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THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL Olympian

VOLUME 64, ISSUE 4

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Omicron variant surges in schools



Marian Meadows passes out a testing kit at Creekside Middle School.

ANDREW HUI

By Ali Nosseir, Ethan To,
and Leland Tsai

The Covid-19 Omicron variant struck CVHS hard in January, leaving hundreds of students' desks empty and infections spreading across many students

and staff. In the first two weeks of January, CVHS and CVUSD recorded more than three times the amount of Covid cases than the prior five months combined. The CVHS absence rate rose as high as 17 percent, more than four times the usual amount.

Current legislation requires districts to have 180 days of in-person instruction, which leaves distance and hybrid learning as unachievable. Before winter break ended, 226 students reported their positive rapid Covid test. After the first two weeks

back, cases have continued to increase as 378 students within the district have reported positive cases. The district continues to offer Covid testing at the Center for the Arts.

"There is no chance of us potentially returning back to online school due to the current legislation... We've been very fortunate to have national labs as well as antigen tests. We were one of the few school districts with the take-home antigen tests to give to students before they returned from break," said Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi.

Due to the current rise in cases, many sports practices and games have been canceled or postponed for a few weeks to accommodate the high surge within the teams.

"At the moment, I don't know if they'll cancel more... I really hope they don't. But since we can't be together as a team, hopefully, everybody puts in some work while we're out to try to stay in shape and get a little bit better every day," said junior

and basketball player Mateo Jackson.

Many other extracurricular activities such as theater and choir have taken more precautions for their rehearsals, moving practices outside and having a limited number of people attending rehearsals.

Originally, the annual CVHS Winter Ball was set to take place on Jan. 22. However, because of the current rise in Covid cases connecting to the Omicron variant, the date has been postponed to late February.

"It sucks that it got pushed back because I was looking forward to it, but at least it didn't get canceled," said junior Chris LaChapelle.

It is unknown when the Omicron surge will die down in our district. This causes many CVHS students to ponder: Will other CVHS events be postponed or potentially canceled as well? Although events like Prom and Graduation are months away, there is no certainty that everything will go on as planned.

Biden's first year met with mixed feelings

By Rebecca Ireland

President Joe Biden's first year in the White House arrived in January, and the approach taken by his administration has shifted from the Trump Administration to a more moderately democratic stance.

Biden's major focuses for his presidency included Covid-19, climate change, racial equity, economy, health care, immigration, restoring America's global standing, and bipartisan cooperation. He also said he would reverse Trump-era policy. Bipartisan support and work is one concern and core focus that Biden had.

An Olympian survey showed 55.1% of CVHS students approve of Biden's job performance. Some that disapprove think he is not doing enough and are unsatisfied and others still believe the 2020 election was rigged.

"He reversed a lot of Trump's previous actions which were harmful to both people and the environment," said CVHS



senior Alaina Retodo.

"He has failed in multiple categories as president and the only thing keeping his image going is his strong pursuit for everyone to get vaccinated," stated CVHS junior Alex Burke. He also criticized the withdrawal from Afghanistan and Biden's impact on the economy.

On the campaign trail, Biden made a lot of promises: ensure the U.S. achieves a 100% clean energy economy and reaches net-zero emissions no later

than 2050, plan for the effective, equitable distribution of treatments and vaccines, forgive student loans, provide a public health insurance option, and more.

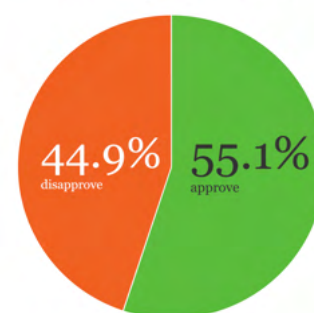
So far, there has been little follow through on a lot of issues, including racial justice and the climate crisis. He has proposed policies regarding these issues which have not passed the Senate.

So far, Biden has seemed to follow through with some of

these promises as best as he can without using too many executive orders bypassing Congress. He has confirmed 40 federal judges and, as promised, many are women of color. He also made a historic addition to his cabinet by appointing Deb Haaland to be Secretary of the Interior. She is the first Indigenous person in any administration's cabinet.

"I think it's important that he has appointed a diverse set of experts to his cabinet.

Biden's Approval
Rating at CVHS



Choosing Deb Haaland as US Secretary of the Interior is so significant," exclaimed CVHS English teacher Anne Parris. "I think getting the Build Back Better bill passed, even in its watered-down form, is also huge."

One crucial part of the Biden plan has been the Build Back Better Act. This is a \$1.75 trillion reconciliation bill (lowered after talks), allocating funds for Covid-19 relief, social services, welfare, infrastructure, and reducing the effects of the climate crisis. It also includes universal preschool, two years of free community college, Medicare and Medicaid expansion, lower prescription drug costs, tax cuts for families with kids, paid family leave for 12 weeks, housing investments, and climate incentives. Some of the tax changes are essentially repeals of Trump-era tax cuts. While this bill has passed the House of Representatives, it is being held up in the Senate, primarily by Sen. Joe Manchin.

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CV students honor Martin Luther King Jr.

By Ethan Hudson

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Students of Castro Valley proudly showed where they stand during a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Zoom event on Jan. 17.

The event held a conducive conversation about the man’s ideas and legacy and how to move forward with his vision of an equal America. Dr. Jason Reimann, assistant superintendent and a self-described ‘educational leader, and advocate for young people,’ led the majority of the discussion. He shone a light on incredibly important issues with statistics and emotion.

“Having this conversation in the first place is a victory. As with any social justice movement we are actively being pushed against by many groups that benefit from oppression, especially when other districts are actively fighting against

these conversations,” explained Reimann.

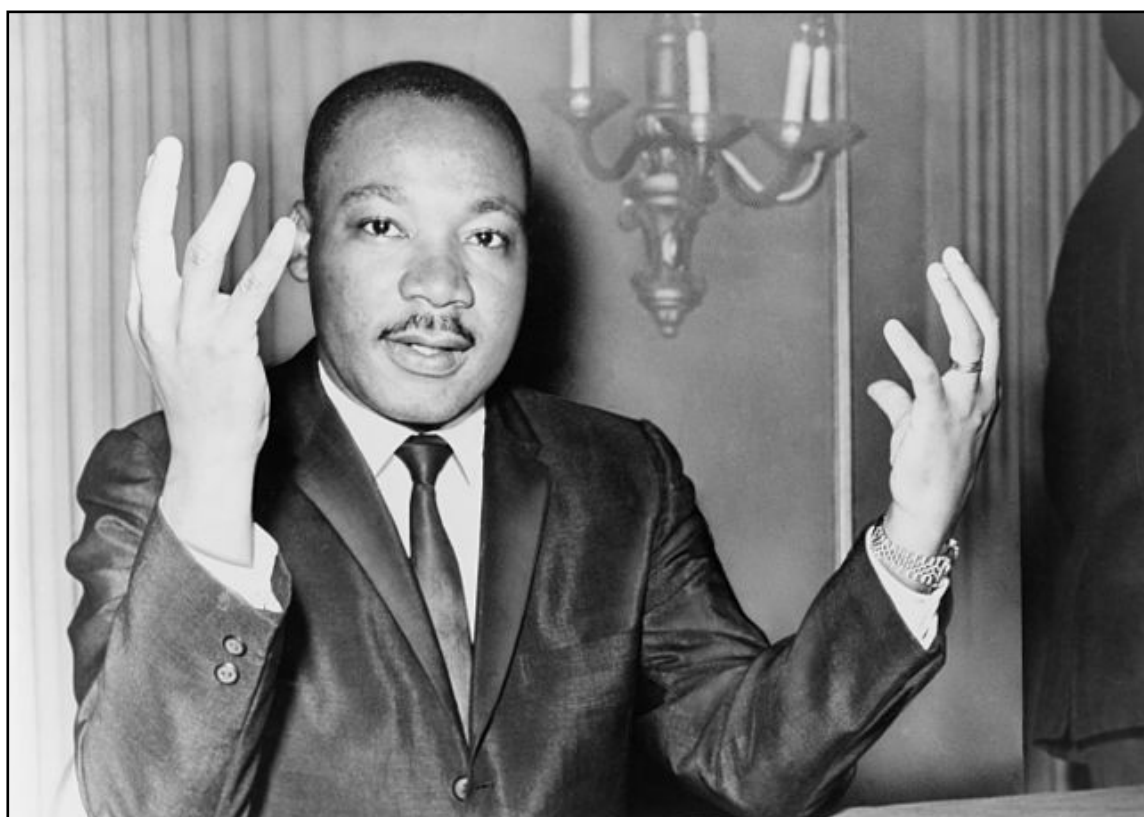
Many other speakers expressed their appreciation for the district for pushing important conversations about race and progressivism.

Reimann brought up many upsetting statistics regarding the economic status of Black communities, such as how homelessness disproportionately affects Black communities. He said 70% of the homeless population of Oakland is African American.

While systemic change is important, many speakers emphasized the importance of remembering your own worth.

“The only way to move forward is to be making the correct wages and it’s important to know what others in your position are making. Never undersell yourself,” said Marshall Elementary Principal Yvonna Rogers.

The center of the event was the student speakers, ranging from elementary to high school age. Briaun Patton and Malachi Everett represented CVHS



Martin Luther King Jr. fought for his vision of an equal America.

with two powerful speeches.

“Freedom needs to be fought for. Dr. King gave us the foundation we need to create change in this world,” said Patton.

“We have yet to fully achieve

this dream of equality. Dr. King’s last speech was titled ‘I’ve Been to the Mountaintop.’ If I were to rename this speech in today’s time, Dr. King would be saying ‘Started From the

Bottom Now We’re Here,’” said Everett. “What Dr. King saw on that mountain top was prophetic. He saw Black people standing united taking economic access through boycotts.”

How will Senate Bill 328 affect the sleep of California high schoolers?

By Jennifer Mi

In a recent survey of CVHS students, only 4.3% report receiving eight or more hours of sleep, the recommended amount for 13-18 year olds according to the Center for Disease Control. Meanwhile, 53.6% of students reported receiving six to seven hours, and 42% reported receiving five or less hours of sleep.

Going into effect during the 2022-23 school year, Senate Bill 328 will require California high schools to begin regular classes no earlier than 8:30 a.m. The law was signed by Governor Gavin Newsom in 2019 to better serve teenagers’ biological clocks and combat the alarming rate of sleep deprivation among high school students.

Teenagers who receive less than eight hours of sleep are more likely to use cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol, and are more likely to cause car accidents. Scientific study has proven that a teenager’s brain is more active at night, and shows that teenagers are unable to feel fully awake and engaged in class until about 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Effects of lack of sleep include high blood pressure,

diabetes, heart problems, anxiety, and depression. Many CVHS students report that when not receiving much sleep, they tend to display, “lack of focus, irritability, no motivation, mood swings, stress, and lack of knowledge retention.”

Homework, sports, extra curriculars, part-time jobs, and screens all hinder sleeping hours and contribute to the drowsiness of students. Among 69 CVHS students, 23.3% reported falling asleep in class “Often” and “Almost Always,” with first and fifth period being the most popular napping times.

In fact, the number of students seen falling asleep in class combined with social media trends has inspired the creation of multiple CVHS sleeping accounts on Instagram. Students send in photos of their classmates dozing off in class to these accounts, which are posted in a humorous fashion on the page. There are dozens of sleeping beauties seen passed out on their desks. Who knew that a funny TikTok trend has brought light to the sheer amount of sleep deprivation seen around campus.

Next school year, first period classes will start no

earlier than 8:30 a.m., but an important question is if dismissal will be later as well.

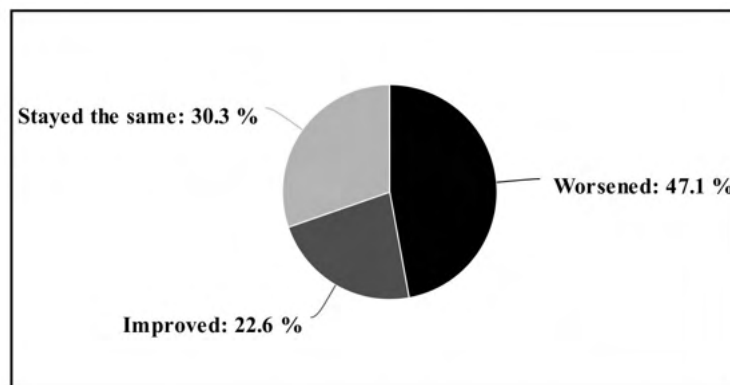
“I would hate that, imagine getting out later than 4:00. That’s a whole day gone just for 20 minutes of sleep that I’ll probably use to stay up later,” shared junior Mia Wierzbza.

About 38% of surveyed CVHS students agree, while 62% support a later start and release time.

“Since our brains are more active later we need more time to ourselves,” said junior Bianca Petalver.

To answer these pressing questions, Principal Blaine Torpey stated, “There is an Instructional Minutes Committee that has been meeting and will continue to meet. There are many different factors that affect a school’s schedule and instructional minutes, so it is difficult to predict our potential end times. I think that any effort to support the development of young people with a focus on their health and wellness is worth it.”

As questions arise about next year’s schedule and its impacts, only time will tell how effective Senate Bill 328 will be to the youth of California.



Mental health impacts students

By Delenn Block

In a recent report, the U.S. surgeon general explains that the effects of the new challenges young people are facing is having a negative outcome on their mental health.

Students’ mental health has been on the decline for many years, likely caused by an increase in academic pressure, social media use, and border stressors such as racism and climate change, the report said. Living through a pandemic has added another stressor for many students.

Out of 155 CVHS students, 47.1% of students claim their mental health has worsened, 30.3% claim it has stayed the same, and 22.6% say it has improved over the pandemic.

“It worsened my mental health because school became an overwhelming thing, where I now not only have to worry about my grades, but also whether or not I’m going to get COVID and bring it home. It also worsened my mental health because I can’t see as many friends and family like I used to,” wrote junior Ma-

yumi Nomura.

Many students are unsure about what would help improve their mental health; some suggest less homework, getting more time with friends or going back online.

“If we could go back to distance learning, it would release the amount of stress me and many other students are having,” claimed junior Leah Balakrishnan. “We constantly fear about contracting covid, and spreading it to family members who have poorer health. This pandemic is getting worse, and to improve we really need to take it seriously.”

When asked about how CVHS is dealing with the decline in mental health, Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi said, “We’re very lucky because in our district we have 11 social workers, because we believe in supporting our students academically but also socially and emotionally.”

Ahmadi also mentioned that due to current legislation, it is not possible to go back to distance learning, but CVUSD does have social workers and the Wellness Center to help support students who are struggling.

Jaywalkers create traffic hazards around CVHS

By Andrew Hui

A recent *Olympian* survey of drivers near CVHS found that four percent of drivers sped past a stop sign, six percent used their phones behind the wheel, and 24 percent of pedestrians illegally jaywalked.

"It scares me that people aren't following directions," said Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi.

The return to in-person classes also comes with the return of notorious CVHS traffic. With parents and students rushing to class or going home, the streets around CVHS are filled with gridlock both before and after school.

"Every school has their own problems with traffic," said California Highway Patrol (CHP) Officer Daniel Jacowitz.

Cell phone use while driving is a common problem everywhere. Driving requires drivers to react quickly and a quick glance at a cell phone can result in drivers missing something and getting into an accident.

At the corner of Redwood Road and Mabel Avenue, *The Olympian* observed six out of 100 drivers looking at their phones. This is up one percent from the last time *The Olympian* did a similar survey, in which five percent of drivers



Students jaywalking near CVHS outnumber other traffic violations.

ANDREW HUI

were using their phones. An officer could write a ticket for a \$170 fine for drivers using phones.

There are many stop signs around the high school placed to help slow down drivers. At stop signs, drivers are required to make a full stop behind the limit line, yield, then go when it's their turn. However, many times these signs are ignored, with drivers speeding right past the stop. *The Olympian* observed four out of 100 driv-

ers ignoring the stop sign at the intersection of Santa Maria Avenue and Somerset Avenue, a popular walking route for many students walking home.

A common thing Officer Jacowitz sees is a "Hollywood Stop," in which drivers slow down at the stop sign but do not fully stop and observe the intersection for any obstacles. By law, a full stop is required at a stop sign, and a violation could result in a point on your driver's license and a hefty fine.

Pedestrians don't get off scot free with the traffic issue at CVHS either. With many students running late or wanting to get home faster, many will jaywalk across busy lanes of traffic. Jaywalking is defined by the CHP as any pedestrian not crossing at a designated crosswalk. A common misconception that many pedestrians have is that they always have the right of way. This is true at crosswalks, however on the street jaywalkers could cause

a major slowdown in the flow of traffic.

The Olympian observed 24 out of 100 students weaving through cars on Mabel Avenue.

"Don't expect a motorist to see you," said Jacowitz. "Make sure to make eye contact."

There are hefty fines for jaywalkers as well. Although not usually enforced, a jaywalking violation can set you back \$200-\$300.

Parents are also concerned about students jaywalking. "Drivers definitely need to be paying attention, but students need to pay attention as well," wrote Laurie Devine in a Facebook post.

As Castro Valley is unincorporated, district administrators have to take concerns up to the county level to make streets safer.

"We've been working with the county for the past few years to put in sidewalks and signs that would be more helpful for walkers and drivers," said Ahmadi.

CVHS has more students than many small towns, and so it is no surprise that drivers need to be extra careful. Some advice Jacowitz would give to drivers: "Always err on the side of caution and always act like it is your first time driving to the high school."

Sofia Palau fights for the climate



Sofia Palau protests to save the environment.

By Drew Paxman

At only the age of 10, Sofia Palau went to her first climate justice rally.

"I didn't know everything that was going on," she said, "but I understood that it was serious and needed to do something about it."

Now a senior, Palau is a lead circle member for Youth vs Apocalypse, an organization she describes as filled with "passionately motivated youth that work to protest for climate justice and native land rights." Palau joined the organization in January 2021, and has been working with its members ever since.

In doing so, Palau strives to get large corporations to move away from using fossil fuels and to invest in clean energy.

"We have been able to get the attention of big companies [such as CalSTRS and BigRock] when we have done actions outside of their headquarters," she said.

Palau first began to realize that global climate change was a pressing issue in seventh grade, when she was doing a project on the Great Barrier Reef. Ever since, it has affected her every day life. "It causes me a little bit of anxiety but it also gives me the energy to stand up to big corporations even as a young person. It gives me motivation to work harder so I can do something about it," she said.

Youth vs Apocalypse is currently planning an event scheduled for Dec. 19 called the Resiliency Village, where different booths of people sharing skills and resources with each other come together. The event will take place at Oscar Grant Plaza in Oakland from 12-3 p.m.

Palau still strives to get large corporations to stop fossil fuel usage. As for other potential solutions, Palau suggested, "[We need to] regulate emissions," and impose "a climate tax to tax companies for their climate emissions."

Super swimmer Samantha



Samantha Li swam at the 2021 Winter Junior Nationals in Texas.

By Jennifer Mi

It is no secret that becoming a professional athlete takes dedication and resilience. Junior Samantha Li knows the hard work she must put in to be a D1 swimmer. Since 2013, Li has been training with her Hayward-based club swim team, the East Bay Bat Rays, known as EBAT. Practices add up to over 12 hours every week, after school and on the weekend. At home, she does extra conditioning in her garage gym, which includes both cardio and strength training.

In December, Li traveled to Austin, Texas to participate in the 2021 Winter Junior Nationals. She is the first swimmer from her club team to qualify for this elite meet since 2015.

"It was cool to see the top swimmers in the country,

including swimmers on the USA national team and 2021 Olympic team," Li shared.

Over the course of three days in Austin, Li raced in the 200 free, 100 free, and 50 free. "To prepare for the meet, my coach Mark Sand and I discussed my goal times and planned special practices to prepare me. About half a week before the meet, we backed off on the intensity of our workouts and rested up for the meet." Li ended up placing 62nd out of 123 in the 50 free, 64th out of 124 in the 100 free, and 47th out of 101 in the 200 free.

Being a devoted scholar while attending vigorous team practices can be a hard balance. "I balance school and swim by making sure I study for tests ahead of time, and do my homework as soon as I get home from swim, since I only have about three hours after

practice before going to sleep."

Li's layout for her future requires that she stays on top of her classes, as she plans to have many academic choices after graduation. Though Li is only a junior, she is already in contact with many D1 colleges, and has even received a scholarship from a UC.

"While I'm honored to have received an offer, I am waiting for my March SAT in hopes of hearing from more universities," she said. Speaking mainly with California and east coast colleges, Li has high hopes for her education. "My dream is to receive an offer from Columbia University, who I am already in contact with, to study business and live in New York."

Li is a passionate scholar athlete, and hopes to use swimming as a gateway to many academic opportunities.

President Biden's underwhelming first year

Editorial:

President Biden's first year in office was underwhelming: we didn't see him follow through on many of the promises he made during his campaign including forgiving student loan debt and expanding public healthcare, which many of his voters—who are young students with student loan debt or low-income voters without healthcare—need.

We also believe that Biden isn't responding to the climate change issue effectively or fast enough. Climate related issues are worsening at an alarming rate and the more time it takes to pass legislation to combat it, the more difficult it will be to reverse the damage.

As for Biden's response to Covid-19, we support his efforts to encourage vaccinations



AMANDA WONG

and masks; however, Covid tests need to be more readily available for Americans. Giving out 4 rapid tests per household is not enough be-

cause many people still do not have access to proper testing.

However, despite the slow progress, many of us agree that his presidency provided

a lot of relief and break from the chaos we experienced under Trump. We no longer have to anxiously anticipate controversial headlines as a

result of Trump's unpredictable and extreme reactions to world events. We also applaud President Biden for repealing several of Trump era laws, restoring peace in various areas.

Biden has also made notable progress in diversifying his cabinet and federal positions by appointing people of color and women to fill these traditions often held by white men. The increased representation has been a step in the right direction, but we also want to see changes in legislation regarding social justice like voting rights.

While we understand that it is difficult to pass legislation with a divided Congress, we hope to see Biden continue to work towards keeping his campaign promises in the next few years of his term.

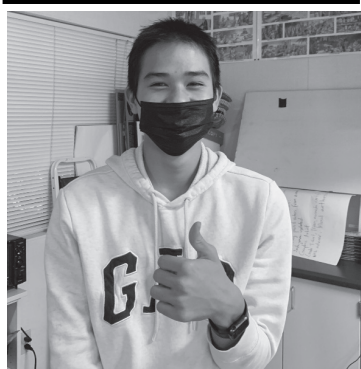
PHOTOpinions

What do you think about Pres. Biden's first year?



“I think he's done a pretty good job and kept many of his promises which is good. Covid is still bad but it has gotten better since he's promoted vaccines.”

Jillian Taylor
freshman



“I like that he reopened schools so that I can see my friends more often. On the other hand, reopening schools probably made Covid worse because it's spreading more easily.”

Curtis Nguyen
sophomore



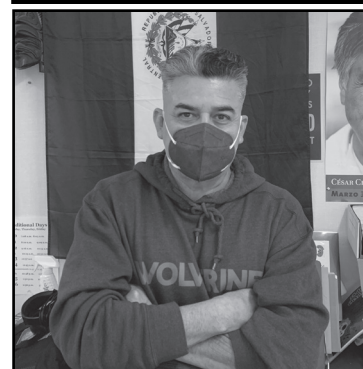
“I'm glad that he loves to take care of our communities by offering us free resources in the face of Covid, through more testing sites and paid leave for people dealing with covid.”

Zeen Ylaya
junior



“Although his actions haven't done very well globally, there isn't as much tension among the youth and that has lifted a lot of stress.”

Wandii Muinde
senior



“I think he doesn't get credit for difficult accomplishments. Any president will struggle to accomplish what's good for the people.”

Antonio Acosta
staff

Let us go home during Covid surge

Editorial:

With the recent surge in Covid-19 cases after the new variant, omicron, made its way to Castro Valley, many students are left wondering what school will look like.

Continuing to attend in-person classes like we are currently doing puts students and staff at risk. Many feel uncomfortable staying at school because omicron spreads incredibly fast and easily. Additionally, there is no adequate testing available: rapid tests are scarce and appointments at the CFA are difficult to catch.

However, in-person learning is beneficial because it is easier to focus and learn in a classroom setting. Both stu-

dents and teachers dread distance learning. Furthermore, distance learning was not easy for students who saw a decline in their mental health or have distractions at home. We don't miss the lagging wifi and awkward silences on Zoom calls.

On the other hand, with hundreds of absences in the past week, going virtual will help students at home to keep up. It also decreases potential exposure to the virus, which will ultimately decrease cases.

We support going online temporarily. We believe this is the best approach because those who are already quarantining will not have to miss school and students can feel safer at home while we wait for cases to subside.



Trojans Talk

“Standards based grading is a good concept but the grading focuses on tests over assignments, meaning that if someone isn't good at test taking they would get a lower grade even though they did well on assignments.” - Calvin Gao

“I respect people who have taken the SAT and ACT. However, I think they are kind of useless because I know some people spent lots of time and money just to find a private tutor. And they ended up only applying to few universities that required the test grade.” - Lisa Tsai



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When rhetoric turns to violence



By Zoe Dorado

Enter any Filipino household and chances are that lying in a corner of a kitchen closet, there rests a special type of broom known as a walis tambo.

So what the heck was it doing in the Capitol Rotunda?

With an upside down American flag draped across his body—as if cosplaying as some kind of superhero reject—and with the Filipino broomstick, branded with ‘Coup Flu Fighter,’ in hand, “Walis Tambo” Man was a part of the panoply of surreal absurdity that distracted from the real violence of Jan. 6, 2021.

This was not the kind of Asian-American representation in our

government I was seeking.

It’s been exactly a year now since I saw this photo and it still stays with me. What motivated “Walis Tambo” Man to participate in the Capitol riot?

Moreover, why did 34% of Filipino-Americans in the 2020 election support Donald Trump? Even more confounding, why do 75% of Filipinos approve of Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte?

What these two politicians have in common is their political strategy of undermining one of the pillars of a functioning democracy: the free press. Their weapon of choice is social media.

Duterte openly threatens the free press with violence and routinely arrests journalists, one being Filipino investigative journalist Maria Ressa. Her work includes reporting on the spread of government propaganda on social media in the Philippines and the horrors of Duterte’s war on drugs. She was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her fight for free-

dom of expression in the face of authoritarian governments.

During her acceptance speech in Norway, Ressa accused U.S. internet giants such as Facebook, of being “biased against facts and journalists” and using their “God-like power” to generate division, continuing how “our greatest need today is to transform that hate and violence, the toxic sludge that’s coursing through our information ecosystem.”

This “toxic sludge” contributed to the Capitol insurrection. Trump fueled a disinformation campaign to erase a basic fact: the election was free and fair.

At every turn, like a constant drum beat from 2015 to 2020, he called the press “the enemy of the people” and “fake news,” flooding the American public with an average of 50 false or misleading claims a day, an analysis by the Washington Post.

The American free press is an important institution of our democracy and the only thing that could refute politicians like

Trump and his disinformation campaign, which fueled the anger of people who sincerely believed the election was stolen.

That’s where the connection between Trump and Duterte lies for that’s what authoritarians do: undermining the free press so they can shape the narrative that fuels their power and influence.

Over a century ago, “Filipino insurrectionists” led a true revolution. This was no Walis-Tambo-type circus gimmick.

It was one that fought back against American imperialism through establishing the Malolos Republic, known as the First Philippine Democratic Republic and the first democratic state in Asia. This revolt was so consequential that it would spark the beginning of the Philippine-American War in 1899, a nearly forgotten part of U.S. history that barely warrants a paragraph in most high school textbooks.

What will definitely end up in history textbooks will be the tragedy that took place at our nation’s Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

“Walis Tambo” Man may never be anything more than an embarrassing footnote.

Frankly, I don’t know much about him other than that his real name was Kene Brian Lazo who was born in Ilocos, Sur in the Philippines. He immigrated to Norfolk, Virginia where he became the owner of a steel erector business; and, like many others, felt compelled to travel to Washington D.C. to “Stop the Steal” at the behest of Trump.

Politicians like Trump and Duterte will come and go. Whatever short-term personal gains achieved through threatening members of the press will be short-lived.

The damage they have done, however, to the long-term health of the democracies of the U.S. and Philippines has yet to be seen.

What we know for sure is that the free press is not the enemy of the people; it’s the people’s best chance to speak truth to power and hold those in power accountable.

Valentine’s Day: It’s not all about gifts



By Maya Wong

Valentine’s Day: the day of love. For those in romantic relationships, it is an opportunity to express one’s appreciation and commitment to their lover. For those not, it is a sappy love-fest that piques either jealousy or denial.

But now, Valentine’s Day doesn’t seem to be entirely about love anymore.

When you think of Valentine’s Day, certain objects come to mind: boxes of low-quality chocolates, teddy bears, jewelry, red roses, and bottles of cheap wine. These objects have come to epitomize what the day of love



MAYA WONG

ought to look like: an exchange of gifts and “I love yous.” Each year, Americans spend billions on Feb. 14 to display their affection. It’s as if all one needs to do to express love is put down a chunk of cash. Valentine’s Day is no longer about loving one’s

significant other: it is about gifting commercialized products.

In the days leading up to Feb. 14, the pressure to buy memorable gifts is placed upon people, often creating stress, both mentally and financially. How can a person possibly dis-

play all of their feelings through something tangible? Does more money spent mean that you love your partner more? What gifts are romantic enough?

It is easy to stick tried and true items associated with Valentine’s Day. But, chocolates

and roses only represent love because corporate industries told us so. Companies market products to appeal to themes of love by adding red and pink packaging bedazzled in hearts. This convinces consumers that what they are buying has an element of romance. Americans dish out \$4.3 billion on jewelry, \$2 billion on flowers, and \$1.7 billion on candy on the day of love. Valentine’s Day is a holiday in which corporations are most joyful.

With such emphasis on buying and giving gifts, one may forget what Valentine’s Day is all about. It is easy overlook the main cause of why you’re spending money in the first place.

So this Valentine’s Day, remember that gifts do not have to symbolize your love; they are not the end-all-be-all to your relationship. Instead, invest your time, not money. Time is fleeting; memories are infinitely more valuable than a handheld object. And then, maybe treat yourself to discount chocolates the day after.

Students should have a choice about learning



By Jessica Truong

When the word “school” is mentioned, the image of pencils, textbooks, and lined paper may

pop into your head. However, Chromebooks and Google Classroom have recently taken over.

Online learning during the pandemic has inspired many CVHS teachers to transfer parts of their curriculum online. Even before the pandemic, many classes had digital versions of their textbooks for students to use. Students also often use other resources such as books and reading materials that have been available online. “Paperless” learning is a method that some teachers have even introduced to their classes.

There are many benefits to

digitalizing school resources; students are able to access them from their devices, eliminating the burden of heavy textbooks. Often, online textbooks provide exclusive online features such as in-depth explanations or videos.

The question is if we should continue this push towards digital learning. Should we get rid of physical textbooks completely?

Since Chromebooks were provided to students, most should be able to access online learning resources, but having school work exclusively online could be unfair to some. The “Digital Divide” is an ongoing issue of the

increasing gap between those who benefit and those who are disadvantaged due to the digital revolution.

Reports estimate that around 9 million U.S. students have insufficient access to the internet. If online learning continues to grow, there should also be an equal focus on supporting students with their digital needs.

Learning style is another important factor in this discussion. Those who read from their devices may absorb less information than those who read from physical paper copies. For some students this might be false, it is

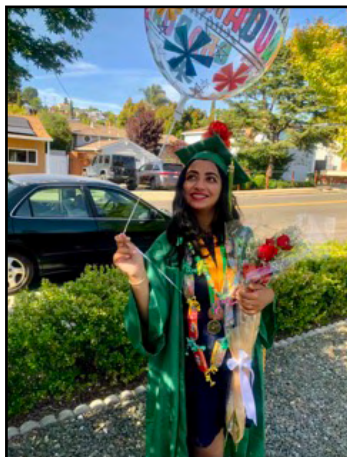
often a matter of personal preference. One student may prefer to use only physical materials, while another may prefer digital materials.

Physical learning resources should not be eliminated completely as to give students a chance to choose their preferable method of learning.

The increase of technology in education comes with a plethora of advantages, and continuing this innovation is key to finding new methods of teaching. However, students should have the opportunity to make a choice in their education.



Trojans triumph after high school



Graduated Trojans pictured from left to right include Isis Poulouse, Paul Friesen, Alexis Alburo, Ruby Yang and Daniel Anilao.

By Corinne Davidson

Isis Poulouse, Paul Friesen, Alexis Alburo, Josie de la Torre, Ruby Yang, and Daniel Anilao graduated with the class of 2021. Though they all came from CVHS, they have taken different paths after high school to pursue their interests further. Some go off to college—private school, University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), or community college—and some pursue work or the military. These six graduates share their experiences after high school.

Trojans tackle private schools

Both Isis Poulouse and Paul Friesen chose to go to private schools, Poulouse at Fordham College and Friesen at George Fox University. These schools are dramatically different from high school given Fordham is a private school in New York City and George Fox is a private Christian university in Oregon.

“I love being in NYC and I love the school I go to,” said Poulouse. “It’s such a good fit for me, but it’s hard being away from my friends and family.”

One change Poulouse notices between high school and college is the difference in community types. At CVHS she saw groups of people from each class almost every day, but now at Fordham, she sees groups of people on a more limited schedule. For example, in high school Poulouse would see her choir class almost every day, creating a tight bond between them, but in college, she only sees her choir class once a week.

Friesen, on the other hand, has had a different experience with college.

“Personally I don’t really like it,” he said. “I have a really

close relationship with my family, so it’s been really hard to be away from them.”

Friesen also mentioned how he feels his classes are boring: difficulty-wise, they are much like how high school classes were for him. He thought that high school was better since it was the first time he was learning the material, so it was more fun. He says that the workload at George Fox is also pretty similar to the workload at CVHS.

Alburo ascends at UC Berkeley

After graduation, Alexis Alburo chose to go to UC Berkeley to pursue her studies in bioengineering. Alburo has been on the path to studying engineering since sophomore year, due to the pathway program offered at CVHS.

“Having a general idea of what I wanted helped me decide to go to Berkeley. When I was younger, I felt that I took Berkeley a little for granted because it was so close but when I was researching bioengineering programs I saw how great the bioengineering program at Berkeley was,” she said.

Alburo explains that classes at Berkeley are harder than high school classes, but they have less synchronous class time. “Although the classes have less instruction time than classes in high school, they require more outside time to self-study,” said Alburo.

Alburo lives in the dorms on campus. Even though the campus is close to her home in Castro Valley, it has still been an adjustment for her.

“Living in the dorms also helps with the adjustment since you are surrounded by a lot of people who are in the same boat,” said Alburo.

When living on campus, schools often have dining halls which are very helpful

for students so they don’t have to worry about cooking their own meals.

As for college expenses, Alburo advises students to apply to as many scholarships as possible and take advantage of financial aid (FAFSA).

“The Castro Valley Educational Foundation Scholarship Program offers a lot of scholarships for just CVHS students. Last year I was awarded the Charles Duerig Memorial Scholarship which helped me out a lot,” Alburo said.

de la Torre drawn into HSU

CSUs are also a great option for education after high school. They are cheaper than UCs and private schools but still provide quality education. Josie de la Torre chose to go to Humboldt State (HSU) and really enjoys her time there. She felt drawn to HSU over other schools because of the beautiful environment, and how different it is from the Bay Area.

“I am enjoying college and taking my classes for my major. It was tough at first being away from home and being homesick in the dorms but eventually, it got better and I’m really enjoying the freedom of college,” said de la Torre.

Due to Covid-19, all of de la Torre’s classes were online last semester, but she says that she enjoys them a lot more than the online classes in high school. Aside from just enjoying the classes more, de la Torre also finds the classes to be easier. In college, you also get a lot more say in what classes you take which adds to the overall experience of the classes.

“I felt like I have always been independent in a way but it’s really different when you are away from family and

parents. Like you don’t have family close by to consult with or make decisions with. It’s a journey to be independent for the first time because you get to make choices without your parents’ supervision. Like either, you can do drugs and get high by putting yourself at risk or you can choose to do something else than that. And you also have to worry about finances, work, and having time for yourself with homework. It’s not as bad as I thought about being independent but it’s fun in a way.”

Cozy community college experience

Community college is an option that is often seen as an easy way out, or a less academically challenging option. However, in reality, community colleges still offer quality education at a good price. After graduating high school, Ruby Yang chose to go to Chabot Community College.

Community college is a good stepping stone into four-year colleges. It’s significantly cheaper and it makes getting into a four-year college easier.

“It wasn’t hard to decide which school to go to, since Chabot is one of the closest options for community college. I didn’t really feel prepared for attending a UC or another larger school,” said Yang.

Tuition at Chabot is \$1,150 per year for in-state students, which makes it much more affordable than any four-year college. Just like other colleges, Chabot offers financial aid to help financially struggling students. On top of that Chabot is very close to Castro Valley, which means students can be closer to home and don’t have to spend more money on dorms or a food plan.

Anilao ventures to the military

In high school, Daniel Anilao was part of the explorer program with the Alameda County Sheriff’s Department and now after high school, he has gone to pursue work with the Marine Corps.

Anilao comes from a family of Navy workers employees, and is now the first in his family to be a Marine.

“Everyone else went to the Navy so I’m actually the first Marine in my family,” he said.

Anilao decided to join the Marines because he wanted to do something different than the rest of his family, and wanted a change from what everyone else was doing.

“As far as I am so far with the Marine Corps, I mostly like it. What makes it difficult like any other work environment is unit cohesion, working with other people, and dealing with belligerent peers,” said Anilao.

Going into any military branch is mentally and physically demanding, which is expected. One has to have a lot of self-discipline and stamina to make it in the military.

“The hardest part was the threshold between going from civilian to recruit since there’s hesitation and the chance to back out before shipping out. Once you’re at the recruit depot, the choice isn’t so hard,” he said.

As for education and tuition, there is no tuition for students in the military, it’s all provided. Students in the military do face strict rules at times such as strict no phone policies. Otherwise class is much like high school classes especially with the restrictions set on students.

Yezenia Gomez soars with her award

By Ethan To

Out of many of the students in the Puente program, Puente student senior Yezenia Gomez won a Puente Statewide Academic and Leadership Award. This award celebrates the academic achievements and student initiatives that Gomez has taken to bring Hispanic heritage to CVHS from her work in the English class and seminar.

"I felt proud of myself knowing that my hard work was being recognized. To me it meant that I am more than enough and a good leader," said Gomez.

Gomez has been in the Puente program ever since her freshman year, taking both the classes and participating in the club, which anyone can join. The program has a two year English program that focuses more on texts written by Hispanic authors, rather than white authors in most other English classes. Gomez chose to partake in the program for this reason, but to also gain support for college applications and participate in different field trips Puente offers.

"She has been instrumental in collaborating successful activities with other clubs on campus to hold great cultural events, such as Dia de los Muertos and celebrating Hispanic



Yezenia Gomez celebrates her achievement.

Heritage Month. She has demonstrated great leadership skills to our Puentistas by asking for students' input, supporting their ideas and working together as a familia," said counselor Gisela Sandoval.

Using the support given to

her by Sandoval and English teacher Aaron Dennis, Gomez has maintained a GPA over 3.5, starting from the beginning of high school. Her contributions to the community and the service she has provided as a leader has not only earned her

respect from her teachers, but from many students at CVHS as well.

"She has motivated me and inspired me to keep going with applying to colleges and not let it bug me or get to my anxiety," said senior Emily Poole.

In the classes of the program, Gomez contributes to discussions for literature, helps with group projects, and overall stands out as someone special in the program. During her sophomore and junior years, Gomez was the secretary of the Puente club, taking minutes and notes during their club meetings. This year, Gomez had the great pleasure of becoming the club's president.

"As president, not only have I been helping present slides and events, but I also have

coordinated them with the leadership class and the school itself. My favorite event that I was able to plan this year was the Dia de los Muertos event, since we collaborated with Deco club and Latinos Unidos. I appreciated the great ofrenda and other decorations it had," said Gomez.

Next semester, Gomez plans to hold the Cesar Chavez day of service event, even with the Covid-19 guidelines. In order to meet the restrictions, she plans to create a video using information not only about Chavez, but other Hispanic civil rights leaders to inform others.

"After high school, I hope to join clubs and programs similar to the family experience I have gained to connect to my Hispanic culture," Gomez said.



Varsity cheerleaders celebrate their NCS award.

Spirits and smarts: cheerleaders win academic award

By Athena Sy Kuzuhara

The varsity cheer team won the North Coast Section Scholastic Championship Team Award for Fall 2021 in the Sideline Cheer Category. The award goes to the top three teams in each sport with the highest grade point average. Reigning over 176 schools in the North Coast Section, the varsity cheer team achieved a GPA of 3.56.

"I'm proud of my team and the fact that we all are doing well at school and our sport, both of which can be time-consuming and sometimes difficult," said senior Brooke Eickmann. "School and cheer can be hard to balance, because cheer sometimes takes up three entire evenings a week."

Varsity cheer captain Ashley Kim succeeds in school despite her hectic schedule. "During football season I would be at the studio until super late at night making choreography every week and staging formations and it was in that same pattern for three months," said Kim.

"I couldn't start my homework until 12 a.m. and it honestly ruined my schedule until I found a good routine. My classes this year are really rigorous and it can be really unmotivating but I think the main thing that helped me academically was talking with people in similar classes who had the same struggles."

Junior Sophie Zhang's trick to succeeding both academically and in cheer is time management. "At cheer practice, I only focus on cheer and then when I get home, I only focus on school. Once I'm done with my school work then I'll start thinking about cheer again so that I can get better," said Zhang.

The varsity cheerleaders have grand plans beyond cheer. Kim's goals for the future are an internship in international relations and a summer program. Senior Jennifer Ortiz plans to attend a four-year college majoring in physics or astronomy.

"I am proud of my team because I know that we all try really hard in school and have strong goals," said Zhang.



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Students want distance learning during Covid surge

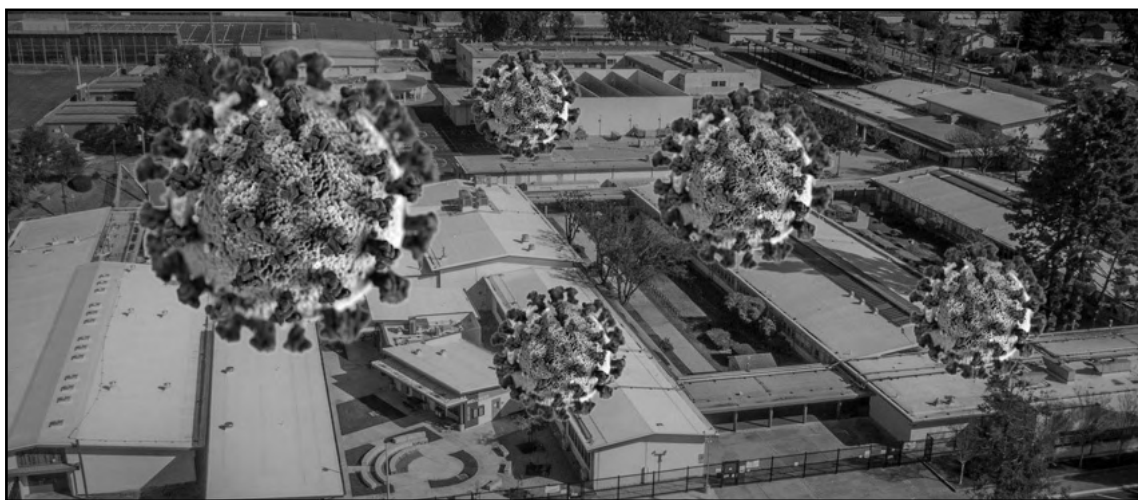
But state rules require live classes

By Corinne Davidson

Since the end of winter break, Omicron cases have surged across California and the world. Some schools and universities in California have opted to temporarily send students online for remote learning, including the Hayward schools, Cal State University, and University of California. Students have varying opinions on where CVHS should go from here.

A recent poll shows that about 70 percent of the CVHS community thinks that schools should move back online temporarily. Many students feel that it would be safer for us to go back online.

"With attendance so low anyway a lot of kids are miss-



ANDREW HUI

ing out on lectures and lessons in person. A lot of teachers don't have an online presence anymore and with so few people in class there's almost no reason to go to class," said senior Faye Brown. "It's not safe anymore; people are getting Covid and a lot of these kids are vaccinated."

"(Covid) is getting bad now and a lot of people aren't really taking it seriously and it's spreading," said senior Elijah Williams.

"(School should close) only for the first few weeks. I'm pretty sure Covid is just going to rise and then go back down again because that's what we've seen in other countries," said senior Elizabeth Martin.

"I think that it's important that we stay in school, but I also think that the staff shortages right now are pretty bad. I think my preference would probably be to close for a week or two, even though that was what we were initially sup-

posed to do, and then hopefully start back up because hopefully, this wave of Covid will be more condensed," said senior Brooke Kasl-Godley.

On the other hand, staff members feel that it would be more beneficial for CVHS to stay in person.

"If students and staff keep doing the right thing by maintaining distance and being extra careful, I think we should stay in person because I see my students really benefiting from

being in person," said math teacher Tagreed Badwai.

"I don't think that schools should shut down because of Covid; I think we should stay open because this is the safest place we can possibly be together," said math teacher Ozzie Maynard.

There are many pros and cons to both remote and in-person instruction, though Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi pointed out that school districts must remain open for live classes under state regulations.

"Current legislation and the Governor's latest order require districts to have 180 days of in-person instruction. Distance learning and hybrid learning as we had last year are not allowed. Other than in-person learning, the only other option available is through independent study as requested by a parent/guardian, which is what we have offered through the Virtual Academy," she wrote to families.

Gun fired during school robbery

By Olive Dooley

Three men robbed three students at gunpoint in a CVHS parking lot on Jan. 14, according to Lt. Ray Kelly of Alameda County Sheriff's Office. One robber fired a shot while fleeing the scene. No one was hurt.

One of the victims called the sheriff at 9:30 p.m., claiming three unidentifiable males robbed them of a wallet with \$200, a cell phone and a pair of the victim's shoes that are supposedly worth \$600.

One suspect had a black, semi-automatic handgun that he brandished at the victims and fired in the air, the students said. Investigators followed up on this claim by recovering a shell casing at the scene.

The suspects fled in a black sedan and were last seen driving south on Redwood Road, likely towards the highway. The case is now currently under the jurisdiction of the Alameda County Robbery and Investigation Unit, which will investigate further.

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CVHS choose best of 2021

By Drew Paxman

Movies

Well 2021 has...certainly been a year, one full of peaks and valleys. But after a year of seeing movie theaters, big and small, closed down due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, it was nice to see some reopen to the public. Entertainment in 2021 was dominated by a slew of blockbusters, whether premiering on the big screen or in the comfort of a living room via a streaming service, but smaller indie productions also emerged. Overall, different media in 2021 had a great impact on several CVHS students. A few days ago, we asked a few of you what your favorite movies, TV shows, and albums in 2021 were. The Olympian writers wrote reviews for the following stories. Here is your list.

Music

3. "When I Close My Eyes" (7 votes)

"Cutler's new approach to breakup songs brings a new light to breakups and shows the growth that one would experience after such an event."

2. "Happier Than Ever" (16 votes)

"The way Eilish writes makes you go through the lyrics and feelings of the songs right along with her, and takes your mind on a field trip across galaxies you may have never even heard of."

1. "Red (Taylor's Version)" (33 votes)

"Taylor Swift's re-recording of her 2012 album 'Red' improves upon her past work, blending together the past and present. Her brilliant songwriting and storytelling is more vivid than ever."

TV Shows

3. "The Owl House" (9 votes)
"The Owl House' is sure to entertain all audiences with its fantastical setting, lovable characters, and heartfelt messages."

2. "Outer Banks" (28 votes)
"This fast-paced show will leave you on the edge of your seat, holding your breath, unable to sit still. Each episode ending with a cliffhanger will leave you aching to see what happens next."

1. "Loki" (35 votes)
"Loki'...offers an entertaining, action packed, and mysterious plot as two Loki's fight for control of the sacred timeline. This show is a must watch and does not disappoint."

5. "Black Widow" (2 votes)

"Marvel fans will adore 'Black Widow' due to stunning action sequences and great performances by Scarlett Johansson and scene-stealing Florence Pugh."

4. 3-WAY TIE! (3 votes)
"West Side Story"

"The original 'West Side Story' is amazing, but new age cinematography helps add so much dynamic to the new version. Whether you are familiar with the original or not, the new version is definitely a movie you need to watch."

"Raya and the Last Dragon"

"This fast paced and unique story leaves the viewer curiously anticipating Raya's next bold move. This film provides great Southeast Asian representation for Disney's young audience."

"The Suicide Squad"

"From an action-packed fight against a giant psychic starfish to tragic character backstories, 'The Suicide Squad' offers a wide variety of scenes and plotlines sure to keep every type of movie-goer entertained."

3. "In the Heights" (4 votes)

"Despite 'In the Heights' dazzling choreography and cinematography, issues of colorism within its casting represent larger problems within the film industry."

2. TIE! (6 votes)
"Cruella"

"Though flawed, 'Cruella' pivots Disney in a new direction with their live action remakes, featuring gritty direction and great performances from Emma Stone and Emma Thompson."

"Dune"

"Dune' captures all the modern aspects of film with amazing cinematography, visual effects, sound design, plot structure, and great acting by Timothée Chalamet, Rebecca Ferguson, and Oscar Isaac."

1. "Spider-Man: No Way Home" (58 votes)

"This movie does a spectacular job at taking all the Spider-Man fans' hopes and dreams and encapsulating them into one movie that is sure to leave a mark on all the O.G. Spiderman supporters."

What was your favorite movie/tv show/album of 2021?

'Spider-Man: No Way Home' lives up to hype



By Delaney Rasmussen

With Spider-Man's identity newly revealed, Peter Parker has to grasp being the most famous person in the world, while still saving the world one web at a time. Unmasked and panicked, he goes seeking help from Doctor Strange, as revealed in the trailer. But things take a turn for the worst and the unexpected starts becoming the expected.

Peter Parker is described as the world's number one enemy, making it hard for him and his friends to simply navigate through their last years as teenagers. He courageously makes the decision that enough is enough and it isn't fair that he and his friends are being treated so poorly by everyone around. So, like a logical person would do, he goes to one of the most renowned superheroes for help. But Parker's indecisiveness leads to life-threatening situations - and

things nobody thought could ever happen, start happening.

"Spider-Man: No Way Home" is one of the most awaited movies of 2021, and this cinematic

masterpiece did not disappoint. The audience score on Rotten Tomatoes had an overall score of 98%. "Personally I think this is hands-down the best Spider-Man movie, and without trying to seem like I'm biasly reviewing this movie too much I may even look back later and say it's the best superhero movie," wrote one reviewer.

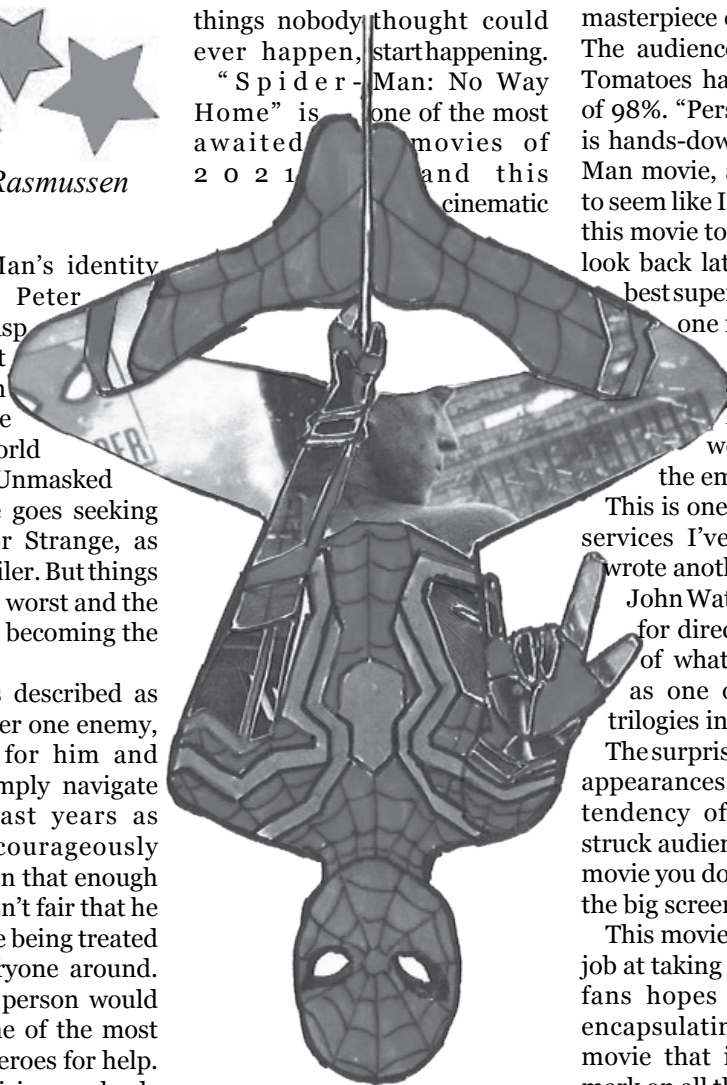
"I'm speechless and overwhelmed. No amount of words can describe the emotions I felt today.

This is one of the greatest fan services I've ever witnessed," wrote another.

John Watts deserves respect for directing every chapter of what can now be seen as one of the best movie trilogies in cinematic history.

The surprise cameos and guest appearances definitely have a tendency of generating awe-struck audiences and this is one movie you don't want to miss on the big screen.

This movie does a spectacular job at taking all the Spider-Man fans hopes and dreams and encapsulating them into one movie that is sure to leave a mark on all the O.G Spider-Man supporters.



ATHENA SY KUZUHARA

'West Side Story' shines



By Melissa Boussaroque

Upper West Side Manhattan, an area bulldozed and in rubble, the Jets prowl across New York, stopping every so often to dance. They begin defacing a Puerto Rican flag, and this is where the trouble begins. The Sharks are not happy and a fight breaks out between the two gangs.

Steven Spielberg's 2021 take on "West Side Story" has all the best parts of the original 1961 film. The movies are nearly identical, but the element of new-age cinematography adds a dynamic that gives the movie an edge.

Contrary to the original, however, this newer version showcases people who are actually of Latin American descent to play the roles of the Puerto Ricans. In the original, a majority of the Puerto Ricans were played by tan white people, which passed as okay in 1961, but definitely wouldn't slide nowadays.

The cast includes Rachel Zegler as Maria, Ansel Elgort as Tony, and Mike Faist as Riff.



Additionally, Rita Moreno, who was Anita in the original 1961 movie, plays the role of Valentina. Her character, Valentina, was not in the original; instead, she is a female adaptation of Doc, which is a great way to pay homage to the original.

The movie portrays a Shakespearean take on a classic 60s gang rivalry. The Jets are a gang of native New Yorkers led by Riff, and the Sharks are a gang of Puerto Rican immigrants. The Jets are not happy to be sharing the city, and they don't think that the Sharks belong.

One night, both gangs are at a dance and tensions are high. Maria, the little sister of Bernardo, the leader of the Sharks, locks eyes with Tony, a former Jet who is fresh out of

prison. They sneak behind the bleachers to dance, until they are caught by Bernardo and his girlfriend Anita.

Both gangs are enraged at the thought of Tony and Maria dating, Bernardo more than most. The Jets and the Sharks organize a rumble to settle their dispute once and for all.

However, the couple doesn't listen to the complaints of their friends, and Tony and Maria fall in love over the course of days, without the others finding out.

Keeping the essence of a classic romance with a tragic ending, the 2021 adaptation of "West Side Story" is extremely similar to the original, yet it helps add to the movie in ways that were absolutely necessary to make the movie truly excellent.

Trojans' field named for former football coach

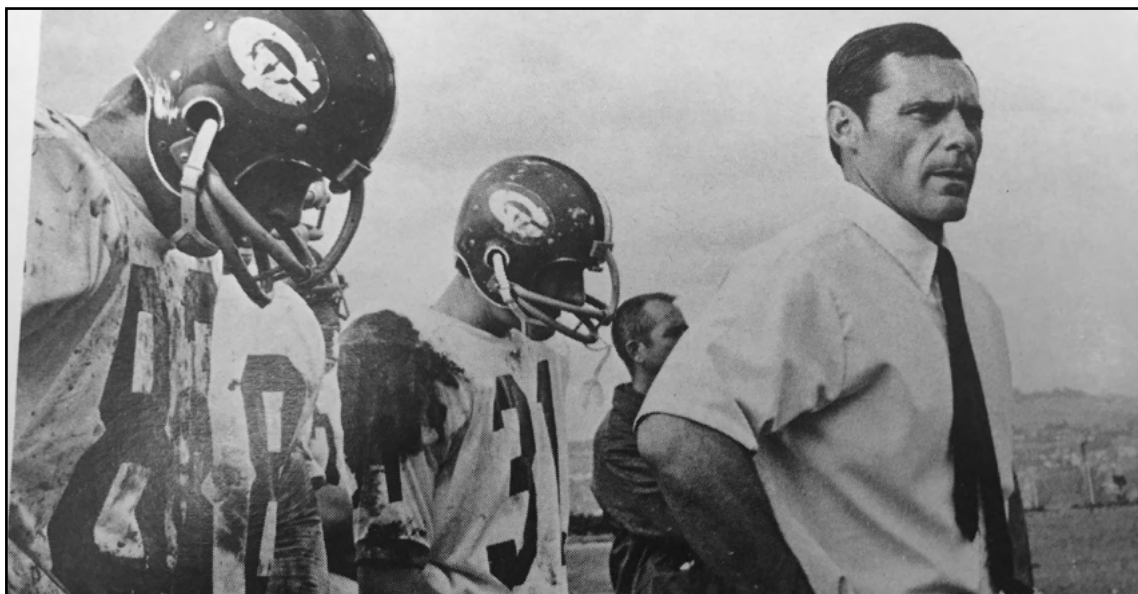
By Ada Chen

The CVUSD Board voted unanimously on Jan. 12 to name the CVHS football field in memory of late PE teacher and athletic director John Brosnan.

From 1963, coach Brosnan worked at CVHS until he retired in 1994. On Sept. 30, 2020 coach Brosnan passed away in his home due to an illness. He left behind a great legacy that continues to be remembered today.

"Everybody knew of him, but did not really know him. He spoke with very few words, but with his players he was very communicative. He gathered the athleticism and team spirit needed and built the program up to what it has become now," said English teacher Clare Le Pell.

During his time at the school he led the CVHS varsity football team to four Hayward Area Athletic



Coach Brosnan surveys the football field during a game.

League championships. Brosnan also coached varsity baseball and golf.

Brosnan made an impressive

record on the scoreboard, but left a much greater impact on the players he coached.

Former student and football play-

er Michael Klews describes Brosnan as old-school, tough and fair. Klews moved from Germany and never played football his entire life until

his sophomore year. He played only for fun and with friends but Brosnan saw his potential. Brosnan made a deal with Klews that he could only play football if he was on his team: the varsity football team.

"Frankly for me he was probably more of a father figure than anything else. [The naming decision] should've happened years ago, not just today," said Klews.

Around the school and in Alameda County, Brosnan made a well known name for his team and himself. Brosnan won the North Coast Section (NCS) Honor Coach in 1989.

"I know a lot of players spoke highly of him. If there was a committee that was created to name the field after him, he obviously had a profound impact on his players and the community during his time at Castro Valley High," said football coach Denny Molzen.

Basketball star Darius Jackson is an "ultimate competitor"



ALANI MALIGAYA

Jackson aspires to play professional basketball

By Alani Maligaya

Out of breath from a racing heart and with sweat dripping all over, he knew the time was perfect. The score, the players, the roaring crowd, the yelling of frustrated coaches—but his focus was on the hoop. Adrenaline began to increase with every step closer to the basket. He gains speed for the right momentum and puts hope on strong legs to get him up. Slam! The ball leaves his fingertips and into the basket...the first points of the game made by Darius Jackson!

Growing up watching the Lakers and idolizing NBA player Kobe Bryant, Jackson

picked up a basketball when he was five. He dreamed of matching Bryant's mentality and intensity on the court. Jackson was always the smallest player on every team from being a few years younger. This was his push to make basketball a way of staying fit, healthy, and motivated.

Basketball being a fast-moving sport requires his physical effort even outside of practice. With his older brother, Jackson does conditioning in the CVHS gym—the weekends being his only days off. Hours of dedication turn practice into skill and, of course, impressive highlights. In a game, he plays to his own strengths while attacking opponents' weaknesses.

The unpredictable issues caused by Covid-19 proved anything possible, putting the basketball season on the line. Already having the Trojans on hold for a week, Jackson used

the extra time as an opportunity to work on his game. He kept himself in shape: lifting weights and playing by himself every day. Jackson worked with the given circumstances and, independently, ensured his readiness for when the Trojans got back.

"He's an ultimate competitor and a very selfless person. He is one of our team leaders," stated varsity basketball coach Terrel Carriere. "He is the type of guy that rises to the occasion and will lead by example."

"Darius is one of my favorites. He pushes me to be a better player when we're on the same team and brings competitiveness when we are against each other. Because we have played together for so many years, we know each other's moves. That's what makes it so easy to play with him," explained Mateo Jackson, a teammate of six years. "It is great knowing I can always count on him to come through when I need him."

With the influence and support of his family, Jackson aims to become a professional basketball player.

"My parents pay for tournaments, traveling, shoes, and more. They make sure I'm healthy. My brothers always give me the right advice, and they're basically my two trainers. They try to be available at every game or watch it online. After, they would talk to me about the things I could've done better," explained Jackson. "Because of them, I learned the values of basketball that go beyond what can be taught in any gym."

Wrestler Jack Clarke is a "hard-worker"



ETHAN HUDSON

By Ethan Hudson

In wrestling, only the strong succeed. A single wrong move can lead to a career-threatening injury at any time. One athlete, Jack Clarke, had this very thing happen to him but came back to the mat better than ever.

Clarke fell in love with wrestling at a young age, going to tournaments just to watch the older athletes and work out with them. He had tried multiple other sports but none of them clicked with him the way wrestling did. This season, Clarke is working to become an NCS champion and place at the state meet.

He owes much of his motivation and success to teammates, coaches and family. "They all give me inspiration to keep going," said Clarke.

Coach Josh Wheeler speaks very highly of Clarke. "Jack is a hard worker who has battled through injuries and the pandemic to improve at our sport. Jack is competing with the best wrestlers in the state and is looking to take home a state medal," said Wheeler.

Balancing a highly competitive and active sport with academics and the rest of life is difficult. It's one

of the biggest challenges student athletes have to overcome.

"It just takes lots of discipline and dedication," Clarke explained. "It can be hard to balance it all at once sometimes. I try to keep things balanced so that I have time for everything."

"My biggest compliment is that Jack has made great improvements as a student. To see this young man improve on and off the mat is a true honor and we look forward to seeing him compete at the state meet in February," said Wheeler.

Clarke is returning to the sport after healing from a broken ankle that took him out of practice and prevented him from competing during the beginning of the season.

"Getting injured is always a frustrating thing especially because it's my senior year. It really hurt me to lose time off my season," Clarke said. "But I'm not going to let it stop me from competing and getting better. As of right now, I feel back to my normal self and have no plan of slowing down."

After high school, Clarke plans to continue wrestling. "I will always stay connected with this sport," he said.

Ali and Jenna Nosseir blog their soccer season

Ali's optimistic start to the season

By Ali Nosseir

Tryouts Week:

I made the varsity team this year, my final year as a part of CVHS's soccer program. The squad looks really strong this year from what I can see throughout the week of tryouts and our new coaching staff are holding highly ambitious goals for us., which I plan on achieving. More than 90 players came to tryout and only about forty were let into the program, hopefully signifying the beginning of a successful soccer program at CVHS. I plan to end my final year here with a bang though. My goals are to make it far throughout NCS and to also win the league above our rivals Bishop O'Dowd. Our first game is soon and I'm eager to see if we as a squad can fulfill my goals this season,

Tuesday, 11/30:

Our first game of our highly-



Ali Nosseir makes his coaches and teammates proud.

anticipated season was nerve-racking. Ever since my freshman year in the soccer program, I've been waiting keenly for my senior season, with the hopes that we will win league or even NCS and today was our first scrimmage of the season against Monte Vista. Though we lost, we fought much harder than I expected against one of the best teams in NCS. I really have a positive outlook for the rest of the season after this game. Hopefully we can continue this run of form going into the league.

Wednesday, 12/8:

Three tough games have passed since our first match. Another three losses. Our whole team was discouraged with our subpar start to the season and today we had another game at San Lorenzo. Considering San Lorenzo were supposedly one of the weaker teams we were meant to play, we had high hopes going into this game, which we followed through on. We finally grabbed our first win. Hopefully this signifies the turning point of our season.

Tuesday, 12/14:

After another two losses at the hands of Berkeley and Granada, our motivation after the San Lorenzo game had quickly deteriorated. Two games which we lost in the last few seconds of the game. Two games that could've easily gone our way had we limited our mistakes. Today we had an away game at Heritage high school, which was quite the drive. Driven to win after the two unanticipated losses, we prevailed with a 2-0 win.

Saturday, 12/18:

Today was a symbolic day. Today marked the first day of a much-needed winter break but also an incredible win both mentally and on the scoresheet for us Trojans. We played the number one ranked team in NCS, Richmond High, and triumphed with a 1-0 win. Despite our losing record, we are now in a position where we might potentially qualify for NCS, a goal I've had since freshman year. Today was a great day,

Tuesday, 1/18:

Our last game was last month. We hadn't practiced in around a month as well considering the Covid cases we had within our team. Despite our lack of training and practice, we managed to scrape an away win against Piedmont. I think we have finally developed a solid chemistry as a team, enhancing our skills on the field. I really hope Covid doesn't screw up the rest of the season for us, especially since this is my last year. I'm looking forward to playing more games and continuing our streak.

Jenna's experience at tryouts



By Jenna Nosseir

Week 1: Tryouts, rosters out, first practices

High school sports are immensely different from recreational sports. Many people view soccer especially as a men's sport, believing that girls aren't strong or fast enough to play it according to society's standards. But girls bring a whole new diversion into this sport. Soccer is a team sport. It's very rare that you can dribble down the field and transcend every defender. You will most likely need to make a few passing combinations with your teammates.

This is why girls soccer may even be more interesting to watch at times than boys soccer. Watching a boys soccer game frustrates me because you will see one boy attempting to dribble down the field by himself to take all the glory and only very rarely score. Regardless of how boys play, girls really use each other like the next step to a staircase to build up the play and finish with a bang.

Throughout the first week of November, CVHS held its girls soccer tryouts consisting of intense conditioning and training.

Every night from 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., over 40 girls were on the field with their nerves exploding through the roof. One group is stretching, another is passing, everyone trying to keep moving around to impress the coaches. By the next Monday afternoon, the junior varsity and varsity rosters were out. Everyone rushed into the auxiliary gym looking for their school id number on either roster. Many people left with their heads hanging low while others were excited for this hard season to come.

The first practice on Nov. 9 was a day for coaches to get an overview of their team, justifying that they had made the correct decision with their team. Every girl gives it 110% every practice to prove that they deserve their spot on the team. Each and every one of them sweat every ounce of energy they had during the first practice.

A few girls, however, made an exceptionally awe-inspiring impression on the coaches and were named captains. Everyone congratulated Taylor Gibbs, Zoie Li, Subhi Karkhi, and Lauren Mac for their extraordinary effort to stand out and succeed.

Monarchs royally pain Trojans with alleged fake injuries

By Felix Shum

The Trojans lost 3-1 against Mt. Eden's Monarchs on Jan. 21, despite the two teams being evenly matched during the first half.

The Monarchs scored one goal toward the end of the first half, with two minutes left on the timer. On several occasions, both teams were close to scoring a goal, tensing up the audience.

By halftime, the Monarchs had only scored one goal with the Trojans still at zero. Coach Robert Olson gathered the Trojans for a huddle and motivational talk.

Center midfield Jacob Shannon took the lead in assessing the situation to his teammates. "We're stuck in two minds," said Shannon.

During the second half of the match, the Trojans scored one goal. But they struggled afterward and suspected an opponent of faking injuries.

There were some injuries where players from both sides had to be temporarily put out of play, but one Monarch in particular, claimed injury at least three times. What outraged Trojans and their fans even more was that the player remained on the field, as if the injury did not happen.

Olson was quick to point out to one of the two referees that the opponent was allegedly faking his injury.

Despite the complaints, nothing was done about it during the match. The Monarchs scored a third goal with little opposition.

"Some of our finishes went pretty poorly, mine included,"



FELIX SHUM

Senior Jacob Shannon passes the ball across the field.

commented player Michael Karapetyan. "We just needed to make better decisions in the final third (of the field)."

Regardless of the anger expressed by the coach and crowd, the Trojans remain optimistic about their upcoming matches.

"I think it's pretty obvious we are a little mad, but I think that energy and anger fuels all of our wins so I think we should have more games to come, and (be) optimistic," said Shannon.

After the loss, the Trojans had a record of four wins and



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Biden battles Covid, Congress

► **BIDEN:** *from page 1*

“Although Biden is heading in the right direction, I feel he needs to revise his tax bills since it would be targeting more employees in the medical field rather than the businessmen,” shared CVHS junior Michelle Phan.

In the last week of his first year in office, Biden rolled out the opportunity for every American household to receive four free Covid at-home rapid tests. His response to the Omicron variant has been to continue the cautionary measures of encouraging vaccination and testing.

“Trying to get the Covid vaccine spread has been a good effort but it doesn’t seem like it is working,” said CVHS history teacher Kevin Batchelor.

“I think the Biden Administration is doing all right. Covid is challenging every leader, but he is really trying. Combating disinformation must be exhausting and a huge drain on resources,” said Parris.

Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi said that schools need support from the Biden Administration to mitigate the impacts of Covid: “Students need take-home tests all the time — not just once,” she said.

“Some people call this a new normal. I call it a job not-yet-finished,” Biden said.

In his first year, he also leased the Gulf of Mexico to Big Oil, even though one of his boldest promises was to not allow oil and gas leasing on public lands and waters.

“The Biden Administration has done little to combat the climate crisis...We need to see radical change in our society to save our planet,” said CVHS

senior Sofia Palau.

Biden has enacted a student loan moratorium, but has not seemed to make an effort to push student loan forgiveness on a larger scale — he left it out of the Build Back Better bill and does not seem to have plans for this in the near future.

According to CVHS librarian Angela Anthony, Biden should “do something about forgiving a percentage of student loans.” As someone dealing with the effects of student loans, this personally impacts her life, so she wants to see change in this area.

CVHS sophomore Lilith Castaneda wants to see Biden “cut the military spending and legalize reproductive rights nationally.”

In general, many CVHS staff members and students feel that the Biden Administration is a lot less chaotic than the previous administration.

“I think there is less cronyism and more civility within the Biden Administration,” stated Parris.

“There is less of a sense of chaos and disorganization than during the Trump Administration,” agreed Batchelor.

“Generally, the political climate doesn’t seem as charged as under Trump,” said Anthony. “I am underwhelmed; I had really high hopes for change, but he hasn’t followed through on a lot of his promises.”

In the coming year, students and staff alike hope to see Biden fulfill his campaign promises and create substantial change for the people. A lot will change regarding Covid throughout the next year, and a new Congress will be in place, so we will be keeping up with Biden.

Introducing Artists’ Abode



By Hope Leong

absence.
paralyzing weight
nothingness
yet the entirety of existence lays to rest upon my head
peacefully resting
toying with my hair
chaos without a budge
the fear of insignificance
disintegration
indescribable uncertainty
when knowledge felt like power
but now only feels like a weapon
a burden
clicking
flicking
ticking
disassociation
doubt
death
realism haunting my dreams
trying to run from the nightmares
so when am i truly awake?
expectations upon myself
the gap between me and my potential

absence
mustn't let it kill me
helplessness sinks in
make it stop
insecurity feasting upon my triumph
where do these words come from?
the dreariness of the day?
or the melancholy of my heart?
thoughts and feelings changing like the rain
unpredictable but beautiful
calm but violent
to be comfortable and productive
having one sometimes means the absence of the other
wish to slip into the zone as if they were my covers
the unparalleled joy that rain brings me
warmth from within
soaking into nature without expectation
wild attraction
screwing with my sanity
destined to thrive in the world of imagination
affirmations begin to set in
the ones that match that of a physical hug
truly making me feel just a little bit okay
sometimes i wish it was enough to just be a good person to survive
not that anyone is truly good
nor is anyone truly bad
the fluidity of existence is something that our labels will always fail to contain
realizing that almost everything is a social construct
how liberating is it to know that
you do have a choice
only beginning to love myself
truly
but that's enough
trying to be content
to be okay with how it really is
otherwise running in the opposite direction
anxious
overwhelmed
disassociating
productive
focused
flying
depressed
stuck
hopeless
hyperactive
uncontrollable
exhausting
the nuances of moods
once again
even in the absence of the rain
water tapping on the window or feet tapping on the floor
thunder rumbling from the clouds or stomachs rumbling from missed meals
lightning cracking in the sky or knuckles cracking in the silence
metaphorical monstrosity
simply what comes out of my mind
unsure of where to stop
within the absence of my sanity
comes clarity
only of more questions about reality

Peaches



By Isabelle Wesner

People peer at Peaches pretty pupils
And ponder Peaches' perfection.
Putting Peaches on a pedestal
Of pitted promises and
Petty presents.
People peer at Peaches and presume
“Peaches is polite
Peaches is proper
Peaches is pure”
Plus Peaches' prosperous pay
Produce people's perception that

“Peaches parents' must be positively proud
Of their pristine, perfect prospect.”
People pushing Peaches' picture to appear perfect-er,
Peaches puts posed polaroids on platforms;
Prada, pumps, and pink placed at the pinnacle when
Peaches' pretty poppy patch is poisoned.
People pick at Peaches' petals
And ponder Peaches' perfection.
Peaches puts on pearl pendants
Out performing previous presentations.
People peer at peaches and presume
“Peaches is pretending
Peaches is prosaic
Peaches is practically a prostitute”
Prada and pumps don't prevent people from peeking.
Kicking Peaches' pride till
Peaches postulates people's presumptions
On Peaches proper price.
Parties are pulling Peaches hair
People start prying, pinning, and pawing
Proclaiming “Peaches is pleading for a peck”
“Peaches' purpose is to please”
Out of pure, petrified pain
Peaches' heart pauses pumping
And progresses to a pit.
Peaches' skin is processed to porcelain
And people peer at nothing but plastic.
People pray for perfect Peaches back,
But Peaches' perfection produced
A powerless pawn, played for a princess
Placed precisely in a perilous man's palm.
Peaches isn't coming back.



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