

El Gato

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL

Leadership hosts Spirit Week and Hoco

by **Hayley Strahs and Dylan Wadhwa**
Editor-in-Chief and News Editor

Los Gatos High School students showed their Wildcat pride during Fall Spirit Week, held Oct. 7–10, concluding with the annual Homecoming football game and dance. Leadership and Rally commissions organized the weeklong event that featured themed dress-up days, decorated hallways, lunchtime competitions, and an all-school rally on Friday.



PARTY: LGHS juniors pose in front of the lantern walkway at Homecoming.

Each semester, LGHS hosts a spirit week centered around a unique theme, this year's theme being Continents Around the Globe. Over the preceding weekend, leadership students from every grade level spent hours decorating the main hallway and transforming campus corridors into colorful displays of creativity and effort. Senior and ASB Outreach **Alexis Dorn** explained that her favorite part of the setup was “working with [friends] and seeing the finished product before everyone else.” Throughout the week, Leadership students also hosted daily lunchtime activities in the quad designed to earn class spirit points.

The dress-up day lineup began on Tuesday with Greek vs. Greek Life. Some students arrived on campus wearing togas, fraternity letters, and gold crowns. The next day prompted an unusual mix of camouflage and bright pink outfits for the Army vs. Barbie theme, while Thursday's Adam Sandler Day had hundreds of students dressed in oversized shirts and basketball shorts inspired by his iconic look. While sophomore **Jonah Cohen** and his friends dressed up throughout the week, his favorite theme was Adam Sandler Day because “you could dress up comfy, but it was also funny because Adam Sandler has really good movies and he's really funny.”

LGHS Orchestra presents fall concert

by **Fuyu Banno**
Graphics Editor

On Oct. 16, Los Gatos High School hosted the first orchestra concert of the semester. Following the program's significant expansion this year, the concert showcased the musicians' improved skills and also served as an important benchmark for new members as the first concert of their high school careers.

The concert began with the String Orchestra, welcoming those who are interested in the music program. They started the night with a composition entitled Flare, which displayed an intricate connection between the cello section and the upper strings.



SMILE: Members of Chamber Orchestra pose together in the McAfee Center.

The Philharmonic Orchestra followed, playing excerpts from the Moldau, Flowing in the Wind, and Gravitass. The fast-paced and dynamic music highlighted the Orchestra's accumulating skill during the first two months of the school year. Freshman **Rohan Thacker**, who has played the viola for four years, looked back on the performance, reflecting, “I thought the dynamics for Flowing in the Wind [were] pretty solid.”

The festivities culminated on Friday with Class Color Day and the Fall Spirit Rally. Each class wore its assigned color: green for freshmen, blue for sophomores, orange for juniors, and black for seniors. Reflecting on the schoolwide turnout at the rally, Cohen remarked, “It was super cool to see everyone showing their spirit. I think it shows how spirited we are at Los Gatos.” During the rally, students competed in tense class-versus-class leadership games, and staff members including **Tyler McGlashan**, **Sarah Campbell**, and **Joseph Tierney** joined in for a fan-favorite soccer game that drew some of the day's loudest cheers. Between games, the event featured performances by senior **Isabella Burlinson**, the LGHS Cheer and Dance teams, and Brass Chaos.

The week's excitement carried directly into Homecoming Weekend, consisting of a Friday night football game on Oct. 10 and the Saturday night Homecoming Dance on Oct. 11. This year's dance adopted a Tangled theme, with Leadership students transforming the front lawn into a glowing fairy-tale setting with vines, lanterns, and sparkling lights. Students also voted for the 2025 Homecoming Court, crowning seniors **Hayden Benjamin** and **Marina Jackson** as this year's Homecoming royalty. Recalling the moment she won, Jackson remarked, “I jumped. I was just so excited.”



PINK: **Zoe Ruelas** and **Coco Von Klemperer** participate in Fall Spirit Week.

The night ended with a performance by the most advanced group, the Chamber Orchestra, packed with well-known classics. The group's performance began with an arrangement of the first movement from Haydn's Symphony No. 9, entirely led by concertmaster, **Alexander Rollins**. Symphony No. 9 was followed by a slow variation of Prelude. The night ended with an upbeat, energetic rendition of A Su Merced, Don Jose. Junior violinist **Catie Chen** commented on the success of the performance: “I feel like we cooperated as a group...and the transitions went very smoothly.”

Inspiration travels along the different groups as well, displaying how the concerts aren't just three groups performing, but also one cohesive collaboration. Thacker pointed out, “I think a bunch of us were inspired by the Chamber concert, and we could definitely be really good like that.”

For some players, Oct. 16 marked their very first orchestra performance. Freshman **Naomi Gilliam**, part of the String Ensemble, described her introduction into the musical program: “I went to the mega concert last year, and I saw everyone playing, and the music was so cool.... so I decided then that I wanted to play the bass.” With only a couple of months playing her instrument, Gilliam has shown an impressive commitment to music and hopes to improve as she spends more time playing double bass. Many in the String Orchestra shared experiences similar to hers.

With much in store for the rest of the 2025-2026 school year, including future concerts, events, and other activities, the Fall Concert was only the start of a remarkable year. Regardless of level or grade, every member of the LGHS Orchestra is sure to open another significant chapter.



BRAVO: Students in the Philharmonic Orchestra practice in the music classroom.

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TOM: DeLynne O’Toole embraces a spooky October

by Hayley Strahs and Tori Schubert
Editor-in-Chief and People Editor

From deriving functions in her calculus classes to dancing her heart out in Santa Cruz, math teacher **DeLynne O’Toole** is a ray of sunshine amidst recent rainy weather.

O’Toole didn’t originally plan on becoming a math teacher. She went to college at the University of Michigan with the intention of becoming a public accountant. After a few years in the industry, she decided to go back to school to earn her teaching credential, and the rest is history. This year, O’Toole teaches AP Calculus AB and BC in addition to running the California Math League and American Mathematics Competitions at LGHS.

Dancing has always been integral to O’Toole’s life. She spent much of her childhood in ballet, tap, jazz, and ballroom classes. Now, O’Toole enjoys a style called ecstatic dance, which places emphasis on feeling the music and self-expression. With Halloween on the horizon, O’Toole’s is planning to participate in a spooky Santa Cruz festivity: the Thrill the World flash mob. O’Toole will join a group of Santa Cruz dancers dressed as zombies to perform Michael Jackson’s Thriller in locations around the city. She enthused, “On Friday the 31st in Santa Cruz, they’ll have a big street party, where they’ll play Thriller in the street [five] times...It’ll be so fun.”

In her remaining free time, O’Toole can be found on the hiking trails with her dog or spending time with her family. O’Toole moved from Michigan to California after taking time off from her teaching



SMILE: O’Toole and her daughter pose together for a picture after hiking.

career to raise her children. Living in Santa Cruz, O’Toole loves her proximity to the outdoors and her involvement with the community. She also enjoys spending time with her family and friends while participating in dances and activities within her town. A longtime companion and friend, The Dude, is O’Toole’s 13-year-old poodle pointer. This “goofball” of a canine is ready to accompany O’Toole on any adventure she has planned, reflecting O’Toole’s committed and loyal nature.

When teaching students, engaging with her family and community, or participating in one of many hobbies, O’Toole has a way of bringing people together through the universal language of math, commenting,

“It explains our world. Math explains everything.” O’Toole leaves a lasting impact on each person she meets, whether it be on the dance floor, a hiking trail, or in the classroom. Following the advice of The Four Agreements, a novel by Don Miguel Ruiz, O’Toole is always sure to be impeccable with her words, not make assumptions, not take anything personally, and most importantly, always do her best. She is grateful for her job and workplace environment, insisting, “I enjoyed every single student I’ve ever had, and it’s really quite an honor to be impactful in their life, because guess what, every one of them has been impactful in my life.”



AWAY FROM WORK: O’Toole and her partner celebrate a spooky Halloween.

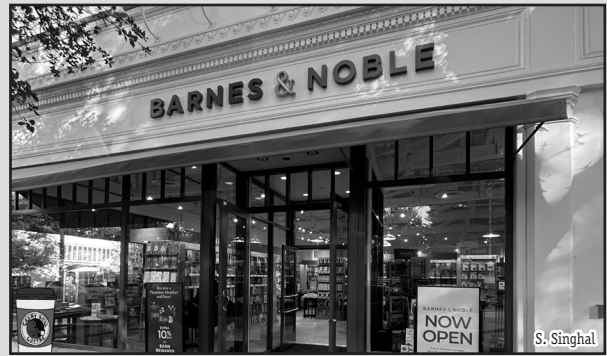
Los Gatos welcomes Barnes and Noble in downtown

by Siyona Singhal
Humor Editor

The newest addition to Los Gatos downtown, Barnes and Noble, feels like a breath of calm in the middle of the town’s constant motion. As soon as you walk through the doors, the noise of traffic and chatter fades, replaced by the soft rustle of pages and the steady hum of quiet conversation.

Store manager Alondra Alfaro explained that this Barnes and Noble is smaller than others, creating a few challenges: “We’ve had to make difficult decisions regarding what we will carry in store. While we can order books that are available in our system for customers, we don’t have certain sections like test-prep or language learning. We also don’t have magazines or a cafe; our small size wasn’t enough to accommodate them.” Despite these setbacks, Alfaro expressed that the community has been welcoming, and people seem enthusiastic about the new store. She commented, “My favorite part about working at this location is the people and the dogs. Everyone has been lovely, and we definitely feel as if we’ve been embraced by the community. We’re just book people who are very excited to meet other book people. All the conversations, meeting new people, meeting all the dogs; it has all been wonderful.”

Regarding the store’s design, Alfaro noted that the modular layout of the store is her favorite feature. The store contains new types of bookshelves that, as she pointed out, “make it so much easier for us to make changes and merchandise our products.” Alfaro also highlighted the whole wall dedicated to local books, even featuring novels by Lemony Snicket, who lives in San Fran-



STOREFRONT: Barnes and Noble is ready for business in downtown Los Gatos.

cisco, and John Steinbeck, who wrote part of The Grapes of Wrath in Los Gatos. Alfaro commented, “There are a surprising number and variety of authors that have a connection to our area, so we wanted to highlight that.”

In the future, Alfaro hopes to hold many book signings, already having held a few: “We had Gene Luen Yang (author of American Born Chinese) do our ribbon cutting and do a signing on our opening day. We also had Ann Liang (author of A Song to Drown Rivers, our fantasy pick of the month) do a signing that day. We have a few more signings planned for the next couple of weeks as well.” However, she explained that the store is limited in the types of events it can host due to its small size and will therefore likely not be able to accommodate lessons, talks, or presentations.

This new Barnes & Noble feels like a reminder of why bookstores matter. It’s not just about buying books; it’s about being around them, about being part of something slower and more human in a world that’s constantly speeding up. It’s a place to pause, to think, to discover something new. Whether you come to browse, read, or just exist among stories, the downtown Barnes & Noble offers a simple kind of magic, one that invites you to stay, wander, and maybe, for a little while, forget about everything outside its walls.

New prop. could fight H.R. 1

by Abby Coven
News Editor

This summer, Congress passed H.R. 1, enacting significant funding cuts to the entire healthcare system. The local impact would be a devastating blow to Santa Clara County’s health and hospital system. Due to President Trump’s stance, the County anticipates losing over one billion dollars in federal funding. In response, the County Board of Supervisors voted to add a five-year, temporary sales tax, known as Measure A, on the Nov. 4 special election ballot to lessen the impact of the funding cuts. Measure A is a short-term fix to ensure that public hospitals and clinics stay open.

Santa Clara County has the state’s second largest public hospital system, including four hospitals, 15 health clinics, two of the Bay Area three trauma centers, and the only regional burn center in the Bay Area. The County’s health system serves one in four residents and accounts for nearly half of all emergency room visits in the County. Specialty medical services like burn and stroke care are at risk, along with critical mental health and substance use support. The public hospitals at risk of closure or reduced medical services are Valley Medical Center and O’Connor Hospital in central San Jose, Regional Medical Center in East San Jose, and St. Louise Hospital in rural Gilroy.

The federal cuts would reduce essential programs for low-income residents, like Medi-Cal, California’s Medicaid program, and CalFresh, the state’s food assistance program. An estimated 500,000 Medi-Cal recipients could lose coverage. Hospitals must provide care to all people regardless of insurance status. When they treat uninsured patients, they bear the full cost without reimbursement. The resulting funding shortfalls “place a burden on the entire system,” noted Kylie Clark, Measure A Campaign Manager. She added, “When hospitals close, patients don’t disappear. They go to other ERs and clinics, placing a strain on private and public healthcare.”



ALERT: Santa Clara Medical Center at risk for closure from H.R. 1.

Also, important safety net services like housing, job training, and child care support would be cut if the measure fails. With more bureaucratic red tape and requirements, the federal government would save money as fewer people would be eligible for Medi-Cal and CalFresh, safety net programs they need.

Measure A would add a sales tax of five-eighths of a percent for every dollar spent and cover around a third of the County’s projected budget deficit. For the average household, the cost is estimated at 82 dollars a year, or seven dollars a month. Clark explained, “The sales tax is only on retail non-essential goods, meaning it doesn’t touch groceries, childcare, healthcare, education, or rent.” Access to healthcare is a lifeline that keeps tens of thousands of residents healthy and stable. If approved, Measure A would go into effect on April 1, 2026, and would expire after five years in April 2031. (Sources: KTVU, Mercury News, SJ Spotlight)

LA builds fireproof homes

by Jane Wilde
Humor Editor

In California, nearly one in five homes is built in a wildfire-impacted area despite repeated devastation in those communities. Of all the structures destroyed in the recent Palisades fire in Los Angeles, more than 80 percent were in a fire-prone zone. California must follow the expanding mandates under the Regional Housing Needs Association (RHNA); however, this creates conflict because when expanding, companies often build in wildfire-prone areas. To combat this, KB Homes, one of the largest homebuilders in the US, launched the first-ever “fire resilient community” in the nation.

Within the fire-resistant neighborhood otherwise known as Dixon Trail, 64 homes were built that meet the strictest requirements for home fire mitigation. Some examples of fire mitigation in California include preparing homes, removing dead trees, and replacing combustible materials. KB homes looked at dozens of homes affected by recent Los Angeles wildfires as well as several from the Maui tragedy in 2023. Notable features such as untempered glass and single roofs influenced KB to build stronger, more resilient homes. To model complete wildfire protection, each home includes the installation of flame-resistant vents, class A fire-rated roofs, and non-combustible gutters. They also use wire mesh to enclose the gutters and stucco around the shutters to resist flames. Additionally, builders tempered each sheet of glass to protect the fire from infiltrating through the windows.



FRIENDLY NEIGHBOR: A new fire-resistant home ready for sale.

The California Wildfire Program has been working in tandem with KB Homes to ensure homes across Southern California are fireproofed. Together they have invested over 117 million dollars into funding half a dozen neighborhood safety installations. Under current funding circumstances, the program is on track to fireproof nearly 2,000 homes within the next year.



MOVE ON IN: Another fireproof home opens in an LA neighborhood.

This concept of a fireproof neighborhood was in the making for decades; however, it wasn’t until the recent Los Angeles wildfires that the project was expedited and put into effect. The CEO of the California Wildfire program, Karen Collin, explained how the wildfires heightened the project’s urgency, saying, “Replacing a roof before a fire is cheaper than replacing an entire house afterward.” This is new territory for California with expected complications to come, especially because fire-resistant materials are particularly costly and difficult to access.

Officials have established that California’s housing shortage cannot come at the expense of the public’s safety. As wildfires become a more common occurrence and threat, the California Wildfire program and KB Homes are working alongside each other in efforts to expand this neighborhood and potentially create others in the future. (Sources: CalMatters, KPBS)



LOOK OUT: Measure A promotes its cause in neighborhoods.

California sets its sights on the Prop. 50 election

by Kat Littfin
Editorial Editor

On Nov. 4, California will have a special election with a controversial issue on the state ballot – Proposition 50. Proposition 50 entails a mid-term temporary redistricting plan that is projected to shift five Republican-leaning districts into Democratic-leaning ones. Even among Democratic voters, this issue is divisive as it questions the integrity of gerrymandering and political retaliation.

Gerrymandering is the manipulation of voting districts to overrepresent one political party. The majority party of a district is important because it often determines the district’s vote in elections and establishes the party of the district’s representative. Each voting district elects one individual to serve its population in the House of Representatives. Currently, the House has 435 seats with 219 being Republicans and 216 being Democrats. Gerrymandering on the basis of a political party is not federally illegal, and some states routinely gerrymander during regular redistricting every ten years. Texas recently redrew district boundaries, adding a projected number of five new Republican seats to the House. Unlike Texas, California has an anti-gerrymandering



BALLOT BACKING: Residents show support for Prop. 50.

clause written in the state constitution. However, to neutralize Texas’s act, California plans to shift five Republican districts to create five new Democratic seats if Prop 50 passes.

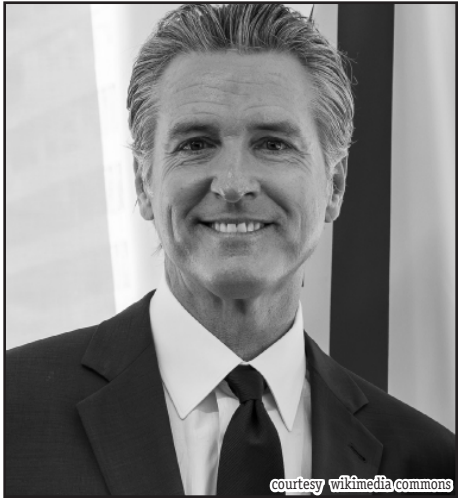
Historically, California determines its districts through a non-partisan committee that disregards the party registration of citizens when redrawing districts. Proposition 50 would ignore this

precedent until the next routine redistricting in 2030. If the proposition passes, any changes to voting maps would be temporary, and redistricting decisions would return to the non-partisan committee.

Critics of Prop 50 argue that the policy inhibits democratic processes, as it would intentionally go against California’s state law that prohibits partisan gerrymandering. Supporters argue that the measure is a necessary step to counteract Texas’s redistricting, as otherwise the House of Representatives will have a disproportionate majority of Republican seats. California’s Governor Gavin Newsom is a staunch supporter of the proposition, as he signed legislation that allowed it to be a voting measure on the ballot. According to CNN, Newsom sees the issue as the obvious response, as he stated: “We have no choice. It is the only chance to counteract even part of what Republicans are doing to redraw maps.” Meanwhile, organizations like Reform California and Protect Voters First as well as former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger have campaigned and raised money opposing the proposition.

This November, California citizens have the opportunity to voice their stance. Currently, ballot

drop-off locations are open and mail-in ballots are welcome until Nov. 4. To obtain more information about this proposition and to register to vote, visit the California State Government website. (Sources: ABC, California Secretary of State, CNN)



ALL SMILES: Governor Newsom poses for a picture.

Activists protest Trump

by Noah Gloege
World Editor

On Oct. 18, thousands of protesters took to the streets in the Bay Area and across the country to protest the Trump Administration for its immigration policies, the National Guard deployment, and the mass layoffs of government officials. These demonstrations, known as the No Kings Protest, followed the first round on June 14, which featured approximately 1,800 events nationwide. This second round included roughly 2,500 scheduled protests, each drawing thousands of participants. Organizers and local volunteers estimated that about five million people took part in the June protests and believed that this time around, participation rose to about seven million, making it one of the largest single-day protests in US history. In California, the highest-attended crowds gathered in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

On the local scale, 50,000 individuals attended the Oct. 18 protests in San Francisco, speaking out against President Trump’s insistence on and looming order to deploy the National Guard, an order he has since rescinded. This comes amid a government shutdown, with lawmakers claiming no end in sight. The protests in San Francisco started around 10:30 AM, at Ocean Beach, with one notable feature being a human banner spelling “No Kings, Yes on 50,” and a massive American flag. Following the demonstrations on the beach, the marches extended to the Embarcadero, San Francisco City Hall, Sausalito, and other locations. The protests in San Jose at St. James Park drew activists to the streets at noon, with around 10,000 individuals showing up.

Many of these protesters held signs reading, “ICE is the Gestapo” and “No One is Above the Law.” The demonstrators also sang songs such as This Land is Your Land and Take Me Home, Country Roads for hours. Many protesters arrived in inflatable costumes, including dinosaurs, frogs, and polar bears, to demonstrate their commitment to peaceful protest. In San Francisco, a police motorcycle escort led activists down the Embarcadero, with the crowd so dense that individuals had to wait 40 minutes or more before joining. Following the marches, many city leaders and activists gave speeches, while poets voiced their opinions, and protestors sang at any available moment. The Mayor of Oakland, Barbara Lee, explained additional motivation behind the protestors’ beliefs: “We’re here today because we

are the patriots, not the ones waving the flag, tearing down our democracy, but the ones standing up to protect it.” Lee also asserted: “We are free people, and we intend to stay that way because in the United States of America, there are no kings. There’s only ‘We the people.’”

In contrast, House Speaker Mike Johnson called these protests the “Hate America Rallies,” with many other Republican officials describing the rallies as un-American; some officials insisted that a foundation run by George and Alexander Soros, the Hungarian-American investor and activist, paid the protesters. President Trump also responded to these protests by saying, “I think it’s a joke,”...“I looked at the people. They’re not representative of this country.” Nevertheless, the organizers of the No Kings Protest believed they achieved their goal for these protests, but there was still a lot of work to be done. Many participants have explained that the demonstrations felt almost like a celebration. Though the feeling around these protests has grown much angrier than during the June demonstrations, organizers stand by their determination to hold protests in peace. (Sources: ABC News, NPR, The Mercury News)



SPEAKING OUT: Protesters converge in San Jose, CA.

CA acknowledges Diwali

by Advika Anand
Graphics Editor

Diwali, often called the Festival of Lights, is one of the most important holidays in South Asian culture. Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists celebrate Diwali around the world. The festival represents the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil. Families decorate their homes with diyas (mini oil lamps), colorful rangoli (intricate floor designs made with colored powder) and string lights; they also exchange sweets and gather for prayers and fireworks. In California, home to one of the largest South Asian populations in the country, tens of thousands of people celebrate Diwali each year. Now, this cultural celebration is officially being recognized statewide.



DIWALI GLOW: Lamps flicker throughout the festival.

In 2025, California will begin observing Diwali as an official state holiday following the passage of Assembly Bill 2596, which Governor Gavin Newsom signed earlier this year. The bill designates Diwali as a state holiday starting January of 2026, allowing communities to celebrate without missing work or school. The legislation permits government offices and schools to close on this day if they choose, acknowledging the importance of religious and cultural inclusivity. Supporters of the bill say it reflects California’s growing diversity and commitment to representing all of its residents. The new law applies to public schools, state agencies, and government employees, who may now take the day off to celebrate. Private businesses are not required to close, but many are expected to participate in the observance, similar to how some recognize the Lunar New Year. School districts can

decide whether to include Diwali in their academic calendars, allowing students to observe without academic penalties. This flexibility aims to make the celebration more accessible while respecting the diversity of California’s population.

Recognizing Diwali as a state holiday is more than a scheduling change; it is a cultural milestone. For millions of Indian Americans and others who observe the festival, this recognition validates their traditions and contributions to California’s multicultural identity. Diwali promotes values of renewal, gratitude, and togetherness, values that resonate beyond religion and ethnicity. The official acknowledgment of this celebration encourages understanding among communities and highlights the importance of cultural representation in public life.

Diwali’s new status as a California state holiday marks an important step toward greater cultural recognition. As the state continues to embrace its rich variety of traditions, this acknowledgment not only celebrates light and renewal but also reflects the values of inclusion and respect that define California. For many families, this decision turns a long-awaited dream into reality, lighting the path for future generations to feel seen, valued, and proud of their heritage. (Sources: ABC7, CNN, LA Times)



GLOWING HOPE: Diyas light the celebration night.

California enacts landmark bills to regulate chatbots

by Ivan Habib
Website Manager

California Governor Gavin Newsom recently passed a sweeping package of bills aimed at implementing safeguards for chatbots and social media usage for minors. The measures mandate features on platforms such as age inference, protocols for suicidal sentiment detection, and warnings on social media and Large Language Models.

One of the main bills of this push is Senate Bill (SB) 243. The bill—encompassing the establishment of many safeguards for AI chatbots—mandates that operators of companion chatbots implement protocols to help identify users who show signs of self-harm or express intentions of suicide. This bill specifically targets the growing concern over parasocial relationships that can form between users, particularly minors, and AI companions. Lawmakers are aiming to prevent the potential for emotional dependency and ensure that vulnerable users are directed toward human support in times of crisis.

Under this bill, AI companies must clearly disclose on their platforms that users are interacting with an Artificial Intelligence rather than a human. For minors, this mandate also extends to giving periodic

reminders every three hours to take breaks, as well as preventing explicit content from being generated. Furthermore, owners of these platforms will be required to disclose their protocol for handling self-harm and statistics to the Department of Public Health. Additionally, SB 243 allows users of these chatbots to sue the parent company responsible for them.

In addition to these measures, Assembly Bill 56, also known as the Social Media Warning Law, will require certain social media platforms to display a “black box” warning to users under the age of seventeen. The bills define the affected social media platforms as those with intentionally addictive feeds, thus excluding services like Gmail, WhatsApp, Slack, and other tools used primarily for internal communication rather than for external interaction and mass consumption of content. The warning will be a “black box” with the Surgeon General’s message that social media has been associated with significant mental health harms for young users.

First Partner Jennifer Sibel Newsom has been a strong advocate for these reforms, stating, “Everything we do begins with our children — their safety, their health, and their well-being. California

has always led in innovation, but true leadership also means setting limits when it matters most, because our kids deserve a world that values them more than the technology around them.” Many members of the legislature have expressed hope that the bills will signal a new era of accountability for tech companies, setting a precedent for other states and nations around the world to follow suit. (Sources: ABC10, California Governor Gavin Newsom’s Office, CNN)



UNDER THE DOME: The California Senate crafts state law inside its chamber.

- NAP funds Native Americans
- Chicago citizens protest ICE

Chicago residents protest ICE raids in the city

by Quinn Hathaway
Media Production Editor

The crackdown on illegal immigration escalates daily in Chicago, Illinois. On Sept. 8, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officially started Operation Midway Blitz, a project that aims to decrease the number of unlawful migrants in Chicago and implement harsher policies. Tricia McLaughlin, a spokesperson for the DHS, asserted that the Trump Administration has an explicit message: “No city is a safe haven for criminal illegal aliens. If you come to our country illegally and break our laws, we will hunt you down, arrest you, deport you, and you will never return.”

One of the administration’s main goals throughout the president’s second term is to increase immigration regulations, as seen in mass deportations and the increasing presence of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The DHS claims it apprehended over 1,000 illegal persons from the period of Sept. 8 to Oct. 3, prompting Chicagoans to fight back against government intervention in their city. A recent altercation occurred on Oct. 13, when a federal agent car chase drew many residents out of their houses to protest ICE raids. The city has seen similar events in various districts, including a mass arrest at a flea market on Oct. 17.

District Judge Sara Ellis issued a court order requiring all immigration officers to wear body cameras as they deploy throughout Chicago, although she agreed to decrease the number of required officers with cameras when she encountered opposition from the Trump administration. The purpose of these body cameras is to ensure safe practices when apprehending any resident of Chicago, a goal especially prevalent due to the recent No Kings protest.



SPEAK OUT: Chicago residents fill the streets with posters and shouts for change.

The recent raids have galvanized not only Illinois but states across the nation in the form of a second “No Kings” protest on Oct. 18, a protest largely organized in response to the perception that President Trump’s actions are tyrannical. The Chicago chapter amassed around 250,000 people and attracted speakers including Governor JB Pritzker and Mayor Brandon Johnson. Both Pritzker and Johnson voiced their disagreements with the role of ICE officers. Pritzker declared, “Tyranny requires your fear...democracy requires your courage.” Johnson assured the crowd: “The attempt to divide and conquer this nation will not prevail, because when the people are united, justice always prevails.”

Explaining his participation in the No Kings rally, one Chicagoan said, “They’re kidnapping people off the streets — in my neighborhood — and it feels like a ghost town. People are scared, I’m scared too, but I’m mostly angry.” This sentiment appears to echo around the city, as by City Council member Andre Vasquez proclaimed: “[Chicago is] not going to tolerate unconstitutional authoritarianism.” The tension between governmental interference and local resistance continues to shape Chicago’s plight over ICE intervention.

(Sources: CNN, DHS, NY Times)

Agencies fund native tribes US military leader resigns

by Kloe Adams
Games Creator

The Indigenous Tomorrows Fund received a total of 720,000 dollars from the Newman’s Own Foundation and Novo Nordisk. Native Americans in Philanthropy (NAP), a coalition of grantmakers, tribal leaders, and other advocates for increased philanthropic support of indigenous organizations, organized the fund. NAP originally began supporting native youth grantmaker programs that taught indigenous young adults about the philanthropic sector. Newman’s Own Foundation offered to take that learning a step further by giving grant recipients a chance to run an entire fund themselves.

NAP distributed the donations to 24 finalists, who proposed original projects focused on food sovereignty as well as health and wellness in tribal communities. Grant recipients are tackling these issues in a variety of ways. For example, there is a multi-generational collective of Shinnecock women in New York who farm kelp to clean up the local bay. Additionally, an Arizona-based community center grows culturally significant crops such as Apache giant squash. They distribute the fresh produce and train youth through hands-on land management. In total, the inaugural cycle received more than 400 applications. With such popularity, the pilot program aims to increase its funding to one million dollars next year.

This program diverges from a usual grant initiative, in which wealthy funders typically dictate the terms of their giving. Communities receiving the donations are rarely involved behind the scenes; it is especially uncommon for young people to receive responsibilities beyond a purely advisory role. Center for Effective Philanthropy President Phil Buchana commented, “There’s this recognition that a lot of philanthropic mistakes are made when answers to problems other people are experiencing are cooked up by consultants in conference rooms, rather than being informed by those whom donors actually



SPEAK OUT: Women support NAP, truth, and healing in tribes.

seek to help.” According to younger participants, philanthropy professionals, elders, NAP staff, and program officers sometimes attend grant meetings; however, their presence only spurs conversation and never dominates.

Another unique aspect of the grantmaking team has been the selection process. Rather than focusing on accomplished resumes or community engagement, NAP prioritizes those who came directly from native communities, thereby allowing participants to continue the legacies of their ancestors and pass down traditions with future generations in mind. As Newman’s Own Foundation Indigenous Communities Officer Jackie Blackbird points out, “Indigenous youth are reconnecting to their culture and to healing more and more. Projects like the Indigenous Tomorrows Fund help them also build that confidence and learn more about challenges in communities.”

(Sources: ABC News and AP News)

by Jordan Park
Website Manager

On Oct. 16, Admiral Alvin Holsey announced that he will retire later this year from his post as the head of the US military’s Southern Command. He is departing less than a year into what is typically a three-year term. His exit also comes at a moment when the Trump administration is escalating attacks against alleged drug-carrying vessels in the Caribbean and increasing pressure on the Venezuelan government.

The US has built a substantial military presence in the Caribbean with roughly 10,000 troops stationed mainly alongside 2,200 Marines on amphibious assault ships. The Navy also maintains eight warships and a submarine in the region. Since early September, US Special Operations forces have hit at least five boats off the Venezuelan coast, killing more than 27 people. The White House claims that all of the boats were transporting drugs. According to American officials, the broader aim of these attacks is to weaken Venezuela’s authoritarian leader, Nicolás Maduro’s, grip on power.

Although Holsey is the highest-ranking military officer overseeing this region, the White House has directed the strikes, and Special Operations forces have carried them out while largely excluding Holsey from the decision-making. The administration has defended the strikes by claiming that they were a part of a non-international armed conflict against drug cartels, but lawmakers and legal experts have raised doubts about the justification. Several members of Congress have pressed for more evidence that the targeted boats were actually carrying drugs and questioned whether the US can treat cartel members like enemy soldiers rather than being arrested and tried. The operations have also increased tensions with Venezuela, as the US accuses President Maduro of collaborating with cartels, which he

has denied while also condemning the attacks. Legal experts dispute the administration’s stance, pointing out that Congress has not authorized any armed conflict and that international law allows this kind of targeting only when a group is a true armed organization engaged in open hostilities.

Holsey announced his retirement from the US Navy in a statement posted on social media, in which he wrote, “I am confident that you will forge ahead, focused on your mission that strengthens our nation and ensures its longevity as a beacon of freedom around the globe.” Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth thanked Holsey for his service and commented that his time in the US Southern Command “reflects a legacy of operational excellence and strategic vision.” It remains unclear why Holsey is departing, particularly during one of the biggest operations of his 37-year career. Hegseth’s statement also did not indicate who would replace Holsey.

(Sources: CBS, NY Times)



THE END OF AN ERA: Holsey gives his speech of resignation.

President Donald Trump implements government shutdown

by Lydia Liu
Public Relations Manager

The United States government entered a shutdown on Oct. 1, after Congress failed to agree on a new spending bill to fund federal agencies. The shutdown began when lawmakers missed the deadline to pass a budget, leaving many government offices without the legal authority to spend money. The shutdown marks the country’s twenty-second government shutdown since 1976, highlighting the growing political division between parties over federal spending priorities.

The immediate cause of the shutdown was a breakdown in negotiations between the House of Representatives (HOR) and the Senate. The HOR passed a temporary funding bill that included steep spending cuts and excluded health care tax credits under the Affordable Care Act. However, the Senate refused to accept it, insisting on protecting social programs and expanding disaster relief funding. With no compromise reached, large sections of the government were forced to suspend operations. Reuters reported that approximately 1,250 federal judiciary employees have already been furloughed, the first large-scale judicial furlough in nearly three decades. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of other federal workers are either working without pay or staying home, waiting for Congress to act.

Across the nation, Americans are feeling the effects of the shutdown. The Associated Press reported that the National Nuclear

Security Administration furloughed about 1,400 employees, delaying important defense and nuclear safety projects. Head Start programs serving low-income families are also losing federal support, threatening access to preschool education for more than 65,000 children nationwide. These programs offer free early childhood education, meals, and family support services to help prepare children for kindergarten and promote long-term success. In addition, national parks have closed to the public, passport and visa processing have slowed, and scientists at federally funded research centers have been forced to pause their work. For many Americans, the shutdown means canceled plans, delayed services, and growing financial uncertainty.

The economic consequences have grown increasingly dire. Politico reported that a White House memo estimated the shutdown could cost the US economy roughly 15 billion dollars in gross domestic product every week it continues. Local businesses near federal offices are losing customers, while government contractors are halting work on infrastructure and defense projects. Financial analysts warn that a prolonged shutdown could lead to reduced consumer confidence and economic instability, particularly if it affects holiday spending or disrupts federal assistance programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and student aid.

As the shutdown stretches into its third week, pressure is mounting on Congress to find a resolution. Both parties have introduced new



ACCESS DENIED: Capitol employees will not return to work under new circumstances.

funding proposals, but neither proposal has passed both chambers. Millions of Americans will continue to feel the effects of Washington’s political standoff until both sides reach an agreement.

(Sources: AP, Politico, Reuters)

- Machado wins Nobel Peace Prize
- Robbers steal from the Louvre

María Machado of Venezuela wins the 2025 Peace Prize

by Nelson Kramer
Editor-in-Chief

On Oct. 10, the Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to María Corina Machado of Venezuela. The committee recognized Machado, the leader of the Venezuelan opposition movement, as a “brave and committed champion of peace.” While this award concentrates on the achievements Machado continues to make in Venezuela, it also adds to the controversy surrounding this prize, especially as the US sends warships to the country’s coast.

By awarding her the peace prize, the Nobel Committee is recognizing Machado’s career, highlighting “her tireless work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela” and also noting “her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy.” A former member of Venezuela’s National Assembly, 58-year-old Machado fights back against the established government and advocates free elections and citizen participation for her people. Her recognition marks a historic moment, as she is the first Venezuelan Nobel laureate and the second Latin American woman to receive the Peace Prize.

As the leading figure in Venezuela, President Nicolas Maduro has subjected Machado to significant persecution, stopping her from running in the 2024 presidential election. Maduro forced Machado into hiding under threat of arrest, but she continued to coordinate and mobilize volunteers for her cause. The Nobel committee has praised her for “unifying a once-divided opposition” as well as her choice of “ballots over bullets” in confronting authoritarian rule.

After the announcement, President Donald Trump expressed disappointment with the 2025 Peace Prize results, noting that high-ranking officials nominated him on multiple occasions, including Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and New York Congresswoman Claudia Tenney. After the announcement, he frequently talked about his administration’s role in brokering international ceasefires, highlighting the circumstances regarding the Israel-Hamas conflict. Trump argued he was “more deserving than any contender.” Hours before the Nobel announcement, Trump made further statements criticizing President Obama’s 2009 Peace Prize as “undeserved,” contrasting it with what he portrayed as his own achievements.

Ultimately, the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize stands as a powerful acknowledgment of Machado’s long battle for freedom and democ-

racy in Venezuela. This award is a significant achievement for Machado, being one of only six Latin Americans to win the peace prize. While Trump’s reaction fueled bipartisan debate in the United States, the Nobel Committee’s focus remains clear. This year, they are set to highlight and honor a movement rooted in courage, civic resistance, and nonviolent change; this honor goes to a woman who, the Nobel committee says, “keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness.” (Sources: Nobel Prize, NYT)



FIGHT AGAINST: María Machado discusses the need for a democracy.

Madagascar protests President

by Gowri Sunil
News Editor

Beginning in late September, Madagascar’s military and Gen Z population have banded together to overthrow the country’s current president, Andry Rajoelina. So far, their military has removed Madagascar’s highest court, its electoral commission, and its Senate. In addition, they also suspended their Constitution, yet their National Assembly remains intact.

The protests began as a result of Madagascar’s government’s inconsistency to providing basic needs to their citizens. Inspired by recent Gen Z protests in Nepal, which was sparked by a social media ban, and protests in Kenya, the Gen Z population of Madagascar turned to protesting as well. Since Sept. 25, younger people have shown up in major Madagascar cities, including as the capital Antananarivo, to protest against what they describe as government corruption.



PROTEST: Demonstrators have different views on scandals.

At first, Madagascar’s security responded with strong force, reportedly killing 22 people, according to the United Nations. In efforts to subdue the protests, Rajoelina attempted to compromise by announcing he would fire his whole cabinet, yet the protestors persisted and continued to call for his resignation. Many of the young protesters found Rajoelina’s words hollow, with Rovatanjonina Valisoa Tsimaniva, a 21-year-old university student, stating, “It’s like everything he said was just a drunk man’s promises.”

In the following days, Madagascar’s military began to side with the protestors. Videos on social media circulated displaying uniformed soldiers removing the barricades that once contained the protestors. On Oct. 14, government officials in the nation’s National Assembly began proceedings to impeach Rajoelina. In response, Rajoelina tried to dissolve the National Assembly.

When Rajoelina refused to back down, Madagascar’s military announced they would take over as government, with Colonel Micheal Randrianirina sworn in as the interim president on Oct. 17. The military announced that they will take over for no more than one to two years, giving the nation time to form a new constitution as well as institutions, while taking into account the civilian opinions.

As to the success of the protests, spokesperson for the youth movement, Edith Randriamandrato, elaborated: “Just the military, it wouldn’t have been possible. Just us, it would’ve taken months, even though we were ready for that. The turning point came from the convergence of both.” While Madagascar’s Gen Z protests have made strides, they have not fully met their goal in reforming their government. (Sources: CNN, NY Times)

Japan elects first female PM

by Chloe Wilson
Culture Editor

On Monday, Oct. 20, after forging a new partnership with a minor party, Sanae Takaichi is set to become Japan’s first female prime minister. Takaichi’s party, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), allied with the smaller rightwing Nippon Ishin (Japan Innovation Party). This party shares Takaichi’s firm view on China and limitations on immigration. Takaichi explained to Ishin co-leader Hirofumi Yoshimura, “I’m very much looking forward to working with you on efforts to make Japan’s economy stronger and to reshape Japan as a country that can be responsible for future generations.”

This alliance ends a nearly month-long quarrel of Takaichi’s efforts to become Japan’s first female prime minister. Takaichi’s win was confirmed after winning the vote to replace the previous Prime Minister, Shigeru Ishiba. However, when Komeito, LDP’s companion of 26 years, left the affiliation, it was uncertain whether Takaichi would take the position or not. The two parties frequently disagree, which led to difficulty in choosing a compromising candidate. The Buddhist group, Soka Gakkai, has supported Komeito, who has heavily criticized Takaichi’s hardline security stance and accused the LDP of neglecting to deal with a damaging funding scandal.

The prime minister grew up close to the capital of Nara in Japan. Acknowledging the hardships of politics as a woman in Japan, Takaichi has nevertheless overcome these struggles as she is currently the leader of the LDP. When Takaichi was a young adult in the 1970s, she commuted six hours by public transit from her family’s home to attend university. Some of her interests included motorcycles and heavy metal music, listening to bands such as Iron Maiden and Deep Purple. As a

young woman, she hoped to one day move out of her family’s home, but her mother prohibited her from leaving before she was married. Contrary to her mother’s wishes, Takaichi explained in a 1992 memoir, “I dreamed of having my own castle.”

She has expressed hopes of working closely with President Trump, but communicates the concern of Japan’s reliance on the United States. Takaichi often wears blue suits to celebrate former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, who is Takaichi’s hero. She was mentored by Shinzo Abe, who was Japan’s longest-serving prime minister and was assassinated in 2022.

Takaichi’s goals include shifting Japan further to the right in response to a recent power movement, with some similarities to President Trump’s MAGA movement. She has firmly promoted the message “Japan is back.” According to journalist Yoshiko Sakurai, “She wants to make Japan strong and prosperous for the people of Japan and for the world.” (Sources: NY Times, The Guardian)



ELECTED: Japan votes in their first female Prime Minister.

Robbers steal items from the Louvre in broad daylight

by Julia Valencia
Opinion Editor

At 9:30 AM on Sunday, Oct. 19, four robbers broke into France’s esteemed national museum, the Louvre, escaping with eight items. They completed the heist in just seven minutes, in broad daylight, shortly after the museum opened. Given how boldly, brazenly, and swiftly the thieves acted, the public immediately began to raise inquiries about the security in and around the Louvre.

The French government called the robbery a professional and well-planned heist. The robbers appeared to have used a truck-mounted ladder to gain access to the museum’s Apollo gallery. The Louvre displays the jewelry and jewels, dating back to the Napoleonic era, behind reinforced glass cases, designed to protect the living pieces of history. After the robbers climbed the ladder, they forced open one of the windows using angle grinders and climbed inside. Although unarmed, the robbers threatened the guards with the power tools while they smashed open the display cases and proceeded to take nine priceless jewelry items. The thieves then fled the scene by going back down the ladder and riding away on two motorbikes awaiting them.

A staff intervention stopped one individual from setting their truck on fire, though the perpetrator managed to escape.

On their way out, the thieves accidentally dropped the Crown of Empress Eugénie. The crown has 1,354 diamonds and 56 emeralds embedded in it, and though its value is inestimable, its number of jewels would make it worth tens of millions of euros, if not more. Among the items stolen were a



HISTORICAL: The Louvre has been closed for the investigation.

tiara and a brooch belonging to Empress Eugénie; an emerald necklace and a pair of emerald earrings from Empress Marie Louise; a tiara, a necklace, and a single earring from the sapphire set that belonged to Queen Marie-Amelie and Queen Hortense; and a brooch known as the “reliquary brooch.”

The bejeweled items are extremely easy to break apart and sell individually. Museum staff and French police will keep the Louvre closed for the time being, as the race against time continues. Countless investigators are working nonstop in an attempt to retrieve the items and bring the criminals to justice. They believe that the four robbers were under orders from a criminal organization. Natalie Goulet, a member of the French Senate’s finance committee, called the heist a “very painful” episode for France: “We are all disappointed and angry...[it is] difficult to understand how it happened so easily.”

As investigators scramble to recover the priceless artifacts and identify those behind the theft, it is clear that the Louvre heist has shocked not only France but the whole world. It is also raising urgent yet valid concerns about museum security for all museums, not just the Louvre.

Goulet expressed pessimism about the items ever being recovered. When asked by the BBC about the possibility of getting the jewels back, Goulet replied, “None.” (Sources: ABC, BBC, CNN, NBC, NY Times)



STOLEN: The perpetrators stole Napoleonic artifacts worth millions.

Connections

M. Saul

pendulum

pyramid

bells

blossom

yield sign

claves

pizza

heart

triangle

bucket

straw

raven

chef

lexington

van

witch

SUDOKU

A. Pandey

9				7		2	5	
	4	7	9		2			
		2		6			1	7
2			7		8			5
	5	6				3	7	
1			6		5			8
4	1			5		6		
			3		9	7	8	
	9	3		8				

The Maze

T. Chang

MINI CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4
5				
6				
7			8	9
10				

- Across:
1. Stretched tight

5. The first part of a famous Halloween phrase

6. Common acronym meaning produced by the original maker

7. Pennsylvania, abv.

8. Driver’s __, a program for people looking to get their permits

10. There are 999 of them leading up to Tianmen Cave

- Down:
1. The second part of the famous Halloween phrase

2. Ready, __, fire!

3. Acronym for a member of one of California’s State University systems.

4. Acronym for transitional school between preschool and kindergarten

5. Spinning toys children play with

8. Similar to an album but often shorter and less narrative-focused

9. The best-selling handheld console of all time

Chain Connections

Pumpkin

P_____

W_____

T_____

L_____

G_____

P_____

W_____

C_____

Clown

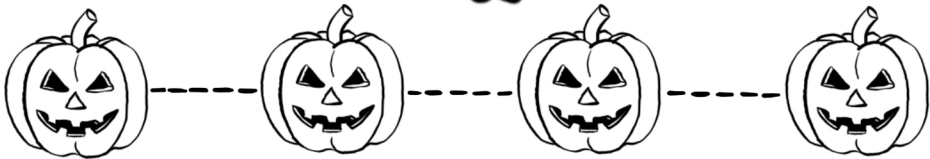
SCRAMBLES

“Ervey yad si Heaolnewl, ‘tnsi ti? orF mose fo su.” - Tim Burton

“m’I os dalg I levi ni a wdorl wehre htere era boOctres.” - L. M. Montgomery

“Mnutau si a secdon prigns newh verye feal si a rowlef.” - Albert Camus

“Wneh uoy rea luretcant ot gchane, tkinh fo het yebatu fo mauutn.” - V. V. Brown



RULES



SOLUTIONS

- LG should celebrate the merit and contributions of women’s businesses

LG must acknowledge women-owned businesses

by Britt Melinauskas, Sahil Muthukrishnan, Atharava Pandey, and Arnav Singhal
National Editor, Culture Editor and Sports Editors

The abundance of small businesses in Los Gatos largely contributes to the town’s distinctive vibrancy. A walk down Main Street reveals a tight-knit community, smiles, and familiar faces, authenticity that is hard to find in the tech-centered Bay Area. A major contributor to this vibrancy is the presence of women-owned businesses, each one bringing a unique warmth and kindness to the community. While they are becoming increasingly common and finding more chances to thrive in places like Los Gatos, women-owned businesses still face challenges that hinder their ability to grow and become financially successful. Living in Silicon Valley, one of the world’s most prominent tech hubs, it is easy to believe the generalization that large male-dominated corporations solely define our identity. In reality, the women-owned businesses, from local bakeries to body work, that represent the true heart of our community. Women’s businesses are crucial not only for our town’s atmosphere but also for its economy. Rather than capitalizing on or downplaying their femininity, the community should recognize local women-owned businesses for playing a role in strengthening the town’s inclusive culture, judging them on their impressive merit rather than solely on their gender.

Women’s small businesses offer more than just services to the community in which they are based; these businesses also provide stories of inspiration and success for other female entrepreneurs. Maggie Raye, the owner of Icing on the Cake Los Gatos, exemplifies this spirit: “[My mother] went into a very male-dominated area later in life, and so she kind of made the call [to join the area], being like, no, women can do the things that only men were traditionally allowed to do.” These innovative women serve as visionaries for what can happen when women turn their passions into their livelihoods. Their drive paves the way for the next generation of women to step forward, creating a space for the community to gather, filled with care and comfort. Raye serves as an example of a female

business owner who sets the stage for more like herself. In doing so, she balances her gender identity with professional ambition, showing how women do not need to change themselves to succeed. Female business owners such as Raye demonstrate that supporting them is not just a choice to support female entrepreneurship; it’s an investment in one’s community, considering their integral role. Businesses like Raye’s are successful not just because they are women-owned, but because the quality of service they provide is outstanding.

Another appeal of small businesses lies in their close-knit relations with their customers. Specifically, YogaSource’s co-owner, Linda Schlamadinger McGrath, explained, “We make taking care of yourself easy, effective, and enjoyable. When you feel great and are a part of an amazing community, you are unstoppable.” A business’s ability to inspire, appreciate, and understand its customers on such a personal level is what keeps people coming back. Moreover, regardless of gender, these businesses actively cultivate personal relationships with their customers and foster deeper ties with the community by organizing events, remembering names, and supporting local causes. Raye also shared, “I think

that the best thing is to see the same people over and over and over and over again.” Both McGrath and Raye emphasize the importance of genuine customer connection and the instrumental role it plays in curating the small-town, tight-knit community Los Gatos locals and visitors alike value so greatly.

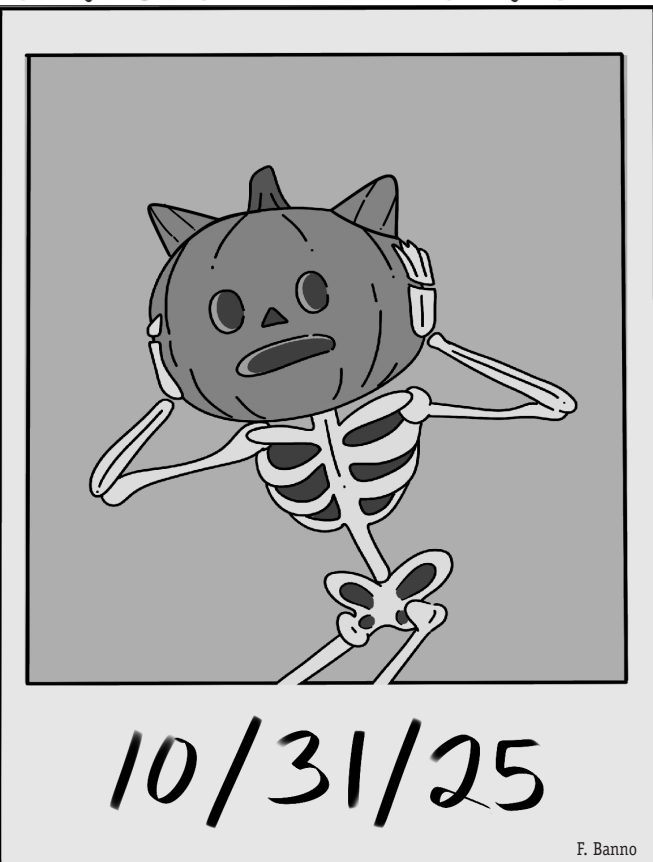
While society has made crucial strides to fight discrimination against women in entrepreneurial fields, our current system is far from perfect. A woman trying to start a business must overcome multiple systemic barriers that men do not face, often struggling to receive loans from bankers due to gender-based bias. According to Columbia Business School, female-led businesses are 63 percent less likely to secure venture capital funding than male-led businesses. This disparity is notable, considering that in the US, 14.5 million women-owned businesses are generating about 3.3 trillion dollars in annual revenue and employing 12.9 million workers. Moreover, a staggering 39.2 percent of all US businesses are women-owned, according to the National Women’s Business Council. Even though these statistics show that female-owned businesses have become integral to the US economy, these businesses continue to face issues today.

Gender discrimination has prompted some of these female business owners to take a defensive stance. Catherine Cabell Sommers, owner of Centerpiece Flowers, explained, “[My landlord] would not lease to me without my husband’s permission and bank account. “He asked me, ‘Are you sure you’ll be able to make it on your own?’ I’m like, ‘I don’t know, but I’m willing to try.’” The male-dominated nature of business networks, which often sidelines women, intensifies the systemic hardships that women face. Frequent gender bias further makes customers view women as less legitimate, even when they are equally or more qualified than their male counterparts. Instead of being discouraged, Sommers followed her intuition as both an entrepreneur and as a woman and has run a successful flower shop for two years. As co-owner of YogaSource, one of the largest and top-performing studios in Silicon Valley, McGrath advises rising business owners to “have a strategy, not just vision. Evaluate what it will take to be competitive in your market, and have backup plans. As soon as possible, hire the best people to complement your strengths.” Despite the unfair reality for aspiring female entrepreneurs, both Sommers and McGrath exemplify the resilient mentality of a business owner, being self-sufficient and refusing to acquiesce to societal pressures or skepticism.

As women-owned businesses continue to play a role in Los Gatos, their genuine and personal approach remains one of their greatest assets. Entrepreneurs such as Raye, Sommers and McGrath have demonstrated that success comes from surpassing the limits that society often places, proving that they can thrive as community-driven operations. In a region where tech startups dominate, these women remind us that sometimes, forming genuine relationships in your community is more than enough. By supporting women-owned businesses, the town of Los Gatos can preserve its warm, welcoming atmosphere while redefining the bar for success in Silicon Valley, keeping in mind that we should appreciate these businesses but not reduce them to the gender of their owners. (Sources: Columbia Business School, National Women’s Business Council, Synovus, University of Notre Dame)



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4 Girls’ Varsity Tennis at Homestead Cross Country SCVAL League Finals	5	6 Boys’ Varsity Football vs. Palo Alto Senior Night	7 Boys’ JV Football vs. Palo Alto	8
9	10	11	12 MOSAIC Lesson	13	14	15 Cross Country CCS Finals
16	17	18 Boys’ Varsity Basketball at Fremont	19	20 Boys’ Varsity Basketball vs. Saratoga	21 Boys’ Football at Wilcox	22
23	24 Thanksgiving Break	25 Thanksgiving Break	26 Thanksgiving Break	27 Thanksgiving Break	28 Thanksgiving Break	29 Cross Country CIF State Championship
30	1	2	3	4 Boys’ Varsity Basketball Tournament	5 Boys’ Varsity Basketball Tournament	6 Boys’ Varsity Basketball Tournament



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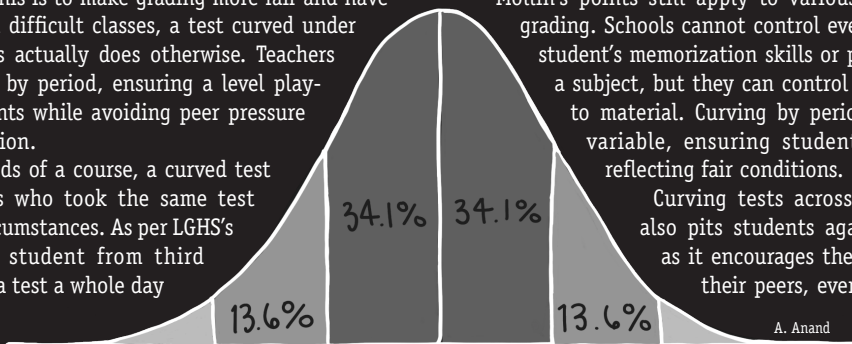
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Subscriber \$30

by Gowri Sunil
News Editor



Across all periods of a course, a curved test compares students who took the same test under different circumstances. As per LGHS's class schedule, a student from third period would take a test a whole day earlier than one in fourth period.



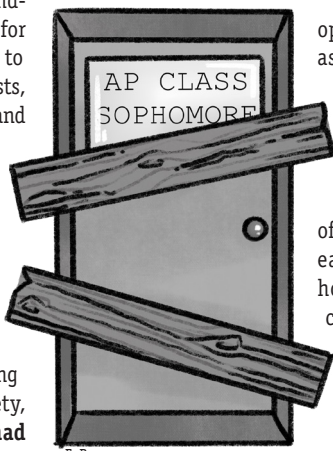
Curving tests across all class periods also pits students against one another as it encourages them to stop helping their peers, even to simply clarify a topic. The fear of their help

Curving tests by period is a necessity in rigorous classes to allow a student room for improvement. When it comes to curving tests, separating scores by class period is the fairest approach since the same preparation and in-class instruction applies to each group's scores. If we want to reduce stress and maintain fairness in education, curving by period is essential. (Sources: The John Hopkins News-Letter, Palisades Hudson)

by Lydia Liu
Public Relations Manager



Some sophomores do well in AP Euro, but students who are stronger in science, math, or global studies don't have the same chance to shine in their areas of interest. Reflecting on the value of academic variety, LGHS World History teacher **Chad Fegley** said, "The more we open up the curriculum, the more chances students have to find what they love." Providing classes such as AP World History, AP Human Geography, or science APs like AP Environmental Science would give students more ways to challenge themselves. These options let students follow their interests, help teachers engage diverse learners, and spark curiosity beyond traditional academics.



Sophomores at Los Gatos High are capable, motivated, and ready to take on greater challenges than what the school currently offers. They should not be limited to a few advanced classes when their curiosity and abilities extend far beyond those subjects. Expanding access to AP courses is not just about rigor; it is about giving sophomores the freedom to discover what they love and the confidence to pursue it.

by Advika Anand
Graphics Editor



During sophomore year, students are building foundations of problem-solving skills, linguistic abilities, and the capacity to grasp complex ideas. **Chad Fegley**, a LGHS World History teacher, emphasized the executive functioning skills necessary to succeed in an AP class. He noted



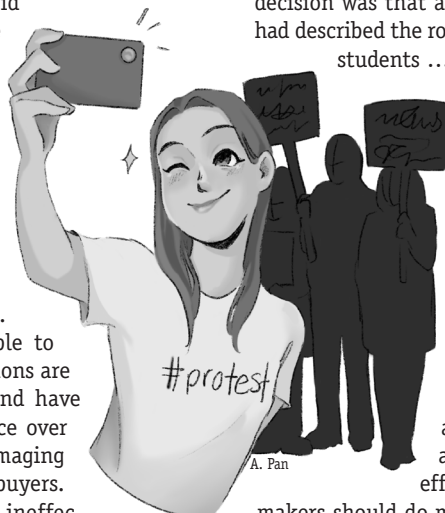
AP European History teachers **Stephanie Pearson** and **Tom Hughes** shared observations about the challenges that sophomores face when taking on their first AP class. Both affirmed that while sophomores are capable of analytical thinking, they often underestimate the time and discipline the course requires. Pearson pointed out that many students initially “struggle to balance the workload and need consistent guidance to manage the heavy reading and essay writing.” Hughes added that although the class encourages deep thinking, the “level of rigor can easily become overwhelming for students still adjusting to high school expectations.” A limited number of AP’s for sophomores keeps learning meaningful rather than mechanical.

by Kat Littfin
Editorial Editor



With the rising controversy surrounding Elon Musk, some Tesla owners report that people have damaged or vandalized their cars. These crimes have prompted Tesla owners to place stickers on their cars touting messages like “Elon Sucks” or “I bought this before we knew Elon was crazy.” The issue is that both perpetrators of Tesla vandalism and those who choose to use the stickers are demonstrating performative activism. Vandalizing cars does nothing to effectively fight against Musk’s damaging ideologies — including anti-semitism, anti-diversity, and techno-libertarianism — his governmental interference, or his company’s power. It only inconveniences the owners of the vehicles, who may or may not agree with Musk. Additionally, placing stickers with anti-Musk messaging is a purely self-serving act. If Tesla owners

Performative activism is not only ineffectual but also takes the focus away from actual changemakers and can hurt an activist's cause. In a *NY Times* article from 2021, John McWhorter, a linguist and professor



Whether it is a Tesla Bumper sticker, a random social media story, or an attack against a rock, performative activism is not effective, nor is it positive. Aspiring change-makers should do more than simply speak out about issues on a surface level. Instead, they should become involved locally or even on a larger scale in matters that they truly wish to address. (Sources: Fox Business. NY Times)

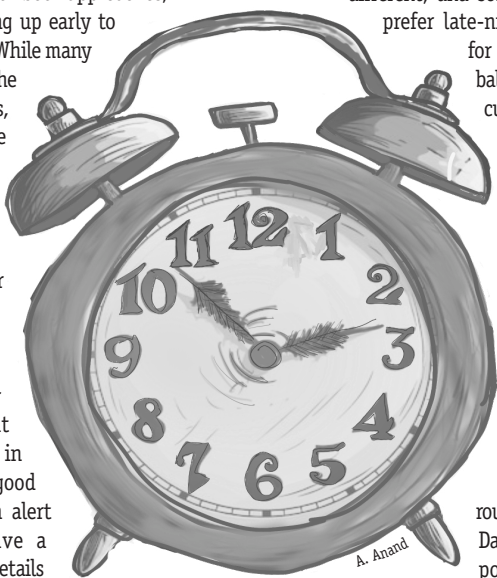
Morning studying is better

by Lila Zamansky
Media Production Editor



It’s well past mid-night, your room is dimly lit, and you still have two more hours of work left. You tell yourself you’ll study “just a little longer,” but the words start to blur together and your focus starts to drift. Trust me, every student has faced this moment. I have experienced the stress of cramming at 12:00 AM, and after experimenting with both approaches, I have found that waking up early to study is the way to go. While many of my peers swear by the late-night study grinds, my personal experience and research suggest that waking up and studying in the morning is far more effective for productivity, focus, and mental health.

According to Oxford Learning, our teenage brains are at their peak sharpness in the morning after a good night’s sleep. With an alert mind, “students have a better ability to recall details like names, places, dates, and facts,” which I have experienced firsthand. I find that when I study or finish homework in the morning, I retain the information clearly. This contrasts with my reading comprehension late at night: staring at the same page for ten minutes, understanding little to nothing, and having a brain too fatigued to comprehend. Sleep restores brain function, so waking up refreshed allows the mind to process information more efficiently. Studying early enhances memory



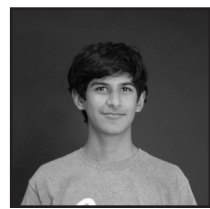
retention because a well-rested mind is better at forming neural connections and storing new information, therefore making it easier for students to grasp theories and complex concepts.

In my opinion, morning studying also boosts motivation. Dartmouth College adds that starting your day with effective study time creates “a sense of accomplishment throughout the day.” I believe that early studying gives me a sense of confidence. It feels rewarding to begin the day having already made progress rather than dragging myself through the day weighed down by unfinished tasks. However, everyone’s internal clock is different, and some people naturally prefer late-night cramming. But for most busy students balancing school, extra-curriculars, and social life, early mornings align better with a productive and sustainable schedule, allowing for less sleep deprivation. Waking up early also encourages healthier habits. To get up early, you naturally go to bed earlier, which results in better sleep routines and less stress. Dartmouth additionally points out that early studying “naturally reduces stress,” since you aren’t racing against time or pulling late-night cramming sessions.

Throughout my high school career, I have learned that studying in the morning transforms how I approach school. So, the next time you’re tempted to stay up until 2 AM working hard, consider closing your laptop and setting an early alarm instead. Your mind and your grades will thank you. (Sources: Dartmouth College, Oxford Learning)

Stop villainizing procrastination

by Ivan Habib
Website Manager



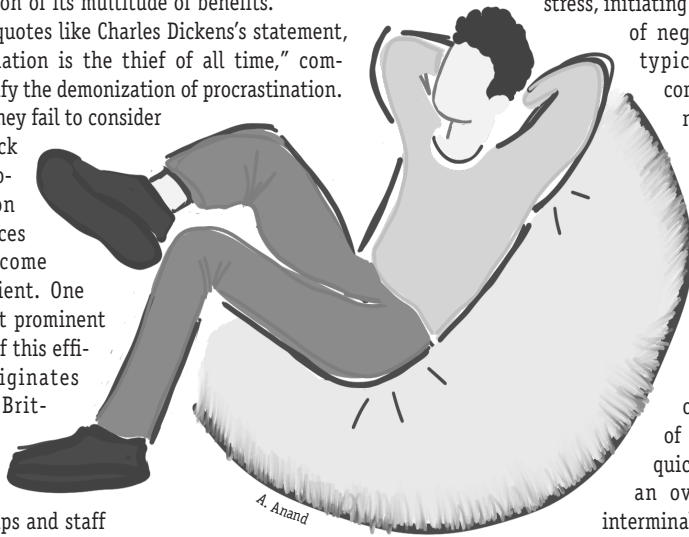
for weeks. Despite such strain, the student always prevails: limited time breeds greater productivity — the hallmark of a procrastinator. Too often does society unfairly villainize procrastination without consideration of its multitude of benefits.

Cliché quotes like Charles Dickens’s statement, “Procrastination is the thief of all time,” commonly justify the demonization of procrastination. However, they fail to consider that the lack of time procrastination causes forces one to become more efficient. One of the most prominent examples of this efficiency originates from the British Navy from 1914 to 1928. Despite ships and staff in the navy decreasing by over sixty-five percent and thirty percent respectively, administrative staff increased by over seventy-eight percent. Researchers classify this effect as Parkinson’s Law: “Work expands to fill the time available.” With more staff and less work, basic tasks simply expanded to fill the time. Conversely, starting tasks with half of the initially provided time leads to significantly increased efficiency. This efficiency stems from a variety of sources: sharper and more defined priorities based on due date, forced

focus, and natural preference towards actions with the highest impact.

Of course, as with any other habit, procrastination is only truly effective in moderation. There is a fine line between intentional and productive procrastination and merely avoiding the task. Scientists Roberte Yerke and John Dodson found that mice work most efficiently when motivated by mild electric stimulation; small shocks were insufficient stimulus, whereas large shocks lead to mice focusing too much on avoiding pain rather than completing the assigned task. Procrastination works in a near-identical manner with stress functioning as a surrogate for electric-shocks. Excessive procrastination leads one to focus on avoiding stress, initiating a destructive cycle of negligence; however, typical on-time task completions lack the necessary incentive to achieve peak performance.

Ultimately, procrastination is a delicate art not for the faint of heart. Embracing it too completely without consideration of consequences can quickly snowball into an overwhelming and interminable workload. It is a skill to know your own limits and how far you can push yourself before you break. Just as mainstream media encourages people to challenge themselves, truly embracing the procrastination mindset encourages people to test their limits and achieve maximum productivity, discovering what they are capable of. We need to stop villainizing procrastination and fairly acknowledge the benefits it can bring while also admitting that, like all other habits, it demands moderation to be effective. (Sources: National Institute of Health, The Economist)



Disneyland should be economically accessible to everyone

by Abby Coven
News Editor



“The Happiest Place on Earth” has become a luxury only for the rich. Originally, Walt Disney envisioned Disneyland to cultivate a magical experience for families of most socio-economic levels. For decades, Disneyland was the ideal destination for the growing middle class due to affordable prices. However, more recently, with the development of exclusive

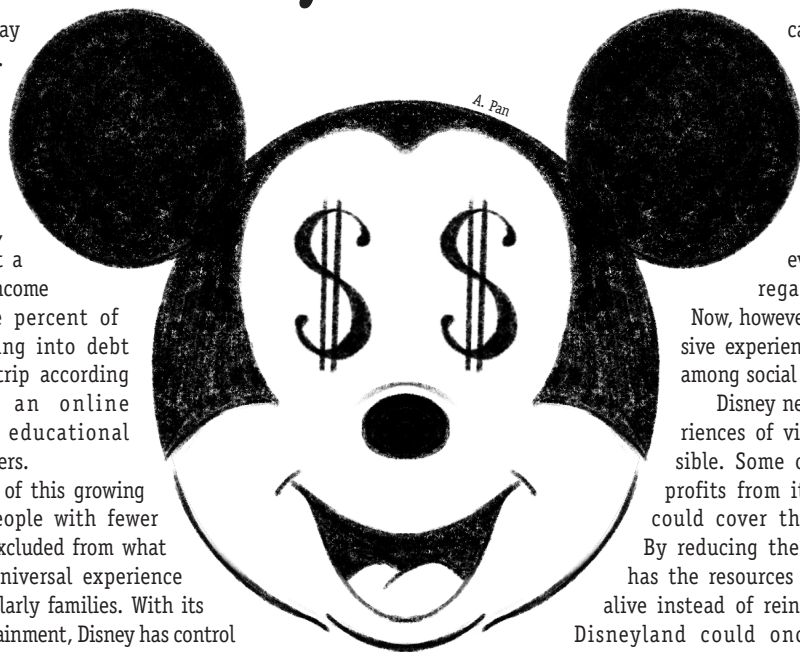
packages to make the park experience more enjoyable, prices have become exorbitant. If Disneyland wants to fulfill Walt Disney’s vision to make everyone’s dreams come true, it needs to stop prioritizing the experiences of affluent visitors over those with fewer means.

Disney has moved toward offering more exclusive, luxury adventures through various perks as it continues to raise ticket prices. Genie+ is a fast pass system that allows visitors to make reservations for specific rides or shows without waiting in long lines. On top of that, ticket fees, hotel costs, and food and souvenir prices in the park are rising exponentially.

Luxury experience marketing promotes the idea that Disneyland is an exclusive destination inaccessible to lower income families. Disney’s annual report notes that an astonishing half of all visitors purchase some sort of perks package, meaning people without them enjoy

fewer park rides per day and longer wait times. Some families take more time off work to avoid busy holidays in order to visit on less crowded days. Unfortunately, time off is often not a possibility for lower income families. Forty-five percent of parents end up going into debt to afford a Disney trip according to LendingTree, an online marketplace with educational resources for consumers.

The social effect of this growing disparity is that people with fewer resources may feel excluded from what should be a more universal experience for everyone, particularly families. With its monopoly over entertainment, Disney has control over the imagination and desires of all children. This poses a problem since a large percentage of lower income children



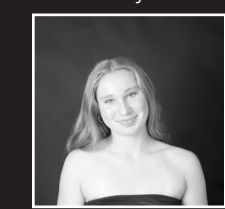
cannot access the park, leading them to internalize the idea that they are less deserving of visiting “The Happiest Place on Earth” than wealthier kids. Disneyland used to serve as a more inclusive, family-friendly experience where everyone could enjoy themselves regardless of their background.

Now, however, Disneyland’s focus on exclusive experiences indirectly drives a wedge among social classes.

Disney needs to make the shared experiences of visiting the parks more accessible. Some of the company’s significant profits from its entertainment dominance could cover the costs of lowering prices. By reducing the power of perks, Disneyland has the resources to keep Walt Disney’s vision alive instead of reinforcing social divides. Then, Disneyland could once again make everyone’s dreams come true. (Sources: CNBC, Disney Annual Report, LendingTree, NYT)

Gruetter condemns glorification of criminals on social media

by Sam Gruetter
Editor-in-Chief



In recent years, many politically motivated shootings have occurred, including the assassination attempt on President Donald Trump, the murder of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson, and the most recent killing of Charlie Kirk. While all of these figures are extremely polarizing and controversial in the realm of politics, social media users have taken it too far by glorifying the shooters and their actions through honorary “edits” and vain approaches to real, human events. Society needs to recognize that shooters are ultimately murderers and should not glorify them or their actions, despite the controversial nature of their victims or seemingly heroic intentions.

One of the most popular types of short-form content on TikTok is the edit. Essentially, a fifteen-second to one minute video of a person with special effects and music added, with the intention of glorifying the subject of the edit, tends to be an inherently positive form of media. Therefore, it was immensely problematic when people began making edits of Luigi Mangione, the alleged killer of UnitedHealthcare CEO

Brian Thompson, specifically, commenting on his appearance while neglecting the fact that he murdered an innocent individual. People, especially social media users, need to distinguish between the assailant’s appearance and intentions and their actions.

Another troublesome example of this behavior is the content users produced surrounding the assassination attempt of Trump. Many users stitched a clip of his competitor, Kamala Harris, saying “I have a Glock” with the video of Trump being shot. These videos lend problematic implications to Harris, a political figure who has built her platform on peaceful resistance and politeness towards controversial figures. These videos are also excessively contradictory to many liberal platforms and doctrines, namely their approach to gun violence and their viewpoint on it as problematic. Liberals cannot



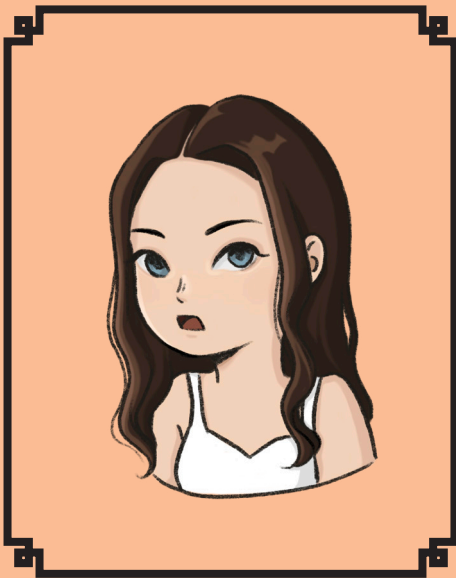
selectively choose when to adhere to their political beliefs; it must be a steadfast constant that they apply to every person and situation, rather than when they agree with it. The strength of political beliefs is indicated not by how individuals exercise them when it is easy, but when it is difficult.

This problem has also extended to the recent shooting of Charlie Kirk, with many people on social media making jokes about the irony and nature of his death. It is even possible that social media discourse motivated the killer; engravings on the bullets read “bella ciao,” a popular phrase in several video games. Even though Kirk had several hateful ideologies, killing somebody for their beliefs signals a trend towards an increasingly Orwellian society, a worrisome transition, and an even more concerning litmus test of the political well-being of our country.

A CRIME IN T

CAN YOU SOLVE THE MYSTER

Oct. 27th. 07:45 AM. On the morning of El Gato's Octo
506. Everything was ready for the students. The snack cab
were charged, and the few remaining September newspaper
that someone used the front page of the newspaper to creat
done it? Who committed this atrocious crime? We narrow
solid alibis. Can you unco



MEGAN SAUL



ARNAV SINGHAL



KLOE A

I promise I didn't cut up the newspaper. Why would I ruin some-
thing I spend so many hours on? I was busy downtown drinking matcha.

You can ask the Great Bear workers on the local page, and they will
attest that I was there bright and early at 7:30 AM, getting my daily man-
datory dose of caffeine, not cutting up a precious El Gato. But I noticed
that Tanvi was looking very suspicious. She had a Pinterest tab open on
her computer and was searching for mummy costumes, so obviously,
Tanvi committed the crime.

-Megan Saul, Editor-in-Chief

Don't look at me, I wasn't the one cutting up the newspaper! I was
stuck trying to recover the humor page the whole weekend and was
almost done about to submit it for edits when InDesign froze. It hit me: I
hadn't saved my page. You can ask my co-editors; they were helping me
try to get it back. But I did notice that Megan was looking very suspicious.
She kept rummaging through the pages as if there was something she
didn't want people to see. Obviously, Megan had something to do with
the crime.

-Arnav Singhal, Sports Editor

Do you really think I did it? I was on the Games page all weekend
on the Games page all weekend. I had never solved a sudoku for the first time; I had t
hard, so I used a pencil just in case. To my surprise, I solved it on my first
shavings on the Games page, I was proud. Speaking of my pencil, while I w
maging through Ms. DeSoto's

-Kloe Adams

THE NEWSROOM

TRY AND FIND THE CULPRIT?

October Press Week, Ms. DeSoto unlocked the door to Room 201. The printer was filled, the couches were cleaned, the computers were reset...were cut up and scattered on the ground?? It appears someone wore a mask for their Halloween costume, but who could have done it? We've narrowed it down to five suspects, but all of them seem to have an alibi. Can you figure out who the real culprit is?



ADAMS



TANVI AMBEKAR



IVAN HABIB

What? Well, think twice because I was in the room. The October issue introduced a new Halloween costume to try it out. Arnav said it was super easy to make, so I made any mistakes. To my surprise, I found an eraser under my desk. I was just my lucky number two pencil. While I was grabbing it, I saw Megan rummaging through Arnav's desk. Pretty suspicious, right?

Ms. DeSoto, Games Creator

Hey, let go of me - what Halloween mask? Ms. DeSoto thinks I did it? I was in the Opinion section the whole time the editors were putting it together; I even slept there both nights of Press Week. Come to think of it, I had to visit Kloe on the Games page on Monday night to ask about a particularly awkward sentence, and we chatted about her Cinderella-themed Halloween costume while we worked. The next morning, I drank a cup of black coffee while I edited. Actually, I think I left the mug on the title of Page 9 - there's my proof I didn't cut up those newspapers! If the mug is there, you can be sure I didn't do it!

-Tanvi Ambekar, Opinion Editor

What! Why would I want to cut up the newspaper? I was with the Editorial team the whole weekend, treating myself to the delicious desserts from Icing on the Cake. I devoured them, leaving so many crumbs that are still likely on the Editorial page. However, I did notice Arnav acting extremely suspicious; he was constantly muttering about how he had no Halloween costume and needed to think of something quickly. Do not shoot the messenger, but I would definitely cross-check his alibi.

-Ivan Habib, Website Manager

- Banno covers new SNL season
- Goodall passes away at 91

Strahs discusses Lucy Dacus's new album

by Hayley Strahs
Editor-in-Chief

Following the success of her indie folk album *Forever is a Feeling*, Lucy Dacus released *Forever is a Feeling: The Archives* on Oct. 10. This deluxe version includes two entirely new songs, along with various acoustic and live renditions from the main album.

The first new track on *Forever is a Feeling: The Archives* is *Best Guess - Wedding Version*. This track previously garnered popularity on TikTok when Dacus announced an open casting call for the song's music video. The initiative aimed to highlight gender-nonconforming individuals, and the final cast included figures like Towa Bird, Naomi McPherson, and Elio Kennedy-Yoon, among many others. While the original *Best Guess* utilizes electric guitar and drums to maintain a cadenced tone, the



F. Banno

wedding version is entirely acoustic. It captures the gentle and intimate side of queer relationships, emphasizing those between two women. Dacus has publicly identified as a lesbian since 2016, and she announced her relationship with fellow musician Julien Baker earlier this year. *Best Guess - Wedding Version* is a raw, yet affectionate portrayal of love and has been a hit among fans of all orientations and backgrounds.

Within this deluxe album, Dacus included the two songs from her summer single: *Bus Back to Richmond* and *More Than Friends*. Both songs examine the gray area between platonic and romantic relationships; like much of her other music, *Bus Back to Richmond* and *More Than Friends* center around Dacus's experiences with intimacy. Long-time fans are enjoying *Losing*, a song thematically similar to *Bus Back to Richmond* that Dacus has played at concerts for years. She previously asked her audiences

not to film it to preserve the anticipation of its release and avoid leaks.

Dacus originally planned to include all of these songs on the original album, but decided to release them later after shifting its theme. She explained on Instagram, "My arbitrary idea at the beginning of making this record was to write about falling into and out of love without using the word love at all."

Popular songs like *Bullseye*, *Ankes*, and *Lost Time* received special spotlights on this deluxe record. At Radio City Music Hall, Dacus shocked the audience and brought Hozier onstage to sing his feature on *Bullseye*. *Forever is a Feeling: The Archives* immortalized this moment with a live recording of the performance. Moreover, Dacus released a demo and an extended version of *Ankes* and *Lost Time*, respectively. Finally, she included an emotional rendition of Jim Croce's *Time in a Bottle*, which quickly became a hit within her fanbase.

From reimagined tracks to all-new songs, *Forever is a Feeling: The Archives* offers an innovative addendum to the original album. Whether you're a seasoned fan or brand new to her music, these eight tracks are absolutely worth a listen. (Sources: Massachusetts Daily Collegian, Them)

Banno describes the new SNL season

by Fuyu Banno
Graphics Editor

On Oct. 4, 2025, the popular comedy series *Saturday Night Live* (SNL) returned with its fifty-first season, welcoming a new set of cast members and writers while parting with those who had been mainstays of the show over the last couple of years. The season opener was met with mixed reactions as well as tensions over how late-night television has been under attack by the current presidential administration.

SNL producer Lorne Michaels had hinted after the end of the fiftieth season that he was going to "shake things up." Regardless, many were shocked by the news that came in early September, when popular veteran cast members Heidi Gardner and Ego Nwodim left. Other cast members who departed from the show include Michael Longfellow, Emil Wakim, and Devon Walker. Furthermore, the comedy trio *Please Don't Destroy* as a whole parted from SNL, a section some considered a staple of the show.

Aside from the various departures, SNL welcomed a new wave of comedians and personalities. New cast members include comedians Tommy Brennan, Jeremy Culhan, Kam Patterson, Veronika Slowikowska, and Ben Marshall. Marshall was part of the trio *Please Don't Destroy*; he is now an official cast member this season.

The new cast members bring years of experience with stand-up, short sketches, and comedy troupes to the show, much like veteran SNL members. Yet unlike previous cast members,

many newcomers gained popularity through TikTok and YouTube skits and trends.

The season premiere featured Bad Bunny as a guest and Doja Cat as a musical guest. Bad Bunny showed his versatility throughout the

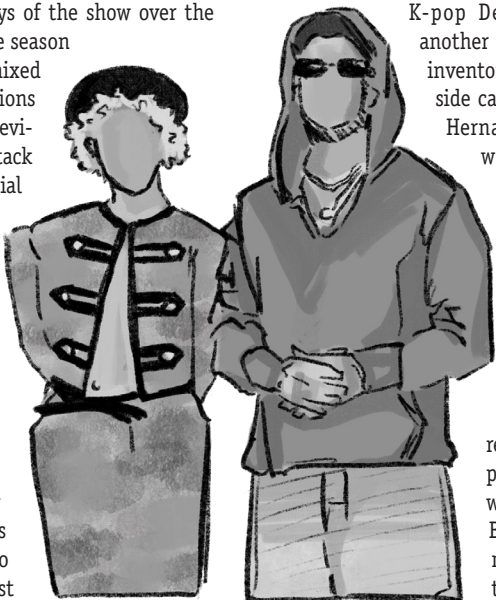
skits, playing an adult who loves K-pop *Demon Hunters*; in another skit, he played the inventor of Spanish along-side cast member Marcello

Hernandez. Other noteworthy parts of the season premiere included Bowen Yang cosplaying as Dobby from the *Harry Potter* franchise and a sketch introducing a rendition of ChatGPT. Audience reaction to the show's premiere was lukewarm. Some praised Bad Bunny's performance as well as the new faces in the show, while others were critical of the

quality of the sketches.

Furthermore, in the midst of pressure on late-night TV following the brief cancellation of Jimmy Kimmel's show, many were eager to see if SNL would continue its criticism and mockery of the administration or pull back. Yet, the season opener sent a clear message to many that SNL will not shy away from its tradition of political satire; *Weekend Update* host and writer Colin Jost showed up dressed as Pete Hegseth.

With a mix of old and new cast members, SNL will undoubtedly capitalize on sketch-worthy trends and current events to what the show hopes will be more enthusiastic audiences. (Sources: NBC, NYT)



F. Banno

MUTHUKRISHNAN'S TAKE ON TAME IMPALA

by Sahil Muthukrishnan
Culture Editor

Grammy winner Kevin Parker, Tame Impala's creator, dropped the project's latest album, *Deadbeat*, on Oct. 17. It is Tame Impala's fifth record, following *Innervisions*, *Lonerism*, *Currents*, and its previous project, the *Slow Rush*. *Deadbeat* is a continuation of the *Slow Rush* in many ways, having a similar psychedelic-electric sound and energy.

The project opens with *My Old Ways*, a track that skillfully blends its catchy hook, "Back into my old ways again," with an electronic feel, aiming to keep the listener engaged. Parker opens the track with flowing piano chords and his trademark, almost ethereal voice, before dropping the beat, enhancing the audio quality, and letting the drums shine. It's reminiscent of hits from his 2015 album *Currents*, with a strong beat, and it also incorporates harmonic elements to keep the track from dragging. The song establishes some of the album's patterns immediately, with later tracks being similarly synth-heavy and incorporating melodic piano at emotional moments.

Parker's next song, *No Reply*, sticks to many of the album's key themes, featuring an even more robotic feel. The track follows Parker as he grapples with his differences, struggling to fit in and perform to others' expectations. The song lays its foundation with similar piano chords to the prior song, making the tracks feel inextricably linked. *No Reply* reinforces the

album's themes and adds to Parker's myriad of relaxed listens.

Dracula, the record's third track, is a dance-oriented pop song taking clear inspiration from rave music. Its lyrics describe Parker at a never-ending party, using *Dracula* as a metaphor for keeping the night going and running from the sun. One of the album's strongest, it was one of three tracks released as a single before the project's release. It's incredibly catchy, encouraging lis-

teners to dance. The track incorporates many instruments – most notably a synth, a phenomenal hook, and a strong bassline. The song has already made waves, debuting at number 55 on the *Billboard* Hot 100 list.

Track four, *Loser*, sees a more sullen Parker reflect on a past relationship. Its instrumentation is a departure from the rest of the album, using the guitar more prominently and distancing itself from the record's electronic vibe, but maintaining some of its influence. The track's featured guitar riff is electrifying, adding to its overall groove. It is the second single Parker dropped before the album's release. Another standout track includes *Obsolete*, a catchy alternative pop tune that explores Parker's insecurities.

While *Deadbeat* might not be the rock return to *Lonerism* some fans were hoping for, it's still an incredible showing from Parker. Its emphasis on Parker's classic tropes are sure to satisfy fans of not just the *Slow Rush*, but also his previous albums. (Source: Genius)



F. Banno

MITCHELL DETAILS RECENTLY RELEASED HALLOWEEN MOVIES

by Kayla Mitchell
Public Relations Manager

Halloween is the one time of year when we get to celebrate the grotesque, scary stories of the world in a fun, festive way. The holiday experience is never truly complete without gathering a group of friends to watch a frightening Halloween movie together. Whether you are looking for a heartwarming Halloween story or a spine-chilling thriller, many new releases are coming out this year. Here are some of the most anticipated seasonal films and fan favorites from the past few Halloween seasons.

One of the most anticipated films coming out this season is the movie *Final Destination: Bloodlines*, the sixth installment of the *Final Destination* franchise. The plot follows new lead character Stefani Reyes, a young woman who discovers her family is cursed after her grandmother once cheated

Death by preventing a deadly tower collapse. Decades later, Death begins hunting down the survivors' descendants, taking the lives stolen years before. As her relatives die one by one, Reyes races to save her family and herself from their fate. If you're searching for a truly terrifying film this Halloween, *Final Destination: Bloodlines* is considered to be one of the scariest and most intense films of the entire franchise.

Multiple streaming services are releasing new films, with HBO Max debuting *Bring Her Back*, a psychological thriller praised for its haunting performances. When a young sibling duo becomes orphans after their father's overdose, they live with a foster mother grieving the loss of her own daughter. Their foster mother's grief quickly becomes an obsession with the young girl Piper, beginning to perform cult rituals in hopes of resurrecting her dead daughter. When Andy discovers his mother's plan to sacrifice Piper for a ritual, he does everything he can to protect his sister from his mother's supernatural plans. The film leans heavily into psychological horror and occasionally gruesome deaths, making it a

frightening watch for a Halloween night.

The Netflix original, *Prevenge*, is a British horror movie with aspects of comedy for a more relaxed fall evening. The story follows a pregnant woman who believes her unborn child is urging her to get revenge on the people responsible for her husband's death. Driven by the manipulative voice in her head, the mother goes on a killing spree, hunting down everyone connected to her husband's accident. As the film progresses, it becomes increasingly unclear whether the strong influence to kill is due to the child or just the thoughts in her own head.

While it can be entertaining to watch a scary film, sometimes it is nice to stick with a classic Halloween movie, celebrating the festivities and spirit of the holiday. The Hallmark release *Haul Out the Halloween* perfectly captures the spooky fun and community spirit that Halloween fosters. Following newlyweds as they celebrate their first Halloween together, viewers watch the couple attempt to win a competitive Halloween decorating contest, capturing all of the joyful parts of this festive holiday. For those who love the heartwarming side of Halloween, filled with seasonal fall vibes and community spirit, Hallmark films like this one are a great choice. (Source: The State Times)



A. Pan

Swift releases her latest project: The Life of a Showgirl

by Nelson Kramer
Editor-in-Chief

The icon who created and starred in the Eras Tour, which became the highest-grossing tour of all time, hasn't even taken a whole year off before releasing her 12th studio album, titled *The Life of a Showgirl*. Taylor Swift, a fearless songwriter, forges ahead with new music, branding her latest era.

The anticipation for the new record started months before its release date. In true Swiftie fashion, fans from around the world crafted album theories uncovering meanings behind cryptic Instagram posts, website updates, and tiny Easter eggs; all of which hinted at her new glittery era. Swift has used a myriad of methods for album announcements in the past. Once again, she switched it up by revealing the title and physical LP (long-playing record) during her first-ever guest appearance on Travis and Jason Kelce's *New Heights* podcast. During the episode, Kelce and Swift



A. Pan

also discussed music, family and their careers, building out common themes in her new life present in the record.

The excitement didn't stop there. Days later, Swift and Kelce left fans reeling after announcing their engagement. The big reveal, which Swift made through an Instagram post, showcases her commitment to her current life and her ability to thrive in an era that highlights maturity and femininity under the spotlight.

The Life of a Showgirl delves into glam-pop and carries a deeper, more mature tone that balances out with her classic sound, which is quickly becoming the hallmark of her late work. Fans are going wild for the opening track, *The Fate of Ophelia*. This piece starts off the album and immediately draws attention to its Shakespearean connections. The song references Hamlet's Ophelia, a classic victim of manipulation and despair; in this new narrative, Swift quite literally flips the script with the help of Kelce. This track is a means of celebrating their connection.

Swift carries the same depth into her next popular track that instantly intrigued fans, *Wood*. The song is catchy, but it needs multiple listens to understand her message. According to Swift, the song was supposed to be a whimsical reference to the phrase knocking on wood, but it quickly delves into playful yet raunchy lyrics about Kelce. This track's explicit double entendres, while shocking to some, make her fans believe she has found the tone of her new music as she settles into this new era.

Swifties are loving *Eldest Daughter*, which is garnering attention for its vulnerability. It references eldest daughter syndrome, a non-clinical depiction of the perfectionism, anxiety, and possible burnout that often accompany family expectations of being the eldest daughter. Raw, honest, and deeply introspective, track five earns the listener's empathetic attention.

Overall, the release of Swift's 12th album brings joy to the Swiftie community, showcasing a well-polished, new sense of sophistication in this era. With all the attention back on Swift, fans are on the edge of their seats, eagerly awaiting the next record. The much-anticipated 13th album, which corresponds with the digit Taylor has long treated as her lucky number and referenced in music and media throughout her career.

(Sources: Harper's Bazaar, NBC, The Cosmopolitan, Time)

Dancing with the Stars airs

by Chloe Wilson
Culture Editor

The new season of *Dancing with the Stars* (DWTS) aired on Sept. 16, and its exciting cast members are increasing the viewership week by week. With athletes, celebrities, reality TV stars, and more, the 34th season is already a fan favorite.

The show features two cast members of the viral series, *Secret Lives of Mormon Wives*, Whitney Leavitt, paired with Mark Ballas, and Jen Affleck, partnered with Jan Ravnik. In episode 4, *Disney Night*, Leavitt and her on-stage partner danced to the song *The Room Where It Happens* from *Hamilton*. This earned the season's first nine out of ten rating from one of the judges, which gave them an overall score of 25 out of 30 for the night. The dance put Whitney at the top of the leaderboard.

Another fan favorite, Robert Irwin, the son of the late *Crocodile Hunter* star Steve Irwin, maintains high scores, garnering a 22 out of 30 score on *Disney Night* and remaining in the competition. Additionally, influencer Alix Earle wowed the crowd with a dance to *Once Upon a Dream* dressed as Maleficent, earning her and her partner a 24 out of 30 from the judges.

The most recent contestant eliminated from the competition was Hilaria Baldwin, an American entrepreneur married to actor Alec Baldwin. So far, the judges have eliminated Lauren Jauregui, Baron Davis, Corey Feldman, and all of the stars' professional dance partners.

DWTS is a light-hearted competition show, a show that gives celebrities a platform to dance professionally, a passion they may not have otherwise pursued. It also highlights the significant improvement of the stars on the show as they accept in feedback from judges Carrie Ann Inaba, Bruno Tonioli, and Derek Hough. The hosts of the show are Julianne Hough and Alfonso Ribeiro.

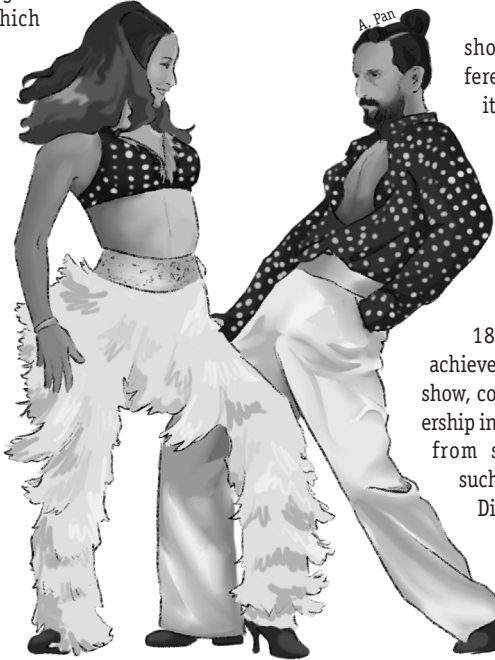
Unsurprisingly, the viewership of Season 34 has been off the charts. On the Disney-themed night, the show reached 5.88 million viewers, just beating the 5.83 million viewers on the previous episode. This marks the first time in all 34 seasons that the audience has grown for three weeks in a row after the premiere.

Additionally, the show has reached different age groups that it has not reached in past seasons. Across its first four weeks, ABC's (American Broadcasting Company) DWTS achieved a 1.0 rating among adults 18-49, a significant achievement for a network show, considering most viewership in that age group stems from streaming services such as Hulu, Fubo and Disney+.

The show will conclude at the end of November, with a total of 11 episodes. New

episodes come out every Tuesday, and each episode is associated with a different theme. New themes to look forward to in future shows include *Dedication Night*, *Halloween Night*, *Prince Night*, and more!

(Sources: Cosmopolitan, The Hollywood Reporter, Yahoo Entertainment)



A. Pan

Goodall passes away at age 91

by Jordan Park
Website Manager

On Oct. 1, world-renowned ethologist, conservationist, and humanitarian Jane Goodall passed away at the age of 91. With her passing, she left a legacy of courage, devoting her life to raising awareness about the threats facing wildlife, advancing global conservation efforts, and inspiring a more sustainable relationship among animals, humans, and the natural world.

Born in London on Apr. 3, 1934, Goodall was the eldest daughter of Mortimer Morris-Goodall and writer Margaret Myfanwe Joseph. From a young age, she was fascinated by animals and dreamed of exploring Africa. She worked toward achieving this dream for most of her adolescent life, saving up in the hopes of one day traveling there to observe animals in their natural habitats. That dream became reality when she met paleontologist Louis Leakey. He hired Goodall as his secretary at the National Museum in Nairobi, a role that led to her groundbreaking research in Gombe, Tanzania. Most of her research centered around several generations of a chimpanzee group of 30 to 40 members. She named many of them, including Flo, Fifi, and David Greybeard, and came to know each of them personally. Her studies focused primarily on their courtship, mating, births, and parenting behaviors. There, her patience and keen observation revealed the discovery that chimpanzees use tools, forever changing our understanding of animals.

While her work with chimpanzees is perhaps her most well-known accomplishment, Goodall's

impact extended far beyond it. A global advocate for human rights, animal welfare, and environmental protection, she dedicated her life to inspiring change across the globe. Over her lifetime, she wrote more than 20 books for adults and children and appeared in numerous documentaries and films. In 1977, she founded the Jane Good-

all Institute (JGI) to support her

research at Gombe. Today, JGI operates in 25 countries, leading diverse programs in conserva-

tion, education, and community engagement. In 1991, she estab-

lished *Roots & Shoots*. This youth-

led humanitarian and environmental program began with just 12 students

in Tanzania and has since grown to include members in more

than 75 countries, empowering young people to take action for animals, the environment, and their communities. To ensure her mission to better the world continued even after she was gone, she established the Jane Goodall Legacy Foundation in June of 2017.

A truly remarkable woman, Goodall earned some of the world's highest honors for her achievements. In 2002, the United Nations named her a Messenger of Peace, the organization's highest recognition for global citizenship. Two years later, Buckingham Palace appointed her a Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE), and the United States awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

(Sources: Jane Goodall Institute, NY Times)



A. Pan

EL GATO RECOMMENDS: Trader Joe's, UGGs, and more

If you are looking for a place to go and spend time with your family, the Los Gatos Farmers' Market is the place for you. Stroll past colorful stalls filled with fresh produce, baked goods, flowers, and handmade treats, all while soaking in the vibrant atmosphere of the town square. Local musicians play lively songs, adding to the experience, and there's always something new to explore each week. Visiting the market is a chance to enjoy live entertainment and connect with the community in a fun and relaxed setting—the perfect way to spend your Sunday morning.

-Tanya Chang, Sports Editor

Do you find yourself wishing for a comforting autumn dessert, even on the warmest October nights? Trader Joe's has just the thing for you: a fall edition of their mini ice cream treats, Pumpkin Ginger Hold the Cones. These cones provide a satiating burst of flavor with a refreshing yet creamy blend of spices. Topped with a thin coating of white chocolate, each bite comes with a welcoming crunch, making it hard to put the box away. Next time you find yourself perusing the aisles of Trader Joe's during these fall months, don't forget to grab this delicious treat before it goes out of season and satisfy your autumn cravings!

-Tori Schubert, People Editor

As the fall season begins and teenagers across the nation bundle up, confinement starts to become a priority. Hoodies, sweatpants, long-sleeve shirts: what's missing? A pair of shoes, initially made for house wear only, now fashionable for public places as well.

Those shoe staples, initially trending in the early 2000s, are slippers, but more specifically, Uggs. Uggs are taking over as the most popular everyday shoe, whether you choose to don the slide-on slippers, the boot style, or some Tasmanians. This fall and winter, grab a pair of Uggs, sure to elevate both your outfit and your mood!

-Quinn Hathaway, Media

Production Editor

The warm smell of vanilla, oak, and something called "oud" invites you into the colorful haven that is Bath & Body Works (BBW). With fully

stocked shelves of soap, perfume, and candles, BBW can solve post-practice sweat and post-school exhaustion at the same time. Whether you prefer extravagant champagne-flavored body lotion or travel-sized shampoo, BBW has a unique scent palette for all who enter. Setting the mood for the morning, afternoon, or evening begins with the very fragrance you choose, and those fragrances are born at Bath & Body Works!

-Tanvi Ambekar, Opinion Editor

Are you an avid doomscroller? Do you constantly find yourself procrastinating on tasks like studying or cleaning your room? If so, Focus Friend might be precisely what you need. This free productivity app helps you maintain total concentration by using timed study sessions, reminders, and even virtual "focus buddies" to keep you accountable. The app's simple design makes it easy to set goals, track progress, and lock down your apps to minimize distractions while completing tasks. Whether you're trying to finish homework, organize your space, or just build better habits, Focus Friend turns productivity into something motivating and fun.

-Lila Zamansky, Media Production Editor



F. Banno



F. Banno

- Littfin describes her squirrel-phobia
- Strahs explores the trolley problem

HUMOR

EL GATO • FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025 • LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL • WWW.ELGATONEWS.COM

Hathaway describes her average sunday

by Quinn Hathaway
Media Production Editor

The question on every high schoolers’ mind: is Sunday the end or the start of the week? A time worn question; the answer varies with every teenager. Whatever the answer, Sunday is the cusp of a new era of pain. Get ready for a shockingly accurate description of the eve of the school week and what all students could agree is a day that expects just too much of you.

You wake up to your phone alarm blaring at its maximum volume at anywhere from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM, depending on how motivated you felt the night before. Groggily, you smash the snooze button and consequently sleep through the snoozed alarm for about five minutes before giving up, shutting it off, and finally rolling out of bed. Thoughts of productivity long abandoned, you slide back into bed and scroll on your preferred social media platform for about an hour. Getting dressed is the next task, and only one category of clothing sounds tolerable on this treacherous day: sweatpants and a hoodie. Even though the outfit is most likely paired with slippers and bags under yours eyes, congrats! You did something!

Now it is about noon, and lunch is sounding most appealing. Because you have procrastinated on your homework for the entire weekend, it is time to multitask. What establishment could you potentially do homework at while simultaneously chowing down

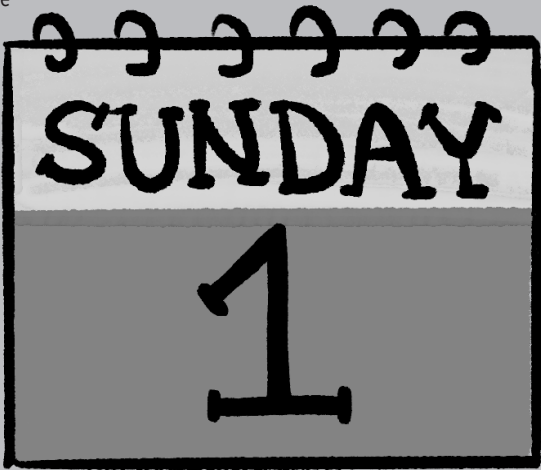
on some overpriced carbs? Yep, that’s right, head on over to your local Starbucks, where the barista most likely knows you by name because of how much you frequent the table next to the charger.

Immediately after arriving at Starbucks, things are looking up when your mobile order is waiting for you, and a table near an outlet is available. Yet you encounter the first roadblock when you find your AirPods are dead, and the espresso machine is whirring loudly while some Lululemon-clad middle school girls are gossiping obnoxiously at the table next to you. Spirits low, you sip your iced chai pumpkin latte in hopes of restoring any shred of motivation and start the homework that sounds the least taxing.

Approximately two hours later, all that is going to get done has been done, and you head home. The next part of the day varies; maybe you have sports practice, tutoring, work, or some random inconvenient task. Regardless, dinner sounds

appetizing, but is ruined when you enter the kitchen to a terrifying scene: behold, the dreaded Crockpot, which has been simmering away all day. You see some form of meat, probably overcooked, but somehow is your parents’ pride and joy. With a sigh, you sit down and paste on a fake smile and pretend to enjoy the unpleasant concoction before you.

The informal period of “Sunday night bedrot” follows the conclusion of dinner: a period of anywhere from 45 minutes to several hours of doom scrolling on TikTok, stressing about the homework you aren’t doing, and trying not to fall asleep. The day comes to a conclusion with a final push of productivity, about 15 minutes long, disturbed by frustration, cutting this work period short. The epitome of giving up is tucking yourself into bed at 11:30, preferably with a treat. Sweet dreams, thinking about a 6:45 AM wakeup and the entire school week in front of you!



F. Banno

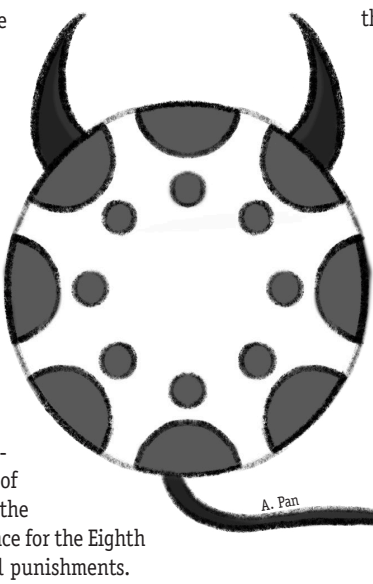
KRAMER CRITICIZES CANVAS

by Nelson Kramer
Editor-in-Chief

To all the parents who forgot what it’s like to be in high school, ask any student, and they will tell you that it sucks. Whether your kid is grinding through seven periods with an elective in “How to Be a Nerd 101,” or they are taking it easy in their senior year with four periods, the overwhelming woes of school life, assignments, and grades affect everyone. No matter how brilliant you think your kid is, school still takes time and energy, and grades make everyone feel worthless. All of that comes with being a student; it is simply beyond our control. But do you know what you can do as a parent to help your kids? Turn off your stinkin’ Canvas notifications, close your kid’s grade book, and get a life!

I mean, COME ON — who-ever came up with the idea for grade and assignment notifications, let alone Canvas Mobile as a whole, needs to be put on trial in federal court. Get me a copy of the Constitution because Kramer v. Creators of Canvas will go down in history as the court case all Gov teachers reference for the Eighth Amendment: no cruel or unusual punishments.

If you think that I’m just bitter because I cry every time I look at my grades, think again. Canvas notifying you the moment a teacher updates the grade book for the fifth time in one day is actually really bad for your brain. I don’t even need to reference scientific studies because I am living proof. The fall semester isn’t even over, and I’m already in need of a straitjacket.



A. Pan

I feel like our parents have no understanding of how crazy we are about grades at Los Gatos High School. I know they want to help, but quite frankly, it’s annoying. Back in their day, success and vanity were achieved with a mirror and a 60-cent can of hair spray. Nowadays, kids wake up and start foaming at the mouth waiting for Canvas to boot up. Don’t get me started on the insane load time. If Canvas is going to tell me that my teacher changed my grade and then takes three weeks to load the homescreen, let alone the gradebook, they had better be ready to pay for my new computer because during the criminal wait time, I will have crashed out and threw my old one at the wall.

I’m lucky; my parents only check Canvas when it notifies them with a terrifying grade drop. Message to the developers of Canvas: please stop only sending my parents my less than ideal grade changes. I am sad to say they are losing hope for me.

To all the kids who have parents who track every assignment, or who look at an ungraded assignment and freak out, I feel deep sorrow for your mental state. Together, we can beat this epidemic of depression that our very own grading systems perpetuate. Let’s overthrow Big Canvas and make our own system. For now, just sneak onto your parents’ phone and silence the notifications from the god-forsaken app.

Anand encourages original costumes

by Advika Anand
Graphics Editor

Once upon a time, Halloween was about the thrill of the night, filled with carving eerie jack-o’-lanterns, hanging plastic skeletons, and racing to get more candy than your sibling. Now, all people care about is creating the cutest costumes, hoping no one else shows up in the same thing.

Let’s face it, Halloween costumes have become boring and repetitive. Every year, social media decides our dress code. Whether it’s girls dressing up as the Lorax, a founding father, or impersonating Adam Sandler, Halloween has transformed from a night of fright into more of a cliquy fashion show.

Gone are the days when people actually tried to be scary. Instead of fake blood, rubber masks, or face paint, costumes consist of denim skirts, corset tops, and high-heeled boots. Although these items of clothing may be appealing, Halloween should be about the innocence of dressing up, spending time with friends, and creatively expressing yourself one night of the year. Somewhere along the way, Halloween stopped being a night filled with costumes and candy and became a competition for who can best match their friend group’s themed outfits and secure the perfect photo to post on Instagram.

As a high schooler, I understand running out of time or ideas for a costume, especially with the stress of Halloween approaching. I myself



A. Pan

have definitely fallen victim to the occasional recycled costume, but just because it’s last-minute doesn’t mean it needs to come in last place. Throwing on casual clothes, like a tutu with leggings and a random accessory, isn’t a costume. That’s not a ballerina, it’s someone who forgot it was Halloween until their first-period teacher reminded them.

Here’s what you can do to restore Halloween back to its original roots. Although it’s difficult for us procrastinators, consider planning out your costume early. If that doesn’t work (because, let’s be honest, it probably won’t), try embellishing your last-minute outfit with accessories that elevate your look. You’d be surprised by the things you can find in Affordable Treasures or from your grandma’s slightly creepy basement. Mix and match, experiment, and see what bizarre combinations you can pull together to complete your look. No matter what you find, have fun with it, because Halloween is all about creativity, not convenience.

It’s not that dressing up for fun is gone; it’s just been replaced by the desperate need to be “aesthetic.” The real monsters now are the ones who judge your costume’s style or ask, “Wait...what are you supposed to be?” with genuine concern. So this year, maybe someone will bring back the classic scares. Let’s trade in the cowboy hats for cobwebs, the glitter for gore, and the Pinterest boards for pure imagination. Because the true horror of Halloween 2025 is seeing 12 other people wearing the same thing as you.

Strahs tackles the age-old trolley problem

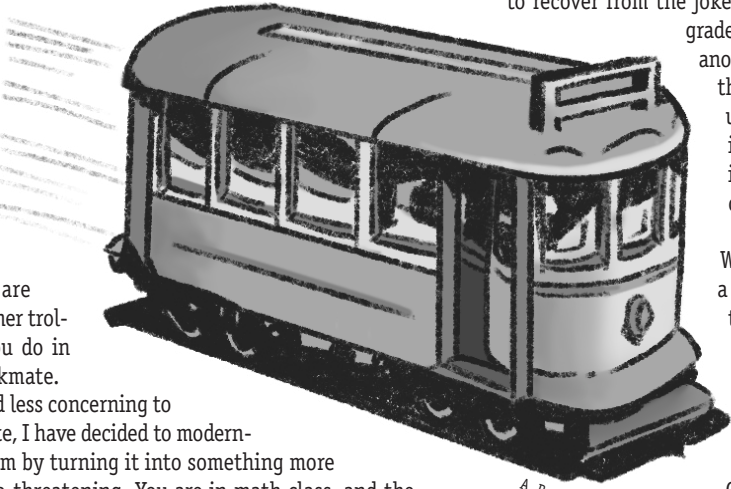
by Hayley Strahs
Editor-in-Chief

Think fast! You are conducting an out-of-control trolley barreling towards six people. But wait, you have the option to divert the trolley onto a different track, with only one person on it instead of six. Do you pull the lever and switch the track, saving some people while consciously hitting another? Or do you let the trolley continue on its path and watch as it crashes into an unsuspecting group of people? The trolley problem is a dark, yet age-old philosophical question that explores fault and the value of a human life. Saving six people at the expense of one seems like an obvious answer, but what if the sacrificed person were a loved one? What if they were a bad person? What if they were a landlord or a celebrity?

As you can see, the trolley problem is no simple dilemma. In fact, some would argue that it’s too dark and pessimistic to reference in the humor section of a high school newspaper. Here, we encounter yet another variation of the previously stated ethical quandary. Does El Gato News a) allow me to write and publish this semi-risky piece with political undertones, or b) divert the journalistic trolley by requesting that I reconsider my controversial topic of choice? Of course, I love El Gato and would happily rewrite my article if necessary. After all, this is a newspaper, and I need to maintain a sense of professionalism and a positive digital footprint. Perplexities such as these complicate

the trolley problem by adding a myriad of possibilities, or “tracks” that the outcome of the situation might take. But let’s not stop at more tracks. How about more trolleys? More people? Imagine a version of the trolley problem where the trolleys are barreling towards other trolleys! What would you do in that situation? Checkmate.

On a brighter (and less concerning to future employers) note, I have decided to modernize the trolley problem by turning it into something more relatable and less life-threatening. You are in math class, and the absolute maximum value of a function happens to be 67. Do you: a) say nothing and let a part of your inner child wither away in agony or b) giggle and out yourself as chronically online? 67 already peaked in popularity, so laughing at it will probably seem cringe and have per-



A. Pan

manent consequences for your reputation. Personally, I’m still trying to recover from the jokes I made in sixth (or maybe seventh) grade, and my social life really can’t afford another hit. Conversely, why deny yourself the happiness of oscillating your hands up and down with numerical joy? By ignoring the 67 joke, you ignore your inner child, who can’t be more than six or seven years old.

No option is ever perfect. Whether it’s a human life (or six) or a nerve-wracking move to a new city, there isn’t always a right answer to every question. After all, haters never back down, no matter what you do and no matter how you navigate a fast-moving vehicle in a hypothetical life-or-death situation. Grab Plato by the horns and take this overanalyzed abstraction with an eight-wheeled grain of salt. Do whatever you need to snap out of this philosophical question mind prison. Hint: a trolley to the face usually does the trick.

AMBEKAR CRITIQUES UNNECESSARY ENGLISH LETTERS

by **Tanvi Ambekar**
Opinion Editor

Your Honor and members of the jury, my name is **Tanvi Ambekar**, and I appear before you today to propose changing the spellings of certain English words to remove unnecessary letters, or better yet, eliminate them from the alphabet entirely. Despite the English language only having 26 letters, we somehow still manage to make about half the characters in a word useless. To be honest, it ticks me off. Especially when my lovely English teacher drops my essay grade from a 90 to an 89 because I switched around the last E and U in entrepreneur; never mind that you would read it the same anyway. My evidence is as follows. Please give me your most rapt attention.

First and foremost, an uncountable number of words in the English language contain unnecessary letters. For example, words like palm, should, and caulk all contain silent Ls for one singular purpose: to make them feel taller. While I can relate, being barely

five foot three myself, I don't have the heart to tell Calm over there that throwing in a random letter will not make him more powerful than a word like dollop or frolicking, no matter how much he tries to copy their spelling.

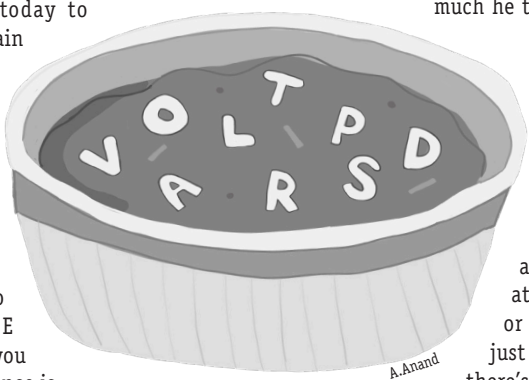
This also goes for the atrocious number of silent Bs in English. Think about it; words like comb, tomb, thumb, and lamb neither rhyme nor have any similar meaning. Their vertical insecurities must be taking a heavy toll on their mental health; it's the only explanation for why they are all so determined not to be associated with each other through spelling or pronunciation. We should probably just send all the words to group therapy; there's no way you can carry around that many useless letters and still be emotionally stable.

Either way, I propose that we spell words based mostly on their actual spelling; maybe then my spelling calf without the L wouldn't have made me a laughing stock in sixth grade. Yeah, Emma, I still hate you.

However, I recognize that some silent letters redeem themselves. For example, the silent E at the end of many words changes the pronunciation of consonants like G and C, as well as the way we say many vowels. Without the E, cute would become cut and rage would become rag; the number of words in the dictionary would halve – which, if you really think about it, might not be a horrible idea given that we have a word for chucking someone out of a window (defenestration, for anyone interested).

Besides E, though, the list of letters thrown arbitrarily into words is astounding. Why do we spell February with two Rs when the first one is never pronounced? Why do we spell Wednesday with an extra D? Why does listen have a random T?? At this point, if English were a person, it would be that one character on Hoarders who keeps a broken lamp for years because it has “sentimental value.”

As you can see, Your Honor, my argument stems not from frustration, anger, or fear of failing English class, but genuine concern for our language. If we don't take radical action now, the silent trauma of these words may spread without us noticing. And trust me, more words with phonetic attachment issues are the last thing this language needs.



A. Anand

Singhal talks trick-or-treating alternatives

by **Siyona Singhal**
Humor Editor

As much as I want to deny it, I cannot anymore. I am officially too old to go trick-or-treating. No longer can I knock on someone's door, flash a smile, and receive a king-sized chocolate bar. Now all I get are dirty looks and judgment. If you're experiencing the same thing, fear not. I have come up with some activities for Halloween night that don't include walking door-to-door asking for candy, only to have your neighbor give you the stink-eye.

First up, scaring trick-or-treaters. If you can't have fun trick-or-treating, no one can. Try putting on a costume with a spine-chilling mask and standing in the corner disguised like an inanimate object. When you catch trick-or-treaters taking more than one piece of candy from the bowl, teach them a lesson. Jump from your corner screaming and just watch how they run. Now, this may seem cruel, but someone has to keep Gen Alpha in check.

You may not be able to acquire candy the traditional way, but who needs tradition? Grab your younger siblings and get to negotiating. One chore for three packs of Skittles. 15 extra minutes of TV time for two Kit Kats. Once you acquire a base amount of

candy from them, move on to your friends, or even trick-or-treaters whose bags are looking pretty full. You'll learn valuable economic skills, like supply, demand, and the true value of your friendship when someone refuses to swap a Reese's.

You can also celebrate Diwali. All my fellow Indians understand what I'm talking about, but for those who don't know, last year Diwali (the Indian festival of lights) fell on the same day as Halloween. It was comical seeing people go from wearing beautiful Indian clothing to dressing as zombies covered in fake blood. If this strange phenomenon occurs again, I'm just going to go as Princess Jasmine to save myself some time.

Next, binge-watching horror movies. Nothing screams Halloween like gripping your popcorn bucket in fear and hiding under a blanket at every noise. As a certified scaredy-cat, Halloween is the only time of the year I force myself to sit down and watch a movie filled with gore, stupid characters, and jump scares around every corner. I just don't understand the appeal. Why do people enjoy being full of tension, yelling at the idiotic people in the movie, and dealing with insomnia for the next two nights? In my opinion, the best horror movies to watch on Halloween are The Nightmare Before Christmas, Hocus Pocus, and Casper.

A. Anand

Mitchell and Hathaway analyze Gruetter as chief

by **Kayla Mitchell and Quinn Hathaway**
Media Production and Public Relations Editors

Editor-in-Chief: the most prestigious position in El Gato, reserved for only the hardest-working seniors. Each year, the class votes on whom they want to lead them, putting their trust in the hands of four role models. Although many compete for this elite spot, the class awards the title to only the most qualified and dedicated workers. This year, El Gato made the choice of a lifetime; they elected the caffeine-addicted, race-car driver, **Samantha Gruetter**.

Gruetter is, in fact, a great Editor-in-Chief and is very knowledgeable about every aspect of El Gato. If you ask her any question, she will definitely answer, but some form of brainrot will be interspersed in the response. References to chronically online trends frequent Gruetter's vocabulary, and memes from years ago resurface daily. However, Gruetter's rhetoric is one of her most interesting aspects, I would go so far as to say that she would not be herself without the constant repetition of "I'm talking 'bout innit" and "airballlll."

Brainstorming articles, arguably one of the most important days in El Gato each press cycle, would not be the same without Gruetter's trademark reactions when she hears an article proposal. Whether she's mid-stalk of a certain someone's family member or strategizing how to get her small bulldozer of a car, "Fitz," out of Church Street, Gruetter never fails to react

dramatically to the situation. Gruetter's reactions consist of a ferocious hair whip (due to her newly developed fixation on the art of French braiding), followed by a boisterous laugh or a sneaky side eye. As for her El Gato writing, Gruetter constantly produces unique articles, never shying away from writing about her recent fixations and hot yoga horror stories.

Press week, the grueling period in which the staff members work long hours compiling articles into the final product, unlocks a new side of Gruetter. She consumes snack after snack, chats with anyone who will sit still, and teaches newbies Adobe tricks that no one else would ever know. You can usually find her lounging on the couch, multitasking to the max. Somehow, she will be editing pages, eating a full meal, talking to three people about three different things, and trying to learn an entire unit of APES in one sitting. The grumbling may be incessant, yet somehow, through pure magic or caffeine, the work always gets done.

Even though this new chief has some funny quirks, we love Sam Gruetter as our leader. An academic weapon and a victim of online memes, Sam is leading El Gato to success this year. Filling the class with her boisterous laugh, unique article ideas, and never-ending brainrot jokes, Sam is ready to take El Gato to the next level.

A. Pan

LITTFIN JUSTIFIES HER FEAR OF SQUIRRELS

by **Kat Littfin**
Editorial Editor

Sharks, alligators, snakes, and squirrels. At first glance, one of these things is not like the others, but I repudiate this sentiment. Squirrels are singlehandedly one of the most demonic, violent, phobia-inducing animals that live among us. By the end of this article, I hope to convince everyone who thinks otherwise to change their mind.

Anyone who knows me knows of the psychological war I have waged against squirrels since the age of about seven. My story begins when a vengeful squirrel decided to jump right over my head, grazing my hair, while I was wearing new roller skates that I was just learning to use. With nowhere to run, I unleashed a blood-curdling scream and fell to my knees to crawl to safety. This terrifying moment was the start of my hard-fought battle with sciurophobia – what some may call a fear of squirrels, but I call being sensible

My fears are not baseless. As much as my family, friends, and peers try to convince me that squirrels are “cute” and “harmless,” my loathing of squirrels has armed me with the evidence to dispel such claims. California squirrels specifically are menaces. Researchers in Northern California have recently discovered that squirrels are becoming increasingly carnivorous and are even developing predatory behaviors. While they may only be hunting small animals now, who is to say humans aren't on the horizon? What's more is that the squirrels' shifting diet has also led them to steadily increase in size. I wouldn't be surprised

if, in the next hundred years or so, there is a squirrel species that could be mistaken for someone's overweight cat.

Recall how I mentioned that humans may soon appear on a squirrel's menu? Though at first glance it may seem I wrote that for humorous or dramatic effect, I truly meant what I said. A squirrel in San Rafael, California, attacked several innocent individuals, even sending two to the emergency room. With multiple eyewitness accounts and credible news articles, I am inclined to believe that this reporting is not some silly AI video that I fell victim to. No, this is a squirrel showing its true form: its vicious, violent, and villainous true form.

F. Banno

Unfortunately, the evidence for my next claim is a little shoddy, as there are no secondary eyewitness accounts to back me up. I believe that the squirrels in my backyard genuinely have it out for me. It may be hard to believe, but my dog has even more vengeance toward squirrels than I do. If they so much as touch the trees in my backyard, she will ceaselessly bark and growl at the menacing mammals until they leave her territory. But when my dog is not there, the squirrels attack. The most tranquil spot in my backyard is a bench that sits under a tree with long, climbable branches. Not once, but twice, a squirrel has snuck up and pooped on me. The first time, I thought a leaf had fallen onto my clothes, but when I shook it off, a brown pellet emerged. I looked up, and directly above my head was a crouching squirrel. Yes, squirrels can and will stoop that low. Even if they aren't always violent, they will go to any length to anger, embarrass, and hurt their enemies.

One day, I hope to live in a world where people do not look at me like I am crazy when I say I am scared of squirrels. Until then, I will continue to spread my message like one of those conspiracy theorists on Facebook in hopes of finding kinship with other squirrel haters.

- Ameziane embraces life as a freshman
- Jayaraj advocates for her passions

PEOPLE

EL GATO • FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025 • LOS GATOS HIGH SCHOOL • WWW.ELGATONNEWS.COM

Exchange student Bournonville joins LGHS and ice hockey team

by **Tori Schubert and Tanya Chang**
People and Sports Editors

Former Danish national ice hockey player **Theo Bournonville** joins Los Gatos in his junior year with an adventurous spirit and a contagious sense of humor. Confident yet down-to-earth, Bournonville is not afraid to take risks, whether at ice hockey practice or school, and is ready to make the most of his time here at LGHS.

Bournonville, a citizen of Copenhagen, Denmark, was faced with the decision to attend boarding school or take a gap year. Ultimately, he chose to come to California, thrilled to be a part of the American high school experience. Born and raised in New York until the age of five, Bournonville has experienced living in a variety of international locations, enjoying the peaceful ways of Copenhagen compared to the lively culture in New York City. Now in Los Gatos, Bournonville has made some major adjustments, such as overcoming language barriers and meeting new people, while



still adapting to certain aspects of small-town life. He hopes to leave California with a non-Danish accent and “have fun experiencing the American lifestyle.”

Adjusting to the US education system has been one of Bournonville’s biggest obstacles. He juggles a schedule that keeps him both challenged and curious, including Chemistry, Chinese 1, English 11, US History, Algebra 2, and Introduction to Engineering Design. In Denmark, teachers typically rotate per subject while the students stay in one classroom. However, Bournonville has faced a major shift in America, where students change classes each period. He pointed out, “Everything is just bigger here; the campus, the number of students, even the hallways.”

He also noted that while Danish schools typically have longer days with less homework, the structure in California encourages more independence. Despite the workload, Bournonville has embraced

the changes, as each class gives him another window into the culture he came to experience firsthand.

When not in class, Bournonville can often be found on the ice. He has rekindled his passion for hockey after a short break from competitive play as a left defender. Back home, he played on Denmark’s U-18

National Team, an experience he described as both exciting and challenging due to the limited number of players and resources. Now, as Bournonville joins the LGHS team, he is rediscovering his love for the game. Although he describes his current performance humbly, Bournonville’s willingness to jump back into competition after a year away reflects his adventurous spirit, the same boldness that brought him to California.

Navigating his year in America with big aspirations, Bournonville leads with his outgoing personality, on the ice and in the classroom. Despite a unique course load, he makes time for his personal interests, embodying a strong balance between an inquiring and passionate individual, always encouraging others to “put [themselves] out there” whenever possible.



Field hockey star Hong excels in all spheres of life

by **Megan Saul and Jane Wilde**
Editor-in-Chief and Humor Editor

Senior **Jisoo Hong** is finishing her career at LGHS strong by skillfully balancing a rigorous course load with the challenges of being a student-athlete. Throughout her four years, she has consistently shone on and off the field hockey pitch.

Hong started playing field hockey in seventh grade, following in the footsteps of her older sister, former captain **Jiwoo Hong**. The two sisters played alongside each other during Hong’s freshman year. After her sister graduated, she passed down her number (2) jersey, an honor that continues to motivate her through her field hockey career.



Carrying on the tradition, she now plays with her younger sister, sophomore **Jihyung Hong**. Describing their bond, Hong shared, “We get to relate to each other on an emotional level, which brings us closer together.” Despite field hockey connecting Hong to her sisters, it also connects her to her role model: captain and senior peer **Leaya Cleary**. Hong enthused, “She motivates me when I’m feeling down. I could talk to her, and she’ll help me out and put my head back in the game, and she’s there whenever I need her.”

Before games, Hong enjoys the silent run around the field, adding, “It is so nonchalant. We always have Ric Flair Drip playing in the background.” Hong plays forward on the field, dribbling through the opposing team and putting points up on the scoreboard. She enjoys this position, saying, “I feel like I get more engaged in the games, and I like scoring goals.”

Hong describes the field hockey team as a tight-knit community, which is a necessary part of a winning team. Currently, she is looking forward to CCS and savoring each minute of her senior season with her teammates.

Although Hong has spent numerous years in the US, she was born in Korea and stayed there for nine months before moving to Montreal, Canada. She spent the majority of her early childhood there before moving to Los Gatos in second grade. Montreal is where she first developed her love for French, which she continues to this day, through taking French at school. She is currently enrolled in French 5 AP with **Timothy Gaylord**. Moreover, Hong can also speak Korean, making her trilingual.

Looking to the future, she aspires to be a nurse, a career choice inspired by her volunteer work at the Terraces of Los Gatos helping senior citizens. Hong commented, “We do fun activities and entertain them. I kind of step out of my comfort zone and experience what nursing is like a little bit.” She plans to major in nursing in college and continue nurturing her passion for helping others. When Hong is not spending her free time playing field hockey or helping out senior citizens, you can find her jogging, playing pickleball, or watching the sunset. If you ever see Hong running around, be sure to give this senior a big smile, as she will likely shoot you one right back.



Tomchenko leads sophomore class

by **Advika Anand and Lydia Liu**
Graphics Editor and Public Relations Manager

As she begins her second year of high school, sophomore **Anna Tomchenko** steps into her role as sophomore class president, ready to strengthen her community and ensure her class succeeds. Tomchenko strives to be a well-balanced and communicative president, taking her peers’ opinions into account when making decisions.

In her position, Tomchenko takes pride in representing her peers and making sure every voice is heard. She described her leadership style as “collaborative and organized,” seeking to create an environment where ideas can be shared openly and efficiently. From planning fundraisers to organizing school spirit events, she approaches each task with enthusiasm and care. “I want to make sure our class feels connected and supported,” she said. Whether coordinating with the Student Council or leading class meetings, Tomchenko stays focused on building unity and helping her classmates stay engaged in school life.

Balancing leadership responsibilities with a demanding schedule is not an easy task, but Tomchenko manages it through dedication and time management. This year, she is taking AP European History, Pre-Calculus Honors, Leadership, Chemistry, English 10 Honors, and French 2, courses that challenge her both academically and personally. “In the beginning, it was really stressful,” she admitted. “It’s a huge jump from freshman year, but I’ve adjusted by updating my study habits and reaching out to friends for help.” Despite the workload, her favorite classes are English 10 Honors and AP European History for their creativ-

ity and discussions. Tomchenko remarked with a smile, “I’m definitely more of an English-oriented girl.” She believes these subjects fit her interests and prepare her for a future career in business by strengthening her critical thinking and communication skills.

Tomchenko’s passion for business led her to co-found Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA), a new LGHS club focused on entrepreneurship, marketing, and finance. “DECA is a national organization where many schools have this club,” she explained. “We go to local competitions and

work on improving our business and entrepreneurship skills.” Tomchenko started the club to give students with similar interests a place to grow and connect. Tomchenko commented, “As class president, I want to establish community. I think DECA is a great way to do that.” Although this is the club’s first year, she already has big plans for its future. She hopes DECA will attend more competitions and eventually reach the national level, leaving a strong foundation for future students to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

Balancing leadership, academics, and extracurriculars, Tomchenko continues to demonstrate determination throughout her time at LGHS. As she looks ahead to the rest of her sophomore year, she hopes to strengthen her class community by creating fundraisers that reflect what students actually want to support. With her commitment to inclusivity, Tomchenko strives to be a dedicated leader through the connections she builds during high school.



AMEZIANE LEARNS NEW LANGUAGES

by **Fuyu Banno**
Graphics Editor

Language expert and skilled violinist **Jed Ameziane** sets his sights on a bright future as he enters his first year of high school.

Fluent in French, Ameziane is currently mastering Japanese as well as Arabic and Mandarin. Language is not just a means of communication for Ameziane, but rather a tool that allows him to connect more deeply with the world around him. He shared, “I really like learning languages because it makes me access and tear down the language barrier that a lot of people face” At school, Ameziane takes two language classes, French 3 Honors, as a way to continue polishing his skills, and Japanese 2, to expand his expertise in the language he first learned through Duolingo. Ameziane continues pursuing language outside of the classroom as a member of the school’s Japanese National Honor Society, in hopes of connecting with other students who share similar interests. He discussed how his love of language connects back to his other passions: “It’s not only because I like learning languages, it’s also because I’m really interested in cultures around the world, and I also really love geography.” In the next ten years, Ameziane hopes to expand his vast knowledge of communication by mastering Mandarin.

In addition to his two language courses, Ameziane’s busy schedule includes Geometry, Biology, English 9, and Philharmonic Orchestra.

Ameziane pointed out that his favorite class is the Philharmonic Orchestra. His interest in music began during the pandemic, when he taught himself how to play the violin. He continued to hone his skills by joining Fisher Middle School’s music program.

Ameziane hopes to be greatly involved in the school alongside his commitment to the music program at LGHS, particularly through his work on the Student Advisory Committee. “I’m currently trying to get involved with the student body and campus culture.” The Student Advisory Committee assists the principal as well as board members in making important decisions for the school, such as choosing where funding should go and suggesting ways to improve campus life. Ameziane hopes to join leadership in his junior and senior years of high school to further his involvement in the LGHS community.

In the midst of his journey of academic greatness, Ameziane talked about his aspirations for the future: “I want to be an engineer, and I want to build.” Ameziane credits his dad with being responsible for igniting his passion for engineering and aspires to be just like him. In the next couple of years, Ameziane hopes to take college classes in engineering to help him prepare for his intended major in higher education.

Ameziane continues to stay true to himself as he shares his motto: “Don’t force yourself to be something just to fit in with others. Be yourself.” Whether it is through his love of language or his musical abilities, Ameziane cruises through life with passion and heart.



ROLLINS TAKES ON HIS SENIOR YEAR WITH A PACKED SCHEDULE

by Isabella Langner and Sam Gruetter
Center Editor and Editor-in-Chief

Senior **Alex Rollins** is the modern Renaissance man, involved in a variety of academic and creative pursuits. Legos have been a part of senior Alex Rollins's life since he was a child: "I didn't really watch TV that much or play games, so I just built Legos." What started as a childhood hobby quickly turned into a passion. Rollins collects various Legos, with a special affinity for Star Wars pieces. He began a YouTube channel with his sister, junior **Sophia Rollins**, where they filmed stop-motion builds. Their highest-viewed video garnered over 170,000 views. Their living room became a workshop, housing hundreds of Lego pieces for future creations. Rollins's proudest achievement was recreating Rivendell from The Lord of the Rings, building it with his sister entirely without instruction, using thirty thousand random pieces they owned. Just before his senior year, Rollins began selling Legos on eBay and BrickLink, using his knowledge of Legos to obtain the highest values; for example, "the stuff that's



photos courtesy A. Rollins

older sells for a lot more, and then specific characters too. For a main character in a show, we sell for a lot."

Rollins's dedication to his commitments shines through in his class load as well. This year, his schedule consists of AP Statistics, AP Physics C, Honors Orchestra, AP Literature, AP Government, Honors Economics, and Multivariable Calculus. Hoping to major in energy engineering, Rollins's STEM-heavy class load has helped him prepare for college. He has furthered his passion for renewable energy by participating in a paid internship this past summer, where he worked on prototypes and models in the Santa Cruz Mountains that could potentially solve large problems related to energy scarcity. While his STEM prowess is undeniable, Rollins's strongest quality is how well-rounded he is as a student, as indicated by his position as a National Merit scholar

after earning a perfect score on the PSAT, a test that measures students' aptitude in both math and English.

Outside the realm of academia, Rollins also has an exuberant passion for the arts, playing the violin as the school's orchestra concert master, an extremely selective role that requires high levels of achievement and ability in one's music field. With all of these extracurricular activities, you may be wondering if Rollins ever has time to sleep and eat, but he does. On top of that, he makes time to indulge in his favorite hobbies: playing pickleball and basketball with his friends, going to the gym, and spending time with his dog, Molly.

Dynamic is a term that does not do the academic and artistic skills of senior Rollins justice. His multitude of hobbies and interests indicates that you can, in fact, do it all. So, if you see Rollins walking in the halls, make sure to say hello to this one-of-a-kind individual.



Buran gears up for an eventful year

by Arnab Singhal and Atharava Pandey
Sports Editors

Athletic and adventurous sophomore **Justin Buran** is kicking off his second year at Los Gatos High School with energy, focus, and determination. Skillfully balancing academics and extracurriculars, Buran is committed to making the most of his high school experience. Buran manages to excel in the classroom maintaining an impressive 4.0 unweighted GPA despite playing two physically demanding sports. This year, Buran is taking six rigorous courses, including Spanish 3, Manufacturing Technology 2, AP European History, Algebra 2 Accelerated, English Honors, and Chemistry. Among these, Buran says his favorite is Manufacturing Technology 2. He has particularly enjoyed projects such as creating a Pagoda Box, a traditional East Asian decorative object inspired by religious architecture. Reflecting on the class, Buran said it provides him with the opportunity to "do so many different, diverse projects, which makes the class very fun." Beyond academics, Buran is also an active participant in the school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes Club (FCA), attending weekly meetings to connect with his peers and strengthen his faith.

In addition to his academics, Buran is heavily involved in school athletics. Last year, he played for the LGHS JV Water Polo Team and the LGHS

Varsity Lacrosse Team and plans to continue this year. Buran wants to go all in on lacrosse this coming season and is looking to go Division One, having had a passion for the sport for four years due to the amount of fun he has playing with his teammates. Beyond the field, Buran loves being outdoors, commenting, "I spend a majority of my summers out hiking with my family on local trails and other mountains. In the winter, I love to ski in Tahoe with my dad and sister. Nature is a beautiful example of God and his omnipotence."

Buran's ambitious personality shines through his inherent ability to spark and win an argument with just about anyone. From a young age, Buran's love for speech and debate has developed into his desire to become a lawyer. He noted his greatest inspiration is his family: "I have a lot of family friends who are lawyers. My dad's a teacher, and he's always talked about the way our country works and how laws are made. So it's always been interesting to me." Overall, Buran exemplifies the model student, taking every opportunity he has at LGHS while laying the foundation for a successful future, and taking his own advice to "not be embarrassed. Just look forward to your high school years, and you'll find something that you love to do." With his determination and drive for success, it is clear that Buran gives his best, whether that be in a challenging class or a tightly contested sports game.



courtesy J. Buran

Beyhm-Berger excels in creativity

by Hayley Strahs
Editor-in-Chief

Fashionable flute-playing freshman **Moxie Beyhm-Berger** is taking LGHS by storm. Between theater, band, and a cappella, Beyhm-Berger's talent transcends all types of performing arts.

Beyhm-Berger is in seven classes, her favorites being Drama 1 and Symphonic Band. After a year's hiatus, LGHS Drama classes are back under new teacher **Benjamin Brotzman**. Recently, Beyhm-Berger and her classmates finished their Shakespeare unit in which they researched and performed scenes from his various plays. With her love for theater persisting since sixth grade, Beyhm-Berger plans to continue with Drama for the rest of her time at LGHS. Moreover, Beyhm-Berger will audition for the spring musical, Hadestown, later this semester.

In addition to theater, band features prominently in Beyhm-Berger's musical repertoire. She plays the flute in both Symphonic Band during second period as well as Marching Band which occurs after school. Beyhm-Berger can't recall the exact day she started playing the flute; she explained, "I just kind of picked it up one day," and the rest is history. Despite the long hours, Beyhm-Berger enjoys the activity: "It's a great community. Everyone's super supportive." On Oct. 18 and 25, Beyhm-Berger attended her first two Marching Band competitions at Independence and Cupertino High Schools, respectively. While the marching band only plays one part of their show during football game

halftime performances, they performed all four movements of their show at these competitions. After spending months "learning how to march and hanging out with people in Marching Band, Front Ensemble, and Color Guard," Beyhm-Berger's first season ends in two weeks as she and the band prepare to compete in the Western Bands Association Championships on Nov. 15.

It's not hard to spot Beyhm-Berger in the hallway; her fun and stylish outfits distinguish her from the crowd. She reminisced on how her family influenced her clothing style: "I think I got it from a mixture of my mom and my dad. My mom taught me how to upcycle clothes, and my dad works in [music] production. I would get to go to shows and see what other people wore." Most of Beyhm-Berger's clothes are either DIYed, thrifted, or both; on any given day, her outfit may be entirely upcycled. Beyhm-Berger's customized wardrobe fits perfectly into her life motto: "don't dream it; be it." Originally from The Rocky Horror Picture Show, the quote reflects her enthusiasm and drive to succeed through music, fashion, and more.

Beyhm-Berger takes each day in stride, no matter what may come her way. She commented, "I always try to see the brighter, good side of things. I get that a lot from my mom." Whether she's drinking a can of Monster Energy before Marching Band practice or perusing a thrift store in San Francisco, Beyhm-Berger is living her life in style.



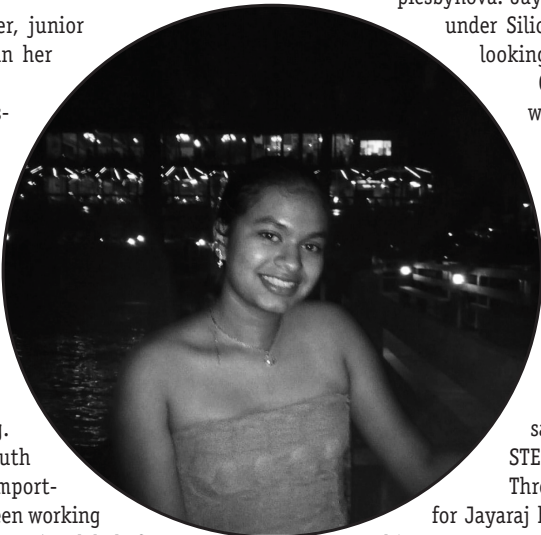
H. Strahs

Jayaraj showcases her passion for advocacy

by Siyona Singhal
Humor Editor

Advocate and photographer, junior **Nova Jayaraj**, is flourishing in her third year at LGHS.

One of Jayaraj's many passions is climate advocacy, which she became involved with this summer. She explained, "I think climate advocacy is so important because it affects the futures of kids, and so many of the laws are being made by adults, who 20 years from now might not be facing the crisis we are going to be facing. I think bringing kids and a youth perspective to that is really important." One project Jayaraj has been working on is her talk show titled Not Ones (modeled after the show Hot Ones): "I eat spicy wings with elected officials with the goal of humanizing them and connecting them with their constituents a bit more. Many constituents may be scared by the rhetoric used in town council meetings, so humanizing these members can keep the line of communication open and stronger." Though the videos have not been released yet, Jayaraj is planning to put them on YouTube.



To stay updated on the videos' release, follow her Instagram account: picsbynova. Jayaraj also leads a Los Gatos/Saratoga action team under Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action (SVYCA) and is looking for students interested in joining the cause.

Closely involved with women's advocacy, Jayaraj will be a panel member at a women's leadership conference with over 1,000 attendees. Jayaraj commented, "I think for me personally, it's such an important topic because I do robotics, and we only have around ten girls on the team. I found that during my first year, it was hard for me to assert myself in an environment where I was with people whom I didn't know how to connect with." She further expressed that she learned a lot from the process and is hoping to make it easier for other girls in the same situation, especially those wanting to go into STEM, a predominantly male field.

Through all her advocacy work, the biggest challenge for Jayaraj has been, as she noted, "making time for everything. However, I get a lot of fulfillment from this type of work; I'm not just doing it for college applications, so even though I'm losing time, in my head it doesn't feel like that." Her advice to students interested in becoming involved with advocacy is to "foster connections with everyone you meet. I am no exceptional person; one year ago, I was not as involved as I am now, so anyone can get there, you just have to put in the work and make those connections."

Outside of her extraordinarily busy schedule, Jayaraj enjoys photography and won an award from the Bay Area Creative Foundation for a picture she took of her chemistry classroom sink: "It's one of my favorite photos because it was one of the hardest to take and I didn't have to go to some extravagant place to take it." Her passion for photography began after taking Digital Photography last year. Jayaraj commented, "Making simpler objects and everyday scenes look really cool using framing and lighting has been a personal endeavor of mine."

Whether it's through her women's advocacy work, climate action, or photography career, Jayaraj's passion and dedication are apparent in everything she does.



photos courtesy N. Jayaraj

Moroccan team performs well in the FIFA U-20 World Cup

by Kloe Adams
Games Creator

The men’s U-20 World Cup commenced Sept. 27, featuring 24 nations from six football confederations. The U-20 World Cup is a biennial international soccer tournament composed of national teams with players under the age of 20. The Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) has held the cup since 1977; prominent players who previously competed include Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi.

The 2025 cup took place across four Chilean cities: Santiago, Valparaiso, Talca, and Rancagua. FIFA organized the 24 teams into six groups of four. The top two teams from each group advance to the knockout stage. The United States’ U-20 team played against France, New Caledonia, and South Africa in the group stage. The US and South Africa both advanced to the knockout stage, where the US faced Italy in their first knockout game. Italy led an early attack in the eighth minute, but US goalkeeper Adam Beaudry executed an impressive save. Only seven minutes later, the US took charge of the game when team captain Benjamin Cresmach scored the first goal in the fifteenth minute. Italy held its own throughout the rest of the first half with the score remaining 1-0. Late into the second half, former Los Gatos

High School student **Nico Tsakiris** scored the second US goal. This was Tsakiris’s second goal of the tournament and third overall in U-20 World Cup play. Three minutes into stoppage time, Cremaschi scored the third and final goal of the game with an assist from Luke Brennan. Italy made a valiant effort, but Beaudry made three impressive saves, keeping his second clean sheet of the tournament.

After their impressive win over Italy, the US moved on to their fifth consecutive quarter-final, facing off against Morocco. The US held a dominant 78 percent possession rate in the first half; however, Morocco’s tough, calculated defense held off US attacks. Morocco claimed the game’s first goal 30 minutes in. Just before halftime, the US team scored on a crucial penalty kick taken by Matthew Corcoran, evening the score to 1-1. The second half featured more back-and-forth play, but Morocco took the lead, scoring two more goals. Beating the US, Morocco headed into the semi-finals against France; Argentina also continued to the semi-finals, playing Colombia. In a tight game, Colombia beat France 1-0, securing third place overall.

Seeking their seventh U-20 men’s title, Argentina came into the match favored to win. The stands, however, featured many Chilean locals rooting against their South American rivals. Morocco, despite being

the underdogs, played unfazed and scored two goals in the first half. Yassir Zabiri bagged the first goal from a free-kick; the second goal came from a cross from Zabiri to Othmane Maamma, who volleyed the ball to the back of the Argentine net. Two goals and a strong defense were all Morocco needed to secure the first-place title. Becoming the first Arab nation to reach a U-20 World Cup in 44 years, Morocco has a newfound momentum that fans are excited to see continue in 2027. (Sources: US Soccer, US Times, FIFA)



ON THE PITCH: The National Stadium in Santiago prepares for excited fans.

Huff exhibits her ambition LG ice hockey remains fierce

by Tori Schubert and Lila Zamansky
People Editor and Media Production Editor

Approaching the end of the 2025 National Women’s Soccer League (NWSL), Bay Football Club (Bay FC) player Taylor Huff displayed an impressive performance throughout a challenging season. This rookie midfielder has proven herself as an exceptional team player, emerging as a leader and game-changer.

After signing a three-year contract with Bay FC in January of 2025, Huff immediately established herself as one of the most dynamic and well-rounded players in the league. Joining as a free-agent player after college, she became one of only two rookies in the entire NWSL to start every game of the season, showcasing her consistency and unmatched work ethic. Concluding her first professional year, Huff scored four goals and one assist, ranking as Bay FC’s second-highest scorer and sixth in assists. She often scored in crucial moments, including the opening

Since the age of three, soccer has been a key aspect of Huff’s life. She grew up in Lucas, Ohio, playing soccer whenever she could. Whether out on a field or kicking a ball against the wall of her garage, Huff’s love for soccer was unyielding. Outside of this sport, Huff incorporates her awareness and creativity into other aspects of her life, sharing, “I love to read and write and pretty much anything creative which is why I love soccer so much because I get to be creative with my skills and decisions.” She took her academic and athletic skills to the University of Tennessee and Florida State University (FSU), where she majored in economics and had successful soccer careers at both schools. In 2020, the United Soccer Coaches named her National Player of the Year and in 2021, the SEC named her Freshman of the Year. After competing with the US National team prior to her professional career, Huff proved to be a perfect candidate for Bay FC.

As Bay FC approaches the end of its tough season, Huff advances in her role on the squad and shocks the world as a new addition. She contributes to her teams’ success as a midfield link during the past season. Montoya enthused that Huff has “consistently excelled at every level of the game. Her ability to impact matches on both sides of the ball is truly unique.” (Sources: Bay FC News, Nickel and Bean)



GOAL: Taylor Huff dribbles while looking for an open player.



ALUMNI: FSU, Huff’s alma mater is located in Tallahassee.

by Claudia Casal
People Editor

As fall began, LGHS’s ice hockey team kicked off the season strong in a game against Pioneer High School on Sept. 29, winning 9-5. With their sights set on being state champions, the varsity team hopes to go to states and bring home the gold.

The varsity team recently continued the season with a win against St. Francis on Oct. 20. So far, the team has its eyes on the prize with three wins and only one loss. The varsity team has upcoming games primarily at Sharks Ice and looks forward to playing Pioneer again on Nov. 10.

Playing since she was nine, junior **Ashley Young** is ready for her third season on the LGHS team. Young cited, “Just getting to the rink and hanging out with people I feel like are my best friends, and getting to see all the girls,” as her primary motivation to keep playing. As a forward, she is on the front line when it comes to attacking, scoring goals, and setting up plays offensively. Her favorite part, she said, is “excelling throughout the postseason games. It’s a great opportunity and so much fun to play in high-stakes games.”

A majority of the team consists of long-time players, such as sophomore **Oliver Bell**, a left wing and center. Bell began playing hockey at five; it’s where he learned his love for the sport and community. “It’s rewarding to go play a sport you know so well with people you always play against during the club season,” Bell commented. Spending his earlier years in Canada, Bell contrasts the sports culture in both countries, saying, “Up there, everyone plays, and it’s a much bigger sport, but here, since it’s a smaller sport, you know everyone. That’s something you just don’t get in Canada.”

Goalie and freshman **Casey Allan** joins the Wildcats this season. As another long-time ice hockey player, Allan described his first year on the high school team: “Once you get to know people, it gets a lot better because you know who to pass



ASSIST: Young makes helpful pass to her open teammate.

to and you have plays that work.” Allan became a goalie at 12 years old, pointing out one of the main challenges of his position is pucks flying towards him at 60 miles per hour. To combat this, Allan trains his reflexes and hand-eye coordination in addition to the standard hockey training. This freshman is excited to build camaraderie and gain experience with more advanced strategies and play styles.

As the season advances, the team is gearing up for its next matches, anxious to earn more accolades. Their upcoming games include one against Leigh High School on Nov. 3, Pioneer on Nov. 10, Bellarmine College Preparatory on Nov. 11, and Valley Christian on Nov. 17. The LGHS Ice Hockey team is optimistic and ready to succeed in yet another season following its 2nd place in the CAHA High School States last year.



DEFENSE: Bell watches the play to make a smart next move.

Los Gatos Girls’ Flag Football ends a winning season

by Isabella Langner
Center Editor

LGHS Girls’ Flag Football is almost finished with league games and has managed to keep a perfect record of 9-0. They currently have a seven-game win streak, demonstrating how their hard work has paid off.

On Sept. 24, LGHS secured a 12-10 league win over Milpitas, the team that tied them for league champions the season prior. Senior **Heather Hansen** said it was their “biggest league game,” making the

win an impressive feat. Going into the fourth quarter, the score was incredibly close. With one minute and 30 seconds left, junior **Sophie Riese** scored a touchdown. For the remainder of the game, LGHS worked hard to hold Milpitas off from scoring again. That weekend, LGHS participated in a tournament at Wilcox High School. They played their first game after school on Friday, Sept. 26, against Monterey Trail. Hansen shared, “It went well and everybody played.” The game concluded with a 19-0 victory for LGHS. Their weekend began early with a morning game against Wilcox; LGHS won 19-7. In their next match against Ventura, a team that traveled from Southern California, LGHS put up an impressive fight and only lost by two points, 12-14. Finally, they played their last game of the day against Salinas, winning 19-0. These scores put them into third place overall.

The week after, girls’ flag football won all three of their games: 18-14 over Los Altos High School, 24-6 over Mountain View High School, and 14-6 over Alameda High School. Their next four consecutive games against Santa Clara, Gunn, Milpitas, and Los Altos also ended in victory for LGHS, leading to an eight-game winning streak. During their second match against Los Altos, LGHS held the lead for the first three quarters, up 21-0. However, Los Altos scored two touchdowns in the remaining quarter, and the game grew noticeably intense. The most heated moment of the match occurred after Los Altos scored a controversial touchdown. Hansen explained, “The game stopped for five minutes because the refs and the coaches were arguing about whether it was a touchdown or not.” Luckily, the play was called in LGHS’s favor: not a touchdown.

LGHS Girls’ Flag Football will be bringing their hard work and intensity into the remainder of their season, aiming to finish undefeated, take first in the league, and achieve success in the CCS playoffs. Outside of games at practice, their hard work shines through with their focus on swarming the ball so they can pull the flag faster and conditioning. Junior **Kendall Feichtmeir** said, “We’ve really been working on perfecting plays and all our splits and just running the right routes and then fixing all our holes and everything on defense.” The players are excited to go to the playoffs and make history as the first LGHS Girls’ Flag Football team to play in CCS.

SCORE: Two flag football teammates cheer after getting a succesful touchdown.

FIRST DOWN: Los Gatos player reaches their opponent to achieve a tackle.

Los Gatos marching band competes in WBA Band Tournaments

by Annabelle Pan
Graphics Editor

Setting off on their task of learning and memorizing the 2025 show music, the Los Gatos High School Marching Band and Color Guard began their season in August, one week before school officially started. New members familiarized themselves with the rest of their section, and everyone received the first movement of the show *Compos Mentis*.

Compos mentis is a Latin phrase that means “of sound mind.” The show this year focuses on the journey between sanity and insanity. **Mario Barron**, the color guard caption head, likened the first movement of the show to the feeling a teenager gets when “you’re going through hard



APPLAUSE: Los Gatos band stands proud performing for hundreds of cheering fans.

times, and you notice that something about it is so different that it doesn’t work anymore. In situations where you always felt confident, you suddenly begin to question yourself. This causes a crack in your foundation.” The next part of the show, movement two, delves into the feeling of helplessness as everything falls apart, and you feel like you have no direction. The music includes portions of the melodic lines in *Wait for Me* from *Hadestown* and solos performed by flutist **Haley Wong** and mellophone player **Jacob Shkolnik**. The plot continues into the third movement, which features a percussion solo from the drumline and front ensemble and, as Barron clarified, asks the question, “Do you have the courage to go on?” In the last movement, “your sanity starts to draw you out of this distress and pushes everything back into clarity,” marking the moment when you achieve *compos mentis*. Many marching band and color guard members commented that they appreciate the story of the 2025 show because it features themes that high schoolers often experience. **Ellenore Hammer**, the front ensemble’s xylophone player, explained that she likes this year’s show music because “the percussion parts are more prominent sound-wise,” especially in movement three.

The marching band and color guard attended their first competition on Oct. 18 at the Western Band Association (WBA) Independence Band Tournament. The ensemble played run-throughs of each movement for three hours that morning before storing all of the instruments and props into trailers. After they finished loading, the group boarded the buses to Independence High School and continued practicing until 6:45 PM at the competition site. By then, it was show time. The LGHS Marching



WHOOSH: LG Color Guard throws their flags during their performance at halftime.

Band and Color Guard took their place on the field and performed all four movements of *Compos Mentis*, placing third in their division. One week later, on Oct. 25, the group once again prepared to perform at the Cupertino Tournament of Bands competition. This time, they received the second place trophy in their division with a score of 71.925.

With two competitions done, the ensemble has one last hurdle to overcome: the WBA California Regional Championship at James Logan. As the show *Compos Mentis* asks, “Do you have the courage to go on?” the 2025 LGHS Marching Band and Color Guard respond by flawlessly executing every beat, step, and note.

LG tennis goes undefeated LGRC sets a HOOCR record

by Kayla Mitchell
Public Relations Manager

The Los Gatos Girls’ Varsity Tennis team is over halfway through the season. With an undefeated record of 9-0, the team is on track to achieve its goals of dominating this season, currently holding the number one ranking in the De Anza league. The next few matches will determine whether the girls’ tennis team can secure the title of 2025-2026 De Anza league champions.

Due to the weather canceling multiple matches at the start of this season, the LGHS team has feverishly competed over the last couple of weeks. After defeating Monte Vista High School for the first time in several years earlier this season, the group started with a newfound confidence in this year’s roster. The following week, the varsity team played another one of their biggest competitors, Cupertino High School, which had defeated the LGHS varsity team twice in the previous season.



READY: Senior Kaley Do prepares to receive a strong serve.

The girls secured a 6-1 win over the Cupertino team, earning another impressive win and building a commanding record. Following the monumental win, the team went on to defeat teams from Homestead High School and Lynbrook High School. LGHS dominated Homestead, taking the match with an overall score of 7-0. Lynbrook High School posed more challenges for LGHS, but the girls prevailed 5-2.

The most valuable win this season was against Los Altos High School, the 2024 CCS champions. Facing Los Altos in the late rounds of league finals last year, and losing by a close score of 3-4, the varsity squad hoped to establish a win against the CCS champions. This year, the LGHS team won the match 4-3, defeating Los Altos for the first time in many seasons. An impressive win from seniors **Kaley Do** and **Valeriya Murincheva** in line one doubles secured the overall win. Sophomore **Allison Chen** also had a formidable match against an older opponent, earning a point for the Los Gatos Varsity team in singles line two.

The second matchup against Los Altos was another key game this season, as both teams are fighting for a chance to become league champions. With Los Altos missing some of its top players during the team’s first encounter, this match was a real test for LGHS. The varsity girls won the contest 4-3 with impressive results from all lines. Coach **Justin Stenger** reflected on the result: “It’s amazing that we have been able to defeat some of our toughest opponents from last season, including the CCS reigning champions twice. We set our goals at the beginning of the season, and everyone is working hard to achieve them.”

The varsity team’s 9-0 record puts them in a strong position to become league champions this season. The last couple of matches against Monte Vista High School, Lynbrook High School, and Homestead High School will determine the team’s final ranking.

by Julia Valencia
Opinion Editor

Select junior athletes from Los Gatos Rowing Club (LGRC) recently competed at the world’s largest regatta, Head of the Charles (HOOCR), in Boston, Massachusetts. This year, the historic HOOCR celebrated its 60th anniversary. Notably, the founder of the race, D’arcy MacMahon, competed in the same boat that he had raced 60 years ago at the first HOOCR. The race attracted 12,000 athletes ranging from high schoolers to master rowers and over 400,000 spectators who either watched the race alongside the river or on top of one of the six iconic bridges under which the athletes row.

The HOOCR racecourse is just under the typical 5,000-meter course for fall racing and has been one of the most coveted races in the past century. Brands like Dunkin’ Donuts and Vineyard Vines annually jump at the opportunity to sponsor the race and often give out free items to visitors.

This year, LGRC sent seven boats from their junior team, three from the women’s varsity program and four from the men’s varsity program, to compete. HOOCR is where the best junior rowers from the United States and other countries race, providing a good indication of the competitiveness of the event. HOOCR is essentially the only race that allows West Coast and East Coast rowers to compete before Youth Nationals in Sarasota, Florida, which happens in June.

The women’s youth coxed quad, which won the race last year, competed as bow number one, meaning they were the first boat to race in their category. Their time set a course record, which Marlow Rowing Club, from Buckinghamshire, England, beat by seven seconds ten minutes later. Los Gatos High School seniors **Jenna Yoder** and **Mariko Okubo** and sophomore **Chloe Stopford** led the boat to second place, but technically, they were the fastest boat in the US. The women’s team also raced two coxed eights, which placed 48th and 63rd out of 86 boats.

The men’s team sent two youth coxed fours, one youth coxed quad, and one U17 coxed four. The men’s youth quad placed fifth overall, and the two men’s youth fours placed sixth and 36th, all results that qualify the boats to race at HOOCR next year. Finally, the U17 coxed four, with Los Gatos High School sophomores **Tony Theakanath** and **Joseph Willey**, won a hard-fought race, coming out on top and setting a course record, to secure the victory.



ROW ROW ROW: LGRC Women participate in Head of the Charles.

After a successful racing weekend in Boston, these athletes quickly returned to Lexington Reservoir to continue improving and prepare for Head of the Lagoon, a smaller regatta in Foster City. There, other California rowing clubs will come to compete along with some college teams. LGRC holds numerous course records at the Foster City Lagoon, and they look to secure more at the 2025 regatta. (Sources: Regatta Central, Row2k)

LG Girls’ Volleyball crushes SCVAL through their season

by Britt Melinauskas
National Editor

As the Los Gatos High School Girls’ Volleyball season nears its end, the Wildcats wrap up league play and transition toward post season games. The varsity and junior varsity teams entered the second round of league on Oct. 7, defeating Monta Vista 3-2 and 2-0 respectively, while the freshman team began their second round on Oct. 14. Following a 1-3 loss to Milpitas on Sept. 22, the varsity team made a strong comeback with a 3-0 victory over the Trojans, joined by a 2-1 junior varsity win and a 1-2 freshman loss. Additionally, girls’ volleyball participated in their annual Pink Out game, a time-honored tradition honoring breast cancer awareness and celebrating the resilience of several affected families.



GO WILDCATS: LG Varsity Girls’ volleyball huddles to prepare for their game.

Compared to past years, the varsity team has been facing a mid-season slump. Co-captain senior **Leilah Bakhtiari** commented, “We have had a tough time this season because we lost key players that have been a part of our program for so long, so we are still trying to adjust to this change.” In hopes of finishing on a high note, junior **Silvia Miletich** affirmed that the team will give “all or nothing,” especially in practices, to translate over into gameplay. Last year, the Wildcats qualified for the Central Coast Section (CCS) in the open division but lost to Saint Ignatius College Preparatory 0-3 in the first round. They then moved on to California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) play, where they were defeated by Campolindo 2-3, following an impressive 3-1 victory over Clovis West.

Throughout the league, the varsity squad has faced a challenging season. Currently, they hold a 5-6 record and place fourth in the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League (SCVAL), reflecting both hard-fought victories and tough losses against competitive opponents. The junior varsity team maintains a solid 6-4 record, contributing to the overall effects of positive team chemistry.

Wrapping up league competition, all three LGHS teams competed against Palo Alto, with varsity finishing 0-3, junior varsity 2-0, and the freshman team 2-1. The varsity and junior varsity Wildcats concluded their final away game of the league season against the Los Altos Eagles, finishing with scores of 1-3 for varsity and 2 -1 for junior varsity. On Tuesday, Oct. 28, the Wildcats celebrated Senior Night against Mountain View, each senior shared their past memories and future hopes, followed by heartfelt speeches from underclassmen dedicated to honoring each senior. The varsity team commemorated seniors **Portia Zeidler**,

Annette Bassani, **Ella Crites**, **Capri Allen**, **Ammie Vo-Robinson**, and **Bakhtiari**. As the fall season wraps up, be sure to congratulate the Los Gatos Wildcats on an eventful season and stay tuned for postseason games! (Source: MaxPreps)



ACE: Bakhtiari prepares to serve the volleyball for the final point.



LGHS water polo approaches postseason with confidence

by Nelson Kramer
Editor-in-Chief

Approaching late October means the high school water polo season is coming to an end, yet the LGHS water polo teams have not thought about letting up for even a second. This season, each team has exceeded expectations. They are performing at high levels, making good memories, and building team bonds that will last a lifetime.

During this season, all teams have demonstrated significant achievement and growth, most notably the LGHS Boys' Varsity, which is living up to the strong showing they gave last year, winning nearly every game and making a solid campaign for CCS and National championships. This group set itself apart from its competitors, consistently ranking at the top for an extended period of time. Many rightfully predicted its season would be tremendous and steadfast. Winning almost every game this season by a high margin, this team has made its way to the top of the list, coming second in the county, 26th statewide, and 35th nationally.

Most recently, the varsity boys defeated Gunn (23-8) and Mountain View (16-3), while losing to Los Altos (9-6). Ultimately, they ended their season with a show of strength; the team beat Bellarmine College Prep (8-7). Overall, they have won 19 out of 22 games this season. Reflecting on the team's powerful performance, one of its top players,

junior **Richard Runge**, shared, "This season has been going really well for me and our team. Of course, we've had ups and downs, but it looks like we'll be seeded between 3-5 for CCS, which is great!" Not only is the team dominating in the rankings, but they are also getting along very well. Runge reflects on the team bonding from this year, noting, "The team community has been awesome this year. I love going to pasta feeds and on trips with the team. I feel great every time we hang out, and everybody is really great to everyone else. That was apparent when we won against Saint Francis two weeks ago." Runge concluded with tips for upcoming water polo players: "My advice for anyone getting into water polo is to focus on swim times and strength training because the tactics and game IQ will come with experience."

Likewise, the Varsity Girls' Team is doing just as well this season, winning matches against Gunn, Castilleja, and Leigh High School and climbing the local rankings. The team has some young talent such as freshman **Martha Kang**. Kang reflected on the season so far: "We're improving...we didn't do that well in the beginning, but we're getting better." Additionally, the girls' team has also built a strong community. Kang said, "On Wednesdays, we usually go to a pasta feed, so we go to someone's house and we all have a team dinner."

As both teams continue to play out the rest of the season, fans are excited to see what is in store for the final games leading up to the

CCS tournament. Keep your eyes on both LGHS water polo teams, and specifically Runge and Kang, because they are sure to excel in the water. (Source: MaxPreps)



HUDDLE UP: LGHS Boys' Varsity Team celebrates after beating a strong opponent.

POM: Portia Zeidler commits to University of Notre Dame

by Britt Melinauskas and Kayla Mitchell
National Editor and Public Relations Manager

Senior **Portia Zeidler** is thrilled to make the most of her final year of volleyball at LGHS as both team captain and a recent commit to the University of Notre Dame. With an exciting season ahead, leading the Girls' Varsity Team and competing in club volleyball outside of school, Zeidler looks forward to sharing her experience with her teammates. As she cherishes her last moments on the court, she is also eagerly preparing for the next chapter of her volleyball journey at Notre Dame.

While Zeidler toured many schools across the country during her college search, she ultimately chose to be a Fighting Irish. Going into recruiting, Zeidler hoped to find a big sports school with strong academics and coaches that foster a solid, supportive team environment. Sharing what factors drew her to Notre Dame, Zeidler explained, "I really liked the atmosphere and team culture. It was very positive, and the coaches focus on bringing in good people as well as good players, so everyone gets along really well." During her official visit, Zeidler experienced being a part of the Notre Dame program, taking her official pictures, bonding with her future teammates, and attending an exciting football game against USC. Recently, when the Notre Dame volleyball team traveled to California to play against top programs such as Stanford University and UC Berkeley, Zeidler had the opportunity to watch her future teammates compete intensely



SAY CHEESE: Zeidler poses after committing to Notre Dame to play volleyball.

against some of the tough opponents she will soon face herself.

As a middle blocker for Vision and both a middle blocker and opposite hitter for Los Gatos Varsity Volleyball, Zeidler enjoys her front-row positions, finding it rewarding to put away a precise set for a kill and thrilling to make a big block. Zeidler began club volleyball in sixth grade for Stingray Volleyball Club, playing on the blue team, the second

team, and advancing to the black team, the first team, in seventh grade. In eighth grade, Zeidler made the transition to the elite Vision Volleyball Club, competing for 14 Blue the second team, and has since played on Gold, the first team, for 15s, 16s, 17s, and now her final season, 18 Gold. For the past three years, Zeidler's team has qualified for the Open Division, the highest level of competition, placing 35th in 2023, 9th in 2024, and 23rd in 2025 nationally. The team is hoping for a top finish at this year's Girls Junior National Championships. Zeidler emphasized their top ten finish in 2024, commenting, "The year before, it was not the case and [we] did not do well in Open. It was something like we'd been really working hard on [and] we pushed ourselves."

Although Zeidler cherishes her time on the court throughout pre-season, league, and post-season, her most memorable moment of the year is Los Gatos varsity's annual tradition of toilet-papering the freshmen. The activity provides a welcoming introduction to the volleyball community as it is a well-known, fun-filled night of team bonding. As another one of her proudest memories, she recalled, "The Branham game my sophomore year, when we won, but it was very close, and then we went to CCS [Division I] finals" with a packed student section and the team taking another step toward their goal of becoming champions. Overall, Zeidler's experiences on and off the court highlight her deep connection to the sport. built through her high school and club volleyball communities.

LG football continues play

by Megan Saul
Editor-in-Chief

Just weeks away from the conclusion of the regular season, the Los Gatos High School Varsity Football Team is quickly racking up wins and gaining the recognition it deserves. Following a difficult start to the season with a record of 2-3 after their first five pre-season games, LGHS football turned it around heading into official league play. Only three of the eight games played thus far qualify as league games. These include the matches against Sacred Heart Preparatory, Wilcox High School, and Menlo School. The Wildcats' record for the league is 3-0, first place in the Peninsula Athletic League (PAL) Bay Division. Senior **Kai Jordan** shared, "The start of the season was a little rocky with the losses we were taking, but we knew they weren't big losses. We are all coming together and playing smoother football than at the beginning of the season."

The LGHS football team dominated its first league game at Helm Field against Sacred Heart Prep, winning 47-0. Referring to the team's overall stellar performance, Jordan stated, "We have leaders on both sides of the ball: **Callum Schweitzer**, **Grayson Doslak**, **Max Thomas**, **Beau Musser**, **Gavin Jordan**, **Hudson Schrader**, **Tyler Purcell**, and **Jared Newman**. All these guys are leading us, so both sides are playing really well right now." At halftime, the Wildcats were ahead by 33 points. They maintained this level of play throughout the remainder of the game. During the second half, senior quarterback **Liam Sullivan's** performance continued LG's control of the game.

The varsity team played one of its biggest rivals, Wilcox High School, on Oct. 17. Although the Wildcats lost to Wilcox High School last year, with a score

of 14-19, they were determined not to let that happen again. At Wilcox's house, the Wildcats won 35-21. Senior **Mason Wend** explained that "the environment was really cool. They had a bunch of posters about us, and they were definitely talking some smack. So that really got us motivated." In just the first quarter, LG's junior **Shane Harmer** and senior Doslak each ran in for a touchdown. G. Jordan said, "This game was a highlight because it was the first time we won back-to-back games this year, and it was a big league win for us to get."

On Oct. 25, the Wildcats faced Menlo School. Although they played the game away at 2:00 PM on a Saturday, LG didn't let this unusual setting get to them. Wend shared, "We were hoping to go in and play fast and physical, and it clearly showed as we came away with a win to keep our goal intact of a league championship. And we were proud that our defense kept a shutout." The player of the game was Schrader, who had two interceptions, and Get Sports Focus's Coaching Staff of the Week was the LG coaching staff, led by head coach **Mark Krail**. LG ultimately won 28-0.

The LGHS Varsity Football Team is eager to play more competitive private schools. Their next and last league game is against Palo Alto on Nov. 6, so be sure to show some support!

(Sources: GetSportsFocus, MaxPreps)



TIMEOUT: A halt in play occurs as the players take a break.

LG field hockey dominates

by Tanya Chang
Sports Editor

The LGHS Varsity Field Hockey Team has shown no signs of slowing down this year, powering through their season with relentless energy, discipline, and teamwork. The Wildcats have maintained a flawless record of 18-0, sweeping their opponents with decisive victories that highlight both offensive precision and defensive strength. From the first match, it is clear this team has been focused, united, and determined to make every game count.

Now, with just CCS remaining, Los Gatos has already achieved something extraordinary: beating the team's record of 144 goals scored in a single season, with 167 goals, while conceding only one. The milestone reflects not just their scoring power but also their unity and relentless drive. Senior Co-Captain **Kendall Sutherland** reflected, "It's less about the number of goals and more about how we play." She added, "The goals are a direct reflection of how well we are doing this season as a team."

Continuing into the season, Los Gatos field hockey has stayed undefeated. They beat Presentation High School 5-0, won against Monta Vista High School 15-0, and crushed Saratoga High School 10-0. They continued their winning streak by defeating Palo Alto High School 7-0, beating Santa Clara High School 8-0, and securing a victory over Lynbrook High School 12-0. They carried their momentum into a set of rematches with wins over Presentation 10-0, Monta Vista 14-0, and Saratoga 7-0.

Senior and goalie **Emma Barrier** has been a key force behind Los Gatos's success, recording shutouts in nearly every game and allowing only one goal all season. Her consistency and calm

presence in the cage have anchored the Wildcats's defense, giving the team the confidence to push forward offensively. "Many shared moments have really helped us build a stronger bond and become a better team overall," Barrier commented. The trust between the backline and the attack has allowed Los Gatos to play with rhythm and composure.

One of the defining moments of the season came during their first matchup against Archbishop Mitty High School on Oct. 1, in which Los Gatos demonstrated not only composure but also resilience. After a tense first half, the Wildcats broke through in the third quarter when senior **Jisoo Hong** scored the game's only goal. Hong and the team celebrated as she shared, "At that moment, it felt really good because we had so many people supporting and rooting for us." That decisive goal in the second half secured a narrow 1-0 win, proving that even under pressure, their teamwork and focus never wavered. In their rematch, Los Gatos won 2-0.

Los Gatos is currently ranked eighth in the state of California, a testament to their dominance and consistency throughout the season. As the Wildcats look ahead, they are focused on finishing strong.



READY, SET, GO: The Wildcats prepare to run down the puck.