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Fauxlympian

THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

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Tommy the Trojan publishes memoir

By Olive Dooley and
Drew Paxman

Tommy the Trojan, CVHS’ mascot, is planning to publish his debut novel and memoir, “Life in the Lunch Line or: How I’ve Been Silenced and Learned to Accept My Own Voice as a Mascot to a School which is Pretty Cool” in April 2023. Co-written by Ernest Hemingway’s Ghost, published by Maloney Publications, and edited by Rachel Maddow, the memoir covers Tommy’s entire life, from his childhood to his time here at CVHS.

“When Rachel first asked me if I wanted to write a memoir of my life, I was confused. I said, ‘Rach what about my life is worth talking about?’ And she was like ‘Tommy boy you changed my life at CVHS. And I think people oughta know your story,’” said Tommy.

In anticipation for the release of the memoir, Olympian greats Olive Dooley and Drew Paxman sat down with Tommy in his mansion on his private island in Lake Chabot. The interview was very exclusive. Our reporters were instructed to wear green and gold and scream “Who’s your daddy? Castro Valley!” continually while treading water. But alas, despite some struggles—including Dooley’s lack of bouyancy—Tommy allowed us to enter and began to share his life with us.

Tommy the Trojan was born in Ancient Troy to Tessa and Timothy Trojan. His brother is the famous Timmy the Trojan and his sister is Taylor the Swifty Trojan.

When Tommy was two, this stupid boy named Paris wanted to marry a pretty girl. He gave a golden apple to someone and then war started. Timothy, Sr. was one of the first to enlist. But then he died.

“I knew I had to go to war when I heard my dad died,” explained Tommy. “It was the only way I could honor him.”

But little did Tommy know what lay in store for him—his stint on the battlefield would be so short-lived. When Tommy was fast asleep in the Ancient



Tommy the Trojan poses for a photo (in real life) with Ernest Hemingway, Rachel Maddow, Maya Wong, and Zac Efron.

OLIVE DOOLEY

City of Troy, he heard a loud knock on the city doors. Tommy looked through the peephole to see a giant wooden horse. Perplexed, for wooden horses were so last spring, Tommy thought it best to not open the gates. His battle-mates, however, disagreed. They opened the door and let in the massive trojan horse—which resulted in the bloodiest battle of the Trojan War.

“This was the first time I was silenced,” said Tommy. “But it would not be the last.”

At the end of the Trojan War, Tommy was cast away. With a heavy heart and broken legs, he started his journey to sunny Los Angeles. After an eventful disembarkment with another famous person who hopped off a plane at LAX with a dream (and a cardigan), Tommy found himself at the gates of the University of Southern California (USC).

“I remember Tommy very well,” reflected USC alumnus Zac Efron. “I had been getting out of Tax Fraud 101 and I saw

him, sitting under the Tommy Trojan statue looking dejected.”

Tommy had joined the 87 percent of applicants and been rejected as USC’s mascot. When asked, the USC Secret Task Force for Choosing a Mascot stated that Tommy’s lack of a high school diploma was the reason. With more prodding, we were able to discover that Tommy would’ve also been offered admittance had he presented admissions with a large chunk of money.

Defeated and dejected, Tommy left the USC campus. His broken legs and beaten heart trudged through the streets of La La Land. His eyes stared at the cracked pavement as he walked seemingly endlessly. But it was in these moments—the darkest and most filled with despair that a smidgen of light entered Tommy’s life. On the ground, lying next to forgotten Erewhon strawberry smoothies and unfinished iced coffees, lay a copy of *The Olympian*. He flipped through the faded pages of student work, mesmerized

by the dedication and skill shown in the tattered pages. The impressive quality of work wasn’t the only gem though, inside the paper was an ad, an ad that said that CVHS was looking for a new mascot.

Excited and in tears of joy, Tommy ran to Castro Valley without any hesitation. (He literally ran the 361 miles.) Yet, despite this week-long mild jog, Tommy still made it to CVHS full of energy and in time for mascot tryouts. However, the long trek was not the least of his worries, he had to face the ultimate challenge: surviving tryouts with Maya Wong.

“We had them do rigorous intervals of backflips, agility ladders, picture-taking, and crowd-cheering,” recalled Wong. “Pretty simple stuff for me, but for pure amateurs—please!”

At the end of the day, Tommy was a shoo-in for the job. He impressed the judges, the coaches, and every other contender for the job. Samantha the Sloth, Bernard the Bumbling Bee, The Thunderous Thunderbolt Thatcher, and

the Bishop O’Dowd Dragon all agreed that Tommy was the best man for the job.

“Tommy was a standout out of all the people who auditioned,” said Wong. “He was able to pick up the choreography incredibly fast and added his own personal flair to everything that he did. I’ve never been more impressed with a candidate, especially his mustache.”

Now thirty years later, Tommy is still going strong. He has formed strong bonds with the students of CVHS and continues to be a source of inspiration for each and every one of them.

“Tommy has been my muse these past four years,” senior and Olympian great Zoe Dorado shared. “Without him, I can’t imagine that I would be the person I am today. He has taught me so much about poetry and literature—I don’t know what I would’ve done without him.”

Tommy is an inspiration to all, his life has not only been just as a mascot or a soldier—but also as a soon to be best selling author and inventor of Tommy Balm, a de-aging lotion (also with SPF-50) that makes you look 2,000 years younger. Tommy (and us) highly recommend that you buy a few bottles! (Use code TommyBalmForever to pay two times as much as a donation to Tommy.)

“I love Tommy Balm! It’s so incredible and makes my skin so smooth. That’s how I was able to do tryouts for Tommy thirty years ago and still be in high school now,” shared Wong.

Editor’s Note: Since the publication of this article, Tommy Balm has been discontinued after a study from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found high levels of tears from depressed and overworked juniors and seniors in the cream ingredients. If you are found with Tommy Balm on the CVHS campus, the item will be confiscated and sent to the Kennedy Space Center where NASA will blast it to former planet Pluto.



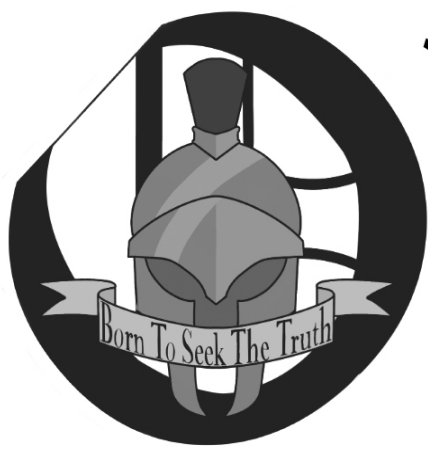
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CVHS' new health clinic: "game changer"

By Zoe Dorado

On March 8, the CVUSD School Board announced the construction of a school-based health center on CVHS' campus forthcoming August 2023.

"I'm so excited it's ridiculous," said health and medical careers teacher Sue Anderson. "You know, as a health science educator, it's going to be such a boost for parents, for this community, and for students."

CVHS will now join 30 other high schools in Alameda County that offer a school-based health center (SBHC) on campus. According to the California School Based Health Alliance, an official SBHC will give students access to primary care like a medical clinic and be "typically staffed by nurse practitioners, nurses, mental health providers, as well as part-time physicians and medical students."

"Access," as Anderson

explained, is something "we don't always talk about when it comes to public health." But she looks at access as "one of the biggest issues that we have not just in this community, but across the United States and in the world."

Indeed, with Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid health program) ending automatic enrollments this year, one-third of the state's population could lose access to medical services.

"When we have the opportunity to interface with healthcare professionals, I think about the communities and families here that don't get that on a regular basis because of financial constraints, stigma, [or citizenship status]," Anderson explained. "I think having that open door says, 'your health matters.'"

In other words, this new health clinic will be a game changer.

In partnership with Tiburcio



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Vasquez Health Center—which already has locations at Tennyson, Hayward, and Logan High—CVUSD students and their families will have

access to primary care services such as sports physicals, sensitive services such as pregnancy testing, and health education services that will

connect students to medical professionals.

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Resistance in the face of anti-trans legislation

By Olive Dooley

Across the country, anti-transgender and nonbinary laws have been proposed in state legislatures. This legislation ranges from pulling back anti-discrimination laws, preventing trans children and people from competing in sports aligning with their gender, blocking gender-affirming healthcare, banning discussion of LGBTQ+ topics in public schools, and more. According to ACLU, there are currently 434 laws proposed across 44 states in the current 2023 legislative session. Currently, 21 bills across 11 states have passed, as of March 30, 2023.

The onslaught of legislation has negatively impacted trans and nonbinary people's mental health everywhere in the country,



LISA CARMACK

from the states like Utah with six laws passed and three more proposed, to California with one law proposed.

"You know, seeing people hear about a trans student who committed suicide and knowing how much you know. Most of us have had that level of struggling with ourselves, with our families with whatever it is. And it's really a gut punch," said Johnna Joy, an Iowan resident and CVHS alumnus. "And it makes you scared you're gonna miss something about your friends and your community. But I'm trying to not let that kind of worry and anxiety eat me and instead use it to keep reaching out and holding space for the

folks in my life that I can."

In January 2023 the Trevor Project, an organization dedicated to suicide prevention in queer youth, published a survey they took, which showed that 86 percent of trans and nonbinary youth have reported that the introduction and passage of new anti-trans legislation has negatively impacted their mental health.

"I try not to think about it, but it makes me really sad," a freshman at CVHS said. The anxiety and fear created by this legislation also impacts how many trans and nonbinary teens feel about their future. A junior at CVHS reported feeling worried about their future ability to transition and travel around the country.

Much of the proposed legislation does not have statistical evidence to back them. For example, one law proposed in multiple state congresses is to ban trans people from using bathrooms that align with their gender rather than their sex assigned at birth. This proposal comes out of a fear that trans women will prey on cis women in the bathroom, but there is no evidence to support

this claim and the long history of trans people using bathrooms that align with their gender identity with no problems further disproves it.

"The thing that's really horrifying is that it's not like this isn't an Iowa problem," said Joy. "There aren't [any] Iowans complaining. Nothing's actually happening. [Legislators are] not actually solving a problem. They are following suit with organizations with money, who can pay to push this kind of legislation and agenda."

"It makes me really mad to see all this happening," said freshman Sky Johnson, "we've seen this time after time, people saying [legislators' reasoning] is false, but it just goes in one ear and out the other."

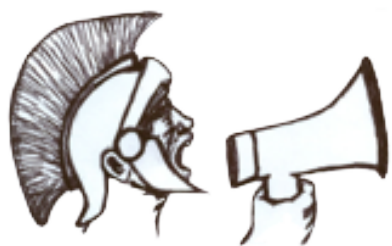
"I hate it," shared sophomore Jack Sawyer. "It's a cruel way to force an outdated way of thinking onto people who are just trying to live their lives."

The trans and nonbinary community (and its allies) are dedicated to continuing to fight the legislation, but the intensity of this session's legislation and the breadth that it covers have left many queer activists exhausted.

"We can't focus on one thing because they're making us focus on many things at once, which I absolutely believe is part of the tactic because the more tired we are, the less we can organize, the less we can be effective in our organizing, the more we have to split between [ourselves]," said Joy. "You can only do so many of those things because we're all human with only a certain amount of bandwidth."

Supporting trans and nonbinary people through this time—especially when there is a large distance—can be difficult. But Joy recommended that people with financial means to use them to donate towards funds for trans people or nonbinary people. They also cited how important it has been for communities to show their support for queer children and people in this time.

"I [am] trying to get flags up in classrooms and businesses and stuff as much as possible to get more visible support because I know how far that alone can go. When you talk to teens here, things as simple as their teachers using their pronouns makes a huge difference to their mental health," they said.



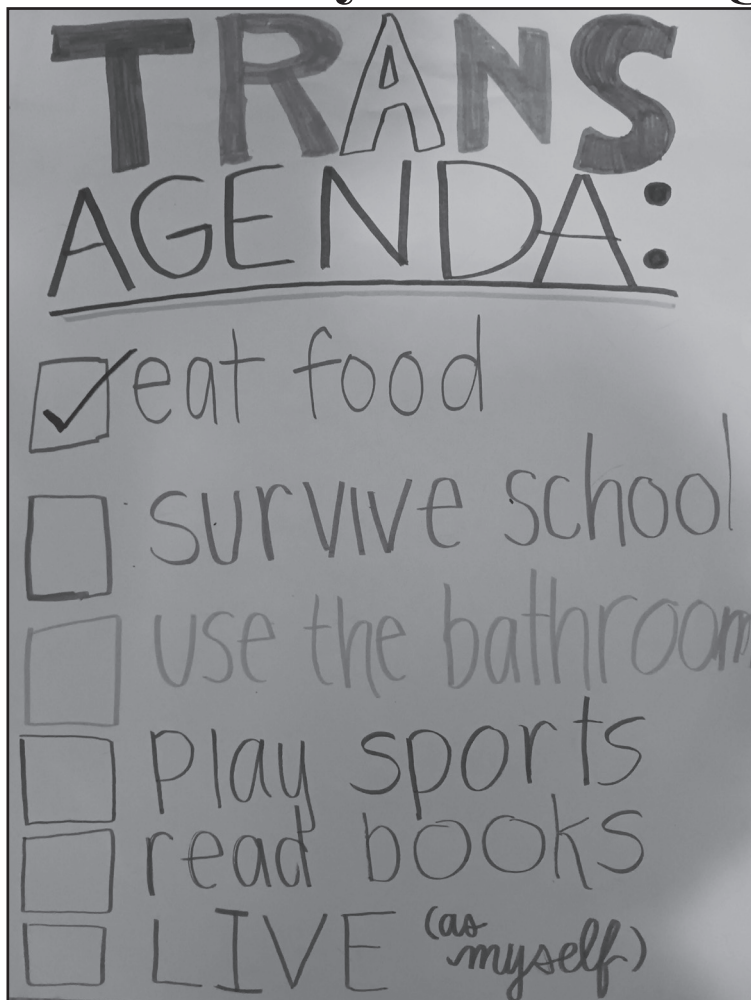
Support trans youth facing anti-trans laws

Editorial:

Since the 20th century, lawmakers have shown they do not prioritize LGBTQ+ rights and people. From ignoring the AIDs epidemic in the 80s to today, conservative legislators have been working to eradicate the ability to live authentically as queer and trans people—especially targeting the rights of trans and nonbinary youth. Not only do the bills going through and passing states oppress trans and nonbinary people, but they also have and will continue to impact the mental health of these people.

The dangers of the bills are evident in mental health statistics found by The Trevor Project's 2022 National Survey. When queer and trans youth are in supportive environments, their likelihood of committing or considering suicide drastically decreases, and rates of anxiety and depression decrease. The introduction and implementation of anti-trans legislation has caused and will continue to have detrimental impacts on trans and nonbinary youth. Many of the bills will result in teachers forcibly outing students to parents, not being able to talk about the LGBTQ+ community in classrooms and banning life-saving gender-affirming care. These will and do worsen suicide rates across the states.

The Olympian believes that it is hypocritical for lawmakers to claim to care about students'



REBECCA IRELAND

safety at school, yet enact policies that directly increase suicide rates, while ignoring real dangers such as gun violence. Already in 2023, there have been 93 school shootings, according to the K-12 School Shooting Database, mean-

while, states like Kentucky with high rates of gun violence have repealed the few gun control laws they had. According to Giffords Law Center, "3 million children are directly exposed to gun violence each year, resulting in death, injury, and

lasting trauma." Despite this, states have instead focused on targeting trans youth, already passing 31 anti-trans bills across 15 states in 2023 alone, as of April 17, 2023. If legislators cared about young people's mental and physical health, they would be preventing gun violence instead of causing harm to trans and queer people who are already marginalized by passing unsubstantiated anti-trans legislation.

On March 16, Florida's Board of Medicine's gender-affirming care ban went into effect. Already, a group of citizens has sued the state, including a ten-year-old trans girl. Other forms of resistance in Florida have included mass walkouts and testifying at the state capital. In Iowa, where there have been two laws passed in 2023, banning gender-affirming care and forcibly outing students—the trans and queer communities are fighting for each other. Students as young as elementary school age are walking out protesting the laws taking away their autonomy. While it is encouraging that young people are standing up for trans rights as they are future voters and will affect change, it is disappointing that the young people are having to fight for their rights instead of being able to enjoy childhood.

Community members are speaking up at school board meetings and testifying at state congressional hearings to protest drag bans, book bans

and general anti-trans bills. Even though it is often like talking to a wall, The Olympian believes this is one of the most important mediums for effective change because it ensures that the people get to speak and often is publicized, exposing what is occurring.

Some states offer medical asylum for those who now can't get care in their home states, like Minnesota. Canada is also offering asylum for trans people who live in states that are passing these laws. However, The Olympian acknowledges that this is not an option for most for a variety of reasons, like being a minor in the closet or having insufficient funds. We believe this addresses symptoms of the issue, but not the root of the problem. Trans and nonbinary people should not have to be displaced from their homes to be themselves; the humanity of queer and trans people should be respected everywhere.

People around the country are taking action in support of trans people's autonomy by offering support for those seeking medical asylum, donating to organizations fighting for trans people's rights, and organizing rallies in solidarity with trans youth. The Olympian believes that organizing in solidarity, or using whatever skills or capacity you hold, is the most crucial thing individuals can do, but ultimately it falls on the legislators to reverse their transphobic policies and protect queer and trans youth and families.

PHOTOpinions How should we respond to anti-trans bans on campus?



"I feel like everyone should be open to each other and not judge each other because you wouldn't want people to judge who you are."

Dayana Powe
freshman



"I think we should have more inclusive programs that provide the perspective on how it feels to not be comfortable with your gender identity."

Ava Kim
sophomore



"We need to show our support to everyone that needs it during this time- and that means protests, awareness, [and more]."

Oli Baker
junior



"Gender neutral bathrooms are a good start. Bringing awareness to the situation is important since a lot of people are ignorant about it."

Charlize Witt
senior



"Provide more students support where they feel heard and maybe more support of students trying to show who they are can help."

Radhika Kolachina
math teacher

Powderpuff plunders progress



By Rebecca Ireland

Every year, CVHS offers a single game of flag football for girls; informally "Powderpuff". Many years ago the name officially changed to "Ladies' Flag Football," though it is still often called Powderpuff among students, which "reinforces sexist ideologies in adolescents at a young age, such as [that] girls can't handle the roughness of sports; a woman's job is to look pretty, not be athletic; and girls and women in sports are a joke" as the Arvada West High School news-

paper The Westwind critiqued. For league football at CVHS, the team is supposedly open to any students interested. In the 2018-2019 school year, Leikela Lunt became the first and only girl on the varsity team and continued the following year. Along the same lines, the cheerleading team is open to any students interested, and there continue to be students of all genders on the teams.

Lunt joined the team to "show other girls that we are perfectly capable of the sport just as much as [boys] are."

However, I believe designating this one-off game for girls tells students that girls don't belong on the league football team; especially being a flag football game while the school team plays tackle football.

Lunt said it makes sense that girls stick to flag football, because "more women are not brought up in football" due to societal norms.

However, shouldn't girls be afforded the same opportunities regardless of their upbringing? Yes, football is dangerous, and perhaps no one should be risking their safety for a sport, but if people are opting to play the sport they should have the choice to join the same opportunities. Along these lines, there is also a youth and adult flag football organization—American Flag Football League—changing the football scene to make it equitable and safer for anyone and everyone interested in football. The California Interscholastic Federation (CIF) decided this year to create a league of girls flag football beginning in the 2023 to 2024 school year.

In talking to leadership students and leadership teacher Thomas Maloney, they have claimed that the Powderpuff game is just tradition—a last opportunity to have fun with

friends before the school year ends. Tradition is often used to mask hegemonic sexism, so maybe we need to re-evaluate this, as we did with Mr. CV (which was a competition between popular CVHS senior boys).

Accompanying this game are the spirit boys—cheerleaders for the one-time players. Aside from the sexism of the Powderpuff game, the spirit boys used to make a mockery of the cheer team. Cheer is one of the most dangerous sports, resulting in more injuries than even football. Minimizing the sport, which is still woman-dominated, demeans the efforts of our students. Luckily this has mostly shifted in recent years, as the cheerleaders coach the boys and see them learn to appreciate the sport. It would be amazing to see more cheerleaders of all genders on the official school teams, but this puts people in boxes, saying this is their one chance to try the sport and enforces that boys don't belong on the cheer team.

The regular-season football

players also have the opportunity to coach the girls in the annual flag football game. While this provides the valuable experience of learning to teach fellow students, as Maloney said, I believe it places the boys on the football team above the girls, again implicitly saying that girls are not as equipped for the sport as the boys.

Outside of flag football, women are fighting against the separate-but-not-equal structures; CVHS girls' teams are not afforded the same opportunities for support according to players on the soccer team, they are not equitably funded, and even the US Women's National soccer team just fought for equal pay. The Equal Rights Amendment has not been federally ratified, and women and non-men continue to face systemic discrimination in a way that is only exacerbated by the CVHS girls' flag football game. The historical and current misogyny makes it difficult to look past the fun of the game and instead forces me to focus on the perpetuation of sexist norms by the sport.



Swim team sinks the San Leandro Pirates

By Gavin Peters

On March 17, the Castro Valley swim team held a home meet against the San Leandro Pirates. From the arrival of the San Leandro pirates until the final lap, our pool of green and gold turned into a seafaring battle ground for our trojans to fend off the purple pirates.

As swimmers began to arrive, putting their bags down and applying sunscreen, the pool was waiting for attention. Being called to the task of removing the pool cover by assistant coach Melissa Wun, the first few attendees were reluctant yet hasty to remove the covers and roll them up. Swimmers gathered together, practicing dives to warm up, stretching their eager bodies, and finishing by clutching their towels to their soaked selves, filling the pool and dry land with a powerful, excited, and somewhat nervous energy.

After warmups they gathered for some team rallying spirit. Led by the captains William DeCarli, Jennnifer Mi, Amelia Johnson, Kyle Mognaga, and



GAVIN PETERS

Austin Xie, they performed traditional collaborative chants including the infamous “T, R, O, J, A, N, S, what’s that spell?” finishing off by yelling “Safe Sex!”, making a humorous take over of the nervous atmosphere.

During the meet, the water and air was filled with a joyous intensity that could be seen

on everyone’s faces. From the supportive teammates lining the foot of the pool scream “GO!” at the tops of their lungs to their peers in a voice of confidence, to the tiny rickety wooden bleachers where parents sat clumped together, to behind the diving blocks where students waited anxiously

for their races, the meet was an exciting environment to witness. JV Captain junior William DeCarli reminisces, “My favorite memories was probably when someone who graduated was at swimming and just kind of the whole team was there to cheer him, and having a good time with him,” then

giving a boost in confidence for his team, he gave this piece of advice: “Swim hard and beat the other team!”

Toward the end of the meet, just as the sun starts setting, the energy also started to die down. The teams were more relaxed and personal records were being checked in by coaches. Varsity captain, senior Jennifer Misaid, “I think the meet’s going well, especially since the weather is nice today. We have a lot of people who were excited and ready to get into the water!” The swim meet brought home some new personal records from Theodora Bejenariu, Charlotte Chu, and Joshua Mitchell on the JV team, and Corinne Arakawa, Gavin Willits, and Stella Chang on varsity.

The Trojans stood their ground, rallying together to make a combined total of 577 points against the Pirates’ 94. The Trojans, led by our three coaches and special junior coach Samantha Li, swam to victory, sinking the San Leandro Pirates into a deep blue demise, returning the clashing waters back to a pool of green and gold.

Winter percussion wins First Place

By Maddie Newman

CVHS’ winter percussion brought home the gold at the Northern California Percussion Alliance competition at James Logan High School on March 18, placing first out of nine schools in their division. Practicing three times a week, including rehearsals from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays, the group’s hard work paid off.

“It is definitely a big time commitment,” said freshman Aleksandra Hurka, who plays bassline in winter percussion. “I feel like many people don’t see it as a physically demanding sport because it’s a music activity, but I feel like it should be categorized as a sport and that more people should do it. It is just very fun and a great experience.”

The students are very grateful for their percussion caption head (similar to director), Glenn Imai.

“Glenn is a really good instructor and...always very straightforward with us. I feel that is a way that our group improves as a whole,” shared Hurka.

“Our instructor Glenn is the one who taught me how to play. And then everyone has always been super supportive because everyone wants to do well, so



everyone wants to help everyone else do well,” said snare drum player and freshman Harper Kiely.

The group only started last year, making this year their second competitive season. Along with Imai, staff members Alyssa Miceli, Ashley Nguyen, Christian Gerardo, and Ryan Yee are guiding students to their success.

“We’ve already gone from essentially no program to first place in two years, which is almost unheard of,” remarked Gabriel O’Hara, senior and cymbal player.

The group is open to new members. “We can always use more people to join. The bigger the group is, the more we can do,” enthused O’Hara.

“It’s different than marching band. Because it has a smaller group, it’s a lot more intimate.

There are less than 30 of us but it’s really fun. I liked the sense of camaraderie. It’s also fun to just play music at all,” said freshman and auxiliary percussion player Liam Lepkowski.

While the activity is fun, it also takes a lot of dedication. Performing can be challenging.

“It’s just like mental gymnastics all the time. That doesn’t even include all the playing,” described O’Hara.

“You need, like, a mega mind brain for this activity,” proclaimed senior Michelle Huynh, who plays the snare drum.

“Winter Percussion is really cool. It’s super fun to watch, too. If you gave us a chance, we’d probably impress you,” O’Hara declared.

Winter Percussion at CVHS has a bright and promising future. Keep a lookout for them!

Young Yeung yearns for champions

By Anjali Yadavalli

With a start in badminton and music in his teenage years, Lotan Yeung continues to pursue his childhood dreams. In college, Yeung knew that he wanted to continue badminton, maybe not professionally, but he wished to share his skills with incoming students. As a second-year teacher, Yeung teaches orchestra at both CVHS and Creekside Middle School. As of now Yeung continues his badminton career, being the current CVHS Badminton coach.

Being a Castro Valley alumnus, Yeung has experience playing in the league which is a big advantage to have as a coach. As he graduated high school he went on to follow his musical interest. After graduating college in 2021 with a bachelor’s degree in music and music education, he found his passion in teaching.

“[In college] I enjoyed performing and watching friends perform. I also enjoyed learning how to teach in different school environments and settings,” noted Yeung.

As for the badminton side of things, Yeung started playing at the age of eight. While he has a long history playing badminton, he believes that there is always room for improvement.

“[I became the coach because] I enjoy the sport and I like to see people grow and improve. I want

the sport to be at a high level of competition for the players so they can go onto playing higher levels of badminton,” stated Yeung.

Yeung, still being new to the coaching system, changed the coaching structure many returning players remember. The former coach has been teaching for quite a while, and with a sudden change in coaching it took the team a lot of adjusting to get used to. Regardless of experience, Yeung strives to give the players all he can.

Badminton games are facilitated by the coaches and there are three groups of varsity levels. Varsity one, two, and three, these levels determine the difficulty of your games. The lineup for the game is created by the coach with the help of the captains. Players can be put in mixed doubles, girls/boys doubles, and girls/boys singles.

While the team had a rough start to the season with a loss in their first game against their biggest competition, Alameda. Yeung believes that there is still a big chance the CVHS team could be co-league champions. Yeung anticipates a good fight saying, “I expect them to tie for first with Alameda, our deciding match is a home game on April 22 and we will win this time. People should come and watch our game to cheer on the team!”



FEATURE

5

CV DECA takes on the world

By Erika Sun

An overheated bus, caused students to be stranded in the middle of the highway with no way to get to their first exams of the competition: unfortunate luck plagued the CVHS DECA club as they headed down toward Anaheim to participate in the annual California DECA State Career Development Conference (SCDC). Despite the unfavorable circumstances, the CVHS chapter defeated their odds to earn a spot to compete in the International Career Development Conference (ICDC).

“The DECA International Career Development Conference (ICDC) is the final competition of the year where 14,000 student finalists from all 52 states [50 states and two territories] demonstrate their knowledge and skills in various career clusters such as marketing, finance, hospitality, management and entrepreneurship,” described Byron Thompson, the marketing and business economics teacher, as well as the club advisor for the CVHS DECA chapter.

To qualify for a position to compete in ICDC, students must place in the top flights of their event at the state level. With over 2,000 students participating, and an average of about 50 students in an event, it is no easy task.

Nevertheless, this year, eight CVHS students earned spots to compete in the highly competitive conference taking place in Orlando, Florida, from April 21 to 26: Kerry



Photo credit: Castro Valley DECA Instagram account

Chen (Restaurant and Food Service Management), Natalli Mishreky (Business Operations Research), Gia Mitra, Jesse Wu, and Katie Yin (Project Management Sales Project), Cynthia Pan (Business Services Marketing), Hannah Thai (Human Resources Management), and Vivian Yang (Automotive Services Marketing).

Throughout the past school year, DECA students have been preparing for the conferences through workshops, after-school study halls, and independent study, as well as taking part in mini-cons, which are small-sized mock competitions.

“Students spend their time learning proper business terminology, taking practice exams and sharpening their

critical thinking skills for use in their role plays,” stated Thompson.

To prepare for ICDC, students will continue with their studying process. For Mishreky, whose event (BOR) requires her to construct and present a detailed written business plan for a local business, she plans to practice her presentation in front of others to gain constructive feedback. She finds the input of others to be the most beneficial to her as she hopes to clinch Top 10 in her event in Orlando.

Preparing for conferences requires a lot of time commitment from participants, therefore, it is essential for students to be flexible and find ways to balance their workload.

“It’s been difficult to balance my schoolwork with DECA at times, especially when I’m gone

for conferences, but even a little bit of communication with my teachers has gone a long way,” stated Pan. “I always make sure to let my teachers know in advance when I’ll be gone and pick up any work that I can.”

However, the club is not simply just about studying for competitions, as members are given opportunities to network and have fun as well. At their latest conference in Anaheim, students were given the day to visit Disneyland and spend time with friends. One of the most favored aspects of the conferences is that students are able to meet and connect with other school chapters as well.

“Ever since I joined DECA and began competing at conferences, I’ve met so many people from across California who have become some of my closest friends,” said Pan.

“The Wallace Dynasty” continues their legacy



By Samantha Jew

The weekend of March 17 to 19, CVHS’s Robotics Club, The Wallace Dynasty (originating

from the theoretical love-child of Wall-E and Eve, according to advisor and engineering teacher Jessica Porter) competed in the For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology Regional (FIRST) Competition at Saint Ignatius College Preparatory School in San Francisco. They placed 35 out of 43 teams.

The club members started working on their robot after the official robotics kickoff on January 8. Teams had the opportunity to attend virtually or watch a live stream detailing the challenge of the season. This year, the competition consisted of two parts, a balancing challenge and a stacking challenge, where

robots would try to stack cubes and cones on a shelf.

Over three days, The Wallace Dynasty along with over 9000 other teams competed in a series of 70 matchups in teams of three, where they competed alongside robots from other schools for efficiency. During each matchup, the smaller groups of three competed against another group, with each robot team doing their best to finish the challenge before their opponents. Each robot was scored individually, with the points being added up at the end to determine the final placements.

As it was only their second year competing at FIRST since the pandemic, at the beginning the team had trouble with communication and time management. With no robot from previous years to build off of, “we were pretty much starting from a blank slate,” said

Porter. Learning from last year, Porter and several mentors played a more active role in the club and the members were able to improve their teamwork skills.

“Though our timeliness was not perfect this year, it improved massively from two semesters ago and I am very proud of all of our members. Our biggest supporters have been Mrs. Porter, and Michael Clive, one of our oldest mentors. They, along with our mentors Rai and Sheila Warbasse, have supported us throughout the year,” said co-president Vivan Owens.

The club consists of a series of sub-teams, ranging from programming and electrical to computer-aided design (CAD) software. Next year the club will continue its dynasty with new administrative members who will continue to grow and develop The Wallace Dynasty into a well-oiled machine.

But the fun is not only limited to conferences, as the CVHS DECA chapter hosts an abundance of club activities for members who choose not to attend the competitions. Previous events have included: Pumpkin Painting, an Egg Hunt, and a back-to-school bonding event filled with pizza and games.

With ICDC rolling around the corner, the club remains optimistic about the upcoming conference.

“Personally, I’m most looking forward to the students having the opportunity to compete at the national level. As a second-year teacher, I think it’s a testament to not only the marketing and business courses at CVHS but also the commitment and dedication to DECA that the members exemplify on a daily basis. We are one of only a few NorCal chapters that have this opportunity,” remarked Thompson.

While Pan will miss out on the final competition because it conflicts with prom, she sends warm regards to all those attending ICDC, “I’m wishing the best of luck to those competing this year, especially from our chapter.”

There is much to look forward to for CVHS DECA as they travel to Orlando to represent both CVHS and NorCal come late April.

While CVHS students will only make up a small margin of the participants at ICDC, in no doubt, will their spirit go unheard as they carry their club chant along the ride:

“Who’s your daddy?”
“CASTRO VALLEY!”

“I feel that [the] robotics club is a place for everyone of all interests... There are so many different roles that students get to learn, and a huge part of robotics is teamwork and becoming like family,” said Porter.



**THE TROJAN
HORSE
PODCAST**

►JUMP: from page 2

“I’m excited about students not having to leave campus to get the services because when they leave, we can’t support them,” she said. Now, “they [can] get the support from professionals at the clinic and then they can come here to the Wellness Center and get support if they need it.”

While CVHS’ Wellness Center provides behavioral health services, Meadows explained how COVID-19 shifted the urgency for physical health services, and, in turn, the health clinic.

“As part of our build-out of the Wellness Center, five [or] six years ago, we did a needs assessment, and then students, staff, and parents overwhelmingly said they wanted behavioral health services. It wasn’t the right time to bring in a medical partner,” Meadows said. The Wellness Center opened in the portables November 2017, but as soon as COVID-19 hit in March 2020, “students really started asking for medical help.”

When the 2022-23 school year hit, the CVUSD school board allowed on-campus accessibility of condoms to high school students in the district; the safer sex kits became the first medical services offered.

“The kits were our first toe in the water for providing any kind of reproductive health resources, real resources, and they’re constantly getting used,” said Meadows.

Soon enough, she realized that the “[Wellness Center] needed a partner and Tiburcio Vasquez was available to partner with [with them].”

“Having a physical clinic on site to support primary and a little bit of secondary health issues is really instructive and important because we need health education in as many places and spaces throughout high school, not just in ninth-grade health,” Anderson underscored.

“You know, we’ve done a good job,” Anderson added. “Everybody knows what PPE means. We know about hygiene, but we still are well

behind the game when it comes to understanding STIs and reproductive health. So that’s a reason that having a physical clinic would benefit us.”

Junior and co-president of the LGBTQ+ club Gabriela Arechiga agreed.

“In regards to the student health services, adding additional services about safe sex between queer couples is essential,” she said. “Although safe sex is briefly covered in CVHS’s health curriculum, it often ignores queer relationships and struggles which leads to harmful misinformation amongst queer students.” With the health

“
It’s a high school health center. It’s not an adult health center. It will serve adults but it needs to be built with students’ voices.”

Marian Meadows

District Behavioral Health Coordinator

education component Tiburcio Vasquez offers, Arechiga stressed the importance of providing in-depth queer sex education.

CVHS students like Arechiga have an opportunity to voice their opinion about what the new health clinic will provide. A group of students, parents, CVHS facility staff, administrators, teachers, Tiburcio Vasquez members, and other community partners will gather to form a planning committee in preparation for the new health clinic.

“It’s meant to be a broad group of folks to guide the development in not just making sure the buildings get built

or cleaned up, but so we’re bringing on a health partner and system that meets the needs of current students, not the adults,” Meadows explained. “It’s a high school health center. It’s not an adult health center. It will serve adults but it needs to be built with students’ voices.”

In fact, student involvement will continue once the health clinic is on campus. “[Tiburcio Vasquez is] going to provide direct education to patients who come in, and then as we get established, [we will bring] on peer health educators,” Meadows continued. “That piece will definitely be a partnership between Tiburcio Vasquez, [the Wellness Center], and the health teachers.”

While peer health educators won’t end up doing direct patient interaction for patient privacy, a peer health education program could look a number of different ways. For instance, students in Berkeley High School’s Sexual Health From Teens (SHIFT) program learn about different health topics during weekly meetings and present to classrooms about sexual health. At Logan High School’s Hip-Hop Elements Program (facilitated by Tiburcio Vasquez), students learn to DJ, break dance, write and perform spoken word poetry, and choreograph hip-hop dances all with a health focus.

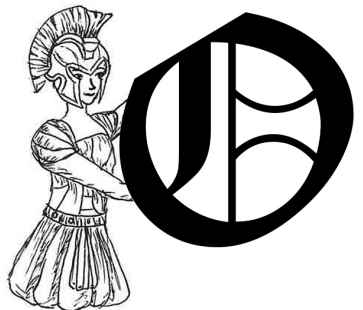
At CVHS, however, a peer health education program is still under development. What is certain is that students taking the medical careers pathway will gain direct exposure shadowing professionals.

“I have students that are fighting fires and are helping people post-injury to recover. They learned some really valuable tools,” Anderson explained. “But having a clinic on-site [is an] absolute game changer. I am excited about how my curriculum is going to shift because of the work that we get to do with the clinic.”

Anderson continued: “It’s huge for our community to say we value your health not just when you’re in crisis. We value your health not just when you’re learning about it, but when you’re going to do it personally and professionally.”

Students like Arechiga are hopeful for the future of public health for the CVHS and the broader Castro Valley community. “At the end of the day, even the littlest of services can help,” she said.

“It’s much more empowering to have agency in your own health when you have access to care, right?” Anderson said. “You feel like it matters and you matter.”



Willow Arctic Oil Project Approved: Woes and Wants for the future



THE NEW YORK TIMES

By Shannan Chan

On Monday, March 13, 2023, the highly controversial Alaska Oil Project was approved by the Biden administration, much to environmentalists’ disappointment. The \$8 million oil project, also known as the Willow Project, faced mass criticism due to the environmental changes it may cause, including the release of 277 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere over the course of thirty years. The project hopes to hold up to 600 million barrels of oil. However, said oil would take years to reach the market as the drills have not been constructed.

The project faces mixed opinions from both Democrats and Republicans. Advocates for climate change voice concerns about the oil drilling project by ConocoPhillips.

Defenders of the project claim that the Willow Project will be a cheaper and cleaner alternative for fossil fuel usage than buying oil from other countries. Meanwhile, the other advocacy for oil projects is to reduce demand for them, as higher-cost producers like Canada and the US would yield to low cost producers such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia. However, this also brings issues to how the failure to prevent further oil exploitation is not restricted to the United States but globally as well, as places like Canada and Norway have high carbon taxes. But environmentalists continue to fight for the cause that this newly approved project will surely impact the Earth in a negative way with increases in temperature and the climate in the near future.

“I think the Alaska Oil Project is really bad because we already have climate problems in the United States,” said junior Sophia Pereira. “And just further approving these massive projects; we’re really doing irreparable damage when we need to actually be doing conservation and environmentalism,” she continued.

Yet, another challenge to the

newly approved project is with the Biden administration. In Biden’s campaign in 2020, he vowed to eliminate new gas and oil drilling, contradicting his current actions today. But despite the negative feedback from the public, the White House blames previous administrations.

“The difficult decision was on what we do with the Willow Project in Alaska, and my strong inclination was to disapprove of it across the board,” said Biden, in an interview with Fox News. “But the advice I got from counsel was that if that were the case, we may very well lose in court — lose that case in court to the oil company — and then not be able to do what I really want to do beyond that, and that is conserve significant amounts of Alaskan sea and land forever.”

But Biden’s actions still have consequences, as oil powers the economy, politics, and climate change. A decrease in oil production would lead to higher energy prices, as the demand for oil continues to increase: to heat homes, fuel transportation, generate electricity, and much more. But as oil teeters on the edge of necessity and causes climate change as a consequence of politics and legislation, voters, especially environmentalists that once approved of Biden’s presidential campaign, might not be as keen to re-elect.

According to statistics from the Washington Post, the Biden administration has surpassed the number of permits allowing the drilling of federal land than that of former President Donald Trump.

With the sudden introduction of change to federal land in Alaska, others take note that there is nothing that can be done to replace the gas and oil industries right now, nor is there such an immediate impact that the public needs to worry about. Still, the looming issue of climate change and temperature rise may continue to haunt us in the coming times.



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Artists' Abode 7

“The Great Sacrifice” by junior Gavin Huynh



Family. No matter how big or small one is, they will always be there for you no matter what. I picture my family as a bridge. Whenever someone walks on that bridge, every part has to hold up the weight of the person until they are no longer on the bridge. And every person who walks on the bridge holds the problems that my family and I face every day.

Things have been pretty rough for me and my family these past few weeks. One of my closest friends got taken away from me because of a few bullets and just last night my mother's sister died from cancer. My father thinks it's best for me and my brother to stay inside for a while because of the increase of gang violence outside. Public stores that have been successful in the past have been shutting down because of the decrease in consumerism this year. Things have been such a mess around town that nobody wants to even come out anymore. The only time you can catch a few cars driving around is when a family has completely run out of food in their house or if they are trying to leave the town for good.

My mother wonders why we have not left yet but my father gives the same answer every time. He tells her that we have nowhere else to go if we leave. She will then instantly respond by saying that any place other than here will be better for our family. Occasionally my brother would agree but most of the time he would just stay out of the family conversations. However, I was always affected by seeing my parents argue over things to keep my brother and I safe.

It wasn't always this bad in our town, just this year it seemed to be a lot worse than before. I don't think it will ever go back to normal in my opinion. As nights pass on and days come by, we are still staying inside our home waiting for any possible changes to our town.

My father says our food storage is getting smaller by

the day and the last portion of our money is dwindling down. My father and mother have not worked a single day since the start of this month because both their bosses had to lay everyone off as their companies filed for bankruptcy that same week. My parents have been discussing how we can still get food even if we don't have any money left and the only option that they could agree on was planting food in the backyard. I thought this idea was clever but it would take a while before we could get any food. And this would require watering it everyday with the chance of being seen by gang members roaming the street.

But we all agreed as a family that it was a risk worth taking, so at night fall my father and I snuck out to look for any seeds to grow. We went by foot because at night we knew it was when the most gangs came out. That's why it is required for us to sleep on the hard ground at night because there is always a chance of a bullet penetrating the walls of our home. As we approached the closest plant shop, we knew it was going to be closed so we looked in the back where shops would usually throw out the extra seeds.

And lucky for us we found a few watermelon seeds and tons of tomato seeds. The look on my father's face was like the look of a person winning the lottery. He was so surprised that we ever found anything. This was a sight I haven't seen in a very long time. My father finally found a sense of hope or any survival for our family. He signaled me to quickly pick up the remaining seeds and follow him instantly because we were still in danger anytime we were outside of the house. I stuffed all the seeds that we could find in both of my pockets and came to his side in only a few seconds. I was also very happy that we now could stop worrying about our next meal to come.

My father and I slowly crept around cars and light posts trying to not get spotted by anyone. Although we did see

“My Sandwich” by junior Sofia Antonia Ortiz

Anong mali sa sandwich ko
Early before school mother makes my lunch
Chopping, dicing, adding, stirring
Beating the sun to its position, working in the light of the moon
Taking and creating aromas

from a homeland far from this one my bed lays to rest
Packed in a cool-whip container, I am greeted with comfort
The lunch bell rings and I find my place in the hundreds
Surrounded by those whose parents pack them jelly sandwiches and carrot sticks

I open my bag releasing the sour smell of my food

The smell ripples through the air causing the sandwich kids to repel and hurl

They laugh, they point, they stare, they tease

Red stains my face in embarrassment and shame

Mocks and insults drown out the noise of the pale masses

And once again I am left wondering

Anong mali sa sandwich ko

What is wrong with my sandwich?

a few people outside, none of them looked very dangerous. I spotted a few cars and another family trying to look for a shelter for the night.

As soon as my father and I got home my mom helped us with the door and instantly slammed it shut as if someone was trying to follow us. She looked a little distressed when she saw us but then she was relieved that we both came back safely with our new source of food. My father told her about how we found the seeds behind the plant shop and told her how lucky we were to find any seeds at all.

The next morning, my father and I planted all the seeds in the backyard as my mother was watching us. We watered it everyday to make sure the seeds grew into healthy plants that are able to eat. As months passed on, we grew tired of living the same cautious life that we've had to endure for almost a year now. We decided that today was the day that we would find someplace safer to call home.

So early in the morning we hopped in our dusty car and headed off into the distance trying to get as far away as possible. We never looked back once as we were driving off into the sunset. It felt as if we had never lived there even though we spent our entire lives living in that little town. My brother and I had a few tears rolling down our cheeks but we knew it was better than risking our lives just to live there. *After all, we still had each other.*



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SANTA BARBARA NEWS PRESS

“UC,” freshman admits unable to live on campus

By Evan Griffith

Just under 250,000 students applied to at least one of the nine renowned public universities in the UC system for the fall 2023 school year. As more and more students migrate to their colleges to settle down for one of the most important and transformative times of their lives, the UC system is running out of dorms. Although these colleges are trying their best to expand their campuses and student housing, pushback from the respective cities and communities surrounding them makes the rapid expansion needed to accommodate incoming students almost impossible.

On Feb. 29, 2023, the official UC website announced, “No incoming first years will be offered on-campus dorm housing without a sizable and unrelated donation to the great UC campus in question.”

This may come as a shock to many current seniors reading this as it has barely been spoken about.

“We intentionally waited to make this information available until now so it would not affect the number of applications we receive for the fall 2023 year... the last thing we would have wanted was frustration and stress at an important time in the college process,” said president of the UC system Michael V. Drake in his press release.

Many seniors disagree with the decision to wait until now to inform future students of their housing options.

Senior Cameron Huyhn said, “I feel cheated. Michael V. Drake can catch these hands.”

But this is not the end of the world for future first years. Many elderly homes surrounding the UC campuses are offering discounted rent for underclassmen students. Co-president of Seniors for Change in Santa Cruz Sehr Alt said in the same article, “Living in an elderly home can get boring, some young faces will really freshen up the place.”

All UC campuses are implementing new and innovative ways to house more students. Campuses such as Irvine, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles are planning on implementing new “Quad Dorms” short for quadruple dorms housing four people where there would usually be two as well as new “Sex Dorms” short for sextuple dorms housing six people where there would usually be three.

Some unconfirmed solutions rumored to be implemented include a “bring your own tent” policy, as well as turning the unused sports stadiums into sleeping commons at night.

Although this news is disgruntling, these things have a way of working themselves out. Keep your heads high, seniors. College is a magical place, even if you don’t live there.

A week to remember: Chaos at CVHS

By Sam Scott

Over the past few weeks, we have seen some interesting things at CVHS. From new classes being added to our principal getting a hefty promotion, here is a rundown of what has happened.

The first of many weird things to occur was the recent food fight on March 31, which led many students and lunch ladies to experience the warzone that is the cafeteria. CVHS senior Seth Rogan began the fight by throwing a rogue apple. It was meant to hit a friend but ended up hitting another student’s pet goldfish that was brought to school as a support animal. Though “Goldie” remained unharmed, the sight of the goldfish wriggling on the ground drove the student to start hurling food in every direction, thus sparking the food fight. Spanning across multiple days, multiple lunch ladies quit and some students ended up seeking refuge under tables, appearing to experience shell shock, or as the school nurses diagnosed it, post-taco stress disorder. One of the students under the tables, junior Eric Swalwell, wrote in his journal, “I am unable to stand up without

getting smacked with mashed potatoes or fruit cups. I do not know whether I will make it out of this, so if anyone finds this, tell my family I love them.”

In other news, a Saturday detention broke out, a reigning disaster on the desolate CVHS over the weekend. “Four hours is simply too long to hold us captive. There is so much more I could be doing for four hours. I couldn’t take it anymore and something had to be done,” explained the leader of the breakout Klay Thompson.

After only 20 minutes into the detention period, Thompson and nine other students kicked the door down and began to take over the school. By the end of the weekend, bathrooms were destroyed and graffiti was plastered across nearly every wall in the school. Thankfully, a few hours before Monday’s school day started, janitors got to school in time to incur the students’ surrender and supervise the clean up, though the boys’ bathrooms remained decimated.

Speaking of takeovers, CVHS Principal Christopher Fortenberry has been promoted to the President of the United States. Our former principal was not able to provide us an email reply to our questions regarding his new career

position, now being too high status to respond to a high school. Since Fortenberry’s assumption of the position of U.S. president, we have settled all differences with neighboring countries and homelessness has dropped to zero percent. The inflation across the states has also drastically decreased. It seems that Fortenberry was the right person for the job.

The last noteworthy event to occur at CVHS over the past couple of weeks is the institution of the new class, Euro-Basics. In Euro-Basics, short for European Basics, students are given insight into European lifestyles and daily activities, as to support their ability to visit Europe without trouble. One of the lessons includes a simulation of having tea and crumpets. In this simulation, students are taught how to correctly eat and drink while conversing in fancy accents. Another lesson revolves around students being required to be angry or upset when someone mentions the “Boston Tea Party.” One student explained, “The class just feels wrong.”

These were some weird things at CVHS, and over the coming weeks, we will be more prepared for apples flying across the cafeteria.

Seagulls protest mask mandates caused by Avian Flu outbreak

By Frances Lee

A new virus strand of the Avian flu, also known as the bird flu, has taken over the world, forcing birds to mask up. Angry seagulls have flocked to the streets due to the mask mandates.

These flocks have wreaked havoc on bird highways, causing migrations to fly off course and scare many residents. However, some birds have also joined the seagull’s anti-mask stance, claiming that the mask mandates cause difficulty breathing in high elevations and oppress their bird rights.

Seagulls who oppose the mask mandate also claim that the bird flu is similar to the common cold and the illness has been greatly

exaggerated.

Some experts also believe that disapproval of masks may stem from conspiracies about government control using bird spies. According to theorists, many anti-masking seagulls may find other birds suspicious when they cover half their faces with the masks. Other theories include lacing masks with chemicals that weaken their flight capabilities and inputting tracking devices into the fibers

of the mask.

These theories, combined with frustrations of social distancing, have motivated anti-masking seagulls to emerge and speak out about the oppression and dangers of masks.

Many seagulls at CVHS have disregarded the social distancing rule in favor of fighting over food scraps. As other birds follow in their footsteps, this may lead to higher risks of contracting the bird flu.



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