the sun is rising, and still, many seniors (and some underclassmen, no doubt) find it necessary to talk about college. This complaint may sound like an issue that high schoolers cannot solve, but I assure you, they can. Step one is to keep it to yourself (KITYS). When you employ KITYS, not only does everyone around you start to feel better, but you also focus on the important things in life, like actually writing your essays. A more radical fix is just not to apply anywhere that requires an essay, simple as that.

Running to lunch line: I am ashamed to admit that I used to be a lunch line runner in middle school. To be fair, the food at Fisher was pretty good.

But in this day and age, I don't understand why people still run to the lunch line. As I left my third period class the other day, three hooligans sprinted past me at full tilt like they were competing for the gold medal in the hundred-meter dash. I understand that the lunch lines can get long, but the line is never so long that you need to be the first person there. If anyone reading this is a lunch line runner, please hear my grievances and walk briskly instead. Save the sprinting for track and field.

People who don't read El Gato: As a chief, it is my responsibility to be angry that more people don't read El Gato. It's in every classroom and plastered all over the school, but people never read it. They hardly even make hats out of the paper anymore. If you are reading this right now, good on you! It means that you are one of the select few interesting enough to read the paper. As for the rest of you out there who will never read this, you are not cool at all. At least pretend to read it; it makes me feel better about devoting hundreds of hours to the paper. Also, you never know what you might find. I heard there's a crossword in here somewhere...

These pet peeves are only a small sample of what I am allowed to print here. I hope someone reads this and understands that all my pet peeves are objective and true. If you do, help spread the word about these key issues, so we can make an impact at LGHS. Underclassmen, the responsibility is on you to read the paper, stop running to lunch, and zip it when it comes to college. Good luck!



Pandey shares his homework guide

by Atharava Pandey
National/World Editor

Picture this. The bell rings on a cold Friday afternoon. Your week of misery has finally ended. As you are packing your backpack, your English teacher reminds you that you have an essay due on Sunday at midnight. You lightheartedly brush it off, thinking that the weekend is more than enough time to get a meaningless essay done. In this article, I will be giving you my exact guide on how to do an assignment the right way.

Don't worry about it. After all, you have three days to do the assignment. Sit back and relax. It's the weekend. Watch YouTube, play FIFA, and binge your favorite show on Netflix. However, make sure to tell yourself continually that you will get back to work on your essay after finishing the next episode.

It's Saturday night and everybody in your house is asleep. You are munching on a bag of Doritos while watching a breakdown of the best FIFA head-to-head strategies. It suddenly dawns on you that you have less than 24 hours till your essay is due, and you don't have a single word on the page. In a panic, you make a plan that you are definitely going to be following. Tomorrow, you will wake up and finish your essay. Relieved, you get back to fixing your hopeless FIFA team.

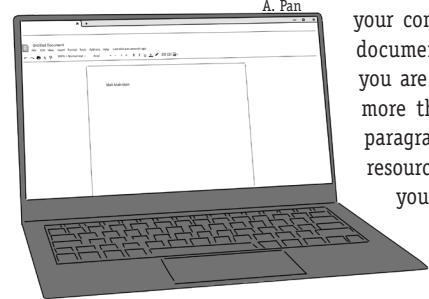
Sunday morning comes around and you wake up and look at the clock. It's noon. You start over-reacting. In a panic, you open up your laptop and lock in. There is nothing that can stop you from

finishing and submitting your essay. However, right at that instant, you get a call from your friend. He invites you to the park to play basketball. All of your motivation instantly evaporates as you run to the park.

After playing basketball with friends, you go over to their house to play FIFA. As you say goodbye to your friend, you have a smile on your face. You have had a great weekend, and there is nothing that could possibly ruin it. You are going to go home and go to bed.

When you get home, you open your computer and see your essay document, empty. At this point, you are screwed. You have a little more than an hour to write five paragraphs. You pull out all the resources that you have to write your essay, including but not limited to Quizlet and Sparknotes. Desperate times call for desperate measures. Time keeps ticking and you are furiously typing at your computer. With eight minutes left, you manage to complete the essay and get it turned in on time. You sigh of relief, only to realize you forgot to cite your sources.

This is the ultimate way of getting schoolwork done. You get to enjoy most of your weekend and only spend an hour working. It is surely better than refining your work over three days and producing a better product—not to mention, the thrill and excitement of the entire process is unrivaled. Even though you may get a C-minus again, remember that the journey is more important than the destination. I hope you guys use my guide in your school life and see success.



ADAMS GUIDES ASPIRING COMEDIANS

by Kloe Adams
Editorial Editor

So you want to become a comedian? A jokester? Someone who lights up a room by making everyone laugh? Well, if that is what you want, I can help. My name is Kloe Adams, and I am funny. I know you're not laughing or even smiling yet, so please just give me a second to warm up.

Physical pain: I can't tell you why, but humans think people getting hurt is the funniest thing ever. If you ever see a pole, walk into it. See a parked car? Start walking backwards and pretend that you don't notice it and just like that, a loud bang plus an ouch and you have a laugh. Next, the high-risk, high-reward option. All you need is a feral cat and some trash cans. At first, you see a lonely

cat in an alley. Obviously, you walk over to pet them. Consequently, the cat hisses and attacks you. Scared, you run but that cat is latched on. This is where the trash cans come into play. While you're trying to escape, you run into a band of trash cans, fall in and roll away. Your friends will video the whole thing, laughing a little too hard, and only then, come help you. But, it's worth it because you're already becoming a jokester!

Timing: Simple, yet an art that takes time to master. While it seems self-explanatory at first, to master comedic timing, you need to be able to analyze situations from all angles and perform some pretty serious mental math. Here are some basic, yet effective, situations that you can master. The door: The door works best in public places because there is more foot traffic, resulting in more door opening. This also works best in bathrooms because all your friends are in one place. To set

everything up, begin by using the bathroom. Trust me from personal experience, you will look weird if you go to the bathroom only to stand in the corner watching. After you use the bathroom and wash your hands (people will talk if you don't wash your hands), position yourself in the area where a door will open on to. Now, when the next bathroom visitor walks in, they will open the door onto you and your friends will laugh! Bonus point if the bathroom goer is about to pee themselves because they will slam that door hard, erupting in more laughs!

Sound effects: Any abrupt noise coming from anywhere is a comedic weapon. Whether the noise is coming from you or from a noise machine (phones, jukebox, speaker, etc.), you will automatically enhance the conversation. There are a few situations when you wouldn't want to implement noise effects. For example, you would not want to use a whomp-whomp sound effect when someone mentions a dying relative. Although I would laugh, they would not. Please trust me. As an example, a good situation to use a wrong buzzer would be when someone says, "I am awesome." It might take some trial and error, but soon enough you'll be a sound effect machine.

Overall, this guide can seem really intimidating due to the intense training and knowledge you need to obtain, but if I can do it, you can too! I'm excited to see you pranksters around school making all your friends literally roll on the floor laughing.



Kramer breaks down fall overcommitment dilemmas

by Nelson Kramer
Humor Editor

It's finally that time of year again when the temperature drops below 70 degrees, and Pinterest moms put on their cardigans and flock to their nearby cafe to order a pumpkin spice latte. In my eyes, fall is defined by many things — back-to-school, sweater weather, and Halloween, to name a few. It's an exciting breath of fresh air from the stifling heat of summer, and it marks the last couple of months of nice weather before winter.

The magic of autumn makes me plan every aspect of my life for the upcoming months, and yet I never fail to disappoint myself by the end of the season. It feels like I make all of these goals and plans to gear up, but it rarely happens. So with that, here is a list of some of my fall dreams and ambitions that usually stay in the idea box.

The enthusiastic academic: Back-to-school season is when I begin manifesting the academic weapon I know I can be. Usually, this feeling of determination starts in the stationary aisle of any store. The sheer amount of dopamine I get from buying a new notebook and pen makes me delusional enough to think I'm going to have the time to write a book. There's also the new planner that I will never open or the pack

of my favorite pencils that I can't help but lose to the goblin who lives inside my backpack. Although it feels good to be the person who always has extra binder paper to hand out to the needy, the rush of my trip to Office Max will eventually fade, and before I know it, autumn has ended and I have fallen back into my old ways.

Don't worry; there's always next year.

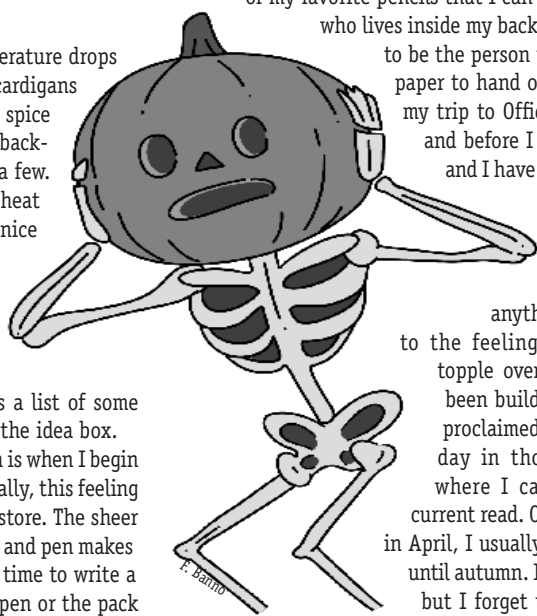
That giant fall TBR (to be read): If you are anything like me, you will relate

to the feeling that a small breeze will topple over the stack of books you've been building up. All I want as a self-proclaimed "avid reader" is one rainy day in those brutal warmer months where I can grab a blanket and my current read. Other than the few rainy days in April, I usually don't get that kind of luck until autumn. I claim to be a "mood-reader," but I forget to tell people that the only

mood I can bear to read in occurs for one season of the year. I have trouble coming to terms with my fear of reading for fun, which is why I steer clear of joining any book clubs.

Planning out the best Halloweekend ever: Every year Halloween passes, and every year, I realize that I didn't make any plans. Well, this year it's going to be different. I'm going to message all of my friends and declare a full factory reset to our original plans of going trick or treating and trading candy after like little kids. This year I'm going to make it to a real Halloweekend party! Alas, similar to last year, my plans will come crashing down because my friends and I aren't even close to being associated with anyone popular enough to be going to a party. On second thought, maybe it's better if I stick to my favorite trick-or-treating route with that one house that hands out full-size candy bars.

While autumn is the season that inspires me and almost everyone to better themselves, it also stands as the season of overcommitment. I come out more disappointed than I would have if I hadn't planned anything. I've decided to ignore my urges to overprepare this part of the year. Focusing on the few things that matter will make fall more enjoyable. And on that note, I'm going to go grab my book and my pumpkin spice latte I've been sipping on while writing this and stay in my room until winter break.



NORTHROP EXPLORES HOCO DRESSES

by Ainsley Northrop
Editor-in-Chief

Still looking for a Homecoming dress? Need some advice on what to get? With the dance just around the corner, I am here to offer you some expert tips for finding your dress.

First of all, if you were planning to order your dress online, you are doomed. Just about every store has been sold out for months, and even though they claim they will "restock soon," it is all a hoax. Looking online just gets your hopes up before inevitable disappointment. While Pinterest may have the dress of your dreams, chances are that the only color the website has in stock is that ugly beige pink with an unsettling flower pattern that nobody in the history of Homecoming has wanted. Even if by some magical luck your dress is in stock, it definitely won't arrive in time for the big day. But think on the bright side. It is almost the perfect time to order your dress for next year!

Now that we have ruled out official online stores, it is time to turn to the dark web. Sometimes a dress is so perfect that you have to get creative. Download the Google app on your phone and submit a picture of the dress. Behold! There is your dress in all of its glory. At least you hope that is your actual dress. Regardless, choose a link that looks promising and enter your credit card information. It doesn't matter if you've never heard of the brand, yet somehow they are selling the exact dress you wanted. Ignore that they have stolen the photo from the real website, cropping it terribly in hopes of clearing their tracks. After all, the only thing that matters is the dress, so who cares if some

website steals your personal information? Just hope that it actually delivers!

If the dark web fails you, I advise going to Macy's or Windsor; both are not exactly high quality, but they will do the job. In fact, I have a three — about to be four — year streak of scrounging through these stores the weekend before Homecoming. Even last year, when I actually ordered something online, the deceptively beautiful photo of the dress turned out to be a lie, and I resorted once again to the tried and true Macy's and Windsor. Enjoy a somewhat large selection of the same sparkly dresses that leave a trail of glitter behind them each year. Just make sure you

don't end up twinning with someone — the dresses are so predictable that no matter what year you buy them, you could still end up matching.

Now, let's discuss the most important issue of all: style. Please, I beg you NOT to opt for a giant bow.

I mean come on... Are we in kindergarten? Also, heed my warning: just because that satin strapless dress with an open back looks gorgeous from the back, it does not necessarily look cute from the front. I keep almost falling for these dresses, only to find they look like an empty potato sack straight-on. Save yourself. Finally, I am not one to hate on brunch-style dresses, but there has to be a line. When you show up in a flowery informal dress, it makes the rest of us look overdressed. Take Homecoming as your chance to go big. Now that you have these tips, go and get that last-minute dress. And PLEASE let me know if you spot an off-the-shoulder satin orange dress; I am on the hunt.



CURTIS SUGGESTS IMAGINATIVE COSTUMES

by Emery Curtis
Graphics Editor

With Halloween coming up, the biggest decision of the fall season is upon us. If you are struggling to find a costume and tired of going as a boring pirate or a tedious vampire, then this article is for you. I have three great, unique costume ideas for Halloween this year that I'm sure no one will be wearing. And don't you worry, they are super easy to make at home in a rush.

For a current and trendy look that everyone will be talking about, the first costume is inspired by the hit movie Dune. While most expect you to dress up as one of the main characters, Paul Atrides or Chani, stand out by going as a sandworm. To achieve this look, you will begin by going out and cutting down a tree, and you will use the lumber to create and form your mold. Next, for the body's structure, melt the wood in your large-capacity propane melting furnace smelter, and then pour it into the mold. Congrats, you are practically done. Only 34 steps left! Once cooled, you will start constructing the base of the worm. It's pretty big, so I suggest building at least three months in advance. For the perfect worm skin, purchase authentic leather unless you want to get bullied for using the cheap stuff. Once everything is sewn together, you'll win best dressed at any party you attend. Think of all the admiring looks you will get as you wobble around in your 50-foot life-sized sandworm creation!

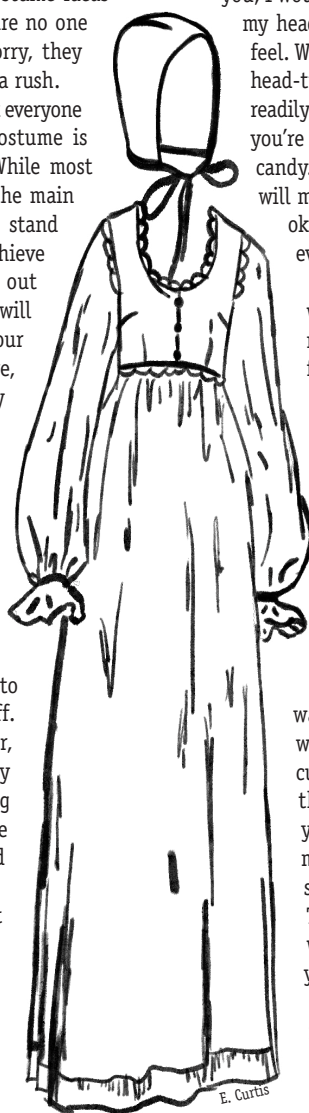
Let's move on to my next brilliant idea. For all basic girlies going as a witch, let's spice it up a bit. This year, try going as a Salem witch trial victim. Start with your best English Puritan dress, bonnet, and apron. Make sure you own a pair of black Colonial Puritan 17th Century English historical shoes, preferably

found in one of the original thirteen colonies. Easy, right? Now, if you want to go for the realism points, you could learn witchcraft. That'll add a wow factor for sure. Finding an Intro to Sorcery class is fairly simple. I am sure they have a few over in England available just before the 31st. If I were

you, I would also dump a bucket of water over my head to attain that drowned-in-a-river feel. Walking around soaking wet is a great head-turner. Add a little blood from your readily available decapitated goat head and you're all set for a fun night of begging for candy. This is the kind of costume that will make people ask themselves, "Is she okay?" And here's the kicker: you don't even know!

Finally, this idea is for people wanting an easier costume. It requires you and about four friends. Who doesn't love the iconic Scooby-Doo team and the amazing adventures they embark on? This Halloween, instead of solving a crime, you'll be committing one. Yes, you could just order costumes from Amazon, but where's the fun in that? Don't you want an exciting story to tell people when they ask about your lame costume? Obviously, you'll need to locate the nearest Amazon warehouse a few nights before. I would personally purchase some bolt cutters. They should be able to break through any chains that stand in your way. Breaking in to steal the mystery gang's outfits should be straightforward. You'll be in and out. The memories you'll make that night will be worth however many years you spend in jail.

I am confident that these ideas will inspire you to avoid the predictable police officer or superhero get-up that we see every year — because, if I'm being honest, those are so basic.



BORDERS DISCUSSES RULES SURROUNDING DOGS ON BEDS

by Katie Borders
National/World Editor

Dogs on the bed: one of the most controversial household issues. As a full-time dog lover and proud goldendoodle owner, I have witnessed my fair share of parents who go from reluctant to shouldering the responsibility of taking care of a new puppy to some of the cheesiest dog lovers that I have ever seen. I have seen my fair share of this shift to dog lover, and it's always amusing to look back and think about how my own parents went from being opposed to getting a dog to some of the biggest lover of dogs, even stopping fellow dog owners on

the streets to ask about their dogs or heading to Target to pick up an extra squeaky toy or two for our dogs.

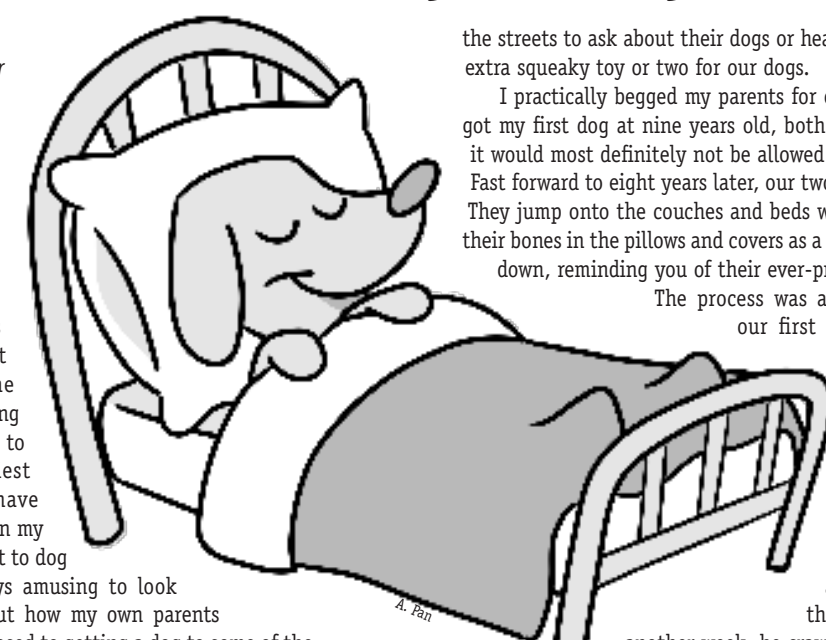
I practically begged my parents for one dog. I remember when I got my first dog at nine years old, both of my parents insisted that it would most definitely not be allowed on the couches or the beds. Fast forward to eight years later, our two family dogs rule the house. They jump onto the couches and beds whenever they please, hiding their bones in the pillows and covers as a special surprise when you sit down, reminding you of their ever-present playfulness.

The process was admittedly a bit slow. With our first family dog, he started off strictly crate-trained. Yet somehow, he slowly wormed his way into my parents' hearts, softening their views on them and turning them into hardcore dog lovers. He migrated to the couches and then to the bottom of the beds. Within the span of another week, he crawled his way up to the top of the bed and onto the pillows. While some people

may shake their heads at the thought of an animal sleeping on the bed, these little unemployed freeloaders are lifelong companions and deserve their place on the bed. Even the little troublemakers, like my two mini goldendoodles who have hearts bigger than some people, deserve their place on the bed. Granted, they each somehow spread out and take up a good quarter of the bed with their presence and have their own designated pampering pillows.

There is nothing like that feeling of trying to relax in bed after a long day of school and feeling something uncomfortable and sharp under your pillow. Chances are, it's probably just another smelly dog bone that your dog has stashed away under your sheets. Loyal protectors of the house and loving companions, this act demonstrates both a level of trust your dog has in you and a nagging, yet adorable reminder of your dog's presence in the house.

There really is nothing like the sight of your clothes being covered in dog hair and the smell of wet dog permeating the couch after you've bathed them. For some reason, dogs' little quirks and personalities make them what anyone could ever ask for. These domesticated hunters may be unfit for security purposes, with their sole attention on the next belly rub, but at least they bring a little spirit into the household. Coming home to the sound of a pitter-patter as my dogs run towards me or the incessant squeaking noise that echoes throughout the house as I'm trying to study never ceases to make me smile.



- Zeidler continues volleyball career
- Webb shines as quarterback

PEOPLE

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Stefanopoulos sets her sights on a surgical career

by Ainsley Northrop and Lucy Panicacci
Editors-in-Chief

A beach lover and self-described biology nerd, senior **Ava Stefanopoulos** could name every shark in the ocean if you asked her to. Whether she is practicing suturing bananas in her free time or memorizing every bone in the body, Stefanopoulos has clear aspirations for her future.

Stefanopoulos has swam competitively since sixth grade. In eighth grade, she started working as a swim teacher, and is now an instructor at Belwood Cabana Club and The Club at Los Gatos. Stefanopoulos shared her favorite memory of swimming: "I liked winning champs. That was the best part. We won our league meet three times in a row."

In addition to her interest in swimming, Stefanopoulos aspires to become a doctor. Her mom is a nurse practitioner, which sparked her interest in medicine. During the spring of her junior year, Stefanopoulos volunteered at a nonprofit clinic in Baja, Mexico. Stefanopoulos recalled, "I got to... do a lot of hands-on stuff." During the trip, she observed and assisted in procedures. In the future, Stefanopoulos plans to become either a physician or specialized surgeon.



Stefanopoulos's interest in biology also extends to marine life. If you were just getting to know Stefanopoulos, the first thing that you would learn about is her love for sharks: "Sharks are misunderstood. They have no bones, and they are super nice." Her fascination began when she got her scuba diving certification at 13 years old, as Stefanopoulos explained: "[Scuba diving] is kind of like a different world." Whether she is wearing a shark-related hoodie or cuddling up with her numerous plushies, Stefanopoulos constantly surrounds herself with shark paraphernalia.

This year, Stefanopoulos is taking Pre-Calculus, US Government, Economics, Anatomy and Physiology, and Yoga and Mindfulness, with her favorites being Anatomy and Physiology because it applies directly to her medical aspirations. During class, students learn the functions of bodily structures through regular dissections, discuss bioethics cases, and expand their overall life science knowledge. She reasoned, "We get to dissect stuff, and I kind of nerd out in that class."

Outside of school, Stefanopoulos has varied interests. If you are ever in need of pickle-based advice, look no further than Stefanopoulos. Since they are one of her favorite things, Stefanopoulos has significant

pickle expertise. Stefanopoulos explained, "I love pickles...preferably either a full round pickle or pickle chips. But Grillo's are pretty good too. [Also] pickles with ranch seasoning or pickles with spicy chips." Concluding her pickle discussion, Stefanopoulos advised people to avoid Super Duper's pickles.

Be on the lookout for Stefanopoulos as she completes her senior year at LGHS. In addition to the topics of swimming and sharks, ask her about Chick-Fil-A's spicy chicken sandwich, her hatred for Lana Del Rey, the musical Hamilton, or her short-lived stint in choir, and you are in for an entertaining discussion.



courtesy: A. Stefanopoulos

STRAHS EXCELS PLAYING MULTIPLE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

by Hayley Strahs and Nelson Kramer
News and Humor Editors

Whether he's intently practicing the tuba, shredding on the bass guitar, or pondering his life motto and aspirations, freshman **Cameron Strahs** is completely locked in.

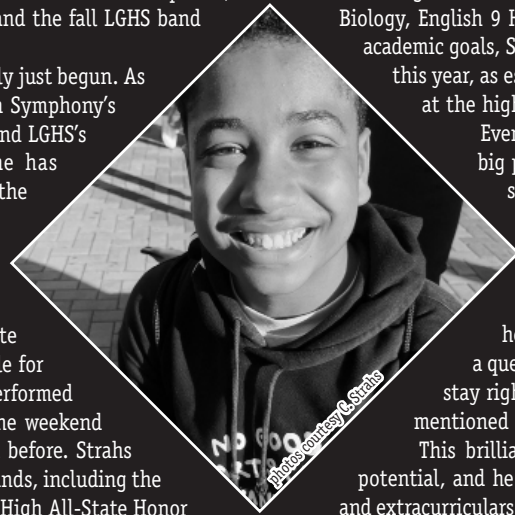
Strahs plays two instruments: tuba and bass guitar. As one of two freshmen in Wind Ensemble, the highest level band class at LGHS, he spends hours taking lessons for both of his instruments. Recently, Strahs's hard work paid off highly. In the past few weeks,

he performed in the Unplugged talent show on Sept. 26, a Jazz Band concert on Oct. 3, and the fall LGHS band concert on Oct. 15.

Strahs's concert grind has only just begun. As a member of the San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra (SJYS) and LGHS's Tri-M Music Honor Society, he has concerts lined up throughout the next year and beyond. For Strahs, playing the tuba "is a way for [him] to connect with other people and have fun." Recently, Strahs was in the San Jose State University Honors Wind Ensemble for high school students, which performed on Oct. 6 and rehearsed both the weekend of the concert and the weekend before. Strahs has participated in four honor bands, including the California Band Directors Junior High All-State Honor Band, which featured the most skilled middle school musicians in California. After making All-State for two years in a row, Strahs's main goal for the school year is to make state for tuba again.

Along with his passion for music, Strahs also enjoys Honors Biology, English 9 Honors, and Japanese 2. When asked about his academic goals, Strahs mentioned his desire to do well in English this year, as essay writing can prove to be difficult, especially at the high school level.

Even though he is a freshman this year, Strahs has big plans when it comes to his education past high school. When asked about his college aspirations, Strahs mentioned, "The Curtis Institute of Music, [and] another one I really want to get into is Northwestern." Even though Strahs is shooting for big goals when it comes to college, he knows where his boundaries lie. In response to a question about studying abroad, he said, "I want to stay right here." But if he had to go somewhere, Strahs mentioned Britain as a potential destination in his future. This brilliant freshman possesses an endless amount of potential, and he plans to shoot for the stars both in academics and extracurriculars. His love for the tuba, bass guitar, and all things music drives him, fueling his plan to pursue his passion. Although things may change throughout Strahs's high school career, be sure to look out for him doing and achieving great things.



photos courtesy: C. Strahs

Zeidler pursues volleyball

by Britt Melinauskas
Sports Editor

Los Gatos's **Portia Zeidler** is entering her junior year with academics in mind and enthusiasm on and off the volleyball court. Zeidler consistently exceeds expectations, ambitious to uncover her complete potential.

Zeidler committed to her dream school, the University of Notre Dame, on Jul. 28, 2024, basing her decision on the amazing campus, supportive coaches, and friendly teammates. She plans on taking her official visit to South Bend, Indiana, within the next couple of weeks to meet all of the upcoming players and watch Notre Dame compete against Georgia Tech and Clemson. One key factor that drew Zeidler in



was the stunning campus, which features serene landscapes, remarkable architecture and facilities, and blossoming student life. Though, her favorite part about the University of Notre Dame is the coaching: Head Coach Salima Rockwell, Associate Head Coach/Recruiting Coordinator Craig Dyer, Associate Head Coach Sara Matthews, Assistant Coach/Technical Coordinator Paul Koneir, and Operations Specialist Mackenzie Keenan. During Zeidler's visit, she explained, "I was able to experience the culture, practice with my upcoming collegiate team, and bond with the coached players while at Notre Dame." Zeidler witnessed the win against Clemson in a three-set thriller of 25-17, 25-17, and 25-23, leading to a great start in the Atlantic Coast Conference season.

qualifiers to compete against the best competition in the nation. Of those tournaments, the Pacific Northwest Qualifier in Spokane was her favorite due to her ability to walk around downtown. This year, Zeidler plans to travel once again to Kansas City for the Triple Crown NIT tournament; Spokane for the Pacific Northwest Qualifier; Las Vegas for Red Rock Rave Qualifier, and finish the qualifier season in Reno for the Far Western Qualifier. With absolute confidence, Zeidler aspires to qualify once again to compete in this year's Girls' Junior National Championships in Dallas.

Portia Zeidler is undeniably driven and has an unwavering commitment to her athletics and academics, ultimately showcasing her endurance through all of her achievements.

Curtis shines in sports and the arts

by Ainsley Northrop and Emery Curtis
Editor-in-Chief and Graphics Editor

Hard at work on Helm Field or busy running his pressure washing business, LGHS sophomore **Jack Curtis** is a diligent and adventurous individual. A dual-sport athlete and rising graphic designer, this sophomore brings his creativity and dedication wherever he goes.

This year, Graphic Design is Curtis's favorite course. Students create original artwork through various platforms during class, adding their designs to stickers, posters, T-shirts, and more. Curtis relishes the creative freedom of the class and explained, "I'm excited to put [my designs] on t-shirts or even hang [them] up in my room."

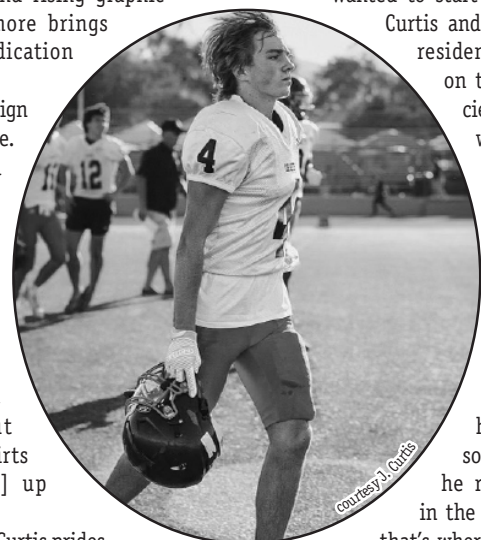
A dedicated athlete, Curtis prides himself in playing both soccer and football. Last year, Curtis played soccer on the LGHS Junior Varsity Team, but added, "I've been playing soccer all my life." Curtis originally joined football when he was little, inspired by his father's love for the UT Austin team. He explained, "We used to go to every home game they had. We still try to fly out there every once in a while to see one." Back for his second year on the school team, Curtis plays strong safety and wide receiver for the LGHS Junior Varsity Football Team. Although juggling two demanding sports can be intimidating, Curtis navigates the challenge easily by working on the weekends, practicing football in the fall, and training for soccer during the winter.

Beyond sports and graphic design, Curtis runs a pressure washing business alongside friend and fellow LGHS sophomore **Alex Halsey**. Curtis detailed the origin of their business: "[Alex Halsey]'s dad had a pressure washer, and he just asked me if I wanted to start [using it]." Since then,

Curtis and Halsey have catered to residents, priding themselves on their hard work and efficiency. Aside from pressure washing, the duo washes windows, aids with heavy lifting, and works on yards, completing virtually any task a customer wants.

Additionally, Curtis referees soccer games for the LG United Soccer Club. Since he has played competitive soccer for most of his life, he reflected, "I see myself in the kids I referee. Like wow, that's where I started out." He continued, saying that he wished he had appreciated the referees at his games when he was younger. In his scarce free time, Curtis visits friends and spends time with his family: "They have been my biggest source of support, especially my parents driving me to every game and practice." He said that even his siblings try to show up to every game he has. He added, "I appreciate the small things they do for me. It encourages me to keep going."

Curtis showcases an impressive ability to manage two demanding sports while using his athletic skills to teach others and run an up-and-coming business. His strong work ethic will carry him through his last two years at LGHS, college, and beyond.



courtesy: J. Curtis

Multi-sport athlete Jenna Webb tackles freshman year

by Isabella Langner
People Editor

Starting off her first year at Los Gatos High School, **Jenna Webb** is already demonstrating her intelligence and athleticism. Webb's schedule is on overload due to her participation in flag football, basketball, track, and many challenging classes.

Webb is currently enrolled in Spanish 2, English 9 Honors, Geometry, Biology, and Multimedia Journalism.

Webb explained, her favorite class is Geometry: "I like how there is only one answer in math and once I learn how to do a problem I can solve them all." Alongside her heavy class load comes lots of homework. In order to balance her schoolwork with sports, Webb said, "When I get home from sports I try to do all my homework right away in order to have time to rest after. If I have off-days or on weekends, I try to get work done two days in advance just in case something comes up then it won't be an issue."

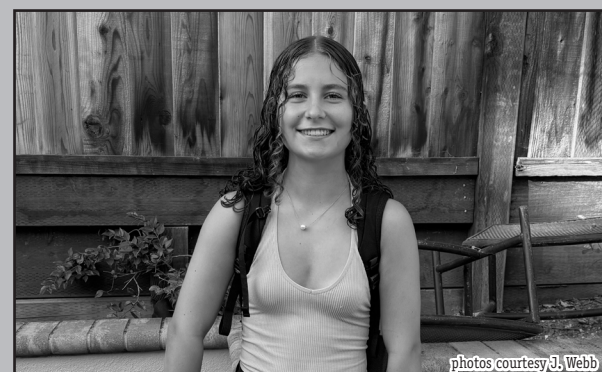
Webb spends most of her time on the LGHS Flag Football Team, where she plays quarterback alongside senior **Ella Rabitz**. This is the first year of the new flag football program at LGHS, and Webb is



overjoyed that she can take part in it as a freshman. Webb said, "I think it's cool that I'll be one of the first freshmen to play all four years on varsity before anyone else." Webb loves the new sport, but it doesn't come without challenges. She stated, "Quarterback is very stressful because it's very new and a turnover in football has a lot more consequences than in basketball." Webb is very grateful for the addition of flag football to the school's program: "It's fun playing in a sport that is traditionally male dominated. We've been getting a lot of attention as we should because we're pretty good and ranked really high."

Alongside flag football this fall, Webb plays basketball at West Valley Drive. She also plans to participate in the LGHS Girls' Basketball Team this winter. She said, "I am excited for school basketball's season because there's a lot more games and it's a lot more official than my club team with play-offs and CCS." Webb is also looking forward to playing with the current members of the team. "I already know a lot of the people on the [basketball] team because they play flag football, so it will make fitting in a lot easier." Additionally, Webb plans on running track in the spring.

Webb hopes to attend college on the West Coast at a school in Oregon, Washington, or California like her older sister **Alyssa Webb**. "Our relationship has always been really good, even though we were both so busy when she still lived at home. She attends [Loyola Marymount University], so I still see her a lot because she's not very far." Webb has a bright academic and athletic future at LGHS. Make sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming flag football games and basketball season to see Webb in action!



photos courtesy J. Webb

RONAN KINCZEL SHOOTS FOR THE STARS

by Rory Zeman and Owen Fugit
Media Production Editor and Editor-in-Chief

Few students can match the effort that LGHS senior **Ronan Kinczel** brings to just about everything he does. Whether it is sending an official company-wide memo, wrestling, boxing, working out, school, or anything else, Kinczel gives it his all. Kinczel makes balancing work, school, and personal life look easy, even during his senior year.

This year, Kinczel is taking six classes. He particularly enjoys his Intro to Business class because "It's kind of cool just seeing how businesses function, and just learning the ins and outs." Besides that, he enjoys watching Shark Tank in class to learn about entrepreneurship. Kinczel loves business, best shown by his work for his father over the summer. "I interned at my dad's company. He has an investment firm, and I helped him with a bunch of different research projects," Kinczel explained. Working with his father, Kinczel said, "Is an easier internship than other internships, but I still have to work really hard if I want to see results." In his internship role, Kinczel explained



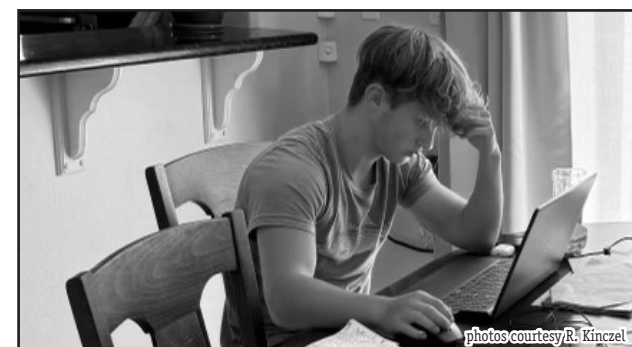
how he "made a report for his [father's] clients" and another "on different types of IRAs." After high school, he plans on going to college to find entrepreneurs along with other business students in hopes of creating his own software startup. He reiterated, "I'm really focused on an entrepreneurship career."

Kinczel's determination is evident in all aspects of his life. Beginning in his sophomore year, Kinczel has been on a fitness journey, focusing on his health and gym progression: "I started in like November of 2022, and...I've stayed consistent since then." Kinczel has enjoyed his improvements, mentioning how "it's kind of cool to progress, because, unlike any other things, you can't be given your progression, just like someone can't just give you muscles, give you strength, you have to actually work for it." To aid his fitness journey, Kinczel participated in numerous sports throughout the years. Currently, he is on the LGHS Varsity Wrestling Team and takes boxing classes. Kinczel has narrowed down his training to a tee, saying, "I do a lot of calisthenics. I do wrestling. I do boxing, and I work out a lot, and

I sleep a lot." Additionally, Kinczel takes his diet very seriously and brings up to four bananas and four protein bars to school.

However, Kinczel's interest in self-improvement doesn't stop with his physical training. Kinczel is currently performing at a high level in numerous Battle Royale-style Fortnite tournaments. As with his love for the gym, Kinczel's fondness for the game stems from his desire to improve himself with consistency and hard work. Kinczel even draws parallels between Fortnite and the gym, stating that "I'd say you can totally progress. I'd say it's pretty much the same thing," and that he likes to play "because I like progressing, because I like competing, too."

If you are ever wondering how to start your own fitness journey or what kind of stocks you should buy, then make an effort to scope out senior Ronan Kinczel, and you will be in for the motivational speech of a lifetime.



photos courtesy R. Kinczel

Lam excels in robotics

by Siyona Singhal
News Editor

No matter if she is building a robot, singing her heart out, or playing tennis, sophomore **Angie Lam** puts her best effort into everything she does.

Lam is taking multiple rigorous courses; however, she remarked that her favorites this year are her electives, choir, and robotics. When asked which she preferred, Lam could not choose. She reasoned, "In robotics, the process is hard work, but when it's done, you get a lot of satisfaction. However, in choir, the process is more fun, and performances are nice but not as rewarding as robotics."

With a passion for singing, Lam has been in choir since the first grade. She is a member of the LGHS Choir as well as a community choir and has traveled worldwide. She has performed at Carnegie Hall, gone to an international choral festival in Canada, and is looking forward to a tour in Taiwan this year. Lam is a soprano and her favorite songs to sing are Where the Light Begins and Let the Music Fill Our Soul. Additionally, Angie is in an a cappella group as the first freshman to ever participate when she joined last year.

Lam has been in robotics since last year and is now a lead on the team. She leads the electrical sub-team, which is a group of around nine to ten people in charge of wiring the robot. When prompted on what her favorite part of robotics is, Lam answered, "It's the people. It's cliché I guess, but when you spend so much time there, literally over 20 hours a week during build season, you get to know everyone really well and you guys can build something super cool."

As a lead, Angie has come up with multiple strategies to make sure her team is efficient and ready for competitions. She plans to train all the new students and make sure they are comfortable with the skills they will need during competition season.

Lam is also on the LGHS Junior Varsity Tennis Team for the first time. Her favorite part about being on the team is "definitely being able to play with friends and just being able to talk to them and also have fun." Lam enjoys playing doubles during practice and rallying with her teammates. Lam doesn't have much free time outside of her extracurricular activities; however, she never fails to make time for her dog, Cheddar. She said, "He's a little reactive, but we adopted him from the shelter in January and he's such a good boy." It's safe to say that Cheddar, often lovingly called Cheddy, has quickly stolen Lam's heart.

Angie Lam is passionate, kind, and an incredibly smart person. She is a hard worker and constantly pushes herself to be better and overcome challenges. Lam is truly the whole package.



photos courtesy A. Lam

JUNIOR RICKY O'HARA CAN DO IT ALL

by Sahil Muthukrishnan
Sports Editor

Whether he is running a club, studying for AP class, or tinkering with tech, junior **Ricky O'Hara** is taking full advantage of his high school experience.

This year, O'Hara started the Downhill Skating Club, where he teaches students how to skate without the fear of getting hurt. When asked about what students need to participate, O'Hara remarked, "All that is required is a helmet, some gloves, and a desire to learn how to go down hills on a skateboard safely." Downhill Skating Club meets every Wednesday during lunch in room 703, the Manufacturing classroom. When prompted to speak about his experience running a school club, O'Hara shared, "I'm thinking of moving into a different room...because it's a little annoying...a lot of people forget about it so I'm thinking of adding an incentive to go." He added, "[But] people are willing to learn, which is...great."

O'Hara is also passionate about his studies. This year, he is enrolled in Pre-Calculus, AP Language and Composition, AP Physics, and AP United States History. Manufacturing Technology and Japanese are O'Hara's electives of choice. O'Hara remarked, "My favorite part about manufacturing is probably the teacher, [Aaron Payne]...he's pretty cool. He's kind of a guy who lets you learn on your own." In addition,

O'Hara expressed his gratitude for the level of freedom awarded to higher-level manufacturing students. O'Hara thrives in his new classes and has thoroughly enjoyed them so far. When questioned about how he is adjusting to his new classes he said, "There's not really much to adjust to. I kind of went dormant over the summer...now that it's not summer, I'm locked in again."

Mechanically gifted in general, O'Hara frequently built personal computers with his father growing up. Specifically, he would "build water-cooling computers." Recently, O'Hara's passion for computer building has waned a bit. When asked why, he explained, "The parts are really expensive. It's not really worth it anymore...now I just build PCs for my friends, but I haven't built [one] in a while." O'Hara has also

recently channeled his technological prowess into robotics. He thoroughly enjoys engineering and is now a member of the LGHS Robotics Team. As a first-year junior, there was a slight learning curve for him, but his prior knowledge of tech eventually kicked in. Not one to shy away from responsibility, O'Hara uses his skills as a machinist to produce parts for the team's robots.

O'Hara is passionate in many areas, and he takes full advantage of all the opportunities that come his way. He is studious and intelligent, and is always willing to take leadership roles. Ricky O'Hara lifts up the people around him at every opportunity. O'Hara is beloved by many at LGHS for good reason.



courtesy R. O'Hara

- Girls' volleyball is currently 15-4
- Steiner commits to Cal State Fullerton

SPORTS

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LGHS football suffers unfortunate defeat against Pittsburg

by Lucy Panicacci
Editor-in-Chief

On Oct. 4, the Los Gatos High School Varsity Football Team faced off in one of their most difficult matches of the season against Pittsburg High School. Following LG's assertive 62-6 win against Mountain View on Sept. 19, the week of Sept. 23 was a bye week, giving LG two weeks to prepare for the Pittsburg game. Varsity football did game prep in practice and watched film extensively leading to the match-up. A tense competition, the game ended with an LG loss of 20-37.

In the first quarter, LG came out strong. With five minutes left in the first quarter, senior **Justin Mazzaferro** scored a rushing touchdown, and senior **Jake Gerber** completed the extra point, making the score 7-0. Pittsburg responded in the second quarter with two touchdowns to put them in the lead. However, following half-time, senior **Scotty Brennan** delivered a 36-yard pass to junior **Beau Musser**, who ran straight down the middle of the field for a touchdown, gaining back the lead, 16-14. "The atmosphere was great and it was really fun," senior **Francis Dudum** shared. He added, "On what could have been our game-winning drive, they started playing songs [like Mo Bamba] when we were in the huddle, and the crowd was getting into it." In

the second half, though, Pittsburg began to make good offensive plays to set the game in their favor. Senior **RJ Cannan** stated, "We were doing good in the first half, and then in the second half, they started to move the ball a little bit...they just had so many different weapons. It was hard to take them all away."

Despite the loss, multiple team members recognized the LG's impressive defensive performance. Dudum emphasized, "The defense played great. They were outstanding." Senior **Alexander Pyszcak**, who completed six total tackles during the Pittsburg game, only began playing football for his final year at LGHS. Pyszcak explained, "Well, I saw it as an opportunity. I never played football, and I always thought I'd like it, and I thought the challenge would be fun, and I just really look forward to playing." For the rest of the season, Pyszcak hopes to "just get more wins, progress in league, and build more connections with friends."

LGHS Varsity Football kicked off its league season with an away game on Oct. 11 against Menlo-Atherton High School. Menlo-Atherton came into the game with the same non-league record as LG, with four wins and one loss. In the tight match-up, LG beat Menlo-Atherton 21-14. Cannan looks forward to the rest of league, stating, "It's going

to be really fun to play the same people we've played every year. Kind of see how we stack up against them." LG football's next home game is the homecoming game against Menlo School on Oct. 25. Be sure to come out and support!

(Source: Maxpreps)



WILDCAT PRIDE: LGHS football celebrates joyfully after scoring a touchdown.

A's undergo stadium change SJSU athletes face backlash

by Megan Saul
Culture Editor

After 57 seasons and 56 years of competing in Oakland, the Oakland Athletics (A's) are relocating to Las Vegas, Nevada. Although the American Baseball League originally founded the A's in Philadelphia, they have been playing at the Oakland Coliseum since 1968. While in Oakland, the A's have competed in the World Series six times and have won the title four times. After playing in Oakland for so many years, the fanbase has grown in numbers and strength, making saying goodbye to this team a heart-wrenching event for the players and fans.



GO AS: The Coliseum filled with people roaring for the game.

The Oakland A's played their last game in Oakland on Sept. 26. They had a final victory against the Texas Rangers, winning 3-2. Stands full of emotional fans, both cheering and crying, supported their last game in the Coliseum. Fans also expressed their passionate feelings through posters reading "unforgivable" and "RIP Oakland A's Fan 1988-2024." The former state Senate President Pro Tempore Don Perata shared, "It's been a slow death, like going to the doctor and being told you have two years to live...There have been so many losses in Oakland, and I think this is the bottom."

A fan who grew up attending the games with her family, Kristin Young, said, "You get used to seeing the same concession people, the same ticket takers...I'll miss knowing the shortcut walks, the weird B [parking] lot entrance that looks like a terrifying war zone...and I won't have that same

experience like with my kids or even my nieces and nephews, taking them to the games. I know that you can still tell all the stories later, but I'll miss telling those stories like in the stadium. I'll miss being able to share those experiences with other people in the places that they happened." The A's are leaving Oakland due to the owner's, John Fisher's, lack of effort. Fisher enraged many fans by refusing to sign valuable players or investing enough into the team. There were momentary discussions over whether to build a new stadium, but eventually, all plans to keep the A's in Oakland fell through. Fisher received backlash from fans, sports broadcasters, and players. Former A's pitcher Trevor May said, "Be an adult. Get in front of a camera and say it with your chest...You love owning stuff, just not your actions." After leaving Oakland, the team plans on permanently moving to Las Vegas by the spring of 2028, but until then, they are supposed to play in a minor league park in Sacramento. The Coliseum will continue to host events such as soccer games, although not nearly as frequently as they used to host the A's. Retired A's Player and Oakland native Marcus Semien commented, "I still think that there's hope sometime for a team to come back here...This particular lot of land is still going to be here if they ever wanted to build a stadium."

The Oakland A's are just another team that the city of Oakland has lost. The Las Vegas Raiders and Golden State Warriors both left Oakland in 2020. While all of these teams have unfortunately left the city, their strong fan bases certainly have not. (Sources: ESPN, NBC News, The Guardian, USA Today)



THROW BACK: In the 80s the Coliseum was beloved by all.

by Britt Melinauskas
Sports Editor

San Jose State Women's Volleyball is facing backlash and several lawsuits from various universities and collegiate players after rostering six-foot-one, transgender player Blaire Fleming. Fleming, a red-shirt senior, transferred to San Jose State University from Coastal Carolina.

According to Fox News, Macy Petty, a Concerned Women of America legislative assistant and an NCAA volleyball athlete, claims that she felt "blindsided because the governing body—the NCAA—of the league has not informed teams of the presence of transgender players on opposing teams." Brooke Slusser transferred from the University of Alabama to SJSU for her final year of eligibility for collegiate volleyball. After joining the SJSU Women's Volleyball, Slusser learned of Fleming's gender identity after overhearing students. Thus, SJSU did not immediately tell Slusser of Fleming's gender identity and did not openly convey the topic while the two roomed together on road trips. According to players on the SJSU team, "The lawsuit alleged that team members were instructed not to speak about Fleming's gender with people outside the team." Several teammates noticed that Fleming's spikes were traveling up to 80 mph, and they were concerned that concussions or other injuries might arise.

In addition to San Jose State players filing lawsuits, Ellis Fox from Texas A&M University, Ellie Eades from University of Kentucky, and Ainsley Erzen from University of Arkansas are plaintiffs in the lawsuit, which accuses the NCAA of breaking the rules of Title IX. As Amy Larson from KRON4 reported, "[The] National Collegiate Athletic Association's Transgender Eligibility Policies [violates] Title IX 'by allowing men to compete on women's teams in intercollegiate sports.'" The lawsuit claims that "transgender athletes have athletic advantages over women. The NCAA's rules require universities and student-athletes to 'uncritically

accept and comply with the subordination of women's rights to the interests of a relatively small number of men."

Recently, Utah State University, University of Wyoming, Boise State University, and Southern Utah University have forfeited their conference matches because of Fleming's gender identity and closed communication of their sexual orientation. State governors have continuously spoken about the importance of maintaining rights for women in sports and not jeopardizing female athletics. In a recent statement, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon said, "I am in full support of the decision by Wyoming athletics to forego playing its volleyball match against San Jose State. It is important we stand for integrity and fairness in female athletics." Utah Governor Spencer Cox continued, "It is essential that we preserve a space for women to compete fairly and safely. Our female athletes are left grappling with this difficult issue because the NCAA has failed in its responsibility to protect female athletes and women's sports."

(Sources: Fox News, KRON4)



HUDDLE: SJSU players gather for heartfelt moment together.

NBA season begins competition again after four-month hiatus

by Atharava Pandey
National/World Editor

After a four-month break, the National Basketball Association (NBA) is finally making its long-awaited return. The league is more competitive than ever, with six different champions in the last six years. Several contending teams in both conferences have a realistic chance of winning the championship.

The Boston Celtics, the defending NBA champions, are fresh off a dominant season where they ran through the playoffs with ease and decimated every team in their path. With a star-studded lineup including Jayson Tatum, Jaylen Brown, defensive stalwart Jrue Holiday, and an elite supporting cast, the Boston Celtics are favored to be back-to-back champions this NBA season.



LOCKDOWN: The Mavericks play scrappy defense against the Philadelphia 76ers.

Every team in the Eastern Conference has the singular goal of dethroning the Celtics. One of these teams is the New York Knicks. The Knicks made a trade just before training camp for Karl-Anthony Towns to fill their need for a high-quality center. Coming off a disappointing loss in the conference semifinals, New York used up all its trade assets on Towns. The Knicks hope that Towns can get them over the hump in the East.

The Milwaukee Bucks are another major threat to Boston's reign. Last offseason, the Bucks took a huge risk and traded for Damian Lillard to give Giannis Antetokounmpo some help. Unfortunately, both their stars missed huge parts of their first-round series against the Pacers, and the Bucks ultimately lost. With consecutive losses in the first round in back-to-back seasons, the Bucks are under a lot of pressure to perform this year.

In the Western Conference, the Dallas Mavericks are favorites to reach the finals again. After being outmatched by the Celtics last year in the finals, the Mavericks added former Warriors star Klay Thompson to give star players Luka Dončić and Kyrie Irving additional support. With Dončić entering his prime, the Mavericks will be a force to contend with in the West.

The Denver Nuggets, the 2023 champions, are looking to return to the heights of their previous glory. They lost many key players in free agency, which increased the load on their star players. However, the Nuggets have a generational talent in Nikola Jokić and a star in Jamal Murray. The Nuggets hope that the addition of Russell Westbrook will be enough for them to return to the West as fierce competitors.

The young Oklahoma City Thunder had a great season last year, finishing as the first seed. However, the inexperienced squad learned some tough playoff lessons, losing to the Mavericks in the conference semifinals. The Thunder, with playoff experience under their belt, will be looking to reach the finals this season.

The Minnesota Timberwolves were among the most surprising teams of last year. They eliminated the defending champions and reached the Western Conference Finals, where they ultimately lost to the Mavericks. With Anthony Edwards blossoming into a superstar, the Timberwolves will want to make another deep run in the playoffs.

Given so many high-level teams, it is difficult to predict the victor of the 2024-25 NBA championship. However, this season is sure to be one of the most interesting and competitive in recent history. (Sources: ESPN, NBA)



ANT-MAN: Star Timberwolves player Anthony Edwards gets back on defense.

Los Gatos flag football continues league play undefeated

by **Jordan Park**
Sports Editor

After a memorable few months, the inaugural season of LGHS Girls' Flag Football is coming to a rapid close, with numerous highlights to reflect on.

Over the course of the season, the tough losses and triumphant wins have certainly brought the girls together. The team's development and camaraderie have strengthened their bond both on and off the field, cementing the girls' relationships and capacity to work together during games. Senior **Cami Lui** expressed that although many of her teammates already knew each other from school or other sports, it was "the long 12-hour tournaments [that] have really



KICKOFF: LG senior **Wyllow Roberts** lines up before beginning their match.

brought us together in commiserating over the suffering we've been through, but yeah, we just had fun together." Lui mentioned that one of her favorite moments from the season was the team's first bus ride to and from an away game against Aptos High School. "Everybody was really tired on the way there, but then on the way back, both JV and varsity had won," Lui described. "We have a speaker that plays during our practices, so we turned it up all the way, and we were just screaming to music. It was really fun, and then our coach bought burritos for the ride back because it was 9:00 PM when we were coming home."

This season, both the JV and varsity teams have faced challenging opponents that led to nail-biting games, frustration among teammates, exhilarating victories, and heartbreaking losses. Freshman **Jenna Webb** expressed her satisfaction with the team's overall performance throughout the season. She also commented on some of the team's toughest challengers: "I would say Hollister and St. Francis and definitely Salinas, for sure, because they caught us off guard." Multiple encounters with these teams were a source of excitement for the players, fueling their outstanding performance and determination on the field. Webb also pointed out some of her personal highlights from the season, which included the close games that came down to last-second plays that ultimately ended in a victory for the Cats.

Approaching their last few games, the team is ready for some extra free time but bummed that the season is coming to a close.

Lui stated that she is looking forward to the first-ever girls' flag football Senior Night and "to see what Coach **Sara Quilici Giles** has planned because she said she has a surprise for the seniors." Make sure to come out and support the seniors at Senior Night, which will be held on Oct. 16 at Helm Field.

LGHS's first-ever girls' flag football season has flown by, and with only a few more games to go, players are filled with anticipation and enthusiasm. Packed with victorious matches and valuable learning experiences, this season is surely one for the history books. Make sure to wish the teams good luck in their final games!



COMPOSED & READY: LG players wait in a team huddle for a decisive play.

Girls' golf season flourishes

by **Aliya Koshaliev**
Media Production Editor

Hole in one! On Sept. 9, the Los Gatos High School Girls' Golf Team swung into a new season. So far, they've played 11 matches, with around two per week. They've won against Milpitas twice, with scores of 235 versus 249 and 234 versus 241.

Last year marked the first season where the Los Gatos golf team was in the upper De Anza Division. Co-Captain and senior, **Emilia Orendain**, said, "Last year's success was everyone just trying to pull their weight and not giving up on their score." In the previous season, they had moved up into the upper De Anza division, which means they played tougher high school golf teams. "Last year, [we] had just come up to Division 1, so we weren't used to how good the other teams were," Orendain explained. "Most of us just pulled our weight in terms of not giving up on our scores."

Although golf is more of an individual sport, co-captain and senior **Juliet Bolger** and Orendain emphasized teamwork, with Bolger saying everyone gives each other advice, "like which club to use or the distance." They credited last year's captain, Kylie Chang, for fostering a sense of camaraderie within the team, something she, Orendain, and fellow co-captain senior **Monika Snell** hope to continue. Bolger commented on the great sportsmanship, even between the schools, saying, "We practice on the

putting greens before to see how slow or fast the greens are, and then, kind of just like asking the other team and stuff, because usually they're pretty nice and they'll give advice."



READY TO STRIKE: Players prepare to swing at the ball.

The captains also praised their coach, **Dave Denight**, for his unwavering support. "He gives us very reasonable goals, [giving] different goals for different people, so when they surpass it, he really congratulates us. He's very much a golf dad," Orendain explained. Orendain's goal is to stay under nine over [the par], since the lower the score, the better.

The highlight of the season so far was their match against Milpitas at the notoriously challenging Bayview Golf Course, resulting in a win. "Bayview is very hilly," Bolger explained. Every golfer is given points, and the school with the fewest number of points wins, with Los Gatos scoring 234 and Milpitas scoring 241. They played an impressive game in 100-degree weather, with Orendain joking, "I guess the heat really helped us in a way." Orendain praised sophomore **Sophia Li** for having the best score out of everyone in the whole match. "Seeing kids like Sophia light up is very motivating," Orendain said.

With one match left before the season ends, Bolger and Orendain said they stay motivated through teamwork and sleep. Orendain joked about her methods, saying, "Sleep, Sleep, and Sleep. I prioritize sleep." Their last match will be against Monta Vista on Oct. 22.



WOUND UP: Orendain focuses on her backswing in the match.

Los Gatos water polo teams find success in fall season

by **Katie Nelson and Ainsley Northrop**
Center Editor and Editor-in-Chief

The LG Girls' Water Polo Team has gone 5-4 in league and 7-6 overall, having recently beat Castileja in a narrow 10-9 victory and dominating their game against Gunn 11-1.

Explaining the team's ambitions, junior **Charlotte Brown** said, "I think some goals for our team in general is just to keep improving. And we really want to beat Harker on senior night, so we're practicing really hard for that." Outside of the pool, the team has bonded and is now closer than ever. They had their annual team sleepover, and Brown said, "[it was] my favorite when we made bracelets [and] key chains as

a team—it was really fun. And then we got to sleep in tents outside." Junior **Jaz Charnaw** said she appreciated both new and old traditions, such as the talk about the memories of alumni **Tessa Joy Davis** and **Peter Kleis** and the new giant candy salad activity.

When asked about goals for the rest of the season, Charnaw said, "Even though there's not a lot of us [on the team], we can really put in the effort and work really hard to [be] the best we can, especially because I think our defense is really good." She added that her biggest hope for the team is "making ourselves proud. I can really see us putting all the work in and becoming an awesome team."

Currently undefeated in league play and holding a 13-2 overall record, the LG Boys' Varsity Water Polo Team is living up to their record-breaking season last year. Recently, the team traveled to a tournament in Granite Bay. Senior **Thien Mai** explained: "We had three games... and during the entire tournament, we played pretty well, especially our first game, where we came out with the most energy we have ever had this season." Mai expressed particular happiness with the team's win over Jesuit High School because they "were a strong team," but LGHS played "better and with more energy," asserting themselves as fierce competitors in the tournament.

Junior **Nicholas Huang**, recently moved up to varsity, described his first varsity game against Mountain View on Oct. 3: "I got a lot of playing time, and I also scored my first goal on varsity...But it's definitely a lot faster paced and a lot more difficult and intense than JV was." The team concluded the game, crushing Mountain View 18-8. Detailing his excitement about the team, Huang reasoned, "It's a really great team. I've known a lot of the players for quite a long time, so it's great being able to play with them and bond and just being able to get together."

As the season progresses, the team hopes to make a name for themselves not only in their league but across Northern California, with difficult non-league games against Bellarmine, St. Francis, and Santa Cruz on the horizon. Mai said, "We obviously have a really strong, talented team this year, and I do believe that we win as long as we come out strong like we did against Jesuit, as long as we play at our highest level." The team is particularly looking forward to their Game of the Year against Santa Cruz on Oct. 18.

Come support these Wildcats at the LGHS pool as they continue their impressive seasons.



WITH GRACE: Senior **Colin Murphy** concentrates to score on opposing team.

SPLASH: Girls' Varsity Water Polo players begin their pregame cheer.

LG Girls' Volleyball demonstrates talent in fall season

by **Isabella Langner**

People Editor

LGHS Girls' Varsity Volleyball is showcasing their talent with an impressive start to the season. They are currently 15-4 and looking to add more wins to their record.



courtesy J.Navidad

Huddled up: LG Girls' Volleyball players celebrate after scoring a point.

LGHS Freshman Volleyball played against Santa Clara on Sept. 12 and prevailed with a 2-0 win. Their next two games were against Aragon and Wilcox. The team lost 2-1 versus Aragon but bounced back with a 2-0 victory against Wilcox. JV volleyball has also made impressive progress since the start of the season. On Sept. 12 and 16, Los Gatos put up tough fights against Monta Vista and Homestead. Following these matches, the team played Los Altos and Mountain View, both ending in 2-0 victories for LGHS.

Varsity volleyball is also performing exceptionally well in their league. On Sept. 12, they beat Monta Vista in a quick 3-0 victory. In their next match, they went all the way to five sets against Homestead but just lost out with a 2-3 loss. However, LGHS volleyball quickly turned it around with a 3-1 win versus Los Altos. With their spirits high, the team traveled to Menlo High School to play in the Chandler Invitational. Their schedule consisted of games against Menlo-Atherton, Aragon, University, and Salinas. LGHS volleyball secured three wins out of their four games with scores of 2-0 versus Aragon and 2-1 against University and Salinas.

On Sept. 24, they played in a home match against Mountain View. They lost the first set but quickly came back, winning the next three to obtain the victory. Freshman **Kate Langner** said, "We had a new lineup that we hadn't really tried out before, and she switched it around

for different players to play with different people to get comfortable. After the first set, we ended up doing really well by adjusting well. We ended up pulling away with a really big lead." This match demonstrated the Wildcats' ability to play well in many different circumstances, preparing them for their upcoming games.

On Sept. 27 and 28, the team traveled to San Marcos High School for the Santa Barbara Tournament of Champions. They came out strong with a 3-0 victory, defeating Hart High School. LG lost their second game to Bishop Diego High School but didn't go down without a fight. Bishop Diego's coach, Dillan Bennett, claimed, "That's probably the best all-around volleyball game we've played in the five years I've been here. They just keep surprising me. I couldn't tell you that I would expect a team like ours to back and hit 19 aces against a team as quality as Los Gatos." The Cats fought hard to add another 3-0 win to their scores against Dos Pueblos High School. In their third game of the day, they won 3-0 against Corona Del Mar.

Following their return home, LG volleyball played against Gunn and refused to give up any sets, winning 3-0. The Cats finished the next two games with a 3-2 win against Palo Alto and Sacred Heart Prep. Their next game against Mountain View ended in a 3-1 win. Make sure to support LGHS volleyball at their next match on Oct. 23 and wish them luck for their upcoming season!

POM: Nicole Steiner commits to Cal State Fullerton

by **Margo Rawlings**

Editor-in-Chief

Excelling as a three-sport athlete, senior **Nicole Steiner** has decided to continue her academic and athletic careers with the Cal State Fullerton Women's Basketball program.

Steiner began playing club basketball at age five; she continued throughout middle school until seventh grade, when she stopped playing for a club team to focus on volleyball. She played volleyball for the remainder of middle school, and during her transition to high school, she became certain she wanted to continue playing in college. As an outsider hitter for the school's volleyball team, Steiner proved to be a core player, even as a freshman. She began the volleyball recruitment process with every intention of committing to a women's volleyball program. It wasn't until the spring of her junior year that she realized she wanted to play basketball in college. Steiner explained, "I think I just realized [volleyball] wasn't my sport. I love basketball because it's more competitive and a lot more physical. Even though I have a lot of fun playing volleyball, in my heart, I love basketball more."

Following the basketball recruitment process, Steiner thanked her coach, acknowledged, "She really helped me a lot. She would reach out to schools on my behalf and she had a lot of connections." By the end of August, Steiner received three offers, and



courtesy N.Steiner

GO TITANS: Steiner poses in her Cal State Fullerton basketball jersey.

after attending official visits to Southern Utah and Fullerton, she realized, "Fullerton just checked off all my boxes." When deciding

which school was best for her, Steiner said, "I really liked the campus and its location is great; I'm happy it's close to home. I knew I wanted to stay in California, so it worked out." Aside from the location and campus, the basketball program stood out to Steiner. Both the coach and team welcomed her, solidifying her decision to commit to the school.

After participating in volleyball in the fall and basketball in the winter, Steiner continues on to the track team in the spring. She explained, "My freshman year, I was playing softball and my dad suggested I do track, so I decided to play both sports. I threw the shot put, which I really like." Steiner hopes to break the school's shot put record this upcoming season.

Looking ahead, Steiner is excited for one more season with the Los Gatos program. She mentioned, "Our coach, **Sara Quilici Giles**, has been my favorite coach. She's taught us so many life lessons and creates such a good environment for the team." Regarding team dynamics, Steiner credits much of their success to the closeness of their group. "We really click, and I think it shows in the success we have on the court."

A big contributor in every sport she's part of, Steiner's absence next year in Los Gatos athletics will definitely be known, but, more importantly, her new presence at Cal State Fullerton will be felt as she continues to stand out while taking her skills to the next level.

Girls' tennis dominates

by **Kayla Mitchell**

Media Production Editor

In the midst of the fall season, the Los Gatos Girls' Varsity Tennis Team is proving to be one of the most dominant teams this year. The players have suited up in their new sleek all-black uniforms and are ready to claim a spot on the top of the league's leaderboard. Though the excessive heat wave in the Bay Area led to the cancellation of several practices and matches, the team has played four league matches so far this season. Facing their toughest opponents right at the beginning of the season, the team earned itself an even record of 2-2. With their new uniforms and fresh talent in the freshman class, the team is ready to take on the season in style.

The girls' varsity team played its first match of the season against Los Altos High School. Los Altos was the number-one team in the division last year and has now added even more talent to their lineup. After a heartbreakingly narrow loss to Los Altos in the quarterfinals of last year's CCS playoffs, the Los Gatos girls were looking for redemption. Sadly, Los Gatos fell short again with another 3-4 loss, the same result as the 2023 CCS matchup. Senior captain **Yasmina Ikkawi** commented on the loss, saying, "While it sucks to have lost such a close match to them again, I think this result shows that the team is at a very high level this year, maybe even better than last season."

Although the first match of the season resulted in a loss for the girls' varsity team, they quickly turned it around in their next matches. For their second match, the Los Gatos girls faced a formidable opponent, Lynbrook High School. The Los Gatos girls edged them out and won the match 4-3, earning their first victory of the season. A few days later, the

team faced a more familiar team, Mountain View High School. Los Gatos made a strong showing and won the match 6-1, with new freshmen earning wins in both singles and doubles lines.

Given the extreme heat in the Bay Area over the past few weeks, the fall tennis season was briefly put on hold, and the girls' matches against Cupertino High School and Palo Alto High School were postponed. Once temperatures dropped, the team took on the challenging Monte Vista High School team, against whom they had a losing record last year. Unfortunately, although the matches were close and competitive, they turned in favor of the Monte Vista players, resulting in a 2-5 loss for Los Gatos. Junior **Anya Chauhan**, positioned in the team's second doubles line, commented, "The team really wanted to come out on top against Monte Vista this year, but this loss just shows us that we need to work harder to compete with the top teams." The Los Gatos girls have started off the season with a solid 2-2 record and are confident they will have even more success going forward. Come out and support girls' tennis!



K.Mitchell

ACE: Junior **Kalyee Do** prepares to serve during a match.

LG cross country competes

by **Quinn Hathaway**

National/World Editor

The Los Gatos cross country teams are making strides towards their goal of becoming CCS champions. The season kicked off with two meets: the Ed Sias Invitational in Martinez, California, and Jackie Henderson Memorial Invitational in North Monterey County. The team placed well in both meets and recently went to Irvine, California, for the Woodbridge meet.

According to junior **Evan Corral**, the boys' team has "a pretty deep roster," a recent meet in Irvine helped display, where everyone "ran super well." While the team did not place quite at their goal, Corral commented that there were other good results for the team, and it was "really great for team bonding." Varsity girls' team sophomore captain **Piper Pyle** explained that even though the girls may not have shown their best in Irvine, the meet still allowed individual talent to shine. When asked to elaborate, Pyle said, "**Taylor Chesarek** [a senior on varsity] did really well. She got first on our team." Pyle reached a new personal record (PR) in Irvine, coming in second to Chesarek. Pyle hit the PR in a three-mile race and finished in just 18 minutes and 38 seconds.

Despite individual victories and strengthened team connections, both the girls' and boys' teams are aiming to place higher in upcoming meets such as the Clovis ASICS Invitational, which will take place in Fresno on Nov. 12. The Clovis meet is a favorite among many runners, as it is run at twilight, allowing for spectacular views and an overall positive mood for most athletes.

While both teams vary in age, from freshmen to seniors, the girls' team this season specifically



courtesy J.Allen

IN THE ZONE: Senior **Aydon Stefanopoulos** finishes a race.

rosters many seniors. Pyle stated they are a big part of the team, but "all of them are leaving and we're... trying to build up our team to be good next year because five of the top seven [runners] are leaving." This may seem detrimental, but Pyle confirmed that the new faces this year are providing hope that the girls' team will continue to be strong in coming years. The boys' team does not bear quite as heavy a load of seniors, but they are still gaining new talent. Corral mentioned **Finn Allan**, a freshman with "a great attitude who runs super fast, so is a great addition to the team." The boys' team seems to have improved a lot with freshman faces such as Allan.

Besides aiming for CCS and states, runners also look forward to spending time with the team. Pyle noted that one fun aspect of the Woodside meet was hanging out at the hotel, which Corral agreed helps foster great connections among the runners. Both Pyle and Corral also mentioned how all the time spent with their respective teams has led to strong friendships. The Los Gatos cross country team appears to be making great memories this season, both during and outside meets.