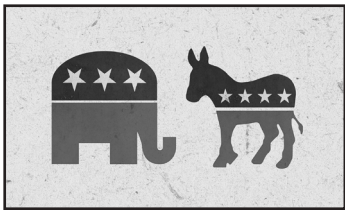


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VOLUME 68, ISSUE 2 NOV. 13, 2024 WEAREBORNTOSEEKTHETRUTH! WWW.CVHSOLYMPIAN.COM

“Les Miserables” shows many talents of CVHS

By Mason Jordan

An audience on the verge of tears jumps out of their seats. A roaring applause echoes through the Center for the Arts and the grinning actors onstage take their bows. People are moved. Tears finally break as audiences grasp what they just witnessed. A beautiful show, brought to life with amazing vocals, gorgeous costuming, and a classic plot. “Les Miserables,” the fall musical at CVHS, has officially opened.

“Les Miserables” covers the expansive story of Jean Valjean and a colorful cast of characters as they push through the trauma of 1800s France. Some rise above and others fall victim, but the show’s message is one of resilience in a time of ultimate suffering, and the strength of human nature when faced with adversity. The student performers really gave their all to this performance. Junior Kennedy Quick, who plays the ill-fated Fantine, imbued the hardships of the time and the show into her jaw-dropping take on “I Dreamed a Dream.”

From a technical perspective, the show boasts an expansive set that took weeks to build and complements the show nicely. One set piece becomes a seaside

brothel, a musty tavern, a slimy sewer, and a lavish garden all within a matter of seconds. This impressive feat is accomplished by a committed stage crew and a tech team that really proves to be the foundation of each show at CVHS. Faith Hudson has spearheaded the tech team for years now as the assistant stage manager.

“I learned a lot about being a leader in tech week,” Hudson said. “I became stronger at delegating tasks when there were too many pieces for me to do alone, and I strengthened my ability to lead while maintaining friendships.”

The show is rooted in its leading performances, and as a full singing show with no spoken lines, the roles were heavy, to say the least. Jean Valjean is brought to life by Gilbert Seidel wonderfully, his vocal abilities carry us through each scene of the show. Logan Yang takes a villainous turn as the vengeful policeman Javert, and does it amazingly. Longtime theater student Nora Layne (who plays Cosette brilliantly) commented on her success in the program and her final musical at CVHS.

“‘Les Mis’ being my last musical performance made the pressure even higher,” Layne reflects. “Letting go of being a



Mirielle Vadnais (left) Ethan Alfonso perform in the musical.

MASON JORDAN

perfectionist and just embracing that emotional story at its core... that’s what got me to my personal best.”

Another big piece of the puzzle is the ensemble, which is one of the strongest ones yet. The commitment to each individual role is palpable, and each ensemble based number is brimming with not only the emotion you’re meant to feel, but the underlying joy of a group number that really has a lot for the actors to work with. A standout number is the darkly

funny “Lovely Ladies,” which takes place at a dockside brothel. The number is grim, funny, and extremely colorful, with truly gorgeous costuming outsourced for the show.

“Les Miserables” was a big ask of the theater department and students, and something daunting that felt unreachable to some. After that opening weekend, however, one can confidently say that they did it. The show is better than ever, full of life and truly displaying the range of talents in the

department from an acting perspective to a technical one. Prepare to be moved in one of the most striking accomplishments of the entire department’s history. The human nature is enduring, and it stays strong even in the hardest times. The show functions as a window to another time, but also a display of hope for parents and community members now.

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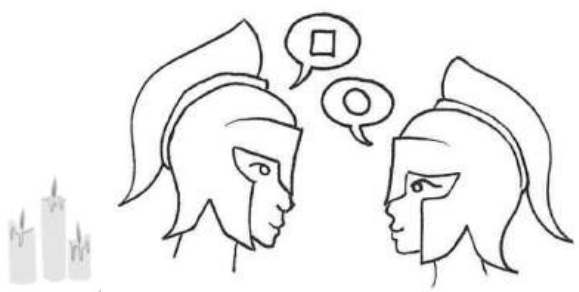
Trojans trick or treat on Halloween night



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ELLIOT LUCAS

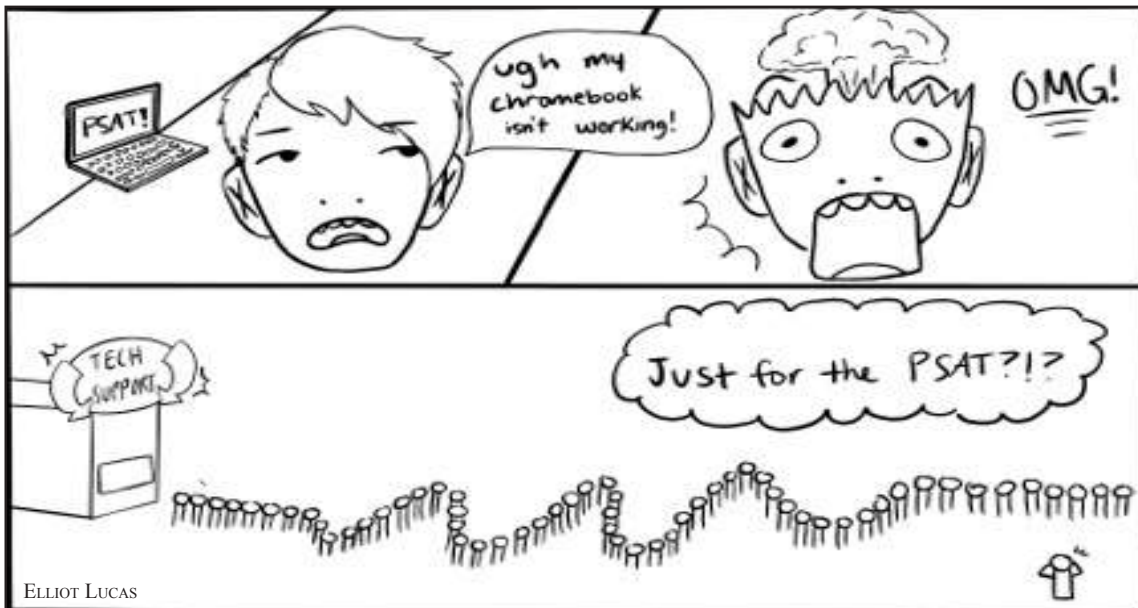


PSAT wastes students' valuable time

Editorial:

Every year, students are subjected to the PSAT, which comes with an extensive process. Students spend half an hour of their day before preparing for the test, trying to make sure the software works, even if it doesn't. Then, they spend another three hours taking the test in a random classroom. During this time, the senior class must attend two "informative" lectures, one of which goes over life after high school, the other being a preparatory lesson on FAFSA and college applications.

On PSAT day, many students suffer from technical errors that limit their time while setting up for the test, and then finally take it. In a survey by *The Olympian*, about two-thirds of students stated that they would rather have this class time for regular instruction instead of testing. The overwhelming opinion was that PSAT time is unhelpful. However, about



80% of students want to keep the PSAT available.

We agree with the student body. We find that the PSAT is somewhat of a waste of time. Students who are retesting, seniors who attend faux seminars, and teachers who proctor the test are to some extent not having

their time used efficiently.

The PSAT is something that students usually take in preparation for the SAT. However, according to our survey, very few students, juniors and seniors especially, had already taken the SAT (~15%). Less than half of

all respondents stated they planned on taking it. This statistically shows that for our students and staff, the time usage that is drained from taking and preparing for the test is not helpful to CVHS.

We at *The Olympian* believe that the PSAT should be fully

optional for students and given over the weekend so that it doesn't interfere with as many extracurricular activities, while still allowing students who want the practice to take it. This would give students and staff more time for in-class educational activities.

We also believe that the senior information assembly could have been done during a Trojan Time, especially since it felt that some speakers were trying to fill time with extra fluff. Some counselors even stated they offered the speakers notes to go off of, but instead, they decided to "wing it."

The PSAT is an important stepping stone for those interested in taking the SAT, but we at *The Olympian* find the PSAT guilty of wasting our time as students. From technical errors to long, unnecessary waiting times, the process of preparing for a test shouldn't be this hard nor take up as much of our day.

TROJAN TALK

Re: *Olympian* endorses Harris for President

"This endorsement from the school's newspaper is outrageously concerning, not only because it reflects a one-sided view, but because it influences students, all of whom will be voting in 2028."

- Wesley Hon

Re: Volunteering at Mini Cat Town made my life better

"This article changed the way I thought about this business. A lot of places like this mistreat animals and are very unethical."

It's nice to know that Mini Cat Town is different."

- Claire Koster

Re: Social media addiction is real

"I agree with your statement about not letting social media captivate us any further. Social media has become something very influential and has had a huge impact on society since it was created. I believe we should not only cut down on social media, but time on our phones as well."

- Luis Soloranzo

Re: A long time coming, girls flag football

"As a part of the first flag football team, I believe we are doing great with our games and I hope more people come and watch our games like they would for tackle football."

- Carrie Lee

Re: Volunteering at Mini Cat Town made my life better

"This article definitely influenced me to visit mini cat town and possibly volunteer because I am a massive animal lover and it is great to see a non profitable organization to helping cats have a better life."

- Brandon Hill

Re: CVHS embraces new visuals

"I love the new paint. I like how they added a ramp for the tree area where you can walk up instead having to lunge your leg."

- Daniel Cai

Re: Anti-hate speech policies implemented

"Anti-hate policies are a positive change, however, not many people are taking them seriously because the way people talk to each other can't exactly be fully monitored, especially online. Realistically, not many will follow the Anti-Hate Speech Compact."

- Nate Lyndon Baranda

Re: Trojans dance over the Lancers

"I loved taking pictures for this game! Our girls flag football team is amazing and I can't wait to see more high scores rolling in."

-Keira Shapland



Russia's war distresses a distant daughter



By Aleksandra Hurka

I promise, I am not the enemy. Or, at least that's what I told myself since Russia dropped the bombs on Ukraine. Now, both countries are attacking each other, yet even though I am on the other side of the world, somehow I feel the closest to the war.

I remember the first time I felt the shock. A few years ago, my friend sauntered to school

one day, telling me she couldn't visit her grandmother in Ukraine because she had passed away when her caretaker had run away after the bombs dropped. I know I wasn't the one who did it, but the guilt that came with knowing my home country had, made betrayal feel like rubbing salt into the wound of a nationality being stripped away.

So I started to compensate for it. As soon as the war started, one of my Ukrainian friends and I created fundraisers and raised money that we would send to Ukraine. I was an ally, but somehow I could never shake the feeling like I always needed to prove it.

My whole life was centered around my Russian identity. It was my first language, the food I ate, my favorite place to go as a child, and somehow it just felt

right. Years later, my country never felt so foreign to me as it did now.

The change was gradual. First, it was my mom telling me that if people asked, tell them I'm American. I was confused, why should I hide such a big part of me?

Then, the commentary started. One of my Russian friends walked into my class one day, eyes wide with tears. She said someone told her, "You should go tell your friend Putin to stop bombing Ukraine." At that moment, I felt like we were the smallest people in the world.

I was curious about what my Russian grandparents' perspective on the situation was. My grandpa had told me he does not support the war, but did not deny that he supports communism. It felt like such

a big slap in my face where suddenly my political viewpoints were contradicting with my own family's, where it made me question if loving these people was even ethically appropriate.

It was hard to put myself in their shoes when they grew up in a communist era that shaped their political viewpoints and I grew up in a democratic country.

Maybe it wasn't such a bad idea to pretend that I had no association with a country that was a walking red flag. I didn't notice it at first, but I slowly started to incorporate my nickname, "Allie" into my everyday life and it became an identity that more people knew me as, starting to replace "Aleksandra." I convinced myself it was because it was shorter, not because the spelling of my full name gave away the Russian

background of it.

In 2023, I found myself sitting at a table teaching my grandma English to practice for her citizenship test because she got a permanent apartment in America. In May 2024, when I turned 16, my mom recommended that I revoke my Russian citizenship because the taxes that are being paid for my passport would go to funding the Russian military effort.

Almost three years later, the war has not stopped yet I still think to myself how one person's decision affected millions of people's lives of all nationalities. My relationship with a country that had betrayed me shattered my identity. It left me alone to figure out how to piece it back together in a way that is socially acceptable.





Marvel movies face a severe crisis



By Lucas Villegas

Within past years, the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) has provided viewers a mass amount of content. However, not all of the content has been well liked or even considered “good.” I have had the privilege of watching all the movies and TV shows the MCU has created and numerous online critics would agree with me in saying the MCU has seen better days. Examples of poor quality movies/TV shows that have hit screens lately would be “She Hulk” and “The Marvels.” The MCU started off strong



AMAYA RAMBEL

with the very first “Iron Man” which was an absolute hit. From there on, they continued making well loved movies for the next decade or so, this, until the pandemic struck, resulting in the MCU taking a heavy hit. During the final year of the COVID era, the MCU started with its first TV series on

Disney+, “Wandavision,” which was a massive win. This was only the start.

After that, we started to receive TV shows and a couple of movies that weren’t as satisfying, leaving us with a total of nine shows. With only three of those nine being even remotely good, it became a wake up call for Marvel.

In the movie “The Marvels” we get to see how three characters interact with each other to face down a villain. Unfortunately, the movie was incredibly rushed and relied heavily on its humor to carry the movie. When I was watching this movie for the first time I found that I did not enjoy it nearly as much as other MCU projects in the past.

The character, Carol Danvers, also known as Captain Marvel, had such an intense build up in previous films only for it all to be shattered with a terrible script. This continued to happen

to a lot of characters; there was good build up from previously well thought out movies only for it to be shattered or destroyed with rushed work.

The TV show “She-Hulk” was released when the MCU was trying to make a comeback after many bad bits of content for a long period of time.

Recently, however, Marvel has been producing better movies and better content, focusing on quality over quantity. One major movie that has recently come out, “Deadpool and Wolverine,” brought hope back to fans, assuring them that it would only get better from there.

I have high hopes for the future of the MCU and am truly excited for many of its upcoming projects. One can only hope that they put the same amount of effort into their newer projects that they did for their most recent, “Deadpool and Wolverine.”

Volunteering at Mini Cat Town made my life better



By Liana Klausmeyer

When I first visited Mini Cat Town in Stoneridge Mall, I knew instantly that this was the place for me. All the people were very

nice, there was music, and best of all -- cats everywhere.

Mini Cat Town is a wonderful non-profit organization with several locations in California. All their cats come from local animal shelters or other Mini Cat Town branches. They are mostly run by volunteers like myself, and all proceeds go to helping more cats. All these cats are adoptable, spayed or neutered, and healthy.

The average customer pays \$15 to be in there for half an hour but I get to be there for

three hours for free. Volunteers don’t have to do much, except play with cats, and I don’t count that as work.

You do have to do some cleaning, take out the trash, scoop kitty litter boxes if you’re unlucky, sweep, mop, or vacuum the floors (sometimes all three) and you have to watch people to make sure they’re not playing too rough with the cats but it’s very much worth it.

You get volunteer credit if you need it for anything, it looks great on college applications

and it’s helped me to be more responsible because you have to sign up for shifts beforehand.

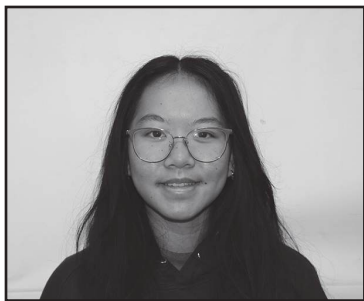
It’s fun when my friend and I go at the same time because I can hang out with them and cats at the same time! It’s just a great experience all around because you become a better person, learn how to deal with cats, or any animal better, become more professional in a work like setting, and be a better person too.

The application process is very easy. You fill out a form

and write a short essay about yourself saying why you want to work there. I would highly recommend anyone who likes cats and wants something fun to do after school to check it out because it’s awesome. You only need to do one shift every two weeks at minimum, but you can do it however often you like.

Mini Cat Town is a part of my life and I am better for it. Volunteering there teaches you important life skills and it is a really good opportunity to do something that you love for free.

Connecting with nature changed my life



By Angel Chen

I sat on top of the mountain my group and I climbed, feeling a breeze blow throughout my face. Seeing the two large lakes we camped at previously and the field of pine trees, everything from this view looked like little pebbles. It looked impossible that we had traveled this far and to this height, but we did that.

Just a little over two months ago, I went on a backcountry trip with a small group of other leaders in the Outdoor Leaders Program, a program formed from the collaboration of Earth Team and Big City Mountaineers.

As our last activity as a group, we were challenged to apply the skills we learned from the past six months of workshops to a five-day expedition trip in the



Angel Chen achieved this view of Lake Winifred.

ANGEL CHEN

backcountry.

On our second day, we arrived at the bottom of Spider Lake, located in Tahoe National Forest. The next day was also our layover day, meaning that we would stay at the same campsite for another day before leaving.

We faced a challenge day, meaning that we as leaders could challenge ourselves to a new experience in the outdoors.

To the south of our campsite, we saw a mountain in the distance that seemed feasible to climb.

Grabbing the compass and map, we confirmed the direction and location of the mountain before heading to bed to conquer our challenge the next day. It was an unnamed mountain near Lake Winifred and 7,246 feet tall. From our campsite, it was about a mile away and 450 feet of elevation gain. It would

be a challenge as there was no trail and was my first mountain climb but I was excited for this new challenge.

At the base of the mountain, as a group, we formulated a path to take that would be the safest and had the least steep slope angles.

Following the leader who stepped up to become the navigator of that day, we hiked up rock slabs and stepped

through thick manzanita shrubs, feeling the breeze become stronger, indicating that we were close to the top.

Throughout the hike, we spotted bright green frogs, a large single tree without any leaves on it, and a medium size pond near the top.

When we reached the top, we spotted a pile of rocks and a wooden bench left by previous hikers. The view from this height was breathtaking and we accomplished that.

Experiences like these have forever changed my brain chemistry and created several core memories that I will never forget.

Experiencing the true outdoors, away from any technology usage and diving straight into the wilderness, will be something that I will seek throughout my life, whether that is through leading trips or going on personal adventures.

I urge you all to go on some kind of trip outdoors whether that is a day hike or a five-day long expedition. The outdoors is worth it to experience at least once before it’s gone in the future.



Taliban weaponize Islam to justify oppression



By Fanoosa Mustamandi

After the Taliban's resurgence in 2021, Afghanistan has spiraled into a state of fear, repression, and lost hope. What was once a nation striving for progress has now been suffocated by the same extremist group that ruled with brutality two decades ago. The swift withdrawal of U.S. forces allowed the Taliban to regain power, undoing years

of hard-fought rights and freedoms, especially for women.

Families, like mine, have been left to gather every possible bit of cash, as the economy has deteriorated under Taliban rule. Jobs that once provided livelihoods are now systematically taken by members of the Taliban, leaving ordinary Afghan citizens in a state of desperation. My family's lives, like many others, were upended almost overnight as the Taliban took control.

"It was just another school day," my mother recalls. "I was at my all-women's university when the Taliban stormed in. They forced us out, and as we lined up to leave, I felt a hand stop me. I wasn't wearing a hijab, and they tried to punish me. I managed to run away, but I knew if I hadn't, the

consequences would have been severe."

This is just one story, but it reflects the daily terror faced by Afghan women who are punished under the guise of religious piety. The Taliban have weaponized Islam to justify their oppression, twisting its teachings and narrative to suit their misogynistic and violent agenda. The U.S. withdrawal left more than just a vacuum of power. It also left behind billions of dollars in artillery, transport, and ammunition.

The finalized efforts which were taken to ensure evacuation of all U.S. personnel seemed to have had a flaw. According to government reports, the American military abandoned nearly \$50 million worth of military equipment behind; including tanks, aircraft, and

ammunition. These resources have not only empowered the Taliban but have also been traced to neighboring countries like Pakistan. It's an unsettling realization that American funds and weapons have inadvertently aided the very group they once sought to dismantle.

The Taliban, now standing more powerful than ever before, continue to fund their reign of terror. Their policies enforce gender segregation, destroy education, and exploit Afghanistan's natural resources for their own gain, rather than for the benefit of the watan (nation). The situation is heartbreaking for Afghan-Americans like myself, who see the suffering of their homeland only deepen after the U.S. evacuation which naturally fortified the Taliban's reign.

During the age of U.S. and Soviet occupations, there was at least a semblance of hope, especially for women. Afghan women were able to attend school, run their own businesses, and reclaim their independence. Today, those rights have been eradicated, and Afghanistan has reverted to a state of suppression.

To bring about change, the global community must impose sanctions on the Taliban, support Afghan resistance movements, and ensure humanitarian aid reaches civilians, not extremists. Governments and organizations must prioritize education, human rights, and women's empowerment while pressuring the Taliban to relinquish control and allow Afghanistan to rebuild, free from oppression and discrimination.

Grief is necessary for developing



By Paty Escalera Carrillo

Grief is one of the hardest things to go through, yet it is unfortunately a part of life that we'll all eventually experience. After experiencing it recently myself, I do strongly feel as though going through this process helps us become

better people. It is a point in our life where we are given the opportunity to take the time to learn a lot about ourselves as well as allowing ourselves to be vulnerable.

I unfortunately lost two significant loved ones in my life. Both experiences were quite different and while in some aspects they were completely unrelated, in some I found them to overlap.

The first loved one I lost was my kitten who was about a year and a half old. Although he was only with me a shorter time than expected, he still had a large positive impact on mine and my family's life by being a great source of comfort.

The second loved one I unfortunately lost was my

grandfather. He made an impact on multiple generations by being a father figure to quite a few people on my father's side of the family. His strong personality and resilience are things that everyone loved about him and will always be remembered.

It is extremely important to try our best to remember the positive characteristics our significant ones held and hold onto the memories that were created as well as never forget the impact that our loved ones made on so many people's lives.

Both losses happened within four months of each other which definitely took a toll on my overall emotional well-being. Although I do feel as though each one had its own

unique attributes, looking back I can now say that both experiences went hand in hand in the healing process.

I personally am actively on this journey of healing. I have learned that there should truly never be a limit on time. Everyone is different, and everyone deserves to heal on their own time. Patience is also a key factor in the healing process. Every day will be different; some days will be good and some will not and that's part of the process.

We must allow ourselves to be vulnerable and explore our feelings in order to have more of those not so bad days and remind ourselves that these feelings are extremely valid but also not permanent.

I would be lying if I said that it's easy to experience grief because it's truly not easy at all. I do however feel that as time has gone it has definitely gotten easier and I take comfort in the fact that it will continue to as time allows.

Although it has been a short period of time since this happened I really do feel as though I have grown as a person and learned so much. I would never wish this experience upon anyone, however it is inevitable. So I think that it is extremely important that we are patient with ourselves through this process in order to get the best out of it and allow ourselves the opportunity to grow and heal.

Balancing work and school is beneficial



By Yusef Scott

Being a full time student while having a part time job might pose some challenges and seem scary but there are many benefits to working at a young age. The majority of students are not paying bills, so not only do you get a nice allowance, but more importantly, you receive the opportunity to work alongside others and develop skills that will help you later on in life.

One of the most important parts of a job is being able to properly handle and balance

work. Being a student whilst working will teach time management which is essential so that you can fulfill academic responsibilities while also being able to meet your work standards.

Having a job also allows you to gain real work experience. Most students are only familiar with classroom environments which doesn't compare to the majority of real work settings. Having real work experience allows you to stand out from the crowd which is important when looking for jobs that are more desirable. Not only that, you also learn a variety of different skills that will help you work with others. When working a shift with somebody else, you learn interpersonal skills which helps with building and maintaining relationships.

Many jobs also require you to work with others which takes teamwork and communication. Many of these skills can be

learned from any beginner level job and are transferable to any other kind of work, and skills like teamwork and communication are often times essential.

Having a job also teaches financial responsibility. Earning money will allow students to budget, save, and invest with their money which is important because school doesn't teach much about financial responsibility. It's also nice to have money to spend when you're going out or with your friends without having to worry about asking your parents for any.

My friends and I usually go out every weekend now that we all have jobs and are able to pay for ourselves without having to beg somebody else to pay for us.

In conclusion, having a job while being a student might be difficult, but there are so many benefits that make it worth it.

Students who work from a

young age will be ahead of those who don't in many aspects and will have more influence over their future. There are many skills that are learned through workplaces that can't be found

in school.

For me, the most valuable skill I have gained from working would be learning how to talk and interact with others in a professional setting.



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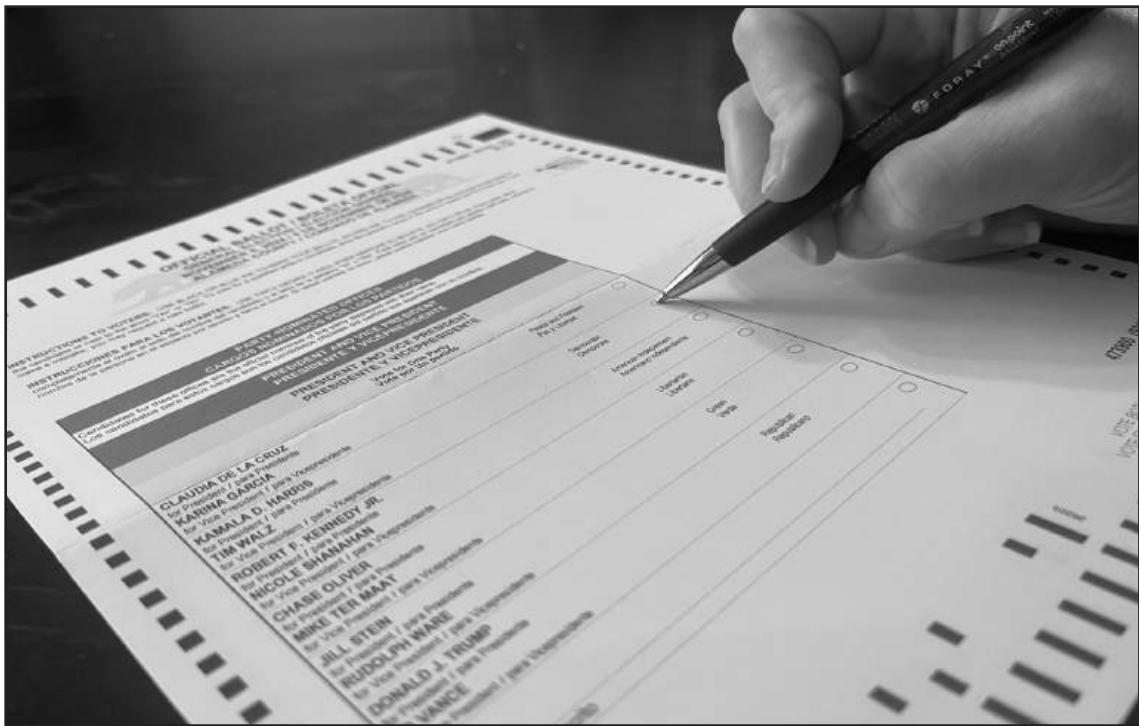
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FEATURE

5

CVHS students vote for the first time



WYATT FRANKLIN

By Wyatt Franklin

This election year will be the first of many for some CVHS students as they have turned 18 just in time to vote for our next president. These students face the tricky task of navigating the voting booth for the first time as they pick who they want for

president.

There is not just the presidential ballot this year, however; voters will be able to decide on measures that have qualified for the state election, the House of Representatives, and Senate representatives.

Most students that are voting for their first time will focus on the presidential election as

that is the most popular and exciting vote this year. With a very close race between the two candidates, it can be very exciting to pick a candidate to support for president, but some students don't think so

Senior Brady Montgomery says that he will vote for "Chief Keef" as he does not want to support either candidate and

will instead write in one of his favorite rappers on his ballot.

Especially in a state such as California—which is an almost guaranteed win for Harris—votes for president might not seem that consequential.

Montgomery still thinks it is important for young people to vote. "Even though I don't stand for either candidate, I am voting so I know how to vote when I actually like who is running," he said.

Senior Reese Elkaim "didn't even think about voting for the other ballot measures, [because] the only thing people talk about is the president," he said.

Senior Riley Ramirez says she will vote for "Kamala Harris this year" and plans to vote via vote-by-mail ballot. The mail-in ballots make voting a lot easier which is helpful for teens who are voting for the first time.

"Most young people are not as educated, so it is important to be educated [when voting]," Ramirez said.

As young people have not been exposed to politics as much, it can be hard to understand what

to do and how to vote when first doing it. Many students do not know where to start when it comes to other elections besides the presidential because they aren't as popular.

"I am voting so I know how to vote when I actually like who is running."

It will always be important for everyone to vote, especially young people as they have to deal with the consequences of the election for the rest of their lives. When things are new, they can be hard, and for students, it seems that voting offers many difficulties within its complexity.

Unicef club serves the community

By Natalie Le

All over the world, thousands of children are in need of help. To assist in that global problem, there's just the club for it at CVHS.

The CVHS Unicef club is an organization that works to help people in need by offering education, emergency support, and a host of other essentials. As a club based on the larger foundation, it is a group of students who come together and supply help for those in need. Unicef is mainly centered around community service and community hours.

"You get to learn about bigger world issues. And at the same time, you also get to participate in volunteering events while giving back to the community. I also think that it widens your worldview a lot in general," said President of Unicef Isaac Kan, who spoke on what makes Unicef special.

Kan made a point about how this club can change people for the better, molding them to be more understanding and considerate. Because Unicef is centered around global issues, it's great to know what people can do to improve the state of a problem.

Having plenty of students who want to support kids all around the world is beneficial for the organization and for themselves. As a way to contribute, there are plenty of events hosted within the club to raise aid to those in need.

"Because Unicef is centered around global issues, it's great to know what people can do to improve a problem."

"Our greatest event usually throughout the year is 'Trick or Canning,' where we get a lot of cans that we can donate," said Jalen Vongnarith, public relations manager. "Everyone has a lot of fun because you get to dress up as well."

The events that occur help engage students to participate



NATALIE LE

in giving to the community, whilst enjoying what they do. These kinds of occasions are what get members going, knowing that what they do can have a meaningful impact on people's lives.

"I really like the impact I can see Unicef making on my community. After helping out the community, making a difference is very fulfilling and feels so rewarding," said Nicole Levano, public relations manager.

Being a part of an organization that works to better communities reveals a lot about members'

character, including their level of consideration. Unknowingly, members' involvement in community service can have a positive impact on their future and present life.

Everything that Unicef does is valuable. And the people who want to change issues facing modern society ought to think about becoming a member of this inspiring club.

On Oct. 25 Unicef hosted a Halloween volunteering event, "Shriek-A-Rama." This event is Chabot Elementary School's annual Halloween event. At this event, volunteers will run

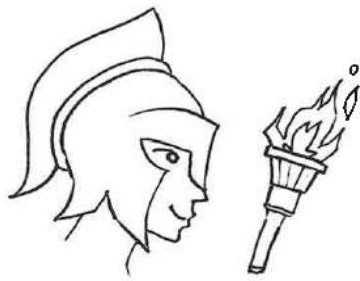
games, shared information, and did many more activities.

If interested in getting involved with activities and ideas like this, head to room 112 on Tuesdays at lunch for Unicef's weekly meetings.

Students never know, they might be drawn to a unique, remarkable club like this one.

Unicef makes every effort to help those in need, so those intrigued should definitely stop by and see what the clubs' fundamentals are all about if one feels like they speak to them.





CVHS sports stars perform under pressure



Rilen Ramirez rushes for a first down.

GRACE LOPEZ



Stella Chang throws the ball.

BRENDA HUYNH

Boo!

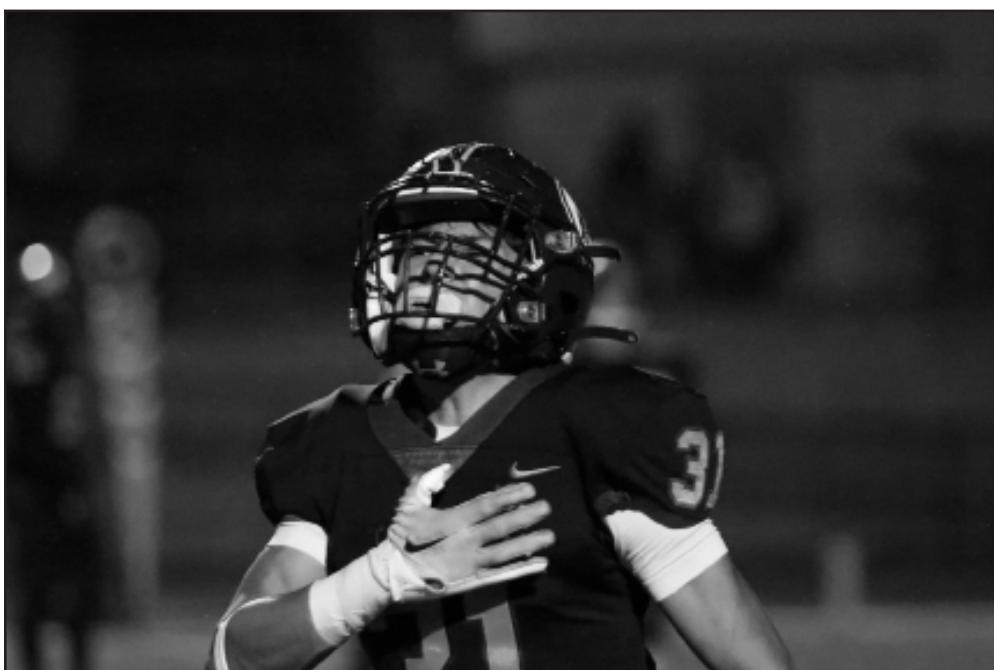


Naomi Chew makes a catch.

GRACE LOPEZ



Hailey Young makes a putt on the green.



Jeremiah Miller prepares for the rest of the game.

GRACE LOPEZ



Malia Robinson hits the ball.

MAXIM BOYCHUK



Boo!





Girls varsity cross country team wins consecutive Mt. SAC championship

By Victor Bahng

For the second year in a row, the girls varsity team finished first place at Mt. San Antonio College on Oct. 26. Marking a historic achievement for CVHS, with the top five runners all placing in the top 30, victory was secured with a score of 83. “They put in hard work, and it’s finally showing now; it’s paying off in the races,” said Coach Dino Cardiasmenos. Sophomore Iliana Nierengarten was first of the team to finish, placing sixth with 19:50. “[The race] was pretty good,” said Nierengarten. “But going into it I actually had an injury going on with my hip flexor, so I was really nervous about

that.” Fortunately, she was able to recover enough to run in the race, and she’s glad the team was able to do well after some initial worry. “I was really just happy to finish the race as high up as I could, and I’m more happy about how the team did,” said Nierengarten. Second of the team to finish was freshman Maria Kryuchkova, placing 16th with a time of 20:37. She was followed closely by senior Anna Dughi, who had the same time and was third of the team to finish. “It was very fun, and I think I did pretty good,” said Kryuchkova. “I enjoyed hanging out with my friends.” Girlsvarsitycompetedagainst 15 other schools, and as first

place, the runner-up was La Quinta with a score of 116. The boysvarsityteam finished in eighth place, scoring 215 points. At the start of the race, sophomore Isaac Ovalle unfortunately tripped, slowing down some of the team, but they managed to recover, resulting in a better score than last year. “It could have been better, but the place that we got was pretty good,” said boys team captain senior Nathan Quinby. Senior Maddeux Lim finished first of boys varsity, placing 10th with 16:55, an improvement of over a minute from last year. “The race was better than last year: less hills and like 10 degrees cooler,” said Lim. “My performance was ok, but I could probably do better on an easier



Trojans celebrate their second straight Mt. SAC win. San Leandro with a score of 193. The cross country teams will be racing next at the WACC Championships on Nov. 9.

Girls varsity volleyball team crushes Alameda Hornets

By Maxim Boychuck

The CVHS varsity girls volleyball team took down Alameda High School on Oct. 17 with a final score of 3 sets to none. With a long junior varsity game right before the varsity match, the team was eager to start playing. The first set was close with the scoring being tied almost the entire time. At the end, the Trojans managed to pull ahead and end the first set with a score of 25-19.

The last two sets were also won by us, but Alameda was a strong opponent and almost caught up multiple times. The second and third sets were 25-17 and 25-19 respectively. Despite the close game, the Trojans’ top player, junior Tessa Smith, was confident and sure that her team would win. “I think going into it we were trying not to get too cocky coming off of our last wins, but I think that we were able to execute well and keep them struggling, which I think was really important for us winning this game. I think, overall, as a

team we did like pretty well,” said Smith. With great teamwork and with this game being their second win in a row, the girls were confident and optimistic about playing against Alameda. “Pre-game, I was coming into the game pretty confident. I knew what we were capable of and what we were going to do and what we were going to do to win,” said junior Maddie Lew. The varsity girls volleyball team won their division 1 game against Los Lomas on Oct. 29, giving them a chance to win the North Coast Section.



Kate Wierzbza prepares to serve the volleyball. MAXIM BOYCHUK

Taryn Pak has a great season

By Grace Lopez

Attended any girls flag football games this fall? Peep co-captain Teepeezy also known as Taryn Pak on the field. Pak, a senior, is playing as a defensive back (DB) and safety for Trojans’ first season of girls flag football. Pak carried girls varsity flag football with only three losses throughout a season of 12 games. She built a defensive wall on the field averaging at least two tackles per game as a DB and safety, earning 20 tackles throughout the 2024 season. Being co captain of girls flag football has made a very positive impact on Pak and her coaches. “Flag football has made a really upstanding impact on me; it has made me a team player. My main sport is wrestling and though it’s a team sport it really is individual in a way,” said Pak. “Taryn is always calling out which way the ball is going which is helpful for everyone else to know so we can cut the angle and stop the play,” said teammate Grace Lassalle. Her favorite moment from the 2024 season was getting to know each player and bonding everyone together to create a

team that can grow together, especially at defensive practices. Pak is known for being a strong leader on the field and uplifting to fellow teammates. “Taryn provides a sort of seriousness to the team. She balances out the personalities among the captains and keeps the team grounded and focused,” said senior co-captain Kiana Ayllon. “I put in my full effort to make sure all of the girls are included as well as doing their best, I also step up whenever something needs to be said,” said Pak. Not only is she captain of varsity flag football but also a part of the Trojans’ girls wrestling squad. Pak has been wrestling since sixth grade and has been wrestling on varsity all four years of high school. Wrestling has shaped who Pak is as an athlete and has played a big part in her life. “Wrestling made me realize how much more I have in me than I thought I did. It [wrestling] pushed me to my highest limits and has made me very strong,” said Pak. “Taryn has been an important part of this team since her freshman year. Her positive

attitude and confidence on the mat helps motivate her teammates throughout the season,” said Coach Sabrina Ross. A favorite memory of hers from wrestling were the overnight tournaments held in Napa. “Those tournaments were definitely my most memorable moments from my athletic career in wrestling, my teammates and I messed around in the Airbnbs the night before our matches,” said Pak. As Pak is a graduating athlete her favorite moment as a senior was the recent win against Arroyo for senior night. “Senior night made me realize that time has passed. That night I also just felt so loved and happy that so many people supported me and I didn’t even know,” said Pak. Pak left flag football on good note with an ending score of 32-6 against Arroyo. She will be cheering on from afar for Trojans’ upcoming seasons. “I’m excited to see how flag football carries on as I graduate! I hope the team gets the funding it needs to continue growing and thriving,” said Pak.



Taryn Pak excels in two sports. TAI NGUYEN

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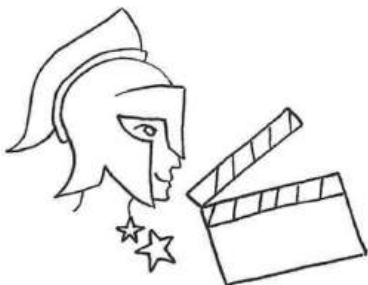


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Bruno Mars makes a return with “Die With A Smile”



By Rachel Zhen

The music industry is constantly evolving, resulting in new exciting collaborations like the one between Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga. Their new single, “Die with a Smile,” released on Aug. 16, 2024, has taken the world by storm. The song, a passionate love story, has already reached the top ten in several countries and has ranked number six on “Billboard Hot 100.”

“Die with a Smile” is about eternal love when faced with life’s uncertainties. The lyrics express the feeling of losing someone you love but also finding comfort in the idea that if the world were to end, you



MADISON LEE

would want to spend your last moments with them.

The lyrics “Wherever you go, that’s where I’ll follow / Nobody’s promised tomorrow / So I’m a love you every night like it’s the last night / Like it’s the last night,” shows just how important it is to stay by a loved

one’s side no matter what and the importance of living in the moment and making every day count.

Mars’ and Gaga’s vocals perfectly complement each other, adding a new depth to the song. It’s a reminder of Mars’s ability to produce genuine

tracks that relate with listeners worldwide. For Gaga, this is another example of her ability to collaborate with various artists and produce something new and exciting each time.

Mars begins the song with a dystopian-like scenario in which he and his lover must say goodbye. As the song unfolds, Mars and Gaga both swear that despite life’s uncertainties, they will love each other as if every day was their last. The song carries the message of cherishing each moment with the person you love.

Both singers bring their style into the song. Mars’ smooth voice and Gaga’s strong vocals, create an emotional experience for listeners. The chemistry between the two artists makes the song feel special, each highlighting their unique talents. Together,

they’ve created the love song of the year.

“Die with a Smile” is more than just a hit, it also represents the significant change in how artists approach themes of love and death. The song’s upbeat tempo and meaningful lyrics show the growing trend where music serves both as a way for people to take a break from reality and as a way to reflect on deeper emotions, inspiring other artists to explore similar themes, combining hope with deep feelings to create songs that connect with listeners on different levels.

This song marks Mars’ first release in three years, making it a highly anticipated comeback, and with this track, he did not disappoint. With its message of ever-lasting love and heartfelt vocals, it has easily become a modern classic.

Revamp to “Black Butler” excites fans



By Fenn Yu

“Now I can show you my true nature.” In Britain during the 19th century, a demon signs itself into a contract with a young boy. The disappearance of a fifth-year student prompts the Queen to send her watchdog to reveal the mysteries surrounding Weston College, Britain’s most prestigious public school. Ciel Phantomhive and his loyal butler, Sebastian Michaelis embark to uncover the secrets of the college.

Mysteries like these can be found in “Black Butler: Public School Arc,” a sequel to the earlier season, “Black Butler: Book of Circus.” This season is adventure-packed with many well-developed characters, and it follows the source material, “Black Butler” by Yana Toboso. However, the ending is anticlimatic and immediately follows up with a new section about the next season. This season is animated by CloverWorks. It can be watched on a paid subscription on Crunchyroll.

“Black Butler” is a long and ongoing series. Despite its impressive length, the progression is extremely slow and has been ongoing for years. The first season starts with Ciel and Sebastian investigating cases for Queen Victoria in Britain. The duo met after Ciel’s family manor burned down, taking with it his parents. He and his twin were captured and under the mercy of a cult. Eventually, he signed a contract with a demon to save himself

and for vengeance on those who wronged him. He makes it out alive and becomes the head of the Phantomhive family. The Phantomhive Family has worked under the Queen for generations and Ciel takes the helm. This position leads him to many uncovered mysteries, cases, and supernatural occurrences. While this is great, the animation studio often makes cuts in the animation. There aren’t many scenes unique to the anime, and it’s hardly different from the manga.

“A Phantomhive butler who can’t do this much isn’t worth his salt.”

“Black Butler” covers a lot of scenarios in 19th century Britain through Ciel and Sebastian. There are multiple cases. But in the fourth and most recent season, the series covers a simple “who did it” scenario to build up suspense and continue the story’s goal of forming a strong antagonist. This story arc is a firm start to creating the true evil within the villain. Much isn’t revealed about him, such as his name until the climax of the story. The story could have been developed better because this story arc is unique in that it is about a school, a long-term case spread over a lengthier time compared to cases that are only a few days or hours long.

However, in the fourth season it covers Ciel and Sebastian’s goal to enter Weston College to find the missing fifth-year student, Derek Arden. The duo goes through multiple situations, such as enrolling Ciel, finding out the true suspect of the entire situation, and figuring out the final question, “Who did it?”

“Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” proves to be a success



By Mason Jordan

Burton is back! Visionary director Tim Burton has released his long-awaited sequel to 1988’s “Beetlejuice” with a clever title choice, “Beetlejuice Beetlejuice.” Although some of the director’s recent work has had a distinct lack of his individual creative flair, “Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” does not continue this trend. The new film is full Burton, with all of the acting, set pieces, music, and effects that come with one of his films. Not to mention, the vibes are flying off the charts.

“Beetlejuice Beetlejuice” returns to the original story’s main character: goth icon Lydia Deetz, played splendidly by Winona Ryder. Much like the other returning performers, Ryder slips back into the role like an old dress that still fits. She and the character have grown, and the performance reflects this amazingly. It’s a quiet, restrained, anxiety-based

performance that truly makes us remember, the things that happen in a film affect the characters! PTSD and trauma exist, and Lydia, who was taunted by a demon at age 15, would definitely not be over it.

She also now has an estranged daughter, Astrid, brought to life by Jenna Ortega. The marketing of the film had many fans worried that Astrid’s character would simply be a recreation of the Wednesday Addams character, played also by Ortega. In a pleasant surprise, Astrid’s character is nothing like Wednesday. She’s an environmentalist with daddy issues, and who disbelieves her mother’s crazy stories about demons and ghosts (which is what made Lydia famous as a TV host). After a tragedy occurs, Lydia, Astrid, and the true highlight of the film return to their old (haunted) house. The highlight in question is multiple Emmy award-winning actress Catherine O’Hara, who knocks it out of the park in this film. Every line, every movement, every gesture, they’re all hilarious when it comes to her return as

Delia Deetz.

All three of these leading ladies are delightful in the new film, and of course, one has to mention the titular Beetlejuice. Beetlejuice still loves Lydia after all these years, and he’ll stop at nothing to claim his bride. Micheal Keaton brilliantly recreates the exact feel of the 1988 performance, while still providing so many new and fresh tricks that differentiate the film from the original. Many new cast members provide fun and unique (and admittedly sometimes crowded) scenes that should bring smiles to theatergoers’ faces. The film relies mostly on practical effects, which are gleaming in this already beautiful film. Fan favorite creatures the sandworms get their moment to shine in this film like never before. The eerie greenish-blue lighting of the afterworld compared with the warm and cozy lighting of fall in a small town gives the film a vibe that is perfect for the Halloween season. No one makes a film like Tim Burton does.

The film is best when you can’t anticipate what’s coming, and most fans would recommend going in as blind as possible. Some may call this film superior to the original in some ways, some may say it is equal, but most agree that the film is a delight. However, it does leave one wondering with the box office success of the film, and of course the clever title scheme, can we expect a “Beetlejuice... Beetlejuice... BEETLEJUICE!” around the corner? Only time will tell, but audiences are seated and ready for whatever Burton will bring next!



“EPIC: The Musical” is truly epic

🎃🎃🎃🎃🎃
By Liana Klausmeyer

In “EPIC: The Musical”’s new album “The Wisdom Saga,” we meet new characters and witness battles of wit and fists while listening to more expertly crafted music from Jorge Rivera-Herrans! I urge all those interested to listen!

“EPIC: The Musical” is a modern retelling of Homer’s Odyssey and follows the main character Odysseus’s journey home to his wife Penelope. Importantly, it is a concept album, meaning it is structured like a musical and the songs tell a story, but there is no on-stage component and all of the songs were recorded in a studio. We take a break from the main plot during “The Wisdom Saga” to focus on Odysseus’s son Telemachus and his newfound friendship with Athena.

In the first of five songs,

“Legendary,” we meet Telemachus. He has grown up without knowing where his father is or even if he’s alive. All he knows of him are the stories of his father’s greatness, strength, and cunning, but Telemachus doesn’t believe he shares those qualities.

Currently, 108 men are living in his house, eating his food, and trying to date his mom. He wants to be like his father so he can fight them, and all of the other monsters in the world. In the next song, “Little Wolf,” Telemachus decides enough is enough, and fights



Antinous, one of the suitors. At first, he’s losing, but Athena steps in to help him, saying, “I’ve no respect for bullies, those who impose their will. I’ve seen plenty enough to truly understand this kind of filth,” She coaches him through the fight, but Telemachus is still a beginner and loses.

In “We’ll Be Fine,” Athena admits she is helping him because she made mistakes with a friend in the past, and she is trying to make it up by helping someone else. She doesn’t tell him that her friend was his father though. Telemachus is just happy to have a new friend.

Athena decides to check on Odysseus after not seeing him for ten years in “Love In Paradise” and finds him on the island of Calypso, a goddess in exile. It is paradise, but Calypso’s island is still a prison. There is a magic boundary keeping either of them from leaving and Calypso doesn’t like that Odysseus

doesn’t want to cheat on his wife with her. After seven years trapped there, Odysseus’s PTSD is getting worse and he is contemplating suicide. Athena realizes that she is the only one who can help him.

In the last song “God Games,” Athena petitions Zeus to release Odysseus and he offers to play a game. If she can convince all of the other gods, Odysseus will be released. She succeeds, but Zeus is mad because she wasn’t supposed to win. Zeus tries to kill her and it ends at this cliffhanger.

This latest installment of “EPIC: The Musical” is absolutely fantastic. It combines modern storytelling, creative interpretation, and amazing vocal performances with an ancient classic of literature to create a unique masterpiece the likes of which we haven’t seen since Hamilton. I highly recommend it to everyone interested in mythology, musicals, or adaptations in any form.

A fun summer hit: “Not Like Us”

🦇🦇🦇🦇🦇
By Michael Owen

“Psst, I see dead people,” are the first words Kendrick Lamar utters right before the beat drops and introduces a funky West Coast beat followed by the producer tag of LA native, DJ Mustard. These two LA natives collaborate to make the summer hit, “Not Like Us,” a love letter to the West Coast (and hate letter to Drake).

The song has a fun and upbeat tempo that almost makes you forget about the savage yet hilarious lyrics found throughout the track.

It spans four and a half minutes as Lamar raps over a bouncy and quick DJ Mustard-produced beat that sounds like it came straight out of the Bay Area hyphy movement of the early 2000s. The influence of the Bay is also present in Lamar himself, as you can hear the influence of Bay Area rappers like E-40 and Too \$hort in his vocals and flow.

The cover art shows a picture of the multi-million dollar mansion owned by the rapper Drake, covered in red markers. These markers resemble those found on websites that mark the homes of local sex offenders, insinuating that Drake and his camp committed such crimes.

Lamar shouts out several

cities in California including Compton, Oakland, Malibu, and of course, Los Angeles.

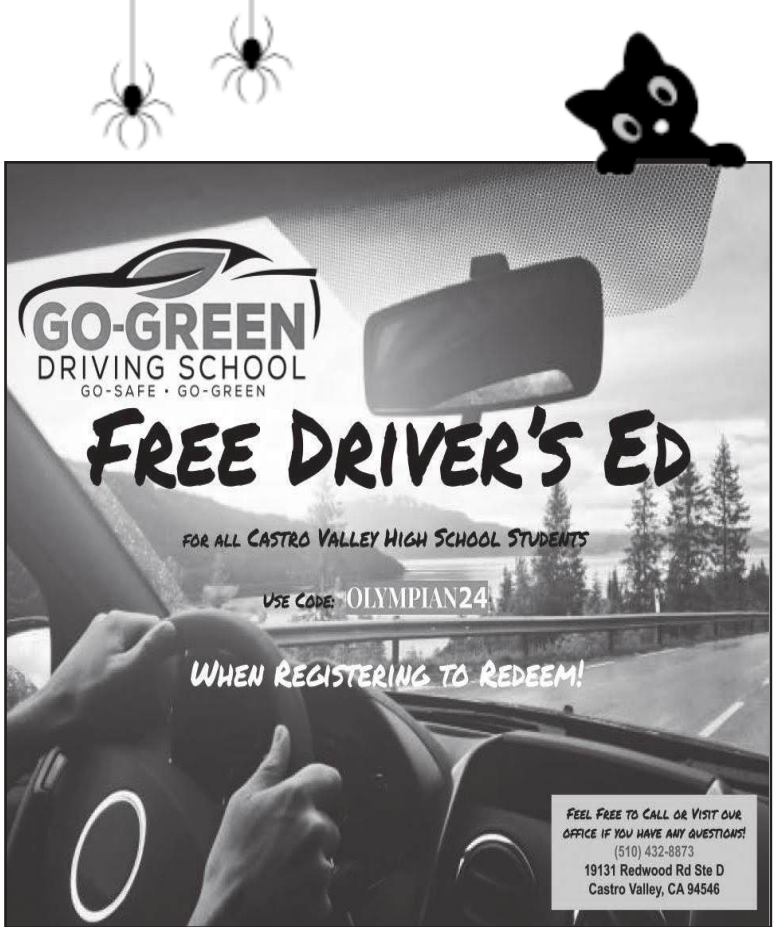
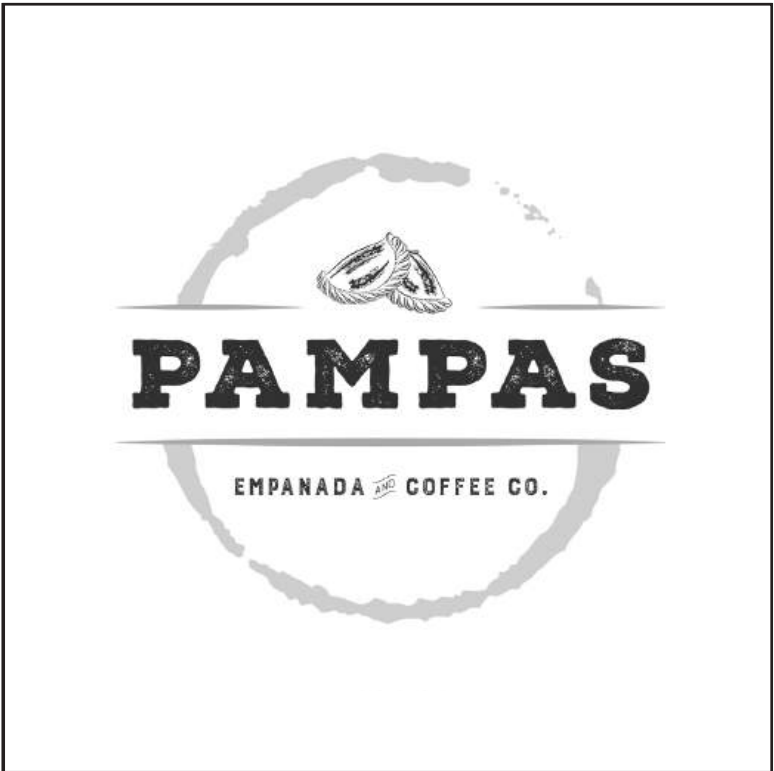
The song comes in the aftermath of Lamar’s very public feud with Drake. The two artists have been engaging in a back-and-forth since April releasing various ‘diss tracks’ toward each other starting with Drake releasing the songs “Push Ups” and “Taylor Made Freestyle” on April 19 and Lamar responding with “Euphoria” on April 30.

The feud came to a head on the night of May 3, with Drake releasing “Family Matters” and Lamar, to everyone’s surprise, releasing his response “Meet The Grahams” less than 30 minutes later. The morning after, Lamar

surprised everyone once again by releasing his final diss track, “Not Like Us.”

The song is filled with lyrics that paint Drake in a negative light. Lines like, “Tryna strike a chord and it’s probably A-Minor” and “Certified Lover Boy? Certified Pedophiles,” continue the theme of Lamar accusing Drake of being a predator that is present throughout the song.

He asks Drake in the line, “You think the Bay gon’ let you disrespect Pac?” Referring to the controversial track released by Drake where he used A.I. to impersonate the rappers 2Pac and Snoop Dogg. He then gives a warning in the line, “I think that Oakland show gon’ be your last stop.”



Behind the scenes of Broadcast club

By Elliot Lucas

Under the bright lights of the football stadium with players crashing into each other and the crowd cheering in the stands, you may think it's just the players working tirelessly, but a hardworking group of students is working together to make the game reach everyone at home. With Broadcast Club the excitement doesn't just stop in the stands, they work behind the scenes to ensure events are captured and available to the screens of any Trojan.

Meeting every Thursday at lunch in Room 208, the Broadcast Club provides a place to learn many things. Whether it's tech, photography, or interviewing, Broadcast has something for everyone. The club members receive hands-on experience capturing action shots and conducting interviews with the athletes, cheerleaders, and audience members, showcasing their school spirit all while earning volunteer hours.

Broadcast is more than just a way to be involved with the school media scene; it's an opportunity to grow connections and gain knowledge in media and communication.

"It's a great club to try new things and experience a new field you have an interest in or even know nothing about. Just a great opportunity to really gain a sense of a team-based club giving access to streams to our community," said Broadcast club President Julian Talauta.

Members can choose the job they want to do during the game. They get training for livestream setup, management, and recording.

Sports aren't the only thing Broadcast publicizes. Members cover College & Career Center events and are planning to do more community-based coverage.

They have highlights of the events at CVHS and their Instagram page (which can be found at @cvhsbroadcast) that has a Linktree attached where you can find all of their resources. You can also support Broadcast for free on YouTube



Alex Mascio and Alex Perez livestream a football game.

ELLIOT LUCAS

at their account CV Broadcast where members post their streams and podcasts.

"Broadcast is currently in the process of starting up our podcast rooms again, where people can talk about current

events whether it be at our school or in general. We give advice and overall curate it to be our own creative podcast," shared the club's social media manager Willow Bhattarai.

So if you ever find yourself

bored on Thursday at lunch and are interested in getting involved in the behind-the-scenes action of our high school's events, stop by Room 208. Broadcast is ready to welcome.



Book Club provides a perfect place to escape

By Madison Lee

A world of time loops, plot twists, betrayal, and murder. A mystery, fantasy, and thriller revolving around the death of Evelyn Hardcastle. At 11:00 p.m. every day, she will be killed until protagonist Aiden Bishop can identify the killer. Experiencing each day through a different body, Bishop learns something new about the crime each night from a new perspective, inching closer and closer to finding the murderer.

Readers really enjoyed "The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle," written by Stuart Turton, the Book Club's first book of the month. In September, the club's book talks centered around tropes of betrayal and time travel. Members were able to change the way they thought about the book to gain new ideas and perspectives.

Members get a free PDF of the novel of the month, allowing the books to be accessible for anyone. Book Club meets every Monday at lunch in room 914.

Club President Mireille Chiv, sophomore, started the school's first book club in years. "I wanted an outlet to find and

talk to people about what I was interested in, and that happened to be books. I could bring a group of people together who have similar interests," said Chiv. "I didn't have too many people to talk about books with. I wanted to find people who liked what I liked."

When finding the book of the month, Chiv's goal is to find books people don't see very often. Spending time on "Goodreads," "Libby," or library websites, Chiv tries to find books that match the theme for the month.

For the month of October, after having members vote for their preferred book, "What Moves the Dead," written by Ursula Vernon, under the pen name T. Kingfisher was selected. Inspired by "The Fall of the House of Usher," written by Edgar Allan Poe, the horror novella fits in with the October season.

Book Club is a place for people to learn new things and gain different viewpoints. "I'm able to gain a better understanding of the books that I read, and a better understanding of different archetypes and tropes," said Fiona Zaretska, sophomore and secretary of the club.



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Never Flush Wipes!

Used flushable wipes belong in the garbage. When flushed, flushable wipes can damage expensive equipment at pump stations and the wastewater treatment plant and only increase the chances of a sanitary sewer overflow.



Put FOG Where It Belongs!

Do not pour **F**ats, **O**ils, and **G**rease, aka **FOG**, down the drain! Grease collects and hardens inside the pipes and forms a solid plug that can lead to sewer problems. Dispose of grease and fats in the green organics cart instead.

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SPOOKY TRIVIA

- 1) In which US State does the infamous ‘Chain Saw Massacre’ take place?
- 2) What movie monster is a killer toy doll
- 3) What kind of allergy does Charlie have in Hereditary?
- 4) What is the name of the summer camp where Friday the 13th takes place?
- 5) What can you sprinkle in front of windows and doorways to help keep away evil spirits?
- 6) Why should a person wear a costume on Halloween?
- 7) Is a pumpkin a fruit or a vegetable?
- 8) From base to point, what is the order of the colors on a piece of candy corn?
- 9) What animals that are associated with witches are bad luck if one crosses your path?
- 10) What is the name of the possessed young girl in The Exorcist?



Trivia answer key

- 1) Texas
- 2) Chucky
- 3) A nut allergy
- 4) Camp Crystal Lake
- 5) Salt
- 6) To deceive evil spirits.
- 7) It's a fruit.
- 8) Yellow, orange, and white.
- 9) Black cats
- 10) Regan
- JASON
- JIGSAW
- SKELETON
- EXORCIST
- DRACULA
- SILENTHILL
- GHOST
- HALLOWEEN
- CHUCKY
- RESIDENTEVIL
- KILLER
- PUMPKIN
- ZOMBIE
- PSYCHO

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Welcome to the Wellness Center

By Renata Gutierrez

Everyone has bad days is a common saying at the CVHS Wellness Center (WC). Located between 400 and 500 hall, a safe space for students' emotions, questions, and concerns awaits all who want to be heard and seen, or even for those just looking for a quiet place.

"I like to normalize the fact that the Wellness Center is for everyone," said Samuel Frank, the lead social worker at the WC.

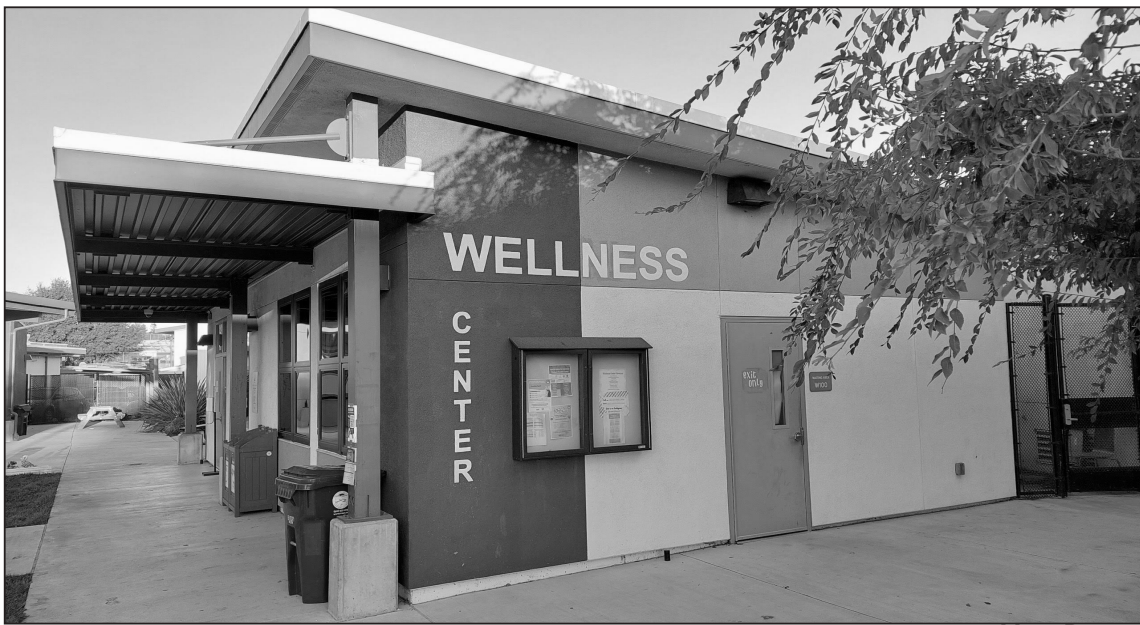
The WC offers a variety of services for students here at CVHS; breaks and drop-in appointments with a counselor or supportive adult are the most popular services amongst students. All things considered, the WC staff tends to be swarmed with students who put their helping hands to good use. The best way to ensure a meeting with one of the interns or counselors is by appointment.

Appointments with counselors can be extended to a weekly, bi-weekly, or

monthly check-ins depending on the student's wants and needs. This year there will also be two therapists who will be taking small caseloads, usually through a referral from the counseling team.

Students are welcome to take a break at the WC once a day, a five-minute break with their phones or 15 minutes if they turn their phones in to the front desk. While taking a break, students are encouraged to play with any fidget toys or board games offered in the group room. For the more artistic students, plenty of art materials are available to relax the mind.

While the WC is open to all students on campus, targeted outreach helps the staff get to freshmen who need a little extra help adjusting to high school. With the help of the Wellness Warriors, a select group of student leaders whose goal is to bring more awareness to mental health around campus, the WC hopes to host year-round events to make CVHS a more welcoming and safe space for



MAXIM BOYCHUK

all students.

Groups include Freshman Orientation, Managing Anxiety and Stress, Black Wellness, Real Talk, Healing and Empowering through Art, Grief, and many more.

After their Restorative Justice training last year, these now certified students will help restore community in situations here at CVHS and the middle

schools in Castro Valley where harm amongst students might have been done. After training, students get paid \$100. If they decide to stay a part of the Wellness Warriors until they graduate, they will have the opportunity to get paid \$100 for every year they work alongside the WC to repair harm.

If you want to know more about the application process

to become a Wellness Warrior, have any questions about the WC, or would like to set up an appointment for a check-in or group meeting, be sure to stop by the WC. Jill Tavis located at the very front of the building will see to you and your needs.

"Everyone has bad days, so let's be patient and empathetic with ourselves," said Frank.

Students suggest skipping the PSAT

By Brenda Huynh

Every year, CVHS students from grades 9 to 11 take the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) for three hours and 22 minutes, not including the preparation period from the day before, which takes 30 minutes. With lost class time, mixed feelings regarding the PSAT begin to stir, and the main question begins to arise: Should CVHS continue to offer the PSAT?

The PSAT is a standardized test administered by the College Board that assesses reading, writing, and math skills, serving as a mock version of the SAT for preparation.

"Since the CSU and UC system no longer accept SAT scores, and most of our students who go to college go to CA public colleges and universities, I now think the administration of the PSAT to students is a terrible misuse of

time, a gross misuse of tens of thousands of dollars that CVUSD pays to the College Board for the tests, and that it is an unnecessary trigger for test anxiety for students, most of whom will never go on to take the SAT," stated social studies teacher Carmelina Frasca.

The PSAT provides students with experience in standardized testing and may convince them to take the SAT. However, most colleges no longer take SAT scores. As Frasca mentioned, the expense of the PSAT and its disruption to class time are some of the con outlooks held by CVHS members.

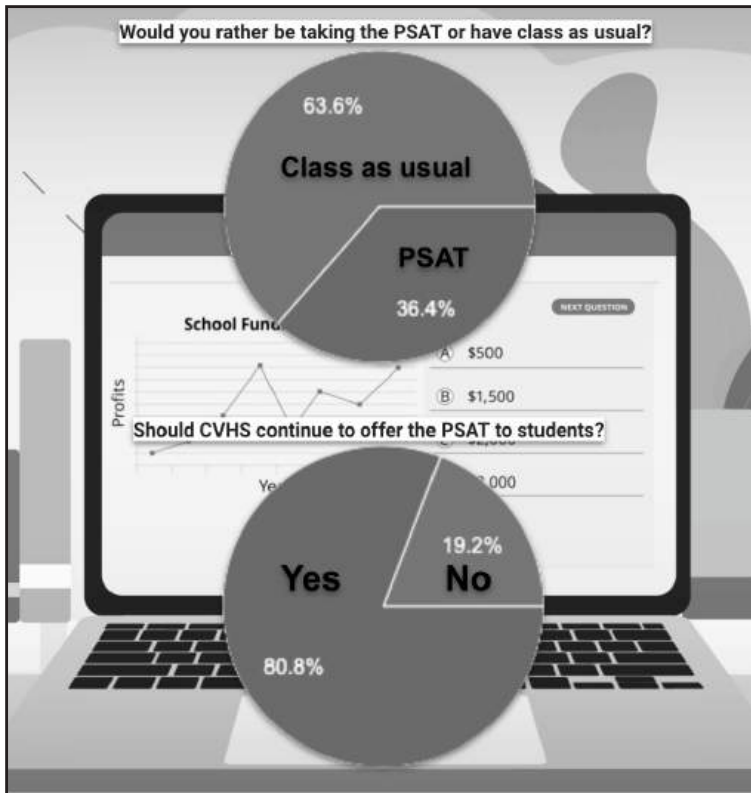
A recent Olympian survey suggests Trojans are not in favor of disrupting class time to hold the school-wide PSAT. Seventy-seven percent of Trojans collectively agree that CVHS should continue to offer the PSAT to students. However, the majority of Trojans would rather have

regular instructional time seeing that many have no intention of taking the SAT.

"The PSAT is a great choice for students who want to further their education by receiving scholarship options for high PSAT scores," stated junior Marwa Seckandary.

The PSAT still holds its perks though. In fact, the PSAT rewards high-scoring recipients, making them eligible to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program as well as other organizations partnered with the College Board.

"CVHS should continue to offer the PSAT especially due to our eleventh graders," stated Assistant Principal Pam Wolf, who noted that the test "offers awards and scholarships even if they're not taking the SAT. As for our ninth and tenth graders, it allows them to practice the PSAT for when they're in eleventh grade."



MATTHEW WONG

► LES MIS: from page 1

These talented performers will go into the real world and carry their success with them, and the future is bright for most of the bright young students involved with the CVHS drama program. "Improving our skills together is an experience like no other, and I'm extremely grateful for it. Without that support, I wouldn't be the person or performer I am today," said actress Nora Layne, in closing for her final musical. One thing no audience can deny: graduating seniors are going out with a bang.



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