

Page 2:
Ethnic Studies
tells the whole
truth



Page 5:
Students
Produce
Film



Page 7:
Soccer Star
Writes
Blog



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Nick Pronske, Emily Tran and Jonny Lin (from left to right) overcame Covid-19. MAYA WONG

Trojans triumph over Covid

By Maya Wong

After attending a dinner at her grandmother’s house, Emily Tran fell sick with Covid-19. It was everyone’s worst fear, and now it had happened to her. “I guess it’ll be a fun story in the future to tell people that I survived a pandemic while getting the virus,” she said.

In the month of January, at least 137 CVHS students tested positive for Covid-19. This number is 23 times higher than the monthly average since this school year began. The Omicron variant, along with the continuation of most activities, created a surge in the virus that came closer to home than ever before.

Although cases are on the decline and the coronavirus’ effect on our everyday lives is bound to fade, the experiences held by CVHS students who caught the illness will linger in their memories for the rest of their lifetimes.

Many of the students who tested positive in January contracted the virus during winter break, whether it be from a sports tournament or a family member. Juniors Tran, Nick Pronske, and Jonny Lin were all vaccinated with two shots of the Pfizer vaccine, but no booster. They are a few of countless breakthrough cases that emerged due to the new variant. The juniors tried to be as cautious as possible, but it was often difficult to do so because so many activities were continuing. Despite constant efforts to stay safe, the virus still took its toll.

The students had relatively

severe symptoms for three days and mild symptoms for the remainder of their quarantines. While some had it worse than others, the main effects were a cough, runny nose, sore throat, chills, and headache.

“Being vaccinated definitely helps a lot, because the long term effects on my body might have been worse if I wasn’t vaccinated. Some people had irreversible damage to their bodies after, but I didn’t have any,” noted Lin.

A common theme in their experiences was the feeling of isolation. Tran was separated from her family during meals,

“I’ve already been through it. So everything will be okay.”

Jonny Lin
Junior

constantly wore a mask, and slept in her family room. Lin stayed in bed all day and lost motivation to do anything.

“It was pretty lonely, to be honest,” expressed Pronske. His entire family fell sick and avoided each other whenever possible. “We were all down and couldn’t help each other. It was a bit rough. After going two weeks without seeing anybody, I realized just how important connections are.”

Because of their positive tests, the juniors were all absent from school for at least a week. An

unexpectedly extended winter break caused them to miss critical time for kickstarting the second semester of arguably the most important school year of their lives.

“A huge downfall was my learning. When I returned, I had three Fs and tests to make up, which was a little discouraging,” commented Tran. “I was eventually able to catch up a couple weeks later, but I had to use up a lot of class, Trojan, and lunch time to completely make up all of the work.”

While at home, the students had to be proactive and contact their teachers to keep up with their studies. Even so, learning is simply not the same without face-to-face communication.

“It was hard to find out what I should have been doing in school,” said Pronske. “I emailed all my teachers and they were very responsive and helped me a lot, but it was still difficult to try and stay up to date when you’re at home.”

In spite of whatever hardships they endured, the students were able to come out of quarantine triumphantly and return to some sort of normalcy. Having the virus and experiencing the thing that has turned our world upside down caused the students to have changed perspectives.

“In a positive light, my big takeaway is that you really don’t fear anymore,” explained Lin. “The virus is another thing that happens today. You feel more confident and unafraid to go back to life before Covid-19. It just kind of feels like: well, I’ve already been through it. So everything will be okay.”

Ethnic Studies contract meets backlash

By Leah Janaway

A new ethnic studies course is set to come to CVHS in 2025, but Jewish groups are objecting to Castro Valley schools contracting with Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Institute (LESMC) to help create it, claiming the group’s material is antisemitic and harmful to Jewish students.

“The draft that [LESMC] proposed included language supporting a boycott of Israel and promoting anti-Zionism,” said Rabbi Laurence Milder of Congregation Beth Emek at a school board meeting on Jan. 19.

The ethnic studies class, required by California law, will be one semester long and mandatory in order to graduate starting in 2030. The district has paid LESMC \$150,000 to help create the class, which will focus on the culture and history of African American, Latinx, Asian American, and Native American people, with added units about Pacific Islander and Arab groups.

The section that tackles the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is what is under fire from some of the Jewish community. Protesters accused LESMC of formatting the curriculum in an antisemitic way, painting Zionists as evil.

“In our national environment of rising antisemitism, many students have been attacked and bullied for their identity—something I’ve witnessed as a teacher at Castro Valley High—and for expressing any connection, either real or perceived, to Israel,” said Deborah Yager, former CVHS science teacher.

Not all of the Jewish community in Castro Valley oppose the new curriculum, though. Some say that a critical examination of Zionism is not inherently antisemitic, and it’s important to teach.

LESMC, a committee comprised of ethnic studies professors, curriculum experts, and ethnic studies teachers, expressed the group’s goal to build empathy among all students, and in doing so, not to pick and choose which events are

discussed.

“Educators have an ethical responsibility to teach the truth,” wrote the group in a letter to Castro Valley Forum. “To compromise ethnic studies curriculum by eliminating the stories and experiences of any of the four radicalized communities provides a disservice to students and the goals of the discipline. LESMC works to partner with school districts and communities to maintain the integrity of ethnic studies and to create safe learning environments where all students may engage in critical conversations, take academic risks, and learn to think critically while becoming more compassionate and empathetic individuals.”

In addition, Assistant Superintendent Jason Reimann emphasized at the school board meeting that there is no set curriculum yet for the ethnic studies course. The California law encourages districts to make their own curriculums that are reflective of their communities, which LESMC would help to do.

“One point of clarity: we are not looking at this point to adopt a curriculum,” Reimann said. “What we’re doing is bringing in a partner who is going to help us with professional development.”

He also added that the history of Israel is covered in the sophomore World History course at CVHS, and that when educators hold conversations with students about the Jewish community, they speak strongly against antisemitism.

“We utilize curriculum from a variety of groups, including the Anti-Defamation League,” he said. “The Mosaic Project has come in and done some excellent work in terms of bringing communities together. We don’t feel working with groups such as LESMC is mutually exclusive from working with other community groups—in fact, we hope that we can bring multiple perspectives, [consulting] anybody who are part of those historically marginalized groups and making sure we’re as inclusive as possible.”



Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be taught

Editorial:

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict should be taught in ethnic studies classes. A handful of Jewish groups are against the new ethnic studies class because they claim that the curriculum teaches the conflict in an antisemitic way, but an explanation of facts cannot be antisemitic as long as it is unbiased.

We feel that this conflict should still be taught even if it makes some people uncomfortable. We learn about the South African apartheid — which was also a deeply rooted conflict between two ethnic groups — so why not learn about the

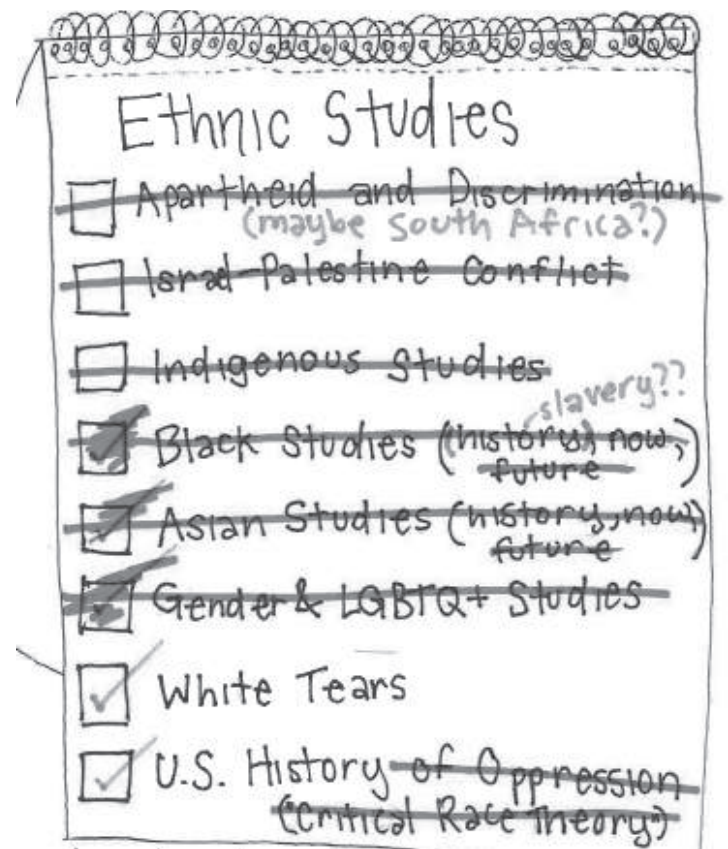
Israeli-Palestinian conflict too?

As long as educators remain unbiased, the conflict is important to teach. Whenever we talk about conflicts anywhere in the world, there are negative aspects that are brought up about both sides, but that doesn't mean that those groups are demonized. The ethnic studies curriculum aims to teach in an unbiased way and refrain from pointing fingers at one group over another.

The Jewish groups are afraid of receiving more anti semitic hate once people learn about the

Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which is a valid fear. While we acknowledge this fear, we believe that it's still important to teach about the conflict because it is a recent event in history, and it deeply impacts many people. Antisemitism is spoken against strongly throughout

In school we already learn about topics like Japanese internment in the U.S. and the South African Apartheid. The curriculum shows both sides of the issues so that students can see why these things were wrong and how we can learn from them. The Israel-Palestine conflict is no different.



REBECCA IRELAND

PHOTOpinions

How do you feel about the conflict between Israel and Palestine being taught in school?



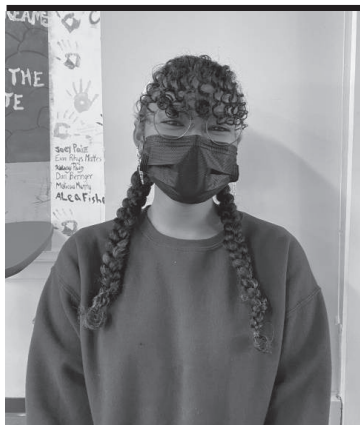
“I’m comfortable with it. It’s viewing the political matters that are happening around the world rather than just U.S. history.”

Sanjana Kumar
freshman



“It does exist and I’d be fine with it as long as it doesn’t present a problem.”

Andrew Lee
sophomore



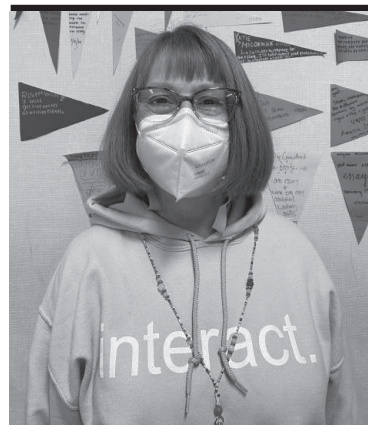
“Everything I’ve learned about it is from outside sources. I think it’s a good idea because I think it’s a big part of history that has been left out for a while.”

Jahzara Jones
junior



“It’s important and needs to be taught in school. We have a lot of polarization in this country because a lot of pieces of history are left out.”

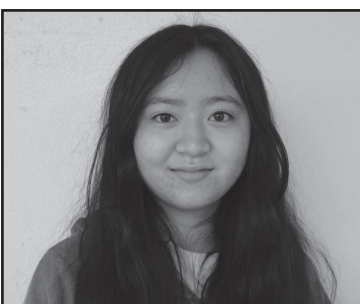
Brooke Kasl-Godley
senior



“This conflict needs to be discussed in schools. It’s important to share multiple viewpoints.”

Clare LePell
staff

Celebrating Lunar New Year as half Chinese and Japanese



By Athena Sy Kuzuhara

I am half Chinese from my mother’s side and half Japanese from my father’s side. I have two last names smushed together, one from my mother and one from my father.

Despite being Chinese, my mother immigrated from the Philippines with her parents and sisters. Her family has resided in the Philippines for

generations as immigrants from China. She interestingly understands Tagalog but cannot speak it after spending years in America. She does not speak Chinese at all. My father, on the other hand, is fluent in Japanese. He was born in San Francisco to Japanese immigrants. I can hardly remember what my Japanese grandparents look like. If I passed them on the street I do not think I would recognize them. I have never been to Japan or China. I traveled to the Philippines once when I was one year old.

My family celebrates the Lunar New Year slightly differently from most people. This Lunar New Year, I learned many new things from Chinese

friends that I never knew before. Apparently, the Lunar New Year is a 15 day celebration. Historically, my family has celebrated the Lunar New Year with a single day feast. On the day of that feast, my cousins, brothers, and I receive red envelopes from my family. One envelope always stands out the most. Instead of a Chinese red envelope, my parents hand me “otoshidama” in a Japanese envelope called a “pochi-bukuro.” Typically, Japanese children receive otoshidama on Jan. 1, but my parents decided to hand it out on lunar new year.

My family also celebrates the regular New Year in an interesting way. My father shares his culture with my mother’s family by cooking

traditional Japanese new years’ foods. My Chinese family would gather around the table drinking “ozoni”, a traditional soup with mochi inside. After dinner, in American fashion, we would stay up until 12 a.m. and watch the New Years’ countdown in Times Square. As the new year began, our Chinese grandmother would hand us small bells to ring around the house and chase the bad spirits away. As a child, I remember fighting over the biggest bell with my brothers and cousins.

Being half in America oftentimes makes me feel distant from my roots. It’s easy to lose track of your identity when you feel that you do not belong in any culture, whether

it be Chinese, Japanese, American, or Filipino. I always feel slightly jealous towards classmates who are full Chinese or full Japanese.

I do not think that the feeling of unbelonging will ever go away. It will always be a part of me. However, I think that my unbelonging is accompanied by a belonging to my unique situation. No family probably celebrates the New Year the way we do and I think that our traditions are a way for my siblings and me to feel accepted and celebrate many different aspects of our heritage. Overall, I like being half Chinese and half Japanese, especially because I get the opportunity to enjoy the best cuisines in the world (totally not just my opinion).

Anxiety rises over the fear of invasion in Ukraine



By Leah Janaway

Editors note: This story was written before Russia invaded Ukraine.

Anyone who reads the news has heard that Russia is ready to invade Ukraine at any moment—whether the Russians will go through with it or not remains unclear. News sources highlight President Vladimir Putin and President Joe Biden in what seems to be an elaborate and expensive staring contest, waiting to see who will crack first. Often Ukraine is left out of the conversation, caught in the middle, and the experiences of its citizens are overshadowed by Russia and the United States.

My friend—we’ll call her by her nickname Nastya for privacy purposes—is 18 years old, studying international relations at university, and living in Odessa, Ukraine, just a few hundred miles from the Russian border where troops are stationed. I met her through an organization

that helps Ukrainian teenagers learn English, and after many Zoom meetings on Saturday mornings, despite the ten-hour time difference, we became friends.

The threat of attack is constant for everyone in Ukraine, but for Nastya it’s underlying and she tries to go about her life as normally as she can. Most of the time she can’t spare a second to worry about the conflict. She’s attending her second year of university, and it’s all-consuming.

“I’m studying two languages—English and German—and I want to study Spanish,” she told me. “I have English courses three times a week and German courses twice a week. There are different types of English-language learning—one teacher focuses on grammar and writing, and we work on speaking with the other. I have to study different subjects for my major, and then I usually end up doing my English and German late at night, till two or sometimes three a.m.”

On her time off, she enjoys touring Odessa to observe the architecture, copying the American accents on the TV show “Friends,” and crocheting. Someday she hopes to open her own shop where she can sell her crocheted creations. At home, her attention is hoarded by a

hamster named Mouse and a pug called Archie.

“For a pug, Archie is quite clever,” Nastya said proudly. “I’ve made him an intellectual.”

She loves Odessa, but Nastya’s favorite place to be is Volodymyrets, her grandparents’ small town in western Ukraine. Every holiday she gets off school, she piles into the car with Archie for the ten-hour drive. She has spent Easter Sundays in Volodymyrets’ beautiful electric-blue church and New Years enjoying her grandparents’ elaborate feasts.

However, the town holds more than just nostalgic value for Nastya—it’s also her escape plan.

“For now, I’m staying in Odessa, but if it looks like my city is going to be attacked, I will probably move to my grandparents’ town because it’s the safest place I know,” she said. “I try to ignore the conflict with Russia, but it’s almost impossible. All news sources are talking about it.”

Nastya’s uncle’s parents are living in occupied territory in Lugansk, a city positioned right by the Russian border. Their home is not under direct threat because the fighting is going on in another part of the city, but the situation could change in a heartbeat.

“They are some of the few



Nastya feels anxiety about Russia’s threat to Ukraine.

people left in the city because all families with children have left,” said Nastya. “Everything is stable there, but I think because of loneliness, after some period of time they will also come to another city.”

Right now, Nastya, like her fellow Ukrainians, is taking things one day at a time.

“It’s almost impossible not to

be anxious when all the news broadcasts say that any minute a war could start and my city could be attacked, but our president tells us that everything will be okay and that our military is strong enough to defend our country,” she said. “We try to be happy in each moment, because at any second a war may happen.”

Schools shouldn’t “out” students



By Rebecca Ireland

It’s lunchtime and you are talking to your friends about something that happened to you regarding your sexuality, gender, or race. You don’t realize, but a teacher walked past during your conversation and overheard. This probably doesn’t mean anything to you. Soon in Florida and other states this could be dangerous to students if the law requires teachers to “out” their students.

Florida is in the process of reverting back to outdated policy similar to “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (a repealed ban on LGBTQ+ people coming out in the military) which would make it incredibly difficult in schools to discuss Critical Race Theory and the LGBTQ+ Community, or anything parents deem unacceptable.

Formally, this bill, that has recently passed the House of Representatives, is called The Parental Rights in Education Bill. It would give parents a way to sue schools if their kids are talking about something they don’t like. It would also give teachers legality in outing students to their parents.

“Erasing LGBTQ+ presence from schools may imply to students that their gender identity or sexual orientation is something to be ashamed of or hidden,” stated Kiara Alfonseco of ABC News. School should be a place where students feel safe and are able to learn. This bill will revert to pushing kids to stay in the closet.

According to 19th News’ Kate Sosin’s recap of the Trevor Project’s national report, “While 12 percent of White queer youth reported attempting suicide over [2021], 31 percent of Native/Indigenous youth reported attempts. For Black youth that number was 21 percent, and Latinx kids reported attempts at 18 percent; 21 percent of multiracial youth made attempts, as did 12 percent of Asian American and Pacific Islander youth.” This is directly related to having an unsupportive environment, which this bill would encourage.

The Florida bill is designed to make parents more involved in their children’s education, but really it will make school far more unsafe for students.

“This is extremely concerning. Students have the right to learn about our history and teachers shouldn’t fear punishment for teaching it,” CVHS history teacher Sarah Burke stated.

With the transphobic legislation that is occurring in many states — banning transgender athletes, banning transitioning, etc. — LGBTQ+ kids are at an even higher

risk. Only 21 states have full nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people. Not only is there a lot of new anti-LGBTQ+ policy, many states have introduced legislation banning Critical Race Theory in schools.

“[This same bill] in Florida would ban public schools and private businesses from making people feel ‘discomfort’ when being taught about racial discrimination in U.S. history,” reported Alfonseca. South Dakota is calling its version of this “Protect Students From Critical Race Theory,” which has also passed the House committee.

Florida is not the only state engaging in these racist and homophobic policies. Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and Tennessee have already passed bans on Critical Race Theory in some form. Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin also currently have bills moving through legislation that aim to limit Critical Race Theory and/or discussion of LGBTQ+ topics.

This will prevent students from learning about America’s true racist history and present, and will make non-white and LGBTQ+ students unsafe. As Carter Godwin Woodson stated in The Mis-Education of the Negro, “There would be no lynching if it did not start in the schoolroom.”

Fear of Covid



By Andrew Hui

A common saying I hear these days is “I had Covid.” Covid is no longer something that I hear on the news, a far away virus, or something that infected that one family member who refused to get vaccinated. It has entered my personal circle, infecting people I personally know who are vaccinated and take proper precautions. When I see an empty desk at school, I cannot help but wonder if I will be next.

My exposure to Covid is high. I commute on public transit daily. I go to the gym three times a week. I go to a school with 2,700 other students. I may be boosted and wear my mask religiously, but I cannot help but be scared every time I feel a scratch in the back of my throat.

I would choose to attend Castro Valley Virtual Academy. However classes at CVVA are limited and do not offer any of the AP classes I am taking.

It’s disappointing that the Democratic Party, running on the platform of “listening to science,” has not followed its word. On the date of writing,

California has 15,403 new cases and 194 deaths. That is more cases and deaths than what we had when schools were closed back in March 2020 and during the Delta surge in the summer 2021.

Although the Omicron variant has less severe effects, people are still getting sick and dying. Yet, those in power continue to push legislation keeping me in school and trying to return things to normal. Gov. Gavin Newsom passed a law that cuts funding from schools if they go remote during a Covid surge in an attempt to restore normalcy. But there’s nothing normal with half empty classrooms, substitute teachers, and getting emails about being exposed to Covid. Cutting funding from schools if they close due to a Covid surge makes an already strained system worse, forcing school officials to put money before safety.

As mask mandates for most businesses ended for fully vaccinated individuals on Feb. 16, the question now turns to when students can take off their masks. Removing mask mandates in schools, especially without requiring a vaccine mandate, is making an already risky situation worse.

The sad truth is that a sense of resignation has fallen upon me. I have accepted the fact that at some point, I will get Covid. Every day, I have to make the decision between getting an education or the safety of my community.



Sadoway “knows how to connect students with music”

By Sam Scott

CVHS Choir teacher Laryssa Sadoway was awarded Outstanding Choral Music Educator during the CMEA Bay Section’s Winter Conference.

Sadoway has taken a great amount of time and effort to get her musical talent to where it is today. Once she started singing in third grade, she did not stop improving her choir skills as she continued classes into high school. After graduating high school, Sadoway started a career in choir, performing with the San Francisco Cabaret Opera Compact and the Berkeley Opera Company. Eventually, Sadoway’s performances led her to pursue a life in teaching, becoming a choir teacher at CVHS in 2012.

Sadoway’s years of teaching at CVHS have paid off greatly, being recognized by the CMEA Bay Section,

a forefront organization of music education.

“I get to run a very full and expansive program at CVHS,” explained Sadoway. “I have five choir classes which is unique, and in the last five years, our choir students have been getting better and better. For that, they have been

getting more recognition.”

Sadoway places a lot of value in her students and the school regarding her winning of the award, explaining how the students have improved greatly over the past few years. Although she gives them a lot of credit, her accomplishments have not gone unnoticed by her students.

“She knows how to connect students with music as well as how to connect us to the students more,” says student Lisette Choo. “That builds

trust and we get more serious about being in her class.”

Sadoway’s class is also greatly

appreciative of the class as a whole, feeling like it brings them together.

“It’s really nice being able to sing with people who love music as much as you,” explains student Rachel Raskin.

Overall, Sadoway’s CMEA Bay Section award was an incredible representation of the abilities of both the students and teacher, putting great teamwork and effort into the class.

Regarding the future of choir, Sadoway describes how her classes have won first place in multiple categories in California choir competitions, but next, she wants to take them further.

“After Covid, I’m really hoping to showcase them on a national level, whether that’s a showcase or competition.

I’m really proud of the diverse student body we have here [and] I want to show that off to the country and internationally.”

This marks the 10th year at CVHS for Sadoway, and she is more than ready to



compete with global teams in choir contests. Teacher and student combined, the class has put in an enormous effort towards bettering their abilities in the arts, and their achievements reflect that. The Outstanding Choral Music Educator award is one of many to come.



CORINNE DAVIDSON

Advice from a Poet

By Zoe Dorado

The classroom was brimming with quiet anticipation. Performers took last-minute scans of their selected poems before their awaited turn to get up to the front and share. For many, participating in the Poetry Out Loud (POL) Competition was their first time reading a memorized poem to an audience. For sophomore Heidi Chen, spoken word was familiar ground.

“It felt like I was telling someone else’s story through my voice,” Chen reflected. Chen won the CVHS POL Competition on Jan. 12. After the school round, she and other winners from their respective schools will compete in the county’s tournament, and later if they are successful there, state and national competitions.

“I heard about this competition through my English teacher, Mr. Dennis,” she said. “I always really liked reading poetry so I thought it would be fun to join.”

To compete in this poetry competition, participants had to choose, memorize, and perform two poems to a set of judges. Chen chose the two poems “I Am Offering this Poem” by Chicano and Apache poet Jimmy Santiago Baca and “I remember, I remember” by English poet Thomas Hood.

“I thought that the relationship between the poet and the poem was very touching and surprising,” Chen reflected on Baca’s poem. “He had a rough childhood, but in his poem he was able to write

the words ‘I love you.’”

She chose Hood’s poem because she liked the repetition in the language and how it “felt very joyful in the beginning, but more towards the end, more melancholy.” She liked the contrast between those feelings the poem expressed.

In relation to spoken word, Chen first got into public speaking in eighth grade when she won first place in an essay competition which then allowed her to perform her work in front of an audience.

“At that event,” Chen said, “I realized that public speaking wasn’t that scary, just something I needed to practice.”

Practice has gotten her to perform at the CVHS 2021 MLK celebration and compete in the La Reina Spring Fling Tournament Speech and Debate Tournament where she won first place.

Chen is also part of the CVHS Speech Club, a community at the school which values public speaking. “I joined speech club last year and it really did help me and boost my confidence when it comes to public speaking,” she said.

Now holding the title of club president, Chen offered a way to help others gain that confidence like she did.

“If you are struggling with public speaking, or especially if you have school presentations coming up and you don’t know how to deal with that, join speech club and we can work on it together,” she said.

Chen described how public speaking is a skill that everyone

needs to practice.

“Even celebrities and talk show hosts – they also practice. That’s why they’re good at it,” she said.

Chen shared three pieces of advice on where to start:

1. Practice good eye contact. I recommend performing in front of a mirror where you can stare at yourself, in front of family members or even stuffed animals,

2. Understand tone and phrasing. I recommend listening to how other people use their tone and how they phrase it. If it’s something that you wrote, try recording yourself and listening back, seeing what you like best.

3. Memorize in chunks. With an essay, take it by paragraph. With a poem take it by stanza. Over a period of time you’ll accumulate stanzas and stanzas and before you know it, you’ll have the whole poem memorized.”

Chen reflected on her early experiences with poetry and spoken word.

“Back in elementary school when they would teach us rhymes, I would go home and try making my own poems. Looking back on those poems, they don’t sound good. The only thing that sounded good was the fact that every last word of every two lines rhymed,” she said.

As she’s gotten older, she’s gained a different view.

“But now I see that poetry isn’t only about rhyming. It’s more about your passion, your word choice, your phrasing, and your tone; It’s about the story and how you portray it,” she reflected.

Broadcast Club shares sports

By Jenna Nosseir

The CVHS Broadcast Club, run by Jag Mishra with Jeff Vendsel as faculty advisor, includes over 180 motivated students. Many people think of the Broadcast Club as a group of students that are forced to go to sports games and make some lighthearted commentary in the background. In reality, the Broadcast Club is a great way to create stronger bonds and bring people closer together from spending hours outside of school.

“People should join the club because it provides young adults with an inside lens of what TV and video production entails. In addition, to me it’s less of a club and more of a large family and/or friend group. Everybody is close with everybody and we love just having a good time and creating a positive impact within our community,” says club president Mishra.

The Broadcast Club consists of students going to different sports games, recording the varsity games and making humorous but yet informative remarks at the same time.

“I joined in the beginning because I had a lot of friends in the club, but I’m really glad that I did because going to the

games with my friends and making funny comments in the background is really fun,” explained Ilana Brown.

Vendsel’s goal is to allow students to have fun, while also being informative to parents who may not have been able to come to their child’s games. Since the club live streams games on their YouTube channel, it allows people who may not have been able to make the games watch them. They also consistently post on their Instagram in hopes to get more followers and viewers.

“Everybody felt like a family and we started getting really close. We do have over 100 members but there’s a really tight nip between the people who stayed, and we’re doing really big things recently,” says club member Paolo Muniz.

They try to make it to every home game, and even the away games if someone is available. The school is generous enough to provide them with a little bit of money to help them get all of the equipment they need, like cameras. They also do a little bit of fundraising on their own to upgrade to better equipment for the enjoyment of their viewers.

Meetings are every Monday after school in room F7 up in the portables.



Don't be square, watch 'A Very Cubed World'



By Ethan Hudson

"A Very Cubed World" is a short film shot, acted, and edited almost completely by CVHS students. The mind behind the film is CVHS senior Zac Furber-Dobson who acted, directed, and wrote the short. Senior Atticus Spence and sophomore Sophia Pereira lend their acting talents to produce some haunting and extremely entertaining performances. Matthew Erickson, Martín Martínez Gonzalez, Logan Phulps, and Joseph Sodano are all CVHS students who worked on the project as crewmembers.

Viewers from Castro Valley will recognize many of the locations in the film like the Castro Valley Community Center, Parsons Park, or even the Castro Valley Rite Aid. "A Very Cubed World" premiered on a red carpet on Saturday, Jan. 15 to a select audience of friends and family that I was privileged to attend along with the cast and crew.

"It was really my inspiration from some of my favorite films like the sunken place specifically in 'Get Out,' 'Hereditary,' and some David Lynch films such as 'Eraserhead' and 'Mulholland Drive,'" said the director Furber-



ADA CHEN

Dobson.

"I tried to make a movie that is left to the viewer's own interpretation. It blurs the line between coherent stories and different genres and styles," said Furber-Dobson.

The film itself almost eludes description but can be loosely called a comedic psychological thriller, not dissimilar to many "Adult Swim" shorts. Giving an unbiased description of the actual plot is a difficult task. It is left to the viewer's own interpretation.

The nine-minute picture is made up almost entirely of conversations between the three characters. It was shot completely on a phone camera and is an exploration of filmmaking style that is very obviously a passion project from all those involved.

"We had two days of shooting and a couple more for reshoots

later on," said cast member Sophia Pereira.

"The editing process took about a month and a half," Furber-Dobson mentioned.

"The time that was spent in between not performing in a school play was very lonesome and boring so I decided to curate this project to keep me occupied," Furber-Dobson explained when asked how this story began. It all started as a simple improv scene that grew into the eventual final product.

"Zac was a very good director and I had fun messing around with the cast," said crewmember Joseph Sodano.

"A Very Cubed World" can be found on Furber-Dobson's YouTube channel, "Grudgeattic" right now and is very worth your click and ten minutes of your time.

Don't say adieu to Wordle



By Ada Chen

What's your starting word? If you have never heard of the game Wordle this may seem like a strange question. The word game was developed by Josh Wardle who created the daily game for his wife who loves word games. The game is adapted from Lingo, an old game show, but without the Bingo aspect.

The game became so big that on Jan. 31, 2022 the New York Times bought Wordle. This is making fans worry about the possibility that the free game may cost money in the future which would cause a decline of players.

I started playing the game because it had taken up all of my social media platforms. Once I played one game, I instantly got hooked. I was curious to see if any of my friends played. To my surprise many of them had never heard it and I eagerly encouraged them to play so we can all bond over our best strategies.

According to the New York Times there are over 300,000 players and the number is growing every day. To play, players simply need to search "Wordle" into their browser or download the app. There is only one word per day and everyone has the same word to guess. This allows for players to easily share and talk about

their results.

The premise of the game is simple. There are six tries to guess a five letter word. After you enter each guess the letters will change color: gray means it's not in the word, yellow means it's in the word but not in that position and green means it is the correct letter and position.

Many people discuss the different strategies to guess the word in the least amount of tries. This is where the question of what someone's starting word comes from. The most popular words are words like adieu which test if there are any vowels in the word (except for y) in one turn. Other players focus on the data by finding the frequency of each letter commonly found in five letter words which boil down to starting words like irate or later.

If players can not get enough of the game then there are plenty of parody games available. For example, if you are a Swiftie you may be interested in Taylordle, where all the words are related to Taylor Swift. Another example is if you were into choral music you may like Byrdle, where all the words are related to choral music. I found myself attracted to the Wordle archives that contained all the previous dates' words.

The game is easy for people of all ages to understand and it usually takes only a couple minutes out of my day to do it. I would recommend everyone try it to see what the hype is about.

Live as another you in the film 'Belle'



By Jessica Truong

"You may not be able to start over in the real world, but you can start over in the World of U."

"Belle" is an animated film about Suzu, a high school girl living in a rural area. She has been unable to sing since the passing of her mother, but when she's introduced to the virtual World of U, Suzu is able to begin again.

The World of U brings out one's hidden strengths, and for Suzu, that is her voice. She quickly begins to gain traction as her avatar named Belle, becoming one of the top artists on "U's Global Music Charts."

Soon after she breaks out as the new sensation, the search is on to find her true identity. But who would guess Belle, the beloved singer, is a timid country girl like Suzu?

During her rise to stardom, she encounters the Beast, an uncontrollable avatar known for strength and ruthlessness. Suzu is

set on an exciting journey to figure out the true identity of the Beast.

Mamoru Hosoda has also directed many other iconic films such as "Wolf Children" and "The Girl Who Leapt Through Time." Hosoda is able to bring viewers on an adventure jam-packed with emotion.

"Belle" spins off of the well-known story "Beauty and the Beast" which is evident throughout the film. Viewers can expect to explore themes of sacrifice, community, and finding your own voice.

All of this is done through the stunning visuals produced

by Studio Chizu. Dive into the dream-like landscape of "Belle" and experience the fantastical universe on screen.

The music, if not the animation, is sure to blow your mind away. The movie features a breathtaking soundtrack with songs such as "Gales of Song," "Lend Me Your

Voice," and "U." In my opinion, the music was the one of most memorable aspects of "Belle," and I was truly impressed by its impact on the film.

Overall, "Belle" is a worthwhile film that viewers may find themselves connecting with in many ways.



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Girls soccer defeats O'Dowd on senior night

By Megan Baldwin

The Trojans varsity girls soccer team took the win against Bishop O'Dowd on Friday, Feb. 11. This was their final home game of the season, and was the teams senior night.

"I'm super happy, I thought all the girls played fantastic and I think the biggest thing was just the heart. Obviously senior night plays a big role in that, but from the start we just never gave up and played with heart the entire time," said coach Vanessa Amaral.

Within the first minute of the game, Kaitie Quinteros scored the first goal for the Trojans. The ball went back and forth between the two teams, until Mia Frautnick was able to score the second goal for Castro Valley. With 27 minutes left of the first half, Frautnick scored on a penalty kick.

"The penalty kick was really



Senior Kaitie Quinteros dribbles past a defender.

fun. The first one I took this season I missed, but the other two I made, so I'm really proud about that," said Frautnick.

The Dragons scored their first goal with 22 minutes left of the first half, making the score 2-1, Trojans. The score remained the

same for the rest of the first half.

During halftime, there was a special competition for the senior players and their family members. The seniors were on

one team, and someone from each of their families were on the other team. Each player got to try and score against their family, and try to block them from scoring. While it ended up being a close game, the seniors won the competition.

As the second half began, the score remained at 2-1 until there were 17 minutes left. Frautnick scored her second goal of the game, and the winning goal for the Trojans. With only two minutes left of the game, O'Dowd scored on a penalty kick.

The game ended with the score being 3-2, and the Trojans took the victory.

"My favorite moment of the game was when my really good friend Mia scored two goals, but my favorite one was the second one because it was really clean, and it was outside the box, and you can tell she had been working on it for a long time," said goalie Brooke Kundert.

Jacob Shannon gives the Trojans a kick of motivation



Senior Jacob Shannon passes the ball up the field.

FELIX SHUM

By Felix Shum

It was halftime at the boys varsity soccer match. The Trojans were only behind by one point but needed some motivation. Senior and team captain Jacob Shannon, who plays center-mid, took the lead in assessing the situation. In a firm voice, he said, "We're stuck in two minds." The Trojans regained their morale and played their best for the latter

half of the match.

Shannon is one of five team captains for the CVHS boys varsity soccer team, at times calling the shots and suggesting strategies.

"Coach looked at all our team captains as people who can lead by example and show that they have captain abilities. Coach picked me because I am a strong leader and am able to influence the [underclassmen] on our

team to help win games," said Shannon.

"He's really good at talking, which is what a leader really needs. He's responsible and organized. That's what leads him forward," said senior and team captain Michael Karapetyan, who plays forward.

Shannon suggests his big stature and strong voice may have also factored into that choosing of team captains.

Although the team's coach usually calls for the huddle at halftime and gives inspirational words of advice, Shannon and the other team captains share a voice in the decision-making.

"We just try to motivate and try to focus on what we did wrong, how to change tactics or just improve on what we learned from previous halves," said Shannon.

Since elementary school, Shannon has been fond of soccer and began playing more seriously in middle school.

When asked about his favorite parts about soccer, Shannon responded, "The team aspect, I want to win, and the game itself is pretty nice. It's fast and high-tempo and you really just put your all into it."

Shannon described his best moment of this season as when he scored a goal during the match on Senior Night.

"He also got a few assists, one really important one was against Richmond, which was the number one projected NCS seat, so he's been really putting in good work and helping us progress in the field," complimented Karapetyan.

Dodgeball tournament filled with glory, heart-break, and controversy



Taste the Rainbow team assesses the situation before throwing the dodgeball.

By Leland Tsai

Dodge, dive, and throw! The spring dodgeball tournament thrilled CVHS. Sixteen teams competed for the sacred Golden Plunger. A tournament filled with glory, upsets, bad calls, and intense moments did not fail to entertain.

Although the tournament was filled with blown and controversial officiating, the basketball team emerged victorious over Mickey Mao, who put up a great fight late in the tournament. Mickey Mao player, Samuel Wu, took on the opposing team solo and managed to survive the pressure for nearly ten minutes before the basketball team finally delivered the winning throw.

"We are the greatest dodgeball team ever assembled," said the basketball team captain Jag Mishra.

However, Mickey Mao felt like the game was not fair and that they were cheated out of the win.

"It's not fair. When other people got hit in the head, there was never anything done about it and now they bring back a player? They also got hit like three times, even though we got hit like twice too," said Mickey Mao player Aldan Wong.

Not to be overshadowed by the finals, many other teams put up a good fight, such as Taste the Rainbow. This team was a big underdog in this tournament, taking down a championship contending team in the first round thanks to the incredible performance from Nolan Barnes and Caleb Coffelt.

"That was insane. It feels great to have taken down one of the best teams in this competition. We came up a little short of the championship, but we are proud of what we accomplished," said junior Ethan Tekawa-Pon.

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CV honors coaches and athletes

By Delaney Rasmussen

For 22 years Castro Valley has had a tradition of honoring a number of incredible coaches and athletes in a Hall of Fame, with a banquet and plaques for the nominees along with it every two years. It happens that 2022 is that year again, and 16 of Castro Valley's own were selected to take part in this very honorable and important event!

This tedious selection process has been eight months in the making, with a seven-person committee appointed by the Castro Valley Sports Foundation (CVSF) meeting regularly to help with the decision process. These athletes and coaches representing ten different sports were chosen by the public and the Castro Valley Sports Committee. One of CVHS's track coaches

was selected to be in this talented bunch, Dooney Jones. A couple of other names on the list include distance runner Calvin Gaziano, multi-athlete and track star Amanda Medrano, and sportswriter Monte Pool. The public can buy tickets for this April 10 event by emailing Ted Riche at triche88@sbcglobal.net. At this event there is the opportunity to celebrate and meet these hall of fame nominees and enjoy a meal with them, among other things. The banquet will be held at the event center at Redwood Canyon. This Hall of Fame banquet

isn't the only exciting event taking place during 2022 in Castro Valley. CVSF is hosting its 38th annual trail challenge 5k and half marathon at Lake Chabot on June 5. "These events go directly to help widen and sustain youth sports participation in our community through our grant program," said Rachel Lunt, CVSF President, a CVHS multi-sport coach and avid member of the community. The half marathon course is a hilly loop, mainly on dirt fire roads with an impressive and scenic view. Mt. Diablo and San Francisco Bay are visible

along the route as well, and during the race the runners are surrounded with grassy slopes and eucalyptus groves. It's a great opportunity to get active and enjoy the summer views! The 5k course is shorter but just as beautiful and challenging as well! It is an out and back that has gentle rolling hills and consists of mainly paved surfaces. There is a free t-shirt if the runners register by May 9. Registration for the trail challenge is available here. This year is set up to be a good one, with exciting events you don't want to miss!

Soccer: end of an eventful season

By Ali Nosseir

Wednesday, Feb. 9:
Today was a pretty emotional day for us 10 seniors on the team, especially the three of us who devoted all four years of high school to this soccer program. After four grueling yet euphoric seasons with this program, the end had come. It was our senior night, our last high school home soccer game ever. We were playing Arroyo High School and yearned to secure a win on such an eventful night, which we did. I also managed to grab a goal to my name as well, as we beat them 4-1. Now we wait and see if we qualify for NCS or not. Hopefully we will.

Monday, Feb. 14:
Against all odds, we actually placed 15th in Division 1 standings and qualified for NCS, despite going 1-6 to start the season. This was a remarkable achievement for us as a team as it showcased our ability to persevere during rough times. We played on Feb. 16 against second seeded Montgomery High School. This game will be extremely challenging to say the least and I hope we can manage to scrape a win as the underdogs. If not, the season comes to an end.

Wednesday, Feb. 16:
Going into the game as underdogs meant we had nothing to lose. We all arrived at Montgomery High School in Santa Rosa two hours before the game to get locked in, which we showed on the field. Throughout the game, we impressively dominated the second-seed high school. This game was a rough one though. We had plenty of chances but couldn't capitalize on them and right before the end of the first half, Montgomery

“After four grueling yet euphoric seasons with this program, the end had come.”
Ali Nosseir

managed to sneak a goal in despite a heroic performance from goalkeeper Jase Brede. The game eventually was drawn out to a 1-0 loss for us, despite an incredible performance from our team. We were all very dejected, especially after the hard work we put in to get to this point in the season. I'm immensely proud of the team and hope to come back and watch them thrive in the next coming years. For me though, I'm retiring from soccer. After 14 years of daily practices and weekend games, it comes to an end for me. This season, though ended with heartbreak, came with glory, entertainment, hope, and euphoria for me alongside my teammates. It was a season I'll never forget.

By Corinne Davidson

With AP testing coming up in May, students are having to deal with the College Board more, and they have varying opinions on it. Some love it and feel that it is a helpful resource, while others are frustrated by its policies and what it stands for. The College Board has been offering AP tests and the SAT for 122 years now. They report that they are a non-profit organization, saying, "College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity." Sixty percent of CVHS students don't like the College Board, according to a recent survey. Generally, students say that the College Board's website feels convoluted and inefficient. Students complained that the website was "clunky" and crashes at inconvenient times. "The website crashes. All of the time. It is constant. I think it was worse during quarantine, but I've still had to deal with untimely website crashes. I've had assignments not appear and then magically exist and be overdue," said senior Anna-Sophia DeBakcsy. CVHS students, along with many outside voices, express frustration with the fact that

the College Board is labeled as a non-profit organization, but charges so much for their tests. This year AP tests cost \$96 dollars per test and the SAT is \$55. The high prices of the tests—along with tutoring that people can opt to get in preparation for the SAT—automatically puts low-income families at a disadvantage, and those students will either do poorly in comparison to high-income students, or they won't take the test at all. "I feel like College Board is a bad company because they make a profit off of students who want to succeed academically. Charging students to take tests like AP and SAT tests is ridiculous," said senior Yesenia Gomez. The College Board offers a lot of resources on AP Classroom, and some students feel that these resources are helpful. "I think it functions well as a source for college preparation," said senior Alaina Retodo. "It's very useful to have a place where so much helpful content and resources (like the provided videos and progress checks) are all in one place and completely catered to what AP tests want." Some students, on the other hand, feel that the videos are unhelpful and random. "Pretty much all College

“In short: College Board is terrible; I did not have a great time utilizing any of its services.”
Anna-Sophia DeBakcsy
Senior

Board videos are terrible," said DeBakcsy. "They are completely random for AP German, they're long in APEL—the only semi-okay ones were from AP Calc and AP Bio." "I don't immediately know a lot about its flaws, but I understand that the system as a whole can be very difficult in terms of how much power it holds over students and how it can easily exploit people for money," commented Retodo. "Our society holds great value in education, so as a result, they can easily make a lot of profit off of it at the cost of students." Students have mixed opinions, but the loud majority is either disapproving of the College Board or are just neutral on the issue. "In short: College Board is terrible; I did not have a great time utilizing any of its services," said DeBakcsy.

Go Trojans!



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New schedule coming in fall 2022

By Olive Dooley

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law in 2019 that requires public high schools to start no earlier than 8:30 a.m. This law does not have to be placed into effect until the 2022-2023 school year. Naturally, this means that the CVHS daily schedule will be pushed back to accommodate this new law. This could mean later release times, later lunch periods, shortening of breaks and/or classes.

A committee of students, staff, and parents has been cre-

ated in order to try and listen and meet the needs of everyone impacted by this new change. The committee surveyed students, staff, and parents' opinions about how they wanted to see next year's schedule play out. These responses are being used to draft various new schedules.

"Our goal in these meetings has been to hear feedback from the community about how shifting our bell schedules to an 8:30 or later start time will affect them, and seek recommendations on how to make

the adjustment work best," said committee leader and Assistant Principal Kevin Baker.

"Everyone has an opinion on what a new schedule should look like, and all opinions, while valid, are not possible," said scheduling committee member and teacher Thomas Maloney.

The committee currently has many different restraints, like the government mandated amount of time that needs to be spent in school, or working with parent and guardian work schedules so students can be dropped off and picked up at reasonable times. With this schedule impacting so many people, there are many considerations to keep people as satisfied as possible.

An adjustment period is expected, as with any new schedule, but this does not mean

committee members are not confident in things succeeding and students benefitting from these new changes.

"Each schedule has its pros and cons and it takes time to adjust to a new schedule, but once you do, it runs smoothly," said science teacher Kathleen Veety-Martin.

The schedule changes are prompted by different studies showing that students may benefit from later starts to the day. By pushing the day back later, students are given a chance to sleep in later, giving them a fuller night of sleep, or get work done in the morning, giving them more time to complete their work to their highest abilities.

"We aren't worried about the new schedules affecting teaching and learning because we can

accomplish the same academic goals with a variety of scheduling options. The whole intent behind the law is for students to get more sleep, so they can be more focused during the school day," said Baker.

Currently many options exist for what can be done with next year's school year, too many to release at this time, because more work needs to be done to try and finalize how the schedule will look. The committee will be meeting again before any public announcements can be made about next year.

"Our recommendations will then be shared with the (staff) Leadership Council, and later with the teachers' union. After all these groups share their feedback, we will be able to publicize expected schedules," said Baker.

Tougher vaccine rule proposed

By Delenn Block

A new bill proposed would require the vaccine for all students only allowing for a medical exemption and no personal belief exemption. This bill is a lot stricter than the current vaccine mandate put in place by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

California state Senator Richard Pan states "Vaccination is the cornerstone of ensuring our schools will be open," and explains that those who refuse to vaccinate will need to use other forms of schooling for their children like homeschooling.

Many parents and students are protesting this bill believing they should be allowed to choose what is best for them

and their families.

"In public places such as a store, club, restaurant, etc, it is fair for the owner to make it a rule to require a mask or to have a proof of vaccination card to participate or go on their property," said junior Stanley Sheehan. "It is up to the person themselves to decide whether they want to get the vaccination or not. Even during a pandemic where cases can increase very quickly, it is still not right to force someone to get a vaccination."

Others believe it is in the best interest of everyone to require the vaccine for all because it will help stop the spread if everyone does their part.

"Some would argue that it's unethical to enforce a mandate

without the exemption of personal beliefs as it would be an infringement on personal freedoms. However, I believe, especially during a health crisis, everyone is entitled to the right to being protected from disease. With that right comes the responsibility of each person getting vaccinated, such as through a mandate, so as to ensure that one person's decision doesn't risk the lives of others and threaten everybody's right to be healthy," stated Medical Students Association (MSA) President Hani Liu.

This bill also raises new questions about how the mandate will be enforced and how the bill will address future booster shots.



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