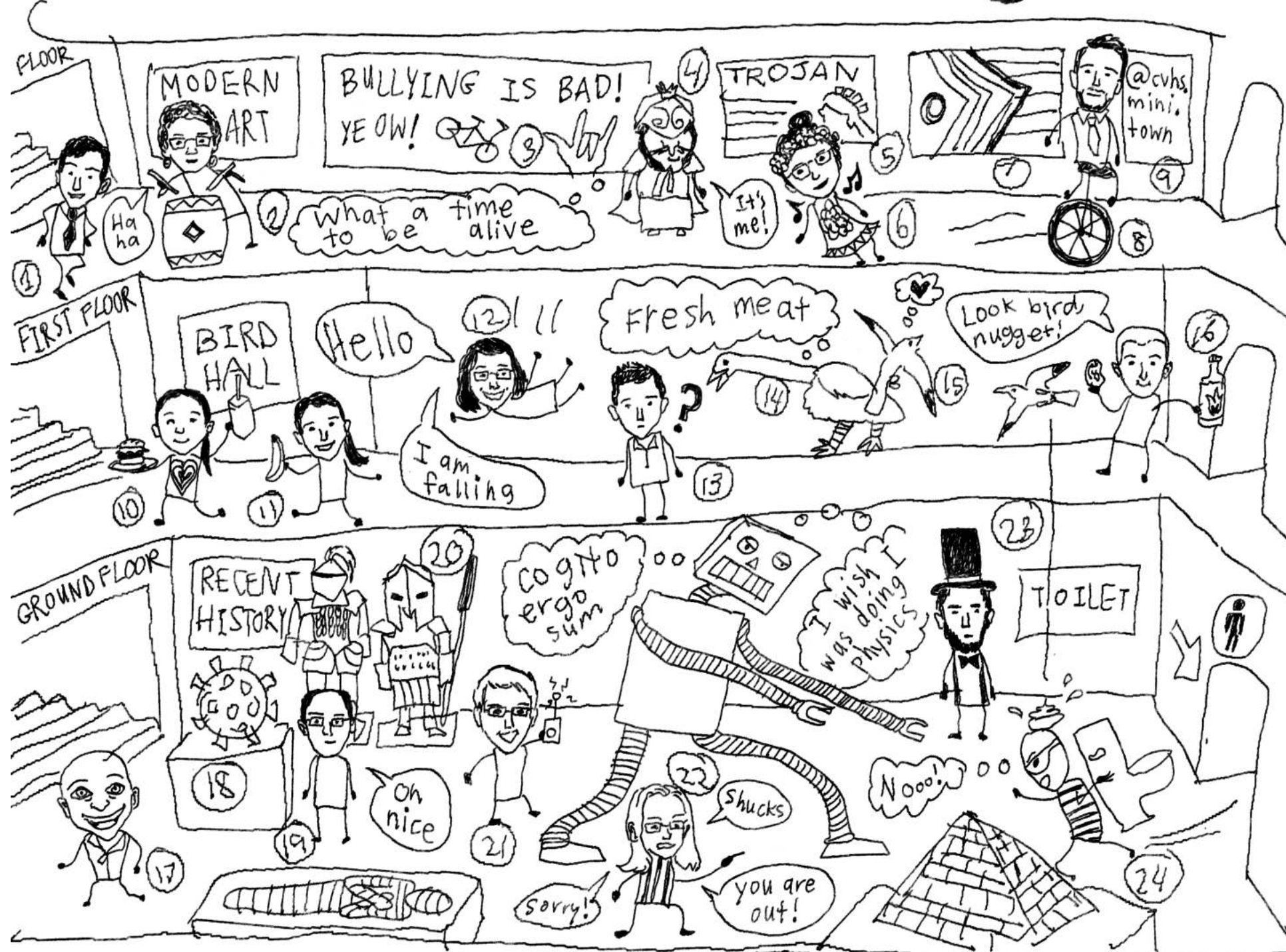


OLYMPIAN '23

SENIOR YEAR



SEARCH & FIND

- ① Health teacher David Judson performed in a Broadway National Tour
- ② Engineering teacher Lisa Holmes was a member of Grand Master Tanaka Sensei's (the founder of U.S. taiko) dream team
- ③ In 2023, bike trick people gave an inspirational speech on Mr. Beast's childhood, then did bike tricks
- ④ That's just Tommy the Trojan. I've never seen him
- ⑤ The new (2023) health clinic and free condoms
- ⑥ Spanish teacher Laurel Orduña wears cool outfits. If you have her, stop being shy. Just sing
- ⑦ The new (2023) pride murals
- ⑧ Assistant Principal Kevin Baker was a KALX 90.7 FM radio DJ, and would ride a unicycle to school
- ⑨ The instagram username for a hidden town that was erected and destroyed in 2023
- ⑩ Thank you Glenda Pirir for making me vegan burgers. I'm sorry I could not eat them all the time. Peace and love
- ⑪ Science teacher Heather O'Connor tested gorilla urine (to see the hormones)
- ⑫ Math teacher Radhika Kolachina sky dived from 18,000 feet
- ⑬ 23 year old Justin Reinboldt, band director of the decade
- ⑭ A senior from the class of 2023 made the most realistic emu costume you've ever seen
- ⑮ STOP leaving muffins on the ground! I see them with only two bites in them! Why are you taking it if you know you won't eat it?! Underclassmen...
- ⑯ Math teacher Ozzie Maynard's passion for chicken nuggets, and bravery to chug hot sauce with me
- ⑰ PE teacher John Edward's blue eyes
- ⑱ Covid-19 started our freshman year, declared over this senior year
- ⑲ Math teacher Sharafeldin Musa لا لأحب. نعم للسلام told me to put this here. It says, "No for War. Yes, for Peace in Sudan."
- ⑳ Math teacher Arthur Wahner does Live Action Role-Play
- ㉑ Genius science teacher Sean Fottrell unknowingly gets RANDOM classmates, OUTSIDE OF PHYSICS CLASS, to tell me physics is FUN (They don't even like math)
- ㉒ Social studies teacher Kathleen Cassidy is a (secretly) world famous basketball referee (I would assume, but it's secret)
- ㉓ Social studies teacher Kevin Bachelor is Abraham Lincoln every Halloween
- ㉔ TikTok Underclassmen follow the 2023 "devious lick" trend to be cool

Seniors sent off to their future!

Academy of Art University
Adora Bailey

Amherst College
Leland Tsai

Arizona State University
Julia Bailey, Aiden Wertzner

Beloit College
Kai Colbert

Berkeley City College
Giselle Quintero, Haley Azevedo, Alexa Esqueda, Lily Crawford

Boston University
Jacob Bull

Brown University
Zi Qiao

Brigham Young University
Benjamin Anderson

Cal Lutheran University
Zach Gardner, Bennington Smith

California Miramar University
Taylor Gibbs

Carnegie Mellon University
Daniel Guo

Chabot College
Sophia Amezcua, Eva Bailey, Peter Baria, Kayla Bowie, Trevor Bucklin, Paula Catacataca, Elijah Chan, Karen Cheung, Cyrus Chiu, Ausin Chu, Daniel Cornejo, Annie Dang, Matty Day, David De La Cruz, Raph Degalia, Brody Dellari, Joseph Dickieson, Moriah Edwards, Alex Evangelista, Zahra Farlow, Sabrina Fernandez, AnnMarie Filson, Orian Gomez, Nikolas Gonzalez, Samsara Gordon, Kito Gregory, Danielle Gutierrez, Felipe Gutierrez, Tyler Hayes, Christian Hernandez, Jaime Hernandez, Aidan Hughes, Emiliano Islas Jimenez, Sinai Iyamu, John Jacob, Raeleen Jensen, Jiji Kennedy, Raye Langdon, Alicia Lee, Max Libed, Juan Lopez, Kenya Lopez, Joey Ly, Miles Madsen, Odin Malby, Alani Maligaya, Garrett Mann Josefina Martinez, Keiry Martinez, Alexandria McCoy, Brandon Mei, Saul Mendez, Jaina Mills, Jace Miyamura. Annabelle Moore, Isabella Mora, Athaliah Morelos, Daelynn Moss, Paolo Muniz, Calvin Ng, Kathy Nguyen, Elijah Oakman, Jenna Odeh, Kristin Okada, Cody Ortiz, Evan Paasche, Diego Page, Vanessa Perez, Koen Phung, Leila Pires, Maria Potts, Rosa Potts, Sikhsa Prasad, Adeeb Rashid, Samuel Robinson, Ashley Rojas, Diana Salahaldin, Yesli Sanchez Paguaga, Mairellys Santiago, Justin Santos Duncan, Makenzie Sharp, Aaron Shea, Ethan Shum, Daniel Souhorukoff, Matthew Tam, Alan Tan, Allan Tellez, Daphne Theodore, Riley Toney Fernandez, Brandon Twarowski, Holden Uyeda, Xavier Vega, Sarah Vieira, Eric Villamor, Elina Wilson, Aidan Wong, Isaac Wong, Ronan Wong, Kevin Wong Zelaya, Alexander Woods, Darren Xu, Kevin Yu, Danny Yu, ShenZhen Yu, Kylie Yu

Chapman University
Lily Flagg

Clark Atlanta University
Londyn Farrish McClerkins

College of Alameda
Alex Lee, Rebecca Bustamante, Kyle Caguiat, Sofia Canha, Isabelle Castro

College of San Mateo
Madison Low, Benjamin Ong, Kaylee Poulos, Jacob Rothwell

Cornell University
Ailin Chen

CSU Bakersfield
Nile Burkett, Malachi Everett

CSU Chico
Diego Gutierrez, Bibiana Lazares, Nate Simonton, Elton Tang

CSU East Bay
Gabriel Avelar, Amin Ayesh, Brooke Barfield, Nomin Batbold, John Briley, Logan Burfield, Alex Burke, Katherine Camaro Aponte, Caleb Coffelt, Anthony Cucchiara, Jacob Drucekhammer, Agata Fedorowicz, Jalonie Hanzy, Albert Hickey, Darren Huang, Noele Jamal, Charlotte Kong, Christopher LaChapelle, Hope Leong, Jocelyn Lu, Anh Luong, Cruz Mariscal, Colin Mogilefsky, Jessenia Munguia, Christopher Nieda, Shea Robinson, Emon Saleh, Ryan Wong, Nathan Yee, Wyatt Zweifel

CSU Fresno
Lynee Sims

CSU Fullerton
Eugenie Bassily, Mason Bilodeau, Syon Chau, Ashley Huynh, Kyle Ignacio, Ryan Ko, Rain Lin, Lawrence Ochea, Franco Sarno, Hannah Thai, Grace Traski, Jia Ying Tsai, Julian Valadez-Garcia, Sophie Zhang

CSU Humboldt
Timothy Hoang, Kevin Li

CSU Long Beach
Fiona Tsang

CSU Maritime
Noah Elkaim

CSU Monterey Bay
Riley Fish, Mackenzie Irvin, Samantha Machado, Edward Nelson, Eli Woodbury

CSU Northridge
Callan Chu, Jollienna Clay, Marlene Lopez, Naomi Sachs

CSU Pomona
Timothy Hoang, Rachel Lee, Isabela Mendoza, Gia Mitra, Kiera O'Dwyer, Anton Pimentel, Nate Scaboo, Gabriel Sommers, Kayhon Wood, Rassa Wood

CSU Sacramento
Peizhen Chen, Andrea De Leon, Alexa Murphy, Jennifer Nguyen

CSU San Diego
Jenelle Andreotti, Declan Everson, Maria Fanger, Hailey Garcia, Samuel Garcia, Cameron Huynh, Victor Lan, Owen Maxwell, Megan McCuaig, Allyson Young

CSU San Francisco
Omar Alfawadeleh, Courtney Bosco, Alexander Cmelak, Kumail Gowhari, Joshua Hill, Timothy Hu, Lauren Hui, Naima Lyons, Amaya Minor, Anthony Molettieri, Nia Pinney, Islam Saeed, Honey Rain Tuasivi

CSU San Jose
Yousif Alrawi, Jonathan Auyong, Conrad Avery, Audrey Chen, Tracy Chen, Raymond Chin, Jaylene Cole, Jayden Dorland-Clements, Kyle Duchscherer, Calvin Gao, Angelo Santiago, Stanley Sheehan, Oliver Simon Abhayjit Singh, Jayden Vuong, AJ Gudino, Denton Hau, Jahzara Jones, Howard Liu, Christopher Ly, Carson Mac, Kamaya Maloof, Kyle Mognaga, Madeleine Newman, Elias Nierengarten, Zachary Pattison, Joaquin Preciado, Daniela Rosas, Andrew Tai, Kaytlen Tanaka, Isaac Thongthap, Victor Tolentino, Tara Tse, Sai Wong, Razelley Yanuaria, Youxuan Zheng

CSU San Luis Obispo
Emily Chin, Emily Corley, Cameron Corley, Olivia Hsu,

Cynthia Lee, Colin Leung, Nikoletta Limnios, Rachel Lowe, Bianca Petalver, Rachel Raskin, Joshua Sanchez, Teejay Tang, Ethan Tekawa-Pon, Owen Vance, Alyssa Wagner, Kayla Wong

CSU Sonoma
Taylor Hodges, Mekhi James, Ian Taylor

CV Adult School
Samantha Alamo, Jiaxi Ao

Dartmouth College
Samantha Li

DePaul University
Roisin Nugent

Diablo Valley College
Ethan Deleoz, Drew Duchscherer, Candice Ho, Joshua Klackle, Albert Lee, Megan Luna, Kaylee Rosario, Jaspreet Sasan, Brandon Teng, Aaron Thung, Charlize Witt, Jacky Yu

Dominican University of California
Mia Frautnick, Mia Woo

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Sam Matsumoto-Ripp

Fashion Institute of Technology
Matthew Chang

Feather River College
Mackenzie Jordan

Fordham University
Emerald Ragan, Erika Sun

Franklin Pierce University
Albert Kim, Jay Saffell

Georgia Institute of Technology
Ying Tzu Chen

Grand Canyon University
Joaquin Acevedo, Shaun Nixon, Darien Wong

Hampton University
Jasmine Butilla

Hochschule für Musik Basel, Switzerland
Rebecca Beringer

Howard University
Giefti Bedaso

Laney College
Serjio Colmenares, Cesar Marin-Hernandez, Bryce Walz

Las Positas College
Kaleb Abilar, Oswaldo Alcala, Leah Balakrishnan, Ellarin Baylon, Natalie Bennett, Lucas Caba, Finnigan Chilton, Naomi Chow, Luca Coppola, Kaylie Dowd, Keira Ebrahimi, Mason Fletcher, Joel Frazee, Taylor Fried, Alvin Huang, Amber Huizar, Dylan Irby, Christopher Kelly, Nathan Kong, Brionna Lee, Grace Liottam, Malea Low Sean Ngan, Vivian Owens, Cameron Pabalate, Angelina Reid, Citlali Rodriguez, Madelynn Sachs, Alexa Salcedo, Juan Sanchez, Alexandra Savva, Zahra Sharifi, Kostandinos Stavropoulos, Sofia Tortorelli, Carys Truong, Mia Wierzba, Ian Wong, Julian Yepez, Zoya Zaman

Liberty University
Christina Yanke

Long Beach City College
Isabelle Wesner

The Master's University
Jireh Min

Military - Air Force
Brandon Chung, Savannah Jenson

Military - Army
Brandon Gutierrez, Esteban

Valencia

Military - Marines
David Heal

Military - Navy
Aron Guillory, Niclas Samson

Moorpark College
Gaby Schirado

Napa Valley College
Kaelyn Gee

Northern Arizona University
Mikella Deigert

Northwestern University
Maya Wong

Orange Coast College
Julian Williams

Ohlone College
Maddison Cutler, Kaylie Gomes, Ethan Hannaford, Destiny O'Neill

Oregon State University
Reese Bartlett, Drew Bascom, Jillian Kuehnel

Pennsylvania State University
Tristan De La Torre

Pomona College
Zoe Dorado

Purdue University
Nolan Barnes, Samar Malhotra

Saint Mary's College of California
Drew Paxman, Jenna Schumann

San Diego City College
Tharen Hilliard

San Joaquin Delta College
Matthew Cormier

Santa Clara University
Natalie Huey, Linda Soto, Elliot Wallis

Santa Rosa Junior College
Lauren Tauscher

Seattle University
David Reggiardo

Seton Hall
Adreanna Dones

Sierra College
Alexandria Ceaser

Stanford University
David Tang

Syracuse University
Charlotte Chu

UC Berkeley
Alexander Cheung, Karissa Chu, Alex Huang, Ariyan Jazaeri, Amelia Johnson, Davidson Lin, Melanie Liu, Elise Lo, Kori Lowe, Ameera Maharaj, Aidan Rickert, Ezra Tramble, Emily Tran, Clarissa Wong

UC Davis
Eddy Bakovic, Kaylie Bang, Man Ho Chan, Melanie Chen, Justin Davis, Karen Isabella Diesta, Christina Fiedler, Joseph Kim, Jaylen Lau, Michael Omans, Keidon Quach, Jojiye Sakai, Malia Solanki, Andrew Yang, Sirui Zeng, Anthea Zhu

UC Irvine
Jack Curtin, Amelie de Jesus, Olive Dooley, Peter Gourgui, Evan Griffith, Karl Haidinyak, Nicholas Hoang, Hagan Kwong, Jessica Lim, Jonathan Lin, Dominic Ng, Gabriel O'Hara, Cynthia Pan, Emily Pham, Alyssa Young

UC Los Angeles
Drew Ali, Jakob Cahill, Sophia Chang, Felipe Duenas, Jash Gandhi, Ember (Rebecca) Ireland, Autumn Kasl-Godley,

Kevin Li, Jennifer Mi, Shreya Varma

UC Merced
Liren Deng, Clive Henrick, James Huang, Ethan Reson

UC Riverside
Felix Dang, Eric Ma, Ngoc Nguyen, TuQuynh Nguyen, David Williams, Katie Yin

UC San Diego
Elvin Chen, Hailey Hoang, Kai Liebowitz, Jesse Wu, Amy Yu

UC Santa Barbara
Joshua Alexander, Estie Hsu, Kyle Lee, Torrance Lee, Angela Li, Nicholas Pronske

UC Santa Cruz
Azra Besic, Kerry Chen, Laurie Chow, Grace Fesmire, Komal Khehra, Tony Mei, Jacqu Mendoza, Carina Newlin, Jaiden Patel, Samantha Rosten, Anna Truong, Julianna Vinciguerra, Doris Wu, Nathan Yee, Kaitlyn Yim

University of Alabama
Isabel Ovalle

University of Arizona
Gianna Henderson

University of Colorado
Miriam Kuehner

University of Hawaii
Emma Miyoshi

University of La Verne
Amaya Jiao

University of Nevada
Colin Livingstone

University of Oregon
Julian Broomfield, Nami Cooper, Madelyn Kennedy, Ava Kinser, Jillian Lilak, Corey Silk, Riley Taylor, Karina Vaca

University of Pennsylvania
Samra Lulseged

University of San Francisco
Lidia Daneshvar, Owen Roura, Joshua Tong

University of Southern California
Zhuolin Chen

University of the Pacific
Bronson Burfield, Andrew Chen, Bryan Huynh, Michelle Phan

University of Texas, El Paso
Bella Tavares

University of Utah
Peter Shlychkov

University of Washington
Ryan Yee

Universal Technical Institute
Hailey James

West Valley College
Darius Jackson

Western Governors Universitys
Zidane Sellami

Western Oregon University
Mayumi Nomura

Willamette University
Zachary Simonton

Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Simon Taylor

Xavier University - Ateneo De Cagayan
Zean Ylaya

Xavier University - Louisiana
Daijah Hamilton



Page 7:
Students
perform
poetry at
open mic



Page 8:
Senior Olivia
Hsu, soloist at
Carnegie Hall



Page 10:
Visual Impairment
program offers
student support



THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL Olympian

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Cheerleading program remains stunted

By Maya Wong

When I first tried out for the CVHS spirit squad, I had to choose between the cheer and dance teams. Although I have danced since I was six, I ultimately selected cheer because of stunting and tumbling. Cheerleading is a sport that offers the opportunity to demonstrate athleticism while enhancing school spirit.

Many cheerleaders share this passion. Some have tumbling experience through gymnastics, while others have cheered competitively at club gyms outside of school. As a varsity cheer captain in my junior and senior years, I cherish the friendships and memories made with my teammates. But while reflecting upon the last few years, numerous CVHS cheerleaders feel a sense of disappointment in the school’s cheerleading program.

As stated in the San Francisco Chronicle’s May 12 article “Stunt taking off in state,” California is one of five states that offer stunt as a varsity sport; its 150 teams are the most of any state. Stunting, where a flyer is thrown up in the air by a base formation, is the differentiating factor that sets cheers apart from dance. It showcases the team’s strength,



OLIVE DOOLEY

flexibility, and teamwork. Now, a new sport dedicated solely to this aspect of cheerleading is gaining traction.

“According to the California Interscholastic Federation, which regulates high school sports, [stunt] participation in the state has risen 80 percent since 2018. Traditional competitive cheer, meanwhile, grew 22 percent over that time, the CIF said, while participation across all sports declined 6.8 percent,” mentioned the article.

While cheerleading as a sport

is gaining rigor, cheerleading at CVHS has not progressed. In comparison to CVHS’ program years ago and to current local high school cheer teams, CVHS cheer is not given the same support. The team does not stunt, attend away football games, participate in summer camps or clinics, or compete in regional competitions.

COVID-19 negatively affected all school sports and clubs. Fortunately, over the past two years, these activities have returned mostly to normalcy—

but the process of bringing the cheer program back has been slower at CVHS. Adding on multiple changes in leadership within CVHS and a new athletic director, it is understandable why things have been more challenging.

Since the pandemic began, CVHS cheer has not stunted. At home games, all squads from visiting teams have demonstrated that their teams continued stunting starting in fall of 2021. The CVHS cheer team is limited to dancing,

jumps, kicks, and tumbling while the opposing team’s cheerleaders are being thrown into the air.

It takes time and forethought to restart stunting. “There would have to be a plan that articulates coaches certifications, expenses, clinics and trainings needed, proper equipment such as mats, and other requirements according to CIF,” explained Athletic Director Kathleen Stacy.

Stunting is legally required to take place on either mats, rubberized track, or grass: all of which CVHS has. The coaches’ stunt certification is an \$85, five-hour long online course. It’s unclear why the approvals are being held up.

Coaches with cheerleading backgrounds and stunting experience are in the best position to advocate for additional training and opportunities. But since the fall semester of 2019, CVHS spirit squads—both cheer and dance—have been coached by dance teachers.

“I think the spirit squad is heavily dance-dominated,” stated varsity cheerleader, senior Keira Ebrahimi. “Since we can’t stunt and don’t work much on tumbling, even as a

► See **JUMP:** page 7

TikTok’s ticking clock



By Matthew Wong

“TikTok is a big part of my day: I eat when I get home and while eating I scroll through TikTok. At my desk, I use TikTok before I start homework. If there is too much work, I’ll take breaks and go on TikTok. Finally, after

MATTHEW WONG

I get ready for bed, I’ll go on TikTok for a bit, then sleep. My average screen time on TikTok is 18 hours a week,” said CVHS sophomore Matthew Aguas.

TikTok is a video-sharing app owned by the private

Chinese company ByteDance. The main concerns with TikTok stem from its relations with the Chinese government, especially after ByteDance admitted that a few employees tracked the location of American journalists who criticized the company, and China’s 2017 National Security Law that required “all organizations and citizens shall support, assist, and cooperate with national intelligence efforts in accordance with the law, and shall protect national intelligence work secrets they are aware of.” The law also authorized the use of means necessary to carry out intelligence efforts both domestically and abroad. Congress is not only concerned with China using TikTok to spy on Americans but also the manipulation of its users through

its content recommendation system. TikTok has over 150 million American users, with 25 percent of its users aged 10 through 19 and the average user spending 1.5 hours per day on the app. As a result, Congress has made lots of efforts to address TikTok and cybersecurity like introducing various bills, but none have become law as of May 2023.

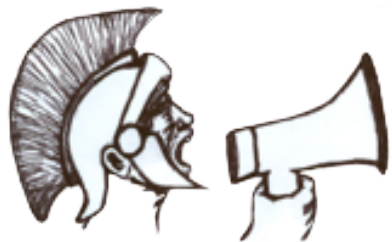
On Dec. 13, 2022, Senator Marco Rubio introduced the ANTI-SOCIAL CCP Act. The bill would block social media companies from a “country of concern” such as China, Russia, Iran, and a few others.

“This isn’t about creative videos—this is about an app that is collecting data on tens of millions of American children and adults every day. We know it’s used to manipulate

feeds and influence elections. We know it answers to the People’s Republic of China. There is no more time to waste on meaningless negotiations with a CCP-puppet company,” claimed Senator Rubio.

“I don’t exactly agree with the reasoning because first off, it’s a very bold claim without evidence (that I know of). Secondly, we use a phone that was likely made in China so there are probably easier ways for China to spy on Americans even if they are made by American companies. Thirdly, I think it’s also safe to assume that many other American social media companies could also possibly gain information and threaten privacy but because it’s American, it’s not a problem,” said CVHS senior Owen Roura.

► **JUMP:** from page 7



Online privacy and censorship is a balancing act

Editorial:

Who gets the right to view the media they want? In the digital age, this is an ongoing argument across the country and world. Across the US, districts are banning books, Montana has banned TikTok, congress has begun hearings for the RESTRICT Act, and certain media sites are making it harder to verify information and accounts. Even in CVUSD, our media usage is arguably censored through the use of Securly—a keyword, website, and domain blocker.

The Olympian, too, is divided on what kinds of content should and shouldn't be censored. Due to various landmark cases in the Supreme Court like New Jersey

v. T.L.O, it has been affirmed that students have limited rights while on school campuses—students can be searched by staff members without search warrants depending on the circumstances. Does this apply to online access being monitored or the idea that we should not have access to certain materials?

The reasoning behind why materials are banned in the first place was considered. Often, adults are worried about what young people will do with certain knowledge. However, what has been banned so far in various school districts and states are books and media addressing queerness, transness, and racial uplift, while books like “Mein Kampf” are still on

shelves around the country. Through the software company employed by CVUSD, Securly, social media sites are blocked on school chromebooks as well

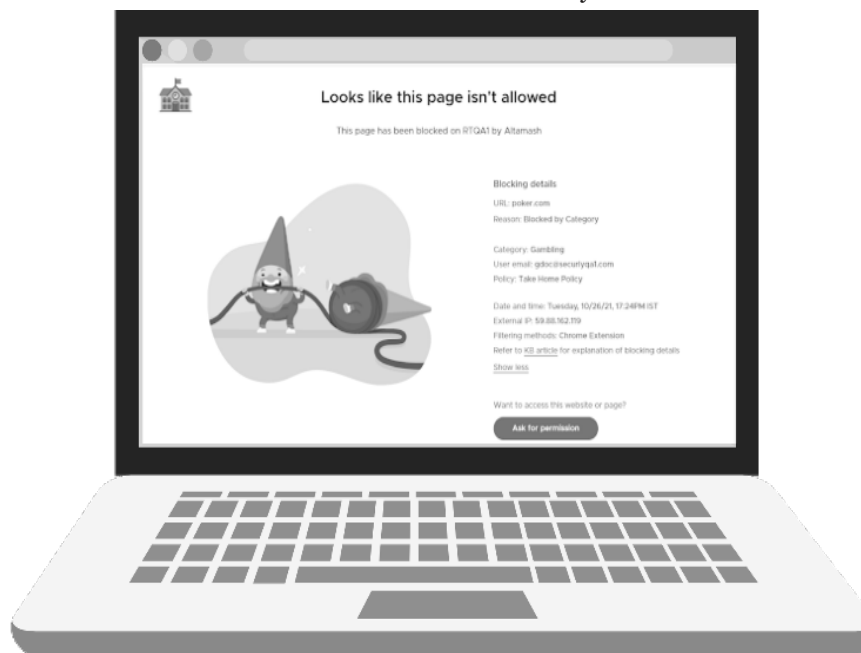
though it is a fault of the system.

Instead of outright banning online materials, The Olympian believes it is crucial to teach media literacy—or how to

home, however, they do not face the same restrictions imposed by Securly. This creates inequity within technological access.

With social media like TikTok, Twitter, and Instagram having detrimental impacts on teens' mental health, in some regards it makes sense to limit those to young people. However, perhaps we should leave the decisions to parents about their own children's access instead of letting some make the decisions for all like how book bans and “don't say gay” laws do.

While limiting access to harmful material can support students' academic growth and mental health, it can sometimes be overstepping personal boundaries; Securly and administration do not know the context for every search or what knowledge people are coming from. Though The Olympian didn't fully come to a consensus of what should or shouldn't be censored, we agree that there needs to be a balance of what is limited by schools. There must be clear guidelines from the district that incorporate a distinction between media that is harmful versus uncomfortable.



How to disagree



By Ember Ireland

The difference between feed-back and bullying

TW: bullying, harassment, self harm, suicide

On my recent piece, “Powderpuff plunders progress,” many people commented on The Olympian's respective Instagram post, which there is nothing inherently wrong with. What crossed the line was attacking me as a person by saying that I am “ugly,” should “never speak again,” calling me “it” in a dehumanizing manner, calling my hair “gay,” and telling me to self harm and end my life.

I do not feel bad for writing my article. I think it is important to express dissent to the status quo, regardless of potential backlash. Similarly, I believe it is good to share your opinion when it doesn't match what others are saying. However, it is not okay to respond to people who disagree with you in a violent manner. Here is my comprehensive guide for how to disagree (or, a brief guide for how to write an opinion).

First, know what you are disagreeing about. In my article, I discussed issues of hegemonic sexism and gender disparities not just in sports and not just at CVHS. In the comments, it was evident that many people did not care to read the article, and just assumed I was attacking a game

they love. In order to show your openness to dialogue on a topic, it is a key tenet of debate to know your opposition; reading the article you are commenting on would probably be a great place to start!

Second, think critically about what is being said. If the article doesn't agree with what you know, pause. Maybe follow up on the sources; check out the links attached. Or, if you plan to refute the claims, do your own research. You can also think about the emotions behind the piece, how it impacts you and other people.

Remember that an opinion piece is meant to bring light to another perspective and start conversations.

Third, express your opinion. Compile your response in a concise (or lengthy, if desired) piece. An effective way to share your thoughts would be in a Letter to the Editor, which can be published in the paper and online. You can also add a comment online underneath the article. If that is not your style, you can also just talk with other people about the article; after all, that is what an opinion piece is meant to prompt.

Some reminders: don't harass or put down the person you disagree with. When you put out your opinion, erase those nasty thoughts from the page. You don't need to tell the person that they don't deserve to speak or should die just because they have a different perspective from you. Also, the person writing the article is expressing their opinion just like you.

As we continue in our lives, we will undoubtedly face opposition to our opinions. When we encounter different perspectives, it is important to take the opportunity to expand our understanding of other experiences instead of instinctively reacting to different points of view with violence and hate.

as necessary class materials and searches including “queer-friendly colleges.”

What adults often fail to consider is that hate and violence are learned while queerness is not. Removing access to identity representation does not reduce the likelihood of someone being part of the LGBTQ+ community. Similarly, though sex education is a unit in health, students still often come away feeling unprepared as queer and trans students. This leads to them doing their own research, which is often frowned upon by administration and parents,

navigate all the information online between truth, fiction and political leaning. With social media like TikTok and Instagram being major outlets for news—mixed with fake news—it is important to teach how to take all the input and filter through it instead of outright taking it away. We do take note that websites are not banned by the school, per say, but blocked by the Securly extension.

Securly is useful in preventing students from accessing explicit content on school browsers. If a student brings a device from

Opinions from The Olympian's website

JC responding to “Powderpuff plunders progress” online:

“This was a really well written article, I would like to say yes, the game seems to be rooted in misogyny but, it actually gives women more confidence in doing more male related sports. My friend did this powderpuff game and had a ton of fun saying how she can't wait to do it next year encouraging her to play more male dominated sports even if it is just flag football. I agree that this game could use improving, everything needs improving but, this is just a fun school spirit game to help bring the school together.”

L responding to “Three-time Olympian Howard Bach holds badminton clinic at CVHS” online:

“The badminton team has done a lot in this season and I've heard they have won many times, too. It's good to know we have a talented coach from the Olympians to help them gain more skills and what to do during games or competitions.”

Dear editor,

Let me express my admiration for your coverage this school year. The Olympian has worked impressively to connect big stories from beyond our town with the CVHS community.

A few examples include your articles about legal attacks on trans and nonbinary Americans by Olive Dooley, the Respect for Marriage Act by Rebecca Ireland, and winter storms by Sam Scott.

I'm also glad that The Olympian covers local events and concerns, like Maya Wong's article about the CVUSD Black History Month Celebration and Melissa Boussaroque's opinion on the importance of breakfast.

It's great to see two new sections catching on: the Trojan Horse podcast thanks to Drew Paxman, and Artists' Abode, created by Zoe Dorado.

Of course, newspaper editors do far more than produce articles; planning, editing and designing the issues require much more effort.

Congratulations also to your staff writers who have made big contributions. Few other students take on such a challenge in service of their

community. I admire you for it.

As a longtime journalist and teacher, I know a few things about the dedication required to produce a high-quality newspaper. Thanks to your staff and teacher Lisa Carmack for upholding a proud tradition.

Matt Johanson

Letters to the Editor



The Olympian encourages letters from our readers. Please note that letters must be signed and no longer than 200 words. E-mail them to cvhsolympian@gmail.com.

Junior jump Senior slump

By Anjali Yadavalli
By Evan Griffith

Imagine it's the last week of your sophomore year, with the blazing sun hitting your back, and you're going to pick up your textbooks for your summer homework. The first thing you hear is, "Good luck junior year, you'll need it,". That is the exact situation I was in about a year ago. That absolutely terrified me. I mean, what was I supposed to say?

In my honest opinion, junior year is on another level of difficulty, but I wouldn't worry too much about it, people act as if they went through a war to get through the year. It's just a realization that life is not going to be a straight, flat road.

It took me a lot of tears, sleepless nights, and lots of reality checks to get through the year. Just keep in mind that there is light at the end of the tunnel, as cliché as that sounds, if you hit rock bottom you can only go up.

Bringing myself to admit something like this took me the entire year to do. Society sets unrealistic expectations for students. Taking five AP classes and getting all A's is not impossible but it's definitely hard on a student's mental health. It's hard to live with the fact that you might be disappointing people and disappointing yourself in the long run. This is a reminder that there are so many options for people once you graduate, don't let a letter on a piece of paper define you.

This being said, you should still try your hardest. Don't just give up, you need to push yourself through the year but all will be fine. By the time you actually get a grasp on reality, it'll be the last month of the year.

Junior Angelina Xie advises, "[underclassmen] should decide carefully when picking the rigor of their classes because it's their first time they will be able to take AP classes."

The only advice that I'd give underclassmen approaching junior year is that they should learn to manage their time. Having time for school and yourself is extremely important, throwing yourself into an endless cycle of only school makes it really hard to enjoy the time you have in high school.

Xie notes that, "It's also important to stay organized through a planner of some sort to keep yourself on track."

Join clubs, join a sports team, or do things that you actually enjoy; it helps with the stress and I promise you aren't alone. The chance that the students sitting next to you are in similar situations regarding stress is very likely.

Don't let the start of the junior year bring you down, it takes time and a lot of effort but you'll get through it. Junior year is the first step in the real world, but eventually it all falls into perspective.

As we enter the beautiful not so sunny month of May, a productivity killing disease, by the name of senioritis, is plaguing our class of 2023. For those who don't know, Webster's dictionary describes senioritis as "an ebbing of motivation and effort by school seniors as evidenced by tardiness, absences, and lower grades".

Educationworld.com lists some common symptoms of senioritis such as, "moderate cases of staring out the window," "homework fatigue," and my own worst affliction, "acute mediocrity." Some of my symptoms that may be relatable include calculating how low you can score on a test while maintaining an A and convincing yourself that a random hobby you picked up is productive, thus taking precedence over schoolwork.

The drag of senioritis in your last few months of high school can be a real shock to your grades and your overall happiness at school. Luckily I have some advice as to how to keep going.

Focus on your finals! High school is like a race and you're just about to cross the finish line. The worst thing you could do right now is slow down. Finals take place the last week of school so once you are done with them you are completely done. Make a study schedule for your finals and stick to it.

The most motivating, and slightly terrifying, productivity booster, in my opinion, is that if you have accepted a college offer you will have to report your second-semester grades to that school. While it is pretty uncommon, there are horror stories of students tanking their second-semester grades and being cut from the college they were committed to. If you are a senior going to college, I would recommend looking up your school's policy on grade drops.

Finally, ask your friend group to keep you accountable. This is the last and probably most important tip. It can be very easy to get swept up in the mindset of your friend group, but you can use this to your advantage. You can make studying a fun and social activity when you do it with your friends. An added benefit of this tip is the rewarding shared sense of relief once finals are over.

So there you have it, senioritis cured! To all the seniors having slacking struggles, I wish you luck. To all the juniors and underclassmen having slacking struggles, I wish you much luck, it gets worse next year.

Melissa's course review

Class Schedule		Name: Melissa
		2022-2023
Period	Class	
0	Advanced Journalism	
1	Spanish 4 Honors	
2	Honors Afrocentric Lit	
3	Marketing Economics	
4	Afrocentric US History	
5	AP Calculus AB	
6	AP Environmental Science	

EMBER IRELAND

By Melissa Boussaroque

This year I took two AP classes, three honors classes, and two electives, one of which was a zero period. After having almost completed all of these courses, I wanted to share my honest opinion on each of them, and tell you if taking all of these classes was worth it in the end.

For my math class, I chose AP Calculus AB. Since I took Integrated 3A my sophomore year, this was the pretty obvious class choice. While I generally enjoy math, and have typically found it easy, this is definitely the hardest math class I have ever taken; this is the first time I have actually had to study and take extra time to understand the material. Even though the class is difficult, I enjoy that it is mostly based on independent work. The teacher teaches a lesson at the beginning of class, and the rest of the class time is spent doing practice problems individually, which I found to be helpful. Also, the homework is mostly taking notes, which is really beneficial in better understanding what was taught in class. However, I did find that the resources provided were not enough to fully understand the material and I required the help of other resources, like my peers and educational websites such as Khan Academy. The class on its own did not help me be ready for the AP test, but the combination of both in-class and external resources was definitely enough. I would definitely recommend this class to anyone who has typically found math easy and is looking for something more challenging. However, if you find math difficult or you don't really need it for the career you want to pursue, I would probably recommend that you do not take this class.

I decided to take Honors Afrocentric English and History, and it was honestly the best decision I made out of all the classes that I picked. I have

never been the biggest fan of history, but for the first time, I was actually super interested in what I was learning. Both the English and history class have taught me some of the most interesting things I have learned out of all my classes. It is so refreshing to finally be learning familiar material but from a completely different perspective. One downside is that not everyone can be in Afro, you have to complete an entrance exam. Another possible downside is that both classes require a lot more writing than is usually needed for other classes. However, I enjoyed this because my writing has improved so much. I am now able to write a high-scoring essay, which is sometimes around three or four pages long, in under 40 minutes. If you don't like writing, maybe don't take this class, but you should still think about it because taking it could change your mind and help you improve.

Science is optional for most juniors, but I decided to take AP Environmental Science regardless. This class definitely has a reputation for being an "easy AP", and while I somewhat agree, I also disagree. Though a lot of the material is basically common sense, there was some of it that can be more difficult to understand. Although it is an AP class, the workload is definitely manageable. Most of it is classwork, and the only thing that takes time at home is the occasional project. However, for most of the projects we do, we are given a good amount of class time to work on them. This class alone made me feel very prepared for the AP test with minimal studying. Overall, I would recommend this class to almost anyone because it has interesting material and is not too difficult.

For my language, I decided to take Honors Spanish 4. As someone who is already fluent in French, I've always found Spanish to be an easy class, and I think that as long as you

paid attention in the first three years of Spanish, it should still be fairly easy. Aside from being a fairly easy class, it is also a really fun class. The learning isn't just focused on language, but also culture; we learn different dances and songs, and try some foods, which makes the learning experience super enjoyable. It is just a really fun class in general, and there is never a boring day in this class.

For one of my electives, I obviously chose Journalism, which I have been taking for almost two years now. Overall, I would really recommend it: working on the school newspaper has made me feel so much more knowledgeable about everything going on both on campus and off. I really enjoy the class, but if you don't like writing, it definitely would not be the best fit for you. One of my only complaints is that it is only offered during zero period so it can get a little exhausting having to wake up early every single day. However, I have been able to adjust, and I like that, as a junior who can't get a parking spot, I am able to find somewhere to park that is pretty close to the school. Additionally, it is nice to be able to have space freed up during the regular school day if you want to take an additional elective.

The other elective that I am taking is Marketing Economics. In all honesty, I didn't really plan to take marketing—it was my third backup on my course request sheet. However, I am not that upset about having taken the class. Though I am not super interested in the material, I think it is a good class for anyone pursuing a career in marketing, business, etc. An advantage of this class is that, aside from a couple projects, the workload is pretty light. Most of the work is work that you can usually get done during the class period, which saves more homework time for other classes. Another positive to taking this class is that you get college credit from Chabot College. Altogether, I would recommend this class for anyone who needs to get their CTE credit, but doesn't want too much extra work.

As you can probably tell, I somewhat enjoyed all of the classes I took in my Junior year. I think that the combination of all of these was honestly pretty difficult to manage. If you are thinking of taking any of these classes, I would definitely think you are making the right choice, but if you are planning on taking all of them, or having a schedule similar to mine, I would make sure you are ready to take on the pressure and workload of it. If you manage your time correctly, I definitely think it is doable, but it could very possibly take a toll on you mentally.



‘How to sell a Haunted House’ sells its scares

By Mason Jordan

A ghost story about evil puppets, strange noises, and the lasting bonds between an estranged family, acclaimed horror author Grady Hedrix recently released his 2023 bestseller, “How To Sell A Haunted House.” The novel is a satirical take on the way families deal with the death of a loved one (with lots of fun scares) and masterfully captures the division and connection that can come from the inevitable.

Louise Joyner is living a successful life in San Francisco as a single mother. When she finds out that her parents have passed away in a car crash under strange circumstances, she travels back to her childhood home in Charleston, South Carolina. There she engages in a battle of ‘what would they want if they were here’ with her brother Mark.

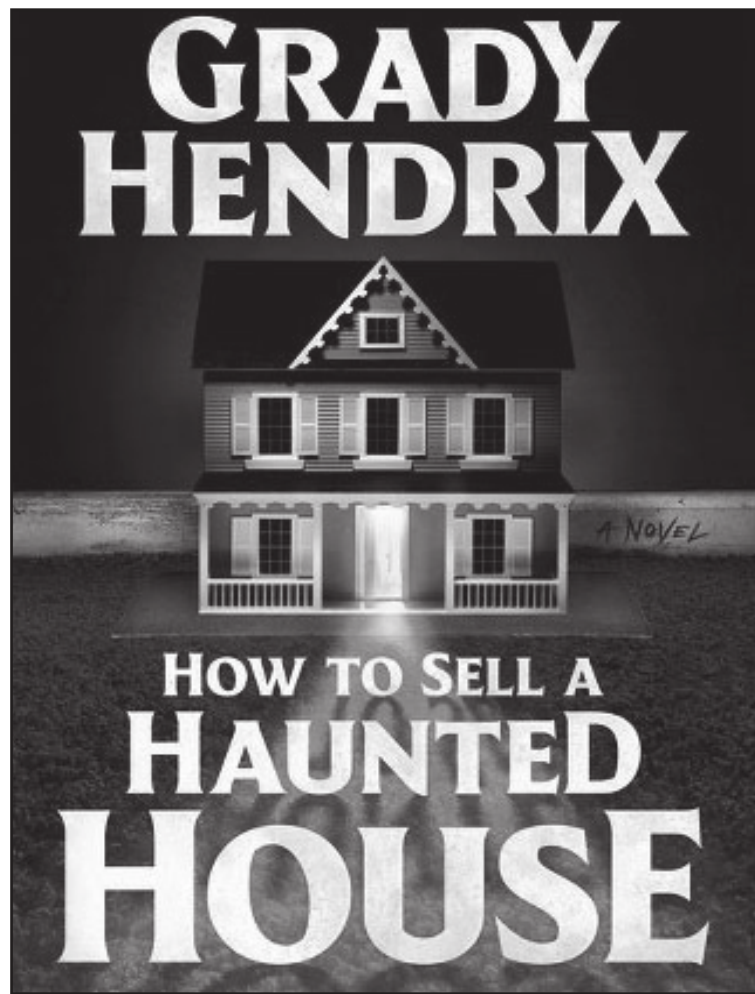
This real-life trope of ‘what would they want’ is very present throughout the book, and is one of the most realistic and well-written aspects. It helps the reader connect to the characters and their experience as people

as opposed to words on a page. Louise and Mark argue about basically everything when it comes to how the deaths should be treated, and one thinks they knew the parents better than the other. The funeral services, of course, are a huge plot point in their overbearing sibling rivalry. The next major plot point is selling the house. How do you deal with two different people, with equal standing in the will, one wanting all the money and keeping no sentimental value and the other wanting to cherish everything and prepare the house to be a home again? Their mother made puppets as a job in her lifetime, and the puppets still eerily linger around their vacant house as little reminders that, yes, this is a horror novel.

Louise and Mark have their first encounter with each other in decades at the house, and it starts with an argument. However, a problem soon presents itself to the siblings. The house is haunted, and therefore won’t be easy to sell. In the adventure of figuring out why their parents really died and coming together as people,

we hear an amazing quote from a realtor that could summarize almost the entire plot of the book, “Strange noises, bad vibes, your mom and dad recently passed—Your house is haunted and I’m not selling it until you deal with that.”

The book tackles topics that many of us can relate to: family ties, sibling rivalry, the different ways we handle grief, and haunted houses. The scares in this book don’t come often, but when they do they are very well done. At its heart, this story shows the reader the ways people can bond and separate over the hardest thing we deal with in life: death. As a fun and scary story, *How To Sell A Haunted House* works amazingly. However, as an examination of what grief does to a person and of long-lasting sibling rivalry, the novel clearly shows how these two things intersect and defy each other. No matter what, after all that has happened, this novel shows you one clear thing: at the end of the day, we’re all just people who face things that, while they seem impossible, are just inevitable. Oh, and some of us are ghosts.



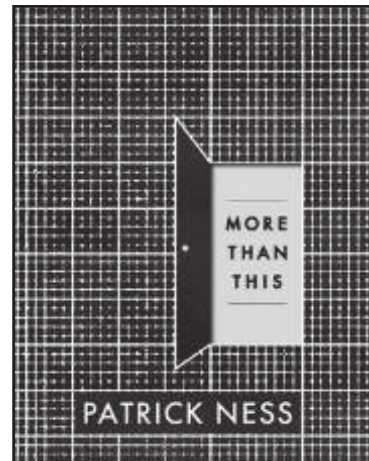
Life after death: is there “more than this?”

By Gavin Peters

Seth is drowning. It’s winter in Washington State. The waters are frigid and the currents are rough. As he is thrown around the water he regrets his most recent decisions. He wished he had said goodbye to the people he loved, he wished he told someone where he was, and he wished he never jumped into the water where he would die. The waters rush him back towards the rugged rockwork of the shore, his head crashes into the rocks and his skull cracks open. What if life was more than this, more than just existence, more than just death? His last few moments are the first few pages of the book and set the stage for a grim dystopian story to unfold.

“More Than This,” written by Patrick Ness, is a sci-fi, dystopian, mystery novel that hints at themes of tragedy, trauma, and existentialism. We follow Seth Wearing, a 16-year-old boy from Southern England who commits suicide after his American dream is shattered, and finds out his life is more than it seems.

Seth then wakes up in a mysteriously nostalgic place. As Seth learns to survive in this new world he begins to remember the trauma of his life that he had initially repressed. The world seems like it was made just



for him to suffer. He wants to remember more, but is the pain worth the knowledge? Is this his own personal Hell?

The idea of solitude is a representation of hell. People are sociable creatures and being a part of society is a part of living. Although, when we don’t feel as though we fit into the rigid ideologies of human life, living can become a chore. Making ourselves change to feel like we belong.

“More Than This,” is an insightful idea of what the world has become and how we, as humans, survive in an ever-ruining world; how we can decide not to recognize the problems of our lives, and instead create a false reality to live in instead. In a time when ignorance is bliss, forgetting tragedy for happiness always seems worthwhile, but maybe that makes reality hell, and hell reality itself.

Flowers for Algernon: A Journey of Intelligence, Emotion, and Humanity

By Samantha Jew

“How strange it is that people of honest feelings and sensibility, who would not take advantage of a man born without arms or legs or eyes—how such people think nothing of abusing a man with low intelligence.” A lack of limbs can be overcome, but a lack of intelligence is considered a lack of humanity itself.

Published in 1966, “Flowers for Algernon” a fiction, sci-fi novel written by Daniel Keyes aims to show the stark difference between the treatment of the intellectually abled and disabled.

Set in 1960s New York, a mouse named Algernon leads the way to perhaps the most important scientific discovery known to man: genetically engineered increased intelligence. Told through journal entries, the simple-minded man that is Charlie Gordon records his thoughts as he undergoes the change of a lifetime. Will it work? Only time, and a mouse, may tell.

In a world where intelligence

is prized, emotion is often disregarded. Post-procedure, Charlie was exploited to make others feel superior, for everyone was a genius compared to him. While he no doubt grew academically smarter, Charlie has no clue how to process his own emotions, but it does not mean he lacks them, a fact that the scientists often forget. Our ability to think on a higher level is what sets humans apart from animals, but is intelligence worth anything if emotion does not go along with it?

“Flowers for Algernon” was written over 60 years ago, but the message Keyes sends about the dangers of the stigma surrounding the intellectually disabled still applies today. Charlie was the first human subjected to the procedure, yet the scientists that conducted it treated him as if he were just another animal. The scientists thought they created Charlie when they made him smart, they didn’t consider him human until he could read, write, and speak “normally.”

When the original short story was written in 1959, “Flowers

for Algernon” was released in a world on the brink of a civil rights movement demanding equal opportunities for those with disabilities. Through the efforts of activists, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was passed, followed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990, the most law protecting the rights of people with disabilities. People are defined by their beliefs, hopes, and dreams, not by a disability. From being objects of ridicule to being able to lead their own independent lives, the problem of inequality has improved, but is far from solved. Laws take years to change, but stigma takes even longer.

For a short time, Charlie held the world in his hands. He had lived his entire life in the dark, ignorant to what he was missing. The procedure gave him the ability to learn the entirety of what the world had to offer with the only catch being that it wouldn’t last. Is the attempt to change nature the limit to scientific advancement? Is what we are born with all that we are ever meant to have?

► **JUMP: TikTok from page 3**

On Jan. 25, 2023, the No TikTok on United States Devices Act was introduced by Senator Josh Hawley. The bill imposed a nationwide ban on TikTok, and similarly to the ANTI-SOCIAL CCP Act, people that continue to violate the law can face criminal penalties of a fine up to \$1,000,000 and 20 years in prison. One month later, the DATA Act was introduced and would require federal action to protect the transfer of “sensitive data” to foreign adversaries, with an emphasis on China.

“I think it has the right idea, but it would be better if there was a bill passed that could investigate TikTok and other social media companies instead. I think it would be more fair than just saying it’s owned by a company in a communist country so it’s not safe, which I think is untrue... It’s a social media app, meant to share civilian content with each other, not the government. Even if TikTok does take private info, I don’t think a lot of people would care,” stated Roura.

The most prominent bill is the RESTRICT Act. Introduced on March 7, 2023, it authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to “identify, deter, disrupt, prevent, prohibit, investigate, and mitigate” covered transactions. Covered transactions means “any acquisition, importation, transfer, installation, dealing in, or use of any information and communications technology product or service” in which a foreign adversary—which can be any country “determined by the Secretary”—is interested in. Simply put, the RESTRICT Act gives the government the ability to monitor information technology relating to foreign entities that threaten national security. When the bill was introduced, however, it received lots of backlash in concerns with censorship, the potential for criminalization of ordinary people, and its broad applicability.

“The RESTRICT Act concerns me because too much of our freedom can be limited. The bill should be more specific so it is clear for people what they can and can’t do. Without being



CHIP SOMODEVILLA, GETTY IMAGES FILE

specific, people may engage in activities that are suddenly punishable,” stated Aquas. “What happens to people using VPNs or a Chinese-owned company’s website like Temu?”

To address these fears, Senator Mark Warner’s (sponsor of the bill) communications director, Rachel Cohen, said, “Under the terms of the bill, someone must be engaged in ‘sabotage or subversion’ of American communications technology products and services, creating ‘catastrophic effects’ on U.S. critical infrastructure, or ‘interfering in, or altering the result’ of a federal election, in order to be eligible for any kind of criminal penalty ... this legislation is aimed squarely at companies like Kaspersky, Huawei, and TikTok that create systemic risks to the United States’ national security—not at individual users.”

On March 23, 2023, TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew testified before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce with the committee chair saying, “ByteDance-owned TikTok has knowingly allowed the ability for the CCP to access American user data. Americans deserve to know how these actions impact their privacy and data security, as well as what actions TikTok is taking to keep our kids safe from online and offline harms.”

During the five hours of testimony, Chew argued that TikTok did not have connections with the CCP and was actively trying to protect the data of its American users, citing Project Texas, a plan they developed with the government officials under the pretext of “storing American data on American soil, by an American company, looked after by American personnel.”

Chew admitted, however, that because Project Texas has not been fully implemented, China still has access to TikTok’s data. Throughout the testimony, Congress attacked not only the plausibility and security of Project Texas, but also TikTok’s harmfulness and manipulation of its users. Representative Kathy Castor said that Congress needs to protect Americans from TikTok’s “addictive algorithmic operations that serve up harmful content and have a corrosive effect on our kids’ mental and physical well-being.”

“TikTok’s effect on our kids isn’t a TikTok problem as much as it is a parenting problem. You can’t give your kids unrestricted access to social media and then blame it for what it does to them,” said a CVHS parent.

Overall, the testimony was largely unsuccessful in convincing Congress otherwise, and there is still bipartisan support for banning TikTok, with the White House even announcing its support for the RESTRICT Act. The bill faces lots of pushback, but a general ban on TikTok would be very challenging considering its violation of the First Amendment.

“That legislation [RESTRICT Act] has very broad grants of government power that could prove quite harmful to free speech and could extend far, far beyond just TikTok,” said Senator Ted Cruz.

“Personally, I use it [TikTok] frequently to keep my mind free from stress because a lot of people share their content on the app. I don’t think a ban on the app overall is a great idea,” said Roura.

“TikTok can be useful in

spreading info or passing time, but it is also very addictive and a distraction... Getting rid of TikTok will open time to be more productive and build useful skills. Still, I don’t agree with the reason for the push for banning the app. I don’t really care if China has info about me as long as they can’t steal my identity. It wouldn’t matter because my life isn’t influential enough to use the info against me,” said freshman Alyssa Evangelista.

“To all the teenagers out there and the TikTok influencers who think we’re just old and out of touch and don’t know

what we’re talking about trying to take away your favorite app: You may not care that your data is being accessed now, but there will be one day when you do care about it... They can choose what you see and how you see it. They can make you believe things that are not true. They can encourage you to engage in behavior that will destroy your life... At any moment, they can demand all of TikTok’s data be used to design an A.I. algorithm with the sole purpose of promoting Chinese interests and destroying our society from within,” warned Representative Daniel Crenshaw.



OLIVE DOOLEY

► **JUMP: Cheerleading from page 3**

... “a cheer team, we’re focused more on dance aspects. Dancing takes priority for the coaches because they know how to critique and improve the dance routines.”

CVHS cheerleaders are also unable to perform at away football games, while all home games in Trojan Stadium features cheerleaders from the visiting school. Pre-pandemic, a parent carpool system was used to transport cheerleaders to and from away games.

CVHS cheerleaders do not attend competitions, for these events require stunting. In the past, CVHS cheer participated in both competitions and summer clinics, traveling as far as Anaheim to do so.

A few cheerleaders communicated their dissatisfaction to school administrators, but they were told to adhere to school protocol and report to their coaches first.

“There’s just so many unanswered questions about cheer,” commented one of the cheer captains, senior Ashley Kim. “And the fact that no one’s answering them makes me think that they don’t care enough about us to try to either offer communication, or give us more opportunities to become a real sport.”

Cheerleaders are used to serving and entertaining others—but without

competitions they have nothing truly for themselves to showcase their athleticism.

“Just because we cheer on other sports, it doesn’t mean that their sports should take priority over ours,” expressed Kim.

Fortunately, cheerleading is evolving and the attitude towards it is changing. At the college level, dozens of universities now offer stunt as a varsity sport with the promise of athletic scholarships. Last month, the NCAA designated stunt as an “emerging sport” for Division I, putting it on track to becoming a championship competition. Meanwhile, an effort is under way to include competitive cheerleading as an Olympic event by 2028.

Many school administrators are eager to fulfill the demand for equal opportunity for women in educational settings, required under the federal law Title IX. Supporting the cheer program is one way for CVHS to do this. There is an encouraging sign that both varsity and JV cheer will be coached by individuals with cheerleading experience: a first step to improve the CVHS cheer program. According to Stacy, “After hearing about the interest from students, coaches, and families, steps are being taken to see how stunting could be brought back to CVHS.”

How soon these will be implemented remains to be seen.



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Hsu performs in orchestras in Castro Valley and beyond



By Erika Sun

Initially put into violin classes by her dad at the age of 5, Olivia Hsu has diligently attended her violin lessons ever since. Over the years, she has engrossed a collection of accomplishments. Most recently, Hsu was given the rare opportunity to perform a solo concerto with the Castro Valley Orchestra.

“The CV Orchestra is a community orchestra comprised of retired professional musicians, current professionals, musicians who’ve changed careers, and the general community members who play at an advanced level,” described James Choi, Hsu’s private violin teacher since the eighth grade.

Only a handful of orchestras in the Bay Area offer the chance for students to play a solo with them, resulting in a highly competitive playing field. With small margins of being selected, performing with an orchestra is a rare opportunity for any musician, let alone a high schooler.

To prepare for her performance, Hsu rehearsed the piece for several months, simultaneously practicing it for several other violin competitions. Throughout the weeks leading up, she took part in rehearsals with the CV Orchestra and worked on fine-tuning the music before the final show.

“I felt happy and grateful that I was able to showcase my hard work and be able to perform in front of my family and friends. I’ve been wanting to perform for my grandparents for a while; this performance gave me the opportunity to do so,” stated Hsu about her final performance.

As a teacher, Choi described how before any performance, he helps his students strengthen their mental fortitude, chip away at technical imperfections, and take part in practice concerts to prepare. However, in the case of Hsu, he did not feel the need to become as caught up in her preparation process.

“By now though, Olivia has already performed solo concertos with orchestra a few times so I didn’t feel the need to get too involved with this particular performance. She knew what she had to do.”

However, Hsu’s performance with the CV Orchestra was only a fraction of her accomplishments this past year. After being selected as a first-place winner of the American Protégé International Music Talent Competition, Hsu will be solo performing the Saint Saens Violin Concerto No. 3 at Carnegie Hall this coming summer. She will also be traveling throughout Europe (specifically Prague, Vienna, and Budapest) to perform with the Oakland Symphony Youth Orchestra (OSYO) as a part of their summer tour.

In her free time, Hsu helps teach violin to kids over Zoom through a nonprofit organization she helped launch called Melody Connects. Choi and his students founded a “mentorship program” to partner with Title 1 schools across the nation to provide free weekly Zoom lessons to their students.

“I believe there is always room for improvement in anything you do. Self-improvement is what inspires me to continue playing the violin. Even though I have been playing the violin for 12 years now, I learn something new all the time,” expressed Hsu. “This [teaching students] inspires me to continue improving my violin skills so that I can share my knowledge with young musicians.”

After high school, Hsu plans to attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (SLO) as a biochemistry major. While not majoring in music, she hopes to continue her passion for violin by joining the Cal Poly SLO Symphony Orchestra or possibly a string ensemble group.

Nevertheless, Hsu has no plans for her violin to leave her side as she takes on New York, Europe, and Cal Poly SLO later this year.

Student poets perform original writing at open-mic



By Zoe Dorado

On the evening of May 13, the stage was set. CVHS student writers and community members gathered at Pampas Cafe, nestled next to Trader Joe’s, for the first school-sponsored poetry open mic since the pandemic.

“I’m just excited to share my poetry because this is the first time that my poetry will actually be heard from my voice instead of just [in The Olympian] newspaper or online,” said junior and co-emcee of open mic, Maggie Rodas.

CVHS poets had been developing their work since the beginning of the school year through writing workshops in the library during Trojan Time, but now they had a chance to share their work with the public.

Like Rodas, senior Vivian Owens was familiar with the written form of poetry but less familiar with the performance aspect. “I usually write poetry and I’m like, ‘I’m never gonna let this see the light of day!’” she joked. “But now it’s going to see the light of day.”

As the open mic went on, teachers, family members, and Trader Joe’s shoppers bustled inside Pampas Cafe and took their seats. Each poet was introduced by Rodas and her co-emcee Bibiana Lazares.

Owens had written a piece about her experience being a person of color, specifically as a racially ambiguous person, through a “fairy-tale” perspective. “I really fixated on like fairy tales and like sparkly things when I was little, so I wanted to kind of put that into my experience into this little capsule that I can show the people and have them understand,” she described.

The poems shared spanned a spectrum of experiences. From heartbreaks, to platonic love poems addressed to friends, to mental health struggles, to work addressing race, gender,

and sexuality, everyone gave each poet who went up to the mic, their full attention.

Senior J Wanjiku had her own spectrum of poems to bring on stage. “One is about childhood, like my upbringing,” she said. “I’m an immigrant. I’m first gen. So it’s about my journey getting here, and how that felt because I was so young. The second one is about periods—putting on a tampon for the first time. That’s an experience.”

Wanjiku’s poetry is influenced by a number of artists, most notably, Nikki Giovanni who she described as “a big inspiration.” “I read about her in school, and I just loved her vibe,” she gushed. “Her poems and the Tupac tattoo that she has—even though she literally is like 60—is so cool.”

Organized through a collaboration between the CVHS library and Smalltown Society—whose motto is to “occupy a space for the neighborhood”—the feeling of community was very much present.

“I would love to see the voices of emerging artists heard more clearly in our community,” said songwriter and Lead Curator of Smalltown Society Paul Keim. He hopes to continue collaborating with CVHS in order to give artistic platforms to more young artists.

Hip hop artist and Smalltown Society Collective member BJ (artist name “CLEAN”) agrees. A collaborative effort between Smalltown, Pampas, and the students at Castro Valley High, was a great space for them to get an opportunity to do public performance and public speaking,” he said. “I know there’s a lot more things in the works and I just think that he’s going to really help the creative community with the high school students and the relationship between Castro Valley overall with the students in Smalltown, so I hope there’s many more collaborations to come. It’s not the first.”

Rodas and a number of



ZOE DORADO

non-seniors are hoping to turn this group of poetry-minded students into an official poetry club at CVHS for the coming school year. “I wanted to make up my own club, a poetry club, not only just to read and speak poetry, but also [to make sure] people who don’t have a healthy way of communicating their emotions or their mind or their thoughts [have a space to do so... and also branch out to different places as we did here with Smalltown Society,” she said.

CVHS librarian Angela Anthony helped jumpstart this project but will be moving on to a different career next school year. “It’s kind of bittersweet. I think students like this are exactly the reason why I continue to stay in education for so long,” she said. “But finishing on this note where I get to have hope for the next generation and see how confident they can be and express themselves through their words, is the heart of what libraries are. It’s all about books and words. So this has just been really nice. I’m really proud of all these girls. For coming up and speaking their hearts and we’re just really happy to end on this note.”

While all the students who shared their poetry identified as girls or femme folks, Rodas emphasized that poets are not limited to just those people. “People always think that poetry is such a feminist thing, or that it’s not masculine for you to do it,” she said. “But I do believe that if you write a piece, you’ll get addicted to it and you’ll learn a lot more things than you anticipated from yourself and other things.”

Rodas continued. “[Poetry] is not just for the females or people who are sad or depressed. Poetry is for people who are also happy. Poetry is for people who have feelings, and I’m pretty sure everyone that’s going to read this article has feelings. I believe that poetry is for everyone.”

CVHS Bids Farewell to Retiring Teachers

By Nicole Wu
Jeff Vendsel



Have you heard of the teacher who has lived nine lives? Well, now you have and his name is Jeff Vendsel! Though many of you may only know him as the photography teacher, that is only the surface. His life has been filled with adventures prior to teaching at CVHS from being a freelance photographer to being a ski bum! But before that, let's explore his journey into becoming a teacher.

"When I first started teaching, I just kinda fell into it, it wasn't intentional, it was just something that evolved," stated Vendsel.

He also says that he taught swimming when he was younger and he just felt gravitated toward teaching. Eventually, he became a photography professor at San Francisco State University and later became a teacher at CVHS.

Now some of you may be wondering: Why CVHS? Since he is adored by many of his students, a former student of his that was the previous photography teacher at CVHS told him about this job

opportunity, and Mr. Vendsel took it!

He loves his job and is excited to watch his students grow every day. Though he may not be teaching at CVHS next year, his advice for future students is to, "always ask yourself how you can make your photo better?"

He will miss hanging out with his students, but will not miss his grading work, which I'm sure many people agree with! Though the future teachers have no easy shoes to fill, he offers them advice as well, "try to remember what it was like when you were your students' age".

Earlier on in his life, Mr. Vendsel had been a teacher at Central Washington University, a freelance photographer and a ski bum! While he was a ski bum, he got into photography, taking his camera up into the mountains with him. He "loved the way your camera could take you on adventures and do things that you normally wouldn't do to take a photo". However, when he was asked if he would ever become a ski bum again,

he stated that he was too old for that! But with his lively personality, there is nothing that he can't do! With his love for adventure, he has traveled to many places and his favorite has been Miter Basin down by Whitney Crest. As a matter of fact, that would be his dream destination spot, but sadly he says he may never be able to go again.

So what's the next chapter for him? Well, it is for sure an exciting one, once he retires, he is moving to the Virgin Islands, 1,000 miles off the coast of Florida, with his wife. Though his journey is not set in stone, he is excited to start a new adventure, hopefully with lots of coffee!

Clare LePell



Clare LePell, after CVHS, plans to continue doing things she enjoys, for example hosting dinner parties, cooking up delicious meals, gardening, visiting art museums, and writing. However, don't think this is the end of teaching for LePell, because though she may not be teaching you directly, she will be teaching teachers how to teach you through the Bay Area Writing Projects, something that she has been doing since the late 1990s! So next time you're in English, LePell might have just helped curate your lesson plan!

Going on, Ms. LePell stated, "I will miss working with

students, seeing them learn and grow as individuals. I will miss collaborating with my colleagues as they are a dedicated and inspirational group."

Though she may be leaving CVHS, she is leaving us with advice for the future, "My advice to students is to stay curious, to take advantage of the time in high school to trust in and expand their intellects, and to actively cultivate empathy and compassion for others."

Through this short conversation, her love of teaching is really the first thing that came out. Her kindness and

“

My advice to students is to stay curious... and to actively cultivate empathy and compassion for others.”

Clare LePell

English teacher

compassion are woven into the words that she says, especially when she shares the hopes that she has for future students.

"I hope that future students will see books as friends, literature as a lifelong companion and

source for understanding more about themselves and other people. I hope that students will embrace writing as a means of personal and intellectual expression and know that words carry power, so all people need to be mindful when using them," she stated.

Here at CVHS, we hope that Ms. LePell's retirement is filled with eating long noodles from 88 Bao Bao, sandwiches from Lucca's Delicatessen, and continuing to spread empathy everywhere.

Sue Lapacek



Sue Lapacek, or Ms. L, offers a radiant personality with her love for queso birria tacos and the kindness that she emits is absolutely evident. After her retirement, Lapacek plans to give back to the community by volunteering in charities supported by her church, for example, FESCO and St. Vincent de Paul. She also plans to help out at retirement homes and human societies. In all, her main focus is just giving back to the community. Which is something that we should all take away from her.

Though she may not be here at CVHS anymore, her impact on her students and faculty members will forever stand. Her hopes for future students are, "above the moon and the stars. May they flourish in becoming successful not only in their education but life". Some advice that she has to offer future students is, "Always be true to yourself".

In all, Lapacek has made a great impact not only on CVHS but on her community as a whole. The selflessness that she displays without even knowing it is greatly appreciated everywhere in the world. In a time where it is hard to be and stay connected with people Lapacek does.

Overall, these teachers have provided so much for each and every one of their students, the least we can do is thank them. Each of these teachers has had an amazing impact on the campus and has helped bring positivity to every classroom they walked into. We wished them the best for their retirement and next time you run into one of them, be sure to say thanks!



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CV visual impairment program offers essential support to students

By Kaitlyn Tchang

Rhythmic sounds of beeping, humming, and clicking fill the classroom as a braille embosser raises dots on thick paper. The machine is operated by Jennifer “JK” Kenyon, who, along with Sherry Castro, serves as a media transcriber at CVHS. Together, Kenyon and Castro adapt class materials—ranging from books to anatomical charts—into braille and large print for 10 to 15 visually impaired (VI) students every day.

Working alongside the media transcribers is Yardley McNeill, who teaches a vision resource class for VI students at both CVHS and Canyon Middle School. As an itinerant teacher, she also drops in on students on her caseload that attend other schools in and out of Castro Valley. McNeill has worked in this field for nearly three decades, with over 16 years being here at CVUSD.

At CVHS, McNeill’s VI course is a repeatable elective open to all students with a visual impairment.

“We typically have anywhere from one to six students who take the course every year,” she said. “We have three right now that take the course every day, and then we get drop-ins during Trojan Time for students who just need a little something once in a while.”

The VI Resource room, a cozy space nestled at the end of 400 Hall, is the hub of vision services for four districts: Castro Valley, Hayward, San Leandro, and San Lorenzo. Students with visual impairments within this Special Education Learning Plan Area (SELPA) can transfer to CVHS to access Castro Valley’s vision services as needed.

McNeill detailed how CVHS’ VI course aims to “give students a fair shot at accessing their curriculum. It’s really about opportunity and access.”

Students with visual impairments typically bring special assistive technologies to all their classes. Learning how to operate this equipment takes practice and support. Common technology utilized by students includes refreshable, portable braille displays like the Chameleon 20, or the Mantis Q40, which can connect to a computer. To digitally magnify text on a page or whiteboard, some students use a Jupiter CCTV, or its smaller counterpart, Juno.

According to McNeill, the VI course also teaches “the special skills it takes to do the things that many of us take for granted because of vision.” Some students are pulled out of class by an orientation and mobility specialist to practice navigating the campus with a



CVHS VI staff (L to R: Yardley McNeill, Jennifer Kenyon, Sherry Castro, Amparo Ramos)

cane. Others might take trips out to the community to learn techniques such as how to shop in a grocery store when it is difficult to see the prices on the aisles. In addition, the curriculum includes independent living skills like cooking and preparing food,

“It’s really about opportunity and access.”

Yardley McNeill

Vision resource teacher

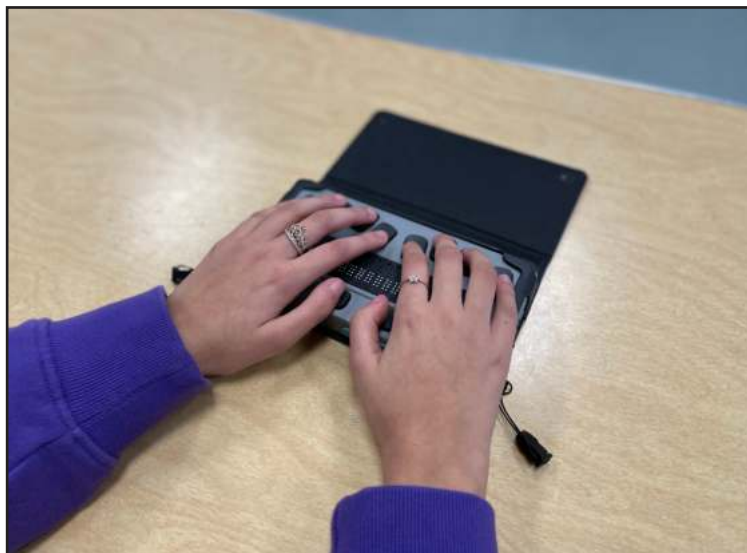
or identifying and managing money.

Most importantly, the VI course ensures equity in education by tailoring lessons to accommodate each student’s learning level and individual needs. For one freshman VI student this year, this involved extra lessons to learn how to operate a talking TI-84 calculator. For many other students, like senior Shahed Dibian, the class is most useful for improving braille literacy.

McNeill clarified that learning braille involves more than simply reading words letter by letter.

“There are frequently used combos like ‘-ing,’ and ‘-ed.’ Each letter of the alphabet can also stand for a word, like the ‘B’ stands for ‘but,’ and ‘G’ stands for ‘go.’ So when you’re learning Braille, you’re not just learning to feel the letters, you have to learn a lot of rules about these contractions.”

While the VI program is highly successful in helping



A VI student types on a braille keyboard on a Chameleon 20. This device also includes a refreshable braille display.

students learn braille and other necessary skills, it faces a unique set of challenges.

In the past, the difficulties were more physical. McNeill recalls how VI teachers at the beginning of every school year struggled to fit hefty large-print books and bulky CCTVs into their cars to distribute to their students. Luckily, digital books and apps nowadays like Learning Ally or Bookshare, which allow students to listen to books and enlarge the print, have reduced the amount of equipment that students must haul around.

The VI program’s greatest ongoing challenge is staffing.

“There are not enough teachers who are trained to do what we do,” McNeill noted. “In this area, the only college that offers that [VI education] program is San Francisco State. It’s a wonderful program, but a lot of people just don’t know about it. We just don’t have enough teachers to meet the demand.”

She encourages CVHS students searching for an interesting and fulfilling

career in high demand to explore the field of education or rehabilitation for people with visual impairments. The State Department of Rehabilitation will even help pay for college tuition or specialized training to support students in the field. Outside of teaching, there are also many career opportunities for braille transcribers like Castro and Kenyon. To become certified, candidates can simply take a distance learning course and submit a transcript.

To fulfill their staffing needs, the Castro Valley VI program recruits good candidates and then helps them through schooling and internship credentials. Student teacher Amparo Ramos is on this path and currently works at both Castro Valley and Hayward

schools.

Ramos described her awe at witnessing a student with vision impairments thriving under the program: “The first time I saw Shahed reading a book and she started telling me a story with her fingers, that was magical because that was [the] first time that I heard anyone reading braille. She was painting a picture with dots.”

Despite its critical work, the VI program often goes unnoticed by the rest of the school community.

“Even though I’ve been working here for 10 years, I meet teachers all the time that say, ‘Oh, I had no idea that [the VI program] even existed here,’” McNeill reflected.

To the general CVHS student body, she calls for more mindfulness in the hallways of their peers who have visual impairments, especially those using canes.

Additionally, Ramos encourages students to be more proactive and open to befriending those who may be limited in their ability to engage in typical “friendly” behaviors like waving back from a distance.

McNeill added, “Sometimes our students miss eye contact and it might be misconstrued as being rude or uninterested. Be open to starting your conversation, because the person that may not notice you because they’re visually impaired, might very well enjoy a conversation with you and end up becoming a good friend once you get to know them.”

Lastly, McNeill urged students to seek help for their visual impairments if needed.

“If you are struggling or if you know a friend who’s struggling with [a] vision impairment, please let us know. Sometimes students feel self-conscious about it. But we are here to provide help to anyone who needs it.”

Thanks to the help provided by Castro Valley’s VI staff, hardworking students like Dibian and many others are better equipped to succeed and grow.

“I’m really proud of my students here that they are able to get everything done and still have a social life and enjoy school, because they do have to work a little bit harder to do the same things that other kids sometimes take for granted.”

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Meet the seniors of *The Olympian* staff!



Olive Dooley joined *The Olympian* staff in their sophomore year of high school as a staff writer. Since then, they have served as Online Editor and Editor-in-Chief. In their three years in journalism (which have been highly enjoyable), they have covered topics ranging from trans and reproductive rights to satirical stories about a certain school mascot. They also have enjoyed making silly little graphics for the newspaper this year and laying out the pages that you see in each edition. In their free time, they are a dancer, barista, and avid frog-lover. Next year, they are attending UC Irvine with a major in Chemical Engineering. Zot! Zot! Zot!



Drew Paxman joined *The Olympian* as a staff writer in his junior year. In October, he created The Trojan Horse podcast--a forum for showcasing news around CVHS, while also highlighting its diverse student body. This summer, he will be teaching podcasting to middle school students alongside journalism teacher Lisa Carmack. With Zoe Dorado, he created the Trojan Talk video series, where CVHS students and faculty showcase their unique perspectives on current events. He also co-organized and was the short story judge for the inaugural *Olympian* Writing & Art Competition. Outside of school, Drew loves writing screenplays, watching movies, and playing tennis. He will be pursuing a double major in Political Science and Film & Media Studies.



Maya Wong has loved her two years reporting for *The Olympian*. She is currently Online Editor and manages the paper's Instagram, Facebook, and website. Although she has written numerous articles involving murals and Taylor Swift albums, her most notable pieces are "Students persevere after COVID," where she interviewed infected classmates, and "Canceled course disadvantages minority students," which is about the discontinuation of AP Spanish Literature at CVHS. Her favorite *Olympian* memories: interviewing Representative Eric Swalwell, taking photos of dodgeball and baseball, and becoming Tommy the Trojan's cheer captain. Outside of journalism, Maya is an avid dancer, cheerleader, thespian, baker, and (of course) Swiftie. Next year, Maya plans to attend Northwestern University to study Journalism--where she will also be a cheerleader at Big 10 games!



Zoe Dorado has been with *The Olympian* since her junior year. In January 2022, she created the Artists' Abode page to give an opportunity for CVHS poets, fiction writers, and visual artists to publish their work. She is currently the News Editor where she formats the front page for our monthly issues and, with Drew Paxman, she created the Trojan Talk series. Her most notable article series "Trojans in search of condoms" and "CVHS discusses its culture around sex" addressed CVHS' lack of student sexual health resources, and a month after the articles were published, the CVUSD school board made a decision to allow condoms on campus. Outside of *The Olympian*, Zoe enjoys writing poetry about scary women, playing drums in various jazz bands, and singing show tunes in the car. She will be attending Pomona College in the fall to study English and Public Policy Analysis!



Ember Ireland has taken on many hard-hitting stories in their two years on *The Olympian*, from marching band to federal and state legislation to campus progress and more, working as the Opinion Editor for the closing school year. They have joined advisor Lisa Carmack to teach journalism to younger students through PlayCV. Outside of journalism, Ireland organizes the Castro Valley community to fight for progress around queer, trans and reproductive justice. They also dance and play piano, just for fun. Next year, they will be studying public affairs at UCLA.



Sam Scott joined *The Olympian* his junior year as a staff writer, moving to Sports Editor his senior year. In his two years, he has written about new teachers, recent updates to grading policies, and vaping at CVHS. In school, he has been involved in creating clubs like Mock Trial, as well as being involved with volunteering through groups like Red Cross. Outside of school, he spends time listening to music and going to concerts. In the summer, he will take part in programs at Columbia University for medical classes before attending college in New York.



Evan Griffith joined *The Olympian* his senior year as a staff writer. He has written about the civil war in Ethiopia, Kendrick Lamar, and not wanting to go to school. His other contribution was making a map of CVHS to point out where newspapers are at one time. Evan is a long-time member of the CVHS track and cross-country teams, with other interests such as reading, cooking, and politics. He will be attending the University of California Irvine next year.



Turtle Newman took journalism this year for their CTE credit. It's been fun. They're excited to be going to San Jose State, majoring in Animation and Illustration!



Erika Sun joined *The Olympian* as a staff writer her senior year. She has contributed to the newspaper through her opinion pieces on Andrew Tate and Don't Worry Darling, the creation of the fashion special "*The Olympian* flirts with fashion", and several other feature stories. Outside of journalism, Sun is involved in CVHS's DECA and fashion clubs, and most recently, organized a school fashion show in conjunction with both clubs. In her free time, she enjoys thrifting, sewing, cooking, and trying new foods.



THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL
Olympian

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