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THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL Olympian

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Trans Trojans Tell Their Truth

By Corinne Davidson

Since the legalization of gay marriage in 2015, society has been learning more about and accepting the LGBTQ+ community more. LGBTQ+ rights are a much bigger topic in media now, but transgender and non-binary voices still struggle to be heard. CVHS has a large LGBTQ+ community which includes many transgender and non-binary people. Many transgender and non-binary people go through the process of changing their name and pronouns and these CVHS students are no different.

“Coming out as a trans woman has been an interesting experience to say the least. I have my name and gender changed with the school yet most teachers don’t seem to respect that,” said senior Ari Arellano. “I find it extremely ironic that the school preaches about equality and that they’re welcoming of all people yet have very limited accommodations for transgender individuals.”

“I appreciate the teachers who have a sheet where it asks for names and pronouns at the beginning of the year, it makes things really easy,” said senior Quinn Villalobos. Villalobos uses they/them pronouns and had their nickname changed on the roster to their name by



Quinn Villalobos and Ari Arellano talk about being transgender at CVHS. CORINNE DAVIDSON

asking their counselor about it. Since it’s only listed as a nickname on the roster it doesn’t show up on Aeries and some teachers and substitutes don’t see it listed—they overlook it.

“I had a horrible experience where I gently corrected a sub and there was a column of preferred names and his response was ‘I don’t care.’ I don’t think it was intended to be malicious, I think it was just his response to being corrected—but it still re-

ally hurt,” Villalobos recollects.

Many people who change their names and/or pronouns struggle with people around them making the change; sometimes it takes people a while to wrap their head around it or even to understand it. The Bay Area is a pretty progressive and accepting place for the LGBTQ+ community but that doesn’t mean that there aren’t struggles.

“Overall it’s been mostly okay, aside from the usual ‘Oh, I don’t

get they/them pronouns,’ or ‘oh, but you’re a singular person,’ from some students, not a whole lot, and then also being deadnamed by my counselor a few times,” said Villalobos.

Deadnaming is when a person uses someone’s birthname as opposed to their preferred name.

“Coming out honestly was fine for me. No one I previously knew questioned my name change and just went with it—

including teachers and admin. The only annoying part is pronouns; no one looks at me and assumes ‘oh I should use they/them pronouns for this person.’ They tend to go with she/her most of the time and most of the time I’m too awkward to correct them,” said senior Jamie Prout.

A complaint from both Prout and Villalobos was Google account names. The school is aware of both of their preferred names but their “dead names” still come up on the Google accounts which leads to confusion and awkward conversations with classmates when they have to do things such as share Google documents.

Arellano also pointed out that the school is rather inconsistent with accommodations for transgender and nonbinary students: there are gender neutral bathrooms but students often can’t use them because they are closed. The process of changing one’s name requires paperwork, Arellano said, but even when it’s been long changed, Arellano still gets randomly deadnamed on her school accounts.

“People seem to dehumanize me without even realising it, they seem to have ideas of what a trans woman is but they’re so far from the truth. I’m just a person, in fact, me being trans is one of the least interesting things about me,” stated Arellano.

Most college-bound CVHS students avoid SAT

By Athena Sy Kuzuhara

In a recent *Olympian* survey, 92.6% of respondents have not taken the SAT or ACT but 78.3% plan to take it. Most of those who have taken a standardized test are seniors.

As the pandemic cancelled SAT testing all over the country, many colleges and universities went test optional. California State University campuses, Stanford and many others are all test-optional until 2022 or 2023. The University of California system permanently no longer considers standardized test scores.

For many seniors this and last year, taking the SAT was an option, not a requirement. However, standardized test scores may still be used for scholarships and placement in college.

The push to make colleges and universities test optional or test-blind has been present even before the pandemic. Between October 2018 and September 2019, 49 schools adopted test-optional policies.

Most CVHS students seem to object to the use of standardized testing in college admissions, considering the test as a poor measure of a student’s aptitude and stress as major reasons.

“I feel like they should not

be used in college admission because one test determining whether one person gets into a certain college is quite absurd. It is more reasonable to grade someone off their grades than the SAT and ACT because with grades, you always can improve

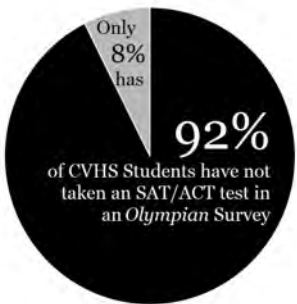
and are always given a chance. SAT/ACT does give retakes but with a cost,” said sophomore Asheley Tan.

Sophomore Tao Zhou disagrees. “Being objective, the SAT and ACT should be used in college admissions. It gives students an opportunity to prove that they are worthy of being in the desired college. Many people can get good grades and it reflects how well they do in class, but there are many factors that can contribute to that such as assistance. The SAT and ACT can give colleges an opportunity to see how well you do without any positive factors other than studying for it,” Zhou said. “But

to be fair, I wouldn’t want to take the SAT/ACT, but having it for college admissions is the rational choice in my opinion only.”

The CVHS College and Career Center recommends that students take the SAT or ACT if they can. According to the College and Career center website, “Applications without test scores, even for test optional schools, will be given the same consideration as other applications. Many local testing centers have been cancelling the exams..”

Caught up in a historic pandemic, taking the SAT is a choice many students will have to make as college applications get closer.





Standards based grading shows effort but fails test

Editorial:

This year many CVHS teachers have changed to a new standards based grading style. Standards based grading evaluates students, without bias, on how well they show understanding of material using their own study styles. The biggest change is that homework is not required and the grading rubric for assessments is from a scale of 0-4 instead of the well known A-F scale.

We believe that standards based grading has more cons than pros. Unfortunately, CVHS students are not ready to be based solely on assessments and understanding after a year of distance learning.

The lack of cookie cutter homework assignments allows for students to explore new study habits that work best for their specific type of learning style. As a result, many of the students who have gotten used to the habit of standardized grading have seen improvements in understanding of the material. Yet, many students view assigned



CORINNE DAVIDSON

homework as a waste of time because it accounts to nothing of their grade. It is frustrating for students to spend time on work that has zero effect on their grade, compared to when homework was accounted for in the gradebook and was able to bring up the overall grade percentage.

One con of standardized grading is that it is extremely confusing. When students were asked in a survey of how many of their teachers were using this type of grading, about 31.5% of students responded that they are not sure. This could be because students do not know what standardized grading is or that

the baseline for each teacher is different which makes it difficult to understand the definition of this procedure.

There seems to be no exact rubric that is followed all across the board. Some teachers allow retakes which allow the student to get up to full credit, while some make a limit that students are

only allowed to get up to eighty percent even if they score full credit on the retake. In some classes failing one test means you fail the whole class, and in another failing a test does not affect your grade at all.

The difference in consistency is also seen through which subjects the standardized grading is applied to. For example, in an English class it would be harder to grade based on essays where students are able to interpret texts using their own analysis as compared to a math test where there is one definite correct answer.

Perhaps it's because it's the first year that this type of grading has been placed that there are many negative reactions to it. We, the guinea pigs of standardized grading, believe that if homework counted for at least a portion of the grade and more consistency of standardized grading for classes, standardized grading would possibly be able to better achieve the goals of equitable grading.

PHOTOpinions

What do you think about standards based grading?



“I don't like it because I don't think that it completely reflects my understanding of the material.”

Ava Ng
freshman



“It can cause pressure on students who aren't good test takers. Without the grading of homework, students can feel less motivated complete homework.”

Somaya Panjwani
sophomore



“I kind of like it because it takes emphasis away from homework, but I can see how it can be difficult for people who understand the material but are bad test takers.”

Cynthia Pan
junior



“I don't really understand the grading, I prefer the old way of grading where we had percentages for scores.”

Eme D'Antonio
senior



“Standards based grading is really difficult to transition to, but ultimately, I think that it's worth it.”

Trent Logan
staff

Trans kids deserve to feel welcome in sports



By Olive Dooley

Over the past year there has been an influx in legislation proposed (and passed) by Republican lawmakers specifically targeting transgender people in Texas and America. Politicians are paying an uncomfortable amount of attention to trans women using women's restrooms and most recently on trans kids being able

to play on sports teams aligning with their gender identity, not their assigned gender at birth. In Texas, they banned such trans athletes from school sports with HB-25.

HB-25, according to Texas senators, representatives and the governor, protects cisgender athletes from having to compete in sports against people who supposedly have a biological advantage. That is a trash statement. Texas lawmakers have constantly used false information to target an already vulnerable group of people. Their laws have no basis and don't make sense.

Their claims of protecting cis women (let's be honest they're really trying to target trans women) fall flat due to the fact that there is no proof that

trans women have triumphed in sports over cis women. Cis women have competed against trans women and won, and continue to win. There is not a significant evidence that shows that cis women have suffered from participating against trans women. HB-25 is an unnecessary law that hurts trans people.

“This is all about girls and protecting them in our UIL sports,” said Valoree Swanson (R) in the Texas House of Representatives.

But if this was about protecting girls, it would protect trans girls. If you say you are going to protect girls, don't only protect cis girls. Allowing trans women to equally participate on a platform with cis women doesn't hurt cis women. It's like

getting any new competitor, there are people who have a leg up on you in certain sports. Having a different biological sex shouldn't limit a person from competing in a place that feels right to them.

If their issue is about trans women transitioning just to get a better standing in sports, then their problem is not with trans women, it's with men who are trying to pass as trans women. There have been numerous trans women who, following their transition, dropped out of their respective sports, knowing that they would struggle to find a place in them. However, people shouldn't have to drop out of sports because other people are uncomfortable with their existence. It shouldn't be a requirement as a trans person to

bend to the will of cis people who dislike their existence because it goes against their view of gender and sex.

Trans kids face a lot of hate, and this law makes things more difficult than they should be. Playing sports can help kids to keep a healthy mindset and body, as well as make connections with people around them. Restricting trans kids from this environment is wrong. Politicians are merely denying trans kids the right to have a life just like any other cis kid.

Texas lawmakers should no longer hold the right to restrict the rights of people for being trans. Allowing transgender kids to exist on the same plane, same teams, as cis kids will hurt no one. Allowing trans people to exist freely hurts no one.

Standards based grading hits report cards

By Deleenn Block

Standards based grading has arrived at CVHS as students as teachers try to bring down the rise in F grades during distance learning period.

Between 2019 and 2020, the amount of letter F grades for the first quarter rose significantly, going from 2.6% up to 6.7%, likely caused by the transition to distance learning.

“Some students really adapted well to distance learning and figured it out while others completely fell off track and had little support, making it much harder for them now that we’re back in person,” math teacher Kelley O’Hern stated.

Many CVHS teachers have followed a nationwide trend by implementing a standards based grading policy in their classrooms. Standards based grading aims to grade for understanding and quality of work. It works on a 0-4 scale and does not count formative assignments



ANDREW HUI

like homework, participation or effort, basing grades exclusively on tests and projects but allowing for retakes.

CVHS students are divided on their feelings about this new policy though. Out of 135 students surveyed, 95% of them have a teacher using standards based grading, 62.5% of students approve of standards based grading while the other 37.5% do not.

“I like how it really helps you learn things. For example I have found retakes very helpful when trying to raise grades. I can review old tests and learn more than just being sad about my bad score,” sophomore Joshua Mak said.

Though other students are not happy with the new system. “It’s a confusing grading method that makes it near impossible to see why your grade increased or dropped. Cryptic, and it preys on people who don’t take tests well. You’re screwed if you’re a bad test taker because, guess what: that’s your entire grade,” said junior Bronson Burfield.

The four-point system makes it difficult for students to calculate grades and many feel this system was never fully explained to them or teachers. But despite the challenges, many students are happy with this grading system, saying that the retake policy and non-required homework helps them learn and achieve higher grades.

Even teachers are split on how they think this grading affects students. “The previous style of grading allows us to offer different paths to success for people with different learning styles that maybe aren’t strong test takers but are still learning and taking info out of class through effort and participation,” said social studies teacher Eric Bahm.

“I feel it really helps students understand if they are comprehending or not. They ask for help now because we’re grading on assessment. I think students are improving in their writing and understanding their reading because they know they can retake it and ask questions,” English teacher Tina Johansson said.

Covid-19 update: vaccine mandate confirmed

By Ethan Hudson

The number of confirmed Covid cases in the CVHS student body fell from seven in August to one in October, but rebounded to five in November.

In contrast to the students, the number of staff infections increased from one in August to four in October, before dropping back down to one in November.

California became the first US state to mandate vaccination for students after the vaccines get full approved by the FDA. This will go into effect in 2022. With the recent approval of Covid vaccinations for children aged 5 to 11, the vaccination rate should only go higher.

“I think vaccine mandates are important in preventing widespread disease,” said senior Giselle Seidman, showing a common sentiment among the student body.

Recently the FDA approved booster shots and mixing vaccinations, making the vaccine even more accessible.

“It’s good for the nation and state but it gets a little complicated with people’s personal rights. Americans, in general, can be unwilling to do something for the greater good, and some people shouldn’t get the vaccine for medical reasons. But overall, vaccines are a good thing,” said former health teacher Jean Emrich.

At some schools, students

are walking out and protesting vaccine requirements. Some parents feel that Gov. Gavin Newsom is overreaching and that it is their right to choose if they and their children get vaccinated. Although, this does appear to be the minority as currently, 78 percent of California residents have had at least one dose and 63 percent are fully vaccinated.

Despite the controversy, California has one of the lowest Covid infection rates of any state.

“It makes me feel safer knowing that my classmates are going to be vaccinated,” said senior Thursday Hill.

Molzen recognized by 49ers

By Drew Paxman

Before every game, CVHS head football coach Denny Molzen finds ways to inspire and electrify his players.

“Before every game, he gives great motivational speeches, and always pumps us up during the week,” said junior wide receiver and defensive back, John Jacob.

Now in his 18th year of coaching, Molzen has been recognized as the 49ers Prep Charlie Wedemeyer Memorial Coach of the Week. The award also comes with a grant. However, Molzen wants to make it clear that, although he is being recognized, the award is really dedicated to all of the team.

“I look at it as we were the team of the week and I just happened to be recognized,” he said.

Molzen also credited the as-

sistant coaches and players in getting an impressive 55-21 win over the Washington Huskies on Oct. 29. The Trojans dominated from the get go, scoring a touchdown on the opening play of the game by running back Jacob Melancon.

A four-year player at CVHS himself, Molzen always knew that he wanted to get back into coaching, and was inspired greatly by his coaches. “Good high school coaches that instilled a lot of things into me as a young man,” he said.

As for the grant, Molzen sees that as a great benefit for the future.

“Football is a pretty expensive sport,” he said. “If it allows us to get some new protective gear, whether it be helmets or shoulder pads, those can help our kids for several years.”

As for what’s next for the



OLIVE DOOLEY

Coach Denny Molzen

Trojans, the team unfortunately did not make the playoffs despite another dominant 35-7 victory over Berkeley. However, Molzen’s influence and dedication still inspires the Trojans.

“He is a second dad to us,” said junior Franco Sarno, running back. “He’s always making sure we’re not doing bad in school or life outside of school. In all of his free time he’s game prepping and watching film.”

Go Trojans!



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‘Red (Taylor’s Version)’ revisits timeless past



By Maya Wong

“Lord, what will become of me/Once I’ve lost my novelty?” wonders Taylor Swift in her recently released track “Nothing New.” Written ten years ago at the age of 21, the song depicts Swift musing upon her future: one of uncertainty and difficulty living up to, considering her past successes at such a young age. “Will you still want me when I’m nothing new?”

Swift has maintained relevancy for 15 years, and continues to stun audiences with her masterful lyricism and heartfelt emotion. She is capable of breaking records time and time again—even with decade-old music. Her re-recorded album “Red (Taylor’s Version)” proves that Swift



MAYA WONG

is more than just a musical powerhouse; she is that music industry.

Originally released in 2012, “Red” is Swift’s fourth studio album. She dabbled into numerous genres, marking a transitional period between country and pop. It has garnered worldwide success and was named No. 99 in Rolling Stone’s 500 Greatest Albums of All Time

this year.

Now, at the age of 31, Swift is revisiting her 22 year-old self in an effort to own her master recordings. With “Red (Taylor’s Version),” she improves upon an already stellar album. Her vocal delivery is more clear and robust; the production is more polished. Lasting hours over the span of 30 incredible tracks, Swift also extends the tracklist with

the addition of nine previously-unreleased songs “from the Vault.”

Of those nine tracks, the standout comes at the album’s end: “All Too Well (10 Minute Version).” Arguably the greatest song in her discography, the original trimmed-down “All Too Well” quickly became a fan favorite. In “All Too Well,” Swift

reflects upon a breakup, her story threaded through by a scarf that her past lover still keeps. “You call me up again just to break me like a promise / So casually cruel in the name of being honest,” sings Swift. While the song’s shortened version is sorrowful and longing, its new sibling is angrier and unapologetic: highlighting an imbalance of power between the couple due to a gap in age. “You kept me like a secret, but I kept you like an oath.” Ten years later, Swift analyzes the love affair at a distance. “Just between us, did the love affair maim you too?”

Once again, Swift demonstrates her incredible storytelling abilities through the lens of her past self. In “Red (Taylor’s Version),” she returns to and perfects upon her discography. The world can relive 2012 and once again feel 22: with a dash of nostalgia and greater appreciation for the greatest songwriter of our generation.

‘Outer Banks’ creates suspense



By Jenna Nosseir

John B. and Sarah stand tall on “The Phantom” sailing to Mexico to escape from the cops. Boom! Thunder strikes right in front of them. Their boat capsizes and they are presumed dead by the world.

Many unpredictable scenes that keep you on your toes are found throughout “Outer Banks,” season two. Every episode leaves you with a cliffhanger aching to keep watching. So beware, you may get hooked!

The fans must also agree with a whopping rating of 4.8/5 stars! Common phrases written by fans include, “perfect mix of action, drama, emotional and humour,” “outstanding and thrilling watch,” “exquisite and remarkably good!” “exceeded my expectations,” and so on, you get the point. The very few lower rated reviews incorporate phrases such as, “too much going on,” “too many side stories,” and “logic is unbelievable.” However, there are only very few of those and they’re very rare to come by.

The intensity of this show is by far my favorite aspect. It leaves me on the edge of my seat wanting to grab a bowl of popcorn and binge watch the whole season in one day.

However, a few of the scenes didn’t make much sense to me which is something I disliked. For instance, when John B messaged Kiara, JJ, and Pope from a random stranger’s phone,

he somehow had all of their phone numbers memorized. Who has their friends’ phone numbers memorized nowadays? I personally only have my mom’s phone number memorized and my own, not even my own dad’s.

In the conflicted world of “Outer Banks,” there just never seems to be enough conflict. Over the course of the season, the amount of times a new issue had popped up for the Pogues and Sarah’s staggering family to face, is absurd. Something as simple as a dropped camera, vehicle trouble, or animal encounters is this show’s way of catastrophizing such a small issue. It wouldn’t be “Outer Banks” without a minor inconvenience feeling as if it’s a life threatening problem!

“Look, I’d rather die than go to jail, Sarah,” John B emphasizes. “I’d rather die than be without you,” Sarah responds. These are the last words they exchange before a flagrant wave takes over and their boat nose dives into the water.

When the news spreads that Sarah and John B’s radio signal had been lost, their best friends back home immediately fall into the arms of their parents and mourn in sorrowfulness. JJ and his benevolent ways don’t know how to react and lunged at the sheriff threatening to kill him for driving John B and Sarah straight into the storm that they got lost in.

Yet, their bodies were never found. Do you think they made it out from under the boat alive or drowned under the blazing storm? Find out by watching season two of the newly hyped “Outer Banks”! Don’t forget to grab some snacks, relax, and enjoy the show.



By Kai Liebowitz

Directed by Denis Villeneuve, “Dune” captures all of the modern aspects of film. The cinematography, sound design, set design, and story are all breathtaking and unique compared to what viewers are accustomed to. From the sounds of spectacular futuristic spaceships to visually awe-inspiring landscapes, it has a lot to offer to people willing to sit through a two-and-a-half-hour movie.

In 1965, a book entitled “Dune” was published by author Frank Herbert. Although sci-fi existed as a genre prior to the release of “Dune,” I believe that Herbert’s novel truly ignited a vision for the future of Sci-Fi. Herbert’s novel was unique because it focused on the politics, society, and religion of future generations instead of technology. In fact, it is a plot point that artificial intelligence was banned in the “Dune” novels. Although the book’s complex language is unnecessarily confusing at times, the idea behind the book is quite genius.

Just like the book, the movie follows a teenaged Paul Atreides, heir and son to Duke Leto of House Atreides. At the beginning of the movie, Paul’s family has been gifted the desert planet, Arrakis (or Dune) by the



Emperor. Arrakis is home to a very valuable resource called Spice. Spice is used all across the universe to raise the awareness and intelligence of humans. In Paul’s world, whoever controls spice has an immense amount of wealth and power. Now that the Atreides family controls the production of spice on Arrakis, they are seemingly destined for success.

It seems that the “third time’s the charm” for the “Dune” Universe, as there have been two other attempts to capture this classic novel on screen. In 1984, David Lynch directed an ambitious movie based on the first book of “Dune” which was not well received. Then, in 2000, a series based on the world of “Dune” came out which was unable to gain traction. With Villeneuve’s vision of the world of “Dune,” an acceptable movie version of Frank Herbert’s masterpiece has been created.

Having read the book, I was pleasantly surprised at how true the movie stayed to it. The movie accomplished a large

amount of the world-building included in Herbert’s lore-filled book. I was especially impressed by how the movie handled the many characters from the book. Almost every character in the movie is somewhat complex, having multiple goals and motivations. The relationships between the characters were also notable in their complexities. Much of the movie is focused on Paul’s relationship with his mom, which is unexpected in a coming-of-age story. It gives the action of the movie more depth and meaning.

“Dune” is a unique film in that it draws audiences from fans of many different genres. Everyone will find something to appreciate in this film. It has heart, action, intrigue, and drama all tied together by Villeneuve. Although some have complained about the first movie not having a definitive ending, I believe that audiences will be more satisfied once they see the second part in 2023. In my opinion, I believe that “Dune” is the first installment in a very successful series.



CVHS Band marches to success

By Felix Shum

The CVHS Marching Band managed to take third place in the competition at Independence High School on Nov. 6.

The marching band has not achieved such a triumph for several competitions.

For this competition, the marching band performed for the judges, “Mandala We are Connected.”

The marching band has put in a lot of time and effort into practices, at about 11 hours a week. Percussionists and color guard had around 14 to 15 hours of practice a week.

“I’m happy and proud of the students. I’m glad the students’

hard work paid off,” said band teacher Keita Hasegawa.

The last competition took place on Nov. 13 at the James Logan Invitational Band Tournament, with the marching band scoring sixth with 83.05 points out of 100, the Trojans’ highest score ever. Judges scored based on various components, including overall sound.

Marching band is about working as a team with the focus on the overall output.

As competition season has been drawn to a close for the year, some have begun to miss the frequent performances.

“I’m really going to miss it as this is my last year,” said second-year percussionist and senior Adam Roura.



Marching band won a third-place trophy at the Independence High School competition.

Deco Club decorates CVHS with dedication

Decorations bring holiday cheer

By Jessica Truong

CVHS’s brand new Deco Club is dedicated to accessorizing the school with festive holiday decorations.

You might have seen the spooky cobwebs or assorted pumpkins scattered around the courtyard this October. In celebration of Halloween, club members ornamented the campus with spiders, gravestones, and much more. Started by freshmen Renata Gutierrez and Nadia Maciel, the Deco Club aims to decorate the campus in celebration of various holidays.

On the Friday before Halloween, the Deco Club held a fundraiser on the stage. They set up a themed area with large inflatable skeletons and gravestones for students to take photos with.

“It’s really fun participating in all the activities, and I like being part of a positive group that wants to do good things for our school,” said club member Alaina Retodo.

Deco Club aims to make sure every student feels represented with the decorations. Club leaders encourage students to suggest potential celebrations and events to decorate for.

“We want to be inclusive to many different holidays and make sure everyone is included,” said Gutierrez.

Club members recently gathered to create handmade



Deco Club members hang decorations.

JESSICA TRUONG

decorations in preparation for Dia de los Muertos. Recently, the Deco Club collaborated with Puente and Latinos Unidos to set up an altar on the stage.

Trojans should keep an eye out for future events all around the campus. “I’m most excited

to decorate for Christmas and Valentine’s day,” stated Maciel.

There is much more to come and students are excited to see it. “I think it makes CVHS a more lively place. It’s refreshing to see a change for once,” says senior Hani Liu.



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REBECCA IRELAND

Yurika Ogawa helps a Japanese student with enthusiasm.

Visiting teacher helps Trojans learn Japanese

By Rebecca Ireland

Have you ever traveled somewhere for a job? How about overseas? Well, Yurika Ogawa has, and she came to teach at CVHS.

Japanese teacher assistant Ogawa came all the way from Japan just to help the CVHS Japanese classes. She is loved by the students and is already becoming involved in CVHS society.

Ogawa is proud of all the students “trying really hard to learn Japanese” and she “likes working with the students.”

Students in Japanese classes this year love having Ogawa in their classroom. “She is friendly and I like talking to her,” shared junior Hailey Hoang.

Coming to California is hard enough, but during Covid-19, with extra protocol and hoops to jump through, it is even harder. Ogawa had to get a Social Security number and a new bank account. She said she felt “like a baby here” since she had to start from the very

first step. She also had to get approved by the school district before joining the classes in-person.

Ogawa and CVHS Japanese teacher Emi Crow got connected through a program called Japanese Language Education Assistant Program (J-Leap). J-Leap is a project to connect a native Japanese speaker — passionate about teaching Japanese — with a Japanese teacher in the U.S. The assistant teachers stay with the class in the U.S. for two years to gain teaching experience.

Ogawa says that after her two years at CVHS she will be “looking for some job abroad to teach [Japanese].”

Outside of teaching, Ogawa enjoys surfing. She has tried to go since arriving in California but, when she went, her car broke down and she was unable to go.

During Homecoming, Ogawa participated in the teacher dance. She is clearly integrating into CVHS nicely, and hopefully will stay comfortably for the next two years.

Friendly canned food competition

By Jennifer Mi

Who knew corn and peas came with fun and competition? The annual CVHS canned food drive grows a breeding ground for friendly fire among teachers and classes.

Traditionally every November, the Leadership class collects non-perishable items and goods to go towards families in need during Thanksgiving. This year, the donations will be going to the CVHS Community Closet, CVUSD Community Closet, and Sunrise Village

Shelter in Fremont.

From Nov. 1-19, fourth period classes fight to bring in the most pasta, mashed potatoes, beans, and more. The competition gets increasingly heated throughout the weeks, as a special prize, glory, and bragging rights are all at stake.

Psychology and Government teacher Carmelina Frasca encourages her students to help keep up her reputation as Canned Food Drive winner, and each year her fourth period brings in hundreds of cans. In fact in 2017, Frasca's class collected 1259 cans, setting a

school record which still stands today.

"We are going to help the community, which may even include students in our very own classes, as we do not know who specifically it is going to. We need to show generosity, kindness, and give back to those who have far less than us," Frasca said.

Frasca shares that her coworkers have previously accused her of cheating, to which she responds, "I would never cheat because cheating means you are not really winning."

American Sign Language

teacher Amy Ryken surpassed Frasca's class and took the victory two years ago in 2019. Ryken recognizes that although winning is great, "Either way we are winning by helping the community."

Leadership students enjoy lending a helping hand during this event, finding it fulfilling.

"The Canned Food Drive really unites the student body. We all have one goal and that is to raise as many cans as we can to donate to those less fortunate," said ASB Vice President Wandii Muinde. "Having all classes participate is really wholesome

and to be a part of collecting them is really fun!"

While the competition is fun, students and staff can agree that overall, the gratification of helping others in need is the true prize at stake. You never know what faces among us at CVHS are in need of a warm dinner. During this time, it is important to show compassion, generosity, and goodwill.

This year, CVHS collected a whopping total of 4004 cans and non-perishable items. The winning title belongs to Frasca's fourth period in room 108, who brought in over 500 cans!

Mahjong: Tile-Based Greatness

By Leland Tsai

The CVHS Mahjong Club, created by junior Jonathan Lin and supported by math teacher Kelley O'Hern, gained popularity quickly among students. As many students don't know how to play or even what mahjong is, over 100 people signed up for the club and the meetings have great turnout.

Mahjong is a tile based game where the goal is to eventually have four sets or straights and one pair to win. Commonly played in many Asian countries, mahjong is not very well known in the Americas.

Lin's goal is to spread and let other people appreciate the greatness of the game of mahjong to students in CVHS. He also coaches new players and teaches them how to play the great game.

"I wanted to let people have the chance to experience mahjong because it is a great game that should deserve more recognition in CVHS and I feel many people will enjoy it," said Lin.

Mahjong is a fun game for everyone to enjoy and have a great time with. As it is played with four people, mahjong is also a great opportunity to catch up with friends or meet



Mahjong club members are engrossed in an intense match.

LELAND TSAI

new people.

"I think this club is really fun. You get to meet lots of people while enjoying mahjong," said junior Trevor Yen.

During the first meeting, the interest among CVHS students

was apparent; the room in which the first meeting was held was unable to hold all of the interested students because it was too small, so the club had to relocate to the main gym. As a brand new club, this was an

amazing feat to accomplish. Being able to create a club with so many participants so quickly is very difficult and very impressive.

Meetings are every other Wednesday in room 757.

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Cross country runners qualify for state meet

By Andrew Hui

Trojans dashed through the Farmers' fields at the NCS Championship meet at Hayward High School on Nov. 20. Cameron Huynh, Logan Phulps and Jacob Bull qualified for the California Cross Country Championships, where they ran among the state's top runners. This is the first time since 2017 that CVHS runners ran all the way to the state meet.

"I couldn't believe I made it to the state meet. It was insane," exclaimed Huynh.

The loopy and hilly course at the NCS Championship posed no challenge for the Trojans. Both boys and girls teams placed fifth overall in Division I of the North Coast Section.

Huynh, placing 8th, beat her time from the league meet by 24 seconds, running the race in



Jacob Bull, Logan Phulps, and Cameron Huynh sprint for the finish line.

just 19 minutes and 41 seconds. Phulps, who beat his own personal record by 17 seconds, ran it in 16 minutes and 5 seconds and placed 8th place. Bull, right behind Phulps, came in just a second later at 16 minutes and 6 seconds, placing 9th.

"I was nervous from the anticipation," recalled Phulps.

But the Trojans had nothing to be nervous about, sprinting around Fresno's Woodward Park at the State Championships on Nov. 28. Huynh ran the girls Division I race in just 20 minutes



ANDREW HUI

and 38 seconds. Phulps finished the boys Division I race in just 16 minutes 37 seconds, with Bull tailing close behind at 16 minutes and 40 seconds.

The cross country teams have been running well all season, with the freshman boys and girls

teams placing first and second overall respectively at the WACC league meet on Nov. 9. The varsity girls placed third overall in the league, and the varsity boys placed fourth.

At the WACC meet on Nov. 6, Bull placed 3rd, running the three-mile race in 15 minutes and 57 seconds. Phulps took sixth in 16 minutes and 22 seconds.

Huynh placed 7th, completing the course in 20 minutes and 5 seconds. Sophomore runner Allison Mitchell tailed Huynh, coming in 8th place at 20 minutes and 19 seconds.

Phulps' advice for aspiring runners: "Stay focused on it. If you stick with it, you'll realize that you've moved up a category." A senior, he plans to continue running in college.

It has definitely been an exhilarating season for the Trojans.

"Everyone should have the right to pursue happiness," says Warriors star

By Leah Janaway

CVHS alum Juan Toscano-Anderson has it all: he's a star of the Golden State Warriors, signing a multimillion dollar two-year contract in the spring. However, there's more to him than basketball.

In mid-2020, Toscano-Anderson decided to use his platform to organize a march in his hometown of Oakland following the historic murder of George Floyd. On paper it was a Black Lives Matter march, but he says that to him, it had a greater meaning.

"I'm just a human, and what I believe is that everyone should have the right to pursue happiness, whatever that is," he said. "It don't matter if you're gay, it don't matter if you're Black, it don't matter if you're a woman. Sometimes we become too divisive. That's why I made that march; it was more so like a peace march to bring everybody together."

Toscano-Anderson visited CVHS on Thursday, Nov. 4. Trojans basketball players as well as several teachers gathered in the gym during sixth period to hear him speak.

Toscano-Anderson's refreshingly candid conversation included everything from his pre-game habit of brushing his teeth to his experience with the NBA recruitment process. He brought a down-to-earth focus to the importance of mental health, not just in basketball, but in



LEAH JANAWAY

Juan Toscano-Anderson talks to CVHS basketball teams.

everyday life.

Toscano-Anderson advised the basketball players in the audience to remember to focus on their education; when he was at CVHS he didn't care about anything but the game.

"Seventeen years old, I'm not even thinking about getting a college degree. I'm a star athlete—I'm thinking about going to the league and getting paid," he recalled. "But my mom said, 'I don't care about basketball. I want my son to graduate college.'"

Now a decade later, he's grateful. "You can take my money, you can take my contract, but you can't take my education," he said. "You can't take my college degree. That's something that's going to sit on my wall forever—that's an accomplishment."

Toscano-Anderson graduated from CVHS in 2011 and attended Marquette University where he pursued a bachelor's degree in criminology while playing basketball for

the Golden Eagles. Following his four years there, he played on teams in Mexico, Venezuela, and Santa Cruz. He signed with the Warriors in 2020.

Toscano-Anderson concluded his conversation with some words of wisdom for the students. "You don't have to have the answers today. Nobody has the answers. I didn't know I was going to the NBA—I'm 28, I got to the NBA when I was 26. That's eight years after high school," he told them. "If I could give you guys any advice, the main thing I would say is to enjoy your life. You're only going to be truly successful if you wake up and you're optimistic."

CVHS social studies teacher Sarah Burke was impressed and inspired by Toscano-Anderson. "He was so well-spoken and thoughtful, and he had such wonderful advice," she said. "It was a really amazing experience."



Team captain Chase Robinson plays linebacker and tight end.

Robinson: "great teammate and leader"

By Maya Wong

As his name was announced, Chase Robinson stepped out from under the inflatable Trojan helmet, grinning as his fellow teammates roared. Accompanied by his parents and sister, Robinson gallantly strided down the field with a large green hammer in his hands.

A symbol of strength and achievement, the hammer has long been regarded by the football team as a good luck charm. On the back of Robinson's helmet, "Be the Hammer" was written out in bold block letters. And that night on the field, the "Hammer" he was.

Calling defensive plays, Robinson is a linebacker, tight end and team captain. His versatility on both sides of the ball allows him to make both score-boosting touchdowns and crucial tackles.

"He's not afraid to do the things that a lot of kids don't want to do, like getting contact or mixing it up with kids that are bigger than him," noted head coach Denny Molzen.

During Senior Night, Robinson contributed to nearly all of the tackles made against the opposing team. The "Hammer," slammed down anyone with the football nearby, an act of confi-

dence and authority.

"He just cares, and wants to be and do well. I think his drive is what makes him a really good football player," explained Molzen.

"He is a great teammate and leader," stated junior quarterback Nolan Barnes. "He picks the team up and motivates everyone to work hard."

When asked what his favorite part about football was, without hesitation he said: his friends.

"I made lifelong friends that I wouldn't have been able to make if I didn't have football," mentioned Robinson. "After a team win when we're on the bus, it's the best feeling ever just being with my friends."

Friendships Robinson has made in football will last a lifetime, and so will the lessons he has learned.

"The most rewarding thing about playing is knowing that after every play you get back up. It teaches you the life lesson that no matter what happens, you get back out," he said.

Robinson has faced losses, frustration, and disappointment. In spite of these challenges, he rises up with more willpower than ever before, leading his teammates along the way. He is the "Hammer."