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THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Olympian

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Joker (Gustavo Barrera) falls to defeat at the hands of Batman (Austin Martin). SHANNAN CHAN

Costumed characters compete

By Shannan Chan

Ghosts, ghouls, and spooky spirits! CVHS’s annual Halloween costume contest in the quad during lunch on Tuesday, Oct. 31. As spirited costume-wearers roamed throughout campus, only three would win the 2023 costume contest.

From costumes from Wonderland to beloved villains like the Joker, one may wonder how long it took to prepare such elaborate costumes.

“I’m the Hatbox Ghost from the Haunted Mansion and I’m really happy about the win,” said winner Mason Jordan, who spent two months on his costume and is an editor for

The Olympian. “The hardest part was probably making the wig into the hat and dyeing all the different pieces. Every piece of this costume is from a different kind of thing. It’s all DIY so it’s just really fun to see it all come together.”

Other participants spent less time on their costumes.

“I’m Wybie from Coraline,” explained senior Anthony Kleinschmidt. “I spent five hours randomly last night making this last minute because I wanted a costume for school.”

Kleinschmidt also noted the challenges for his costume, stating that the mask was the most difficult to acquire, but was happy with the results of the contest.

“I think the people who won deserved to win, because their costumes were really good, especially Mason’s,” he said.

Underclassmen at CVHS participated in this year’s costume contest as well, such as sophomores Kallie Jackson and Dominique Green, who were Jessica Rabbit from “Looney Tunes” and Freddy Krueger from “A Nightmare on Elm Street,” respectively.

“It was good, I liked it,” said Jackson, when asked about how she felt about the results. “I liked Alice in Wonderland [costumes].”

Green also explained how her costume came to be: “The makeup took a long time, it took like almost an hour and a half. I woke up at four in the morning,” she said.

When asked what part of her costume was the hardest to acquire, Jackson responded, “Probably the gloves, I even dyed my hair more red for it to look like Jessica Rabbit.”

The top three winners were the Hatbox Ghost (Mason Jordan), Scorpion from Mortal Kombat (David So), a group costume including The Queen of Hearts, Mad Hatter, Alice, and The Cheshire Cat (Riley Ramirez, Nora Layne, Zhenia Rocha and Sofia Myers). Edgar Allen Poe also won as a bonus teacher win (Aaron Dennis).



The Hatbox Ghost haunts CVHS. SHANNAN CHAN

Schools get bathrooms and books but not condoms

By Richard Paseman

New changes are coming to the California public school system! Schools will add genderless bathrooms. While school book bans and suspensions for willful defiance will soon be illegal. Gov. Gavin Newsom approved each of these bills this year, but vetoed distribution of condoms to high school students, as it went over-budget.

Genderless bathrooms have been present on college campuses and are a safe place for members of the LGBTQ+ community. Approved on Sept. 23, Senate Bill 760 now requires at least one gender neutral bathroom on the campus of any K-12 California public school by 2026. This will be a major adjustment for some campuses, but CVHS has already introduced genderless bathrooms.

School book bans have been a topic of discussion throughout the nation. Bans occurring in Florida and Texas have targeted minorities and/or excluded relevant history in learning. In action against this, Assembly Bill 1078 was approved on Sept. 25, allowing the state to enforce the FAIR Education Act. Parents can use this bill to get their children the education they deserve, and the state can force schools to update their curriculum in accordance with the law.

“I’m glad about banning school book bans because students deserve the ability to determine what education is right for them,” said senior Damian Caldiero.

Previously California had already had a law preventing elementary students from receiving suspensions for willful defiance. Now this right has been expanded to all public school students. Approved on

Oct. 8, Senate Bill 274 now bans suspension for willful defiance by 2029 for all students in the public school system. Previously willful defiance was considered as minor infractions such as tardiness or truancy, which penalty for has disproportionately affected students of color. With the passing of this bill, California is looking to find more appropriate solutions for students facing these suspensions.

All three of these bills are aimed at removing race or sexual bias from the California public school system, the next bill is aimed to reduce STD rates for high school students.

Senate Bill 541 if approved would have made free condoms available to high school students, but was rejected for budgeting reasons. With 1.9 million high school students enrolled in California public schools, Gov. Newsom considered the expenditure too great for the school system.

Although this bill was not approved, it did pass through the Senate demonstrating an open-mindedness that may set the precedent for future bills. Uniquely the veto of this bill doesn’t affect CVHS. Our school also provides condoms for students at the health center.

“I’m glad my children are growing up in California, because growing up in Pennsylvania our communities would never even consider these changes,” said Kathleen Veety, a science teacher.

Here at CVHS we already have implemented all of these bills lining up with the decisions made in our state. Time will tell if these decisions are beneficial or not, and will serve as an example to other states who have made different decisions in education.



Editorial: Newsom strengthens California schools

The education bills that Gavin Newsom passed and vetoed in the last two weeks have brought up concern for some students and schools, ranging from providing contraceptives to banning suspensions due to “willful defiance.” *The Olympian* approves of most of these decisions.

One of the bills Newsom passed requires public schools to provide gender inclusive bathrooms. Many California schools have already implemented gender neutral bathrooms, so the bill will provide financial support for schools that have not constructed these bathrooms.

“California is proud to have some of the most robust laws in the nation when it comes to protecting and supporting our LGBTQ+ community,” Newsom stated.

We agree with this bill because everyone deserves to feel safe and comfortable, especially on a school campus.

Continuing with the support of LGBTQ+ members, Newsom passed a bill that prohibits school boards from banning books that are inclusive or diverse. Some school districts disapprove of this bill, citing complaints from parents regarding the proliferation



KALAYA WILLIAMS

of these topics, especially relating to transgenderism and its accessibility to young audiences.

The Olympian staff sees this as a great improvement as everyone should feel included and represented in modern literature. From what students see, the literature that we read in class rarely represents other groups of people. While there are classes

that focus on other groups like Afrocentric Literature, the normal English curriculum still lacks inclusivity towards others.

A bill that Newsom vetoed would have required schools to provide contraceptives such as condoms.

“This bill would create an unfunded mandate to public schools that should be considered

in the annual budget process,” Newsom explained.

We disagree with this veto because condoms and various other contraceptives methods are crucial in preventing pregnancies and STDs. Newsom’s veto is an obstacle to schools which are trying to make their environment safer and more comfortable, especially for touchy topics like

sex.

If public schools provided condoms for students, pregnancies would decrease in teens across America because students actually use these resources. Statistics show that when given access to condoms, 51.8 percent of high school students used one during their last sexual intercourse, according to Statista.

The most controversial bill that Newsom passed was to ban school suspensions for “willful defiance,” which is the active defiance of a teacher or staff member while disrupting school activities.

The Olympian did not reach a consensus and opinions varied. Some say that the ability to suspend students was a positive thing because the teacher had more control over the classroom and could build a better learning environment for students.

Others claim that suspensions for willful defiance were abused to target minority groups. Petty and insignificant acts such as not putting a phone away were labeled as willful defiance and used as justification for suspension.

But at least we know that students cannot get suspended for complaining about the lack of condoms.

PHOTOpinions What is your opinion on gender neutral bathrooms?



“I think every school should have them. They are useful for people of all genders to use the restroom.”

Brandon Fischer
Freshman



“Gender neutral bathrooms are like a good thing, there is more privacy. I think every school should have one.”

Tami Shatsky
Sophomore



“I think they are great. I use them all the time... I like the idea that the stalls go from top to bottom. I think every school should have them.”

Dima Serebrenny
Junior



“I think that gender neutral bathrooms are a way of allowing people to express themselves, especially for those who are nonbinary.”

Maggie Rodas
Senior



“They are needed for queer and trans students who don’t feel comfortable using a certain bathroom because of their identity.”

Samuel Frank
Staff

Instrumental music: the best extracurricular



By Maxim Boychuk

The lights dim and the audience goes silent. The musicians see the bright white baton in the stage light and everyone puts their

instruments up, ready to play the piece they have been practicing for months on end. With a flick of the baton, the entire band begins to play “Omens of Love” by T-Square. Performing this piece at the 2022 Winter Concert was the highlight of my time in CVHS’s Wind Ensemble.

Throughout my entire music career, the most enjoyable part is the final product, the concerts! Many believe that band is simply going to class and playing as a group for an hour, which leads to a concert. They are mistaken.

Instrumental music, especially in Castro Valley, has numerous

moving parts to make every single program a success. Of course, we have our regular period classes in school, whether it is band or orchestra, but besides that, we have so much more. This includes marching band practices which are held around two weeks before school starts, practicing countless hours on the hot field almost every single day until the start of school. Additionally, there are separate percussion practices and color guard practices.

We also practice for the school’s football games! We get to practice popular songs that everyone knows and loves, as well as chants

that all members of the band shout to support our football team. Staying from the very beginning to the end of the varsity games is tough, but is definitely worth it.

Apart from marching band, the most important thing that any musician has to do is practice. This, in my opinion, is probably the most annoying and excruciating part of mastering your instrument. While not many students, especially students in junior year, have time to practice, we try our best to squeeze in a bit of time for music when we can.

The music programs here at CVHS are incredible. Along my

musical journey, I have made countless friendships and bonds with amazing people that I still learn and work with almost every single day that I do not think I would have otherwise made.

With the challenges of school itself, including classes and homework, musicians work extremely hard. Whether it is taking time out of their summer to practice marching or simply practicing at home, the work of a musician is rewarding, yet exceptionally challenging. Along the way, however, the experiences and memories that are created are truly priceless.

Taylor Swift: “role model for everyone”



By Lillian Cooke

Singer, songwriter, business woman, fashion and so much more. These are some of many more words that are used to describe Taylor Allison Swift. As said in Swift’s song “You’re On Your Own Kid,” she gave her “blood, sweat, and tears for this.” Now you might be wondering what “this” is. Well it represents all her success and perseverance through everything she’s been through. I believe Swift is much more than just a singer, she is an inspiration.

The way you typically get into music is through recommendations or even hearing an artist on the radio and listening to more. “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together,” was Swift’s first number one song, and at the age of four years old, I was drawn in.

Many people say that Swift just sings about her ex-boyfriends but there are a lot of songs that revolve around many other topics, including her thoughts on the LGBTQ+ community and the 2018 Tennessee Senate race. Listening to the way she

words her songs is what really connects most people to Swift. She inspires me because she is resilient and relatable.

Back in 2019, Swift got her first six albums sold and out of her possession because of entrepreneur, Scooter Braun. This has caused lots of controversy because Swift doesn’t have ownership of her original songs that she worked hard to make. So what did she do? She decided to retaliate by re-recording her former albums with her new record label. By doing this, she was able to have possession of her albums back by re-naming the albums with parentheses that say, “(Taylor’s Version).”

Not only was this inspiring, but this helped show women to stand up for themselves and how girls shouldn’t be treated by the “toxic male privilege.” Swift helps people relate to her music in ways no one could imagine. Lyrics such as “I can change everything about me to fit in,” and “It’s your freshman year and you’re gonna be here for the next four years in this town” help teen girls, including me, relate to what it’s like to be in high school.

With an amazing voice like hers, and the motivation that she has, I know she will be one of the big time artists of all time. Swift isn’t only a singer for young women, she is for any and all age groups, races, genders and religions. Swift is a role model for everyone, and people should strive to be as strong as she is.

Faking or fleeing? Yeonmi Park’s deception of the media



By Devin Hidayat

Imagine living in a world where everything is shrouded in mystery: one can be executed for even attempting to watch an American movie, and people stare emptily on the street, surviving off of dragonflies and grass. Yeonmi Park claims to be a North Korean defector, only escaping through helpful missionaries. However, her stories can’t seem to line up with her previous statements, from how she was treated in North Korea to how she escaped it.

A big piece of evidence directly comes from a South Korean TV show called “On My Way To Meet You”, where North Korean defectors are asked to talk about their experiences. During the TV show, Park’s mother is quoted saying, “It wasn’t as harsh (referring to eating grass), and we did not starve. For example, if someone was to ask what kind of rice we ate, we didn’t differentiate between white rice or corn rice as we did not know the difference.” Park later claimed that she and her mother were forced to respond that way.



Park has also made many statements that show her prosperity in North Korea. Her mother is seen in the South Korean TV show wearing a Chanel bag and checkered pants and dresses imported from Japan. Park points this out, quoted “My mum even carried around a Chanel bag in North Korea.” When the interviewee questioned other North Korean defectors in the show if Park would be classified as rich, one defector said, “Yes, that’s right.”

Another quote was from multiple sources, as she continually changes the crime a mother was executed for. In 2002, Park claimed that her friend’s mother was killed for watching a James Bond movie, but in an interview with Joe Rogan, she said they were executed for South Korean DVDs. She then revokes her

statement in an interview on the Independent, claiming that a Hollywood movie was the reason for her execution.

The reason switching for every other interview could have been an honest mistake. However, other North Korean defectors have been interviewed about the public execution when watching movies. Multiple defectors from her hometown in Hyesan have debunked the myth, responding that arrest is possible, but public execution has never been seen before.

Using this evidence, I personally believe that Park has lied about a few of her credited stories. While I do truly believe that Park has both lived in—and escaped—the harsh environment of North Korea, I similarly believe that the living conditions and escape were not as glamorously depressing.

Advanced classes should have entrance exams



By Cat Baldwin

Junior year is one of the most important years in a student’s high school experience. It is also when kids tend to take more AP classes. History is one of those classes that students are required to take every year if they want to graduate. Now, juniors who want to take an AP history class have the option to take either AP US History (APUSH) or Honors Afrocentric US History and English (Afro). Some kids prefer to take Afro, not because they find the topic of the class interesting, but because it is much easier than APUSH, according to past and present students. Both

Afro History and APUSH are taught by Kevin Batchelor, with Michelle Lew teaching Afro Literature.

There has been no required entrance test to take APUSH for the past two years, so any junior can take the course. Meanwhile, for Afro, students must read a short passage and write a paragraph analyzing it. They’re graded based on their writing and how well they understood the passage. Last year, around 100 students, including myself, got into the class, with three periods for Afro. However, this year, only 65 students got into the class, with just two periods of Afro. The reasoning for this change was that fewer students qualified for the college-level, discussion-based class.

An example of this would be my brother; he got into the class, but once he realized how much work and time he would have to put in, he dropped. I was one of the kids whom Batchelor had personally convinced to take the class, because of what I would be able to learn, and so I

took the class. To my surprise, a group of students there seemed to have no interest in the class and would sit in a corner seat on their phones or talking to friends.

With a class like Afro, where discussion and the students’ interests progress the class, this group of kids sometimes made it difficult to do so. I was partnered with a lot of kids, mainly in Afro Literature, who never spoke a word or spoke very little when having discussions about a book or whatever topic the class was on. Afro and all its elements require hard work and a passion to learn this particular history.

I believe that having a test for any AP class is a good idea because the classes usually have limited space for students. A test allows those who really care about the subject an opportunity to learn, not just earning the AP credits.

So, the question that arises is, do you meet the qualifications and the passion level to enter this class? Find out when you apply for Afro.

Letters

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



THE CASTRO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Olympian

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Spanish exchange students navigate CVHS

By Kaitlyn Tchang

At first glance, seniors Alberto Rodríguez and Lucas Menéndez and junior Alejandro Baixas look like average high schoolers. They joke together, struggle over some classes and play for the JV football team. What makes them so unique? These three students arrived in the US just at the end of this summer as foreign exchange students from Spain.

They will stay until early June before returning back home. For Baixas, home is the Spanish capital of Madrid, while Rodríguez comes from Almería, a city in the south. Menéndez hails from Asturias, in northern Spain.

In order to study in the US, all three students had to go through a time-consuming application process.

“You have to do a lot of paperwork,” recalled Menéndez. “You have to pay a large quantity to come here... and then you have to go to the embassy [in Madrid] to take your visa to stay all year.”

Upon arrival, the three students met on the football team and quickly became friends.

At first, joining this foreign sport was a jarring experience: “The first day, I was about to join water polo because I didn’t like [football],” joked Rodríguez. However, “once you start getting the rules and everything, it’s a nice sport.”

“It’s a cool experience to try



KAITLYN TCHANG

Lucas Menéndez, Alejandro Baixas and Alberto Rodríguez are enjoying their year at CVHS.

new sports,” added Menéndez. The coaches and teammates, he gratefully noted, have received them “like family.”

In addition to new athletics, the exchange students have been adapting to the culture shock; for instance, American lunch hours are much earlier compared to Spain’s. When it comes to academics, one notable difference is the homework load; while junior and senior year are considered crucial in American schools, in Spain they are non-compulsory, meaning students have no homework and spend their time preparing for and taking exams instead.

Rodríguez also explained

specific teaching differences. In Spain, education consisted of more memorization, and subject choices per grade were limited. The exchange students are now having more fun due to CVHS’ more interactive teaching style, as well as the wide variety of course options to choose from, such as civil engineering and psychology, which Rodríguez and Menéndez are enrolled in, respectively.

Lastly, all three students expressed astonishment at Trojan Stadium and the CVHS gym facilities.

“In Spain, everything is smaller,” commented Menéndez. “We don’t have the

huge stadium that you have to play sports.”

Despite all the things Rodríguez, Baixas and Menéndez enjoy about Castro Valley, they are also facing their own set of challenges. Naturally, these native Spanish speakers’ first hurdle was adjusting to English.

“We’re used to using English, but not all day,” Rodríguez explained. “So it was quite difficult the first [few] days, but now it’s fine.”

Now, over one month into the school year, they generally share the same struggles as many other CVHS students: maintaining their grades in

tough classes and getting through less interesting ones.

“Some of the classes are kind of boring, but that’s with every place,” Baixas laughed. “US History... trying to survive that.”

“Math [class] is the most difficult, because you do a lot of things, [that] in Spain, we don’t see,” Menéndez shared. Due to the different way material is being taught, they have to relearn much of it.

For Rodríguez, government is his most challenging course: “It’s something we have never learned, and also it’s a different country, so we don’t know about it.”

Outside of school, the exchange students enjoy spending time with their host families, visiting local cities like San Francisco and Monterey, and simply sleeping after tiring football practices.

Looking ahead, they all hope to maintain straight As and make it onto a varsity sports team at some point during the school year—“just for the jacket,” Baixas joked. He plans to try out for basketball and track and field, while Menéndez is looking forward to soccer season; Rodríguez will try out for soccer and volleyball.

As all three students navigate their first and final year at CVHS, they feel optimistic and grateful for the support from their classmates, teammates, and coaches: “I thought that because we’re from another place, they would ignore us at first,” said Baixas. “But they help you with everything you need.”

Oktoberfest brings food and festivities

By Wyatt Franklin

Oktoberfest is known as a massive festival with great food such as sausages, pretzels and beer. All of this was brought to CVHS to celebrate the German holiday, minus the beer of course.

This year, like many years before, the German club brought the holiday of Oktoberfest to CVHS in great fashion with the help of the Deco club. During lunch on Oct. 18, several massive lines formed in the quad to receive good food from the German club students.

This once a year event brings together the whole school under the banner of the German class and club. Junior Tony Valverde said, “giving out great food to the community is really inspiring. I think it’s a great event.”

While some students are



LUIS OCHEA

Students enjoy German food during lunch.

inspired, others are just glad to get some good food. Many students come through with heaping plates and beaming smiles. German student Alex Winn stated that, “the food’s good.”

The festival known as Oktoberfest originated as a

celebration after a wedding in 1810 in Munich, Germany. Andreas Michael Dall’Armi started this festival, pulling in a crowd of 6 million people to celebrate the wedding of the Prince and Princess of Bavaria.

For this year’s celebration at CVHS the German class, club,

and the Deco club all helped get ready for the festivities. The German club was an integral

“Giving out great food to the community is really inspiring. I think it’s a great event.”

Tony Valverde

Oktoberfest fan

part in the planning of the event as club member Cameron Parnell stated that, “many

members helped hand out food or set up.”

While the setup and planning was coordinated by the German club, the decorations in the quad were products of the Deco club. Parnell also said that the decorations went up in part through, “the help of parent volunteers [from the German club].”

Through the help and planning of the German and Deco clubs, Oktoberfest was a great success, not only planning wise, but also the decorations that were beautifully done throughout the quad.

The German and Deco clubs continued the amazing tradition of Oktoberfest in brilliant style. Many students were very excited about the prospect of free food which the German students happily provided, leading to an amazing event.

Engineers create the future at CVHS

By Samuel Jarvis

If you could pick any school activity to do right now it would probably be in engineering. Why? As Engineering 2 student Bryan Tunggal said, “When I think about my favorite school projects I think of engineering because I can make my own projects.”

In the class right now every student will design and build a 3 inches by 3 inches by 3 inches cube, while still learning about how to draw models and assemble parts which they will use as the foundations for their futures in the class.

“We need more engineers because engineering enables all skills,” said engineering teacher and CTE chair Lisa Holmes. CVHS engineering can serve as a fun cross between math and problem solving. When using their method of finding a problem, researching said

problem, creating a solution, building said solution and improving on it as much as possible you will have a complete and commercially ready product. Even someone who sees no future career in engineering can enjoy this class for the simple life skills and problem solving that it teaches.

The cube is 3 inches by 3 inches by 3 inches made out of multiple parts made with between four and six smaller cubes that must fit together to make the larger cube; besides those constraints students are free to create any type of pattern on their cubes. The kids in the class can be seen solving each other’s puzzles as quickly as possible in an attempt to break the cubes record. While they may look simple it’s a struggle to find the true solution when put under the pressure of the timer. Once you have a cube that you personally



SAMUEL JARVIS

An engineering student assembles a puzzle cube.

made you feel a larger sense of accomplishment.

As Engineering 2 student Vincent Cavalieri put it, “Engineering is fun because you can use your imagination to create a final product.”

Before the puzzle cube activity the students are taught how to draw with isometric drawing

which is essentially drawing in 3D. They then use this to draw the sketches of the cube and to draw future models that they will then build like in the case of the Recycle Racer which is a car made out of everyday items you may have around your house or designing a catapult. The students will soon start to

use the modeling software auto desk inventor to model their future projects as accurately as possible. The first assignment on this software is to recreate and animate their puzzle cubes coming together and coming apart.

A student in engineering will see all this and more because engineering is the combination of everything you can think of. When a CVHS engineer sees a problem they will use what they have learned to create a solution in a way no other classes teaches. The initial proof of this is the puzzle cube because in learning this you are taught about things like statistics and model drawing.

When you think of the first steps in a promising future it starts off with a small thing like the puzzle cube but ends with large things like a problem solving mindset or potential career in engineering.

CVHS Class of 1973 celebrates 50th reunion

By Zoe Lawrence

The CVHS graduating class of 1973 held their 50th reunion in early October. They had a weekend-long celebration including a dinner, a social hour, and brunch, with a total of 99 people attending these events. Finally, they finished off the reunion with one last celebration at the high school.

Just to put 50 years ago in perspective, in the year they graduated the most popular movie was The Exorcist, a perfect flick for a Halloween fright night, a package of Oreos cost only 59¢, and the average cost of a home in the U.S. was \$32,000.

A lot has changed since 1973, but it was clear at the brunch on

Sunday that the most important things, like friendship and unity, have not. As alumni gathered outside the high school for the brunch, and were asked about what CVHS was like 50 years ago, what they would go back and change if they could, and the reasons they attended the reunion.

“[CVHS] was a large school, though not as large as today, and mostly pretty fun,” said Steve Blake. He and others had regrets about not getting more involved in the clubs, but he fondly remembered his science classes.

Other alumni, Valerie Wilkerson Dupuich and Cindy Hall Alexander, laughingly remembered there being “a lot of smoking in the bathroom

right across from the teacher’s lounge, a big cloud of smoke.” Apparently, some things don’t change. Blake, Dupuich and Hall were all excited about the reunion for no other reason except to just “see old friends.”

The reunion committee chair for the past 25 years, Rebecca “Becky” Avelar, has helped

organize the combined reunions of classes 1970-1979.

CVHS in the ‘70s was “really good. We did not have the pressures the students face today...We did not have cell phones; we did not have social media. None of us knew what a lockdown was. We did not have drive-by shootings...We

kept everyone safe...We really took care of everyone,” recalled Avelar.

Avelar’s advice to current CVHS students is to “be friends with everyone; give them courtesy, because you never know what someone is going through...and take care of each other.”



ZOE LAWRENCE

The CVHS Class of 1973 enjoyed their return to the campus.





CVHS cheer team returns to stunting

By Melissa Boussaroque

The CVHS cheer team has finally returned to stunting three years after being halted by the pandemic.

When COVID-19 hit, the cheer team had to stop stunting for safety reasons. However, returning to stunting was not as easy. There were many things that needed to happen, such as certifications, training, and most of all, administrative approval.

"In order to create the opportunity for students to participate in stunting, we had to ensure that coaches were all certified and facilities were able to safely allow for the activities with mats in place," said Athletic Director Kathleen Stacy.

After figuring out all the quirks, the cheer team is happy to finally be able to

stunt once again, and to have the chance to show off one of the most dangerous aspects of cheer.

"I am very excited that we are finally able to stunt again because it allows for more opportunities for the team to show our skills and also stunting is a lot of fun," said varsity cheer captain, senior Payton Pacheco.

Senior Jason Galvan agreed: "I think it's going to give people more opportunities and memories about high school cheer."

While the team is still working on getting back into stunting, they are already showing some of their moves during the football games, at halftime and occasionally on the sideline. The cheerleaders are looking forward to showing off their new stunts.

"I'm excited for them!" said Spirit Squad coach Janet Taddie.



Sophomore Alana Thompson stunts at football game.

RENATA GUTIERREZ

Raumann leads water polo team with over 77 goals

By Haku Kremer

Junior Caleb Raumann is a double threat: he plays for the boys varsity water polo team, as well as the boys varsity basketball team. He first got into water polo through swimming.

"I was really into swimming and at the swim lesson I had on Friday, they set up a little kickboard in the gutters and a Disney princess rubber ball that we played with," recalled Raumann. "That was my first introduction and I've loved it ever since."

At CVHS, Raumann's talent was quickly recognized.

"I was pulled up to varsity in my freshman year to play about five games for the water polo team," he explained. "My first [varsity] game, we were playing against Cal High in a tournament, which is a really good team. I scored 4 goals, which is one of my most memorable moments."

Raumann has had impressive stats throughout his water polo career, with 52 goals his freshman year in JV, 31 goals and 19 assists his sophomore year on varsity and 77 goals and counting for his junior year on varsity.

"Caleb is extremely competitive. Every game he takes very seriously, every practice he takes seriously

and he is physically strong and probably the strongest shot in the league," explained coach Patrick Ryken. "Caleb is leading the team with goals and gets a lot of attention; a lot of teams will focus on getting one or double teams on him. His impact is a really stronger scorer like Steph Curry, the defense focuses on him and allows other players to be more open and create opportunities."

Ryken added that Raumann "sees the game very well and communicates with his teammates and knows where the ball should go."

"His size, 6'6, makes him dominate and with a lot of the big guys they might not tend to understand the game, but Caleb uses his intelligence with his body," agreed junior Edwin Sabanovic. "Caleb as

a teammate is very down-to-earth and will tell you the truth a lot. He isn't afraid to be strict, like if someone is goofing off he won't be shy to tell you to listen to the coach."

"We had an overtime game in the foothill tournament against Heritage," recalled Ryken. "It was a golden goal, we won the sprint and the ball shifted to Caleb at mid-pool and he skipped it in the high corner of the goal to win the game."

Raumann has high hopes for the future of the boys water polo team.

"I'm looking forward to playing with all the other guys coming up because we got some good talent coming up through the program," he said. "Our goal is to win league this year, then hopefully we can go back-to-back and win league next year."



Caleb Raumann gets ready to shoot the ball.

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Volleyball title highlights fall sports



Avery Bland and the rest of her team celebrate after a major score.

LUIS OCHEA



RENATA GUTIERREZ

Nico Colmenares scores a touchdown in a massive win.



Alenea Loera prepares to send a pass to her team during a match.

NICOLE WU



MICHAEL LAC

Lia D'Errico does flagwork as the marching band performs.



VICTOR BAHNG

A cross country race comes down to a single step between Mika Gomes and an opponent.



KELLY XU

Malia Robinson hits an impressive shot.



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2007004

State Farm, Bloomington, IL

“Little Mermaid” provides magical challenge

By Mason Jordan

Ariel leans in close as the crab Sebastian spins a gentle melody. Prince Eric is almost ready for a kiss, but he hesitates. “Just kiss the girl,” Sebastian sings. The wildlife of the swamp trills around them as this magical scene comes to life on the CVHS stage, but this moment is not allowed to last. Before the Prince and Ariel can complete a kiss, the villainous eels Flotsam and Jetsam rock the boat at the command of their evil leader, the sea witch Ursula.

“The Little Mermaid”, an iconic Disney animated film, was adapted into a Broadway musical in 2007. This year, CVHS has adapted it into an amazing stage production that will dazzle Disney fanatics and new viewers alike. Many challenges arise with adapting such an iconic film, like how to capture the magic of animation with real actors, on a real stage. The world that the students have created is wonderful, with its colorful grottos and undersea kingdom. It’s also terrifying, with the purple-lit cavern that Ursula the sea witch dwells in. However it’s also beautiful, with the grand and wealthy castle settings out of the ocean.

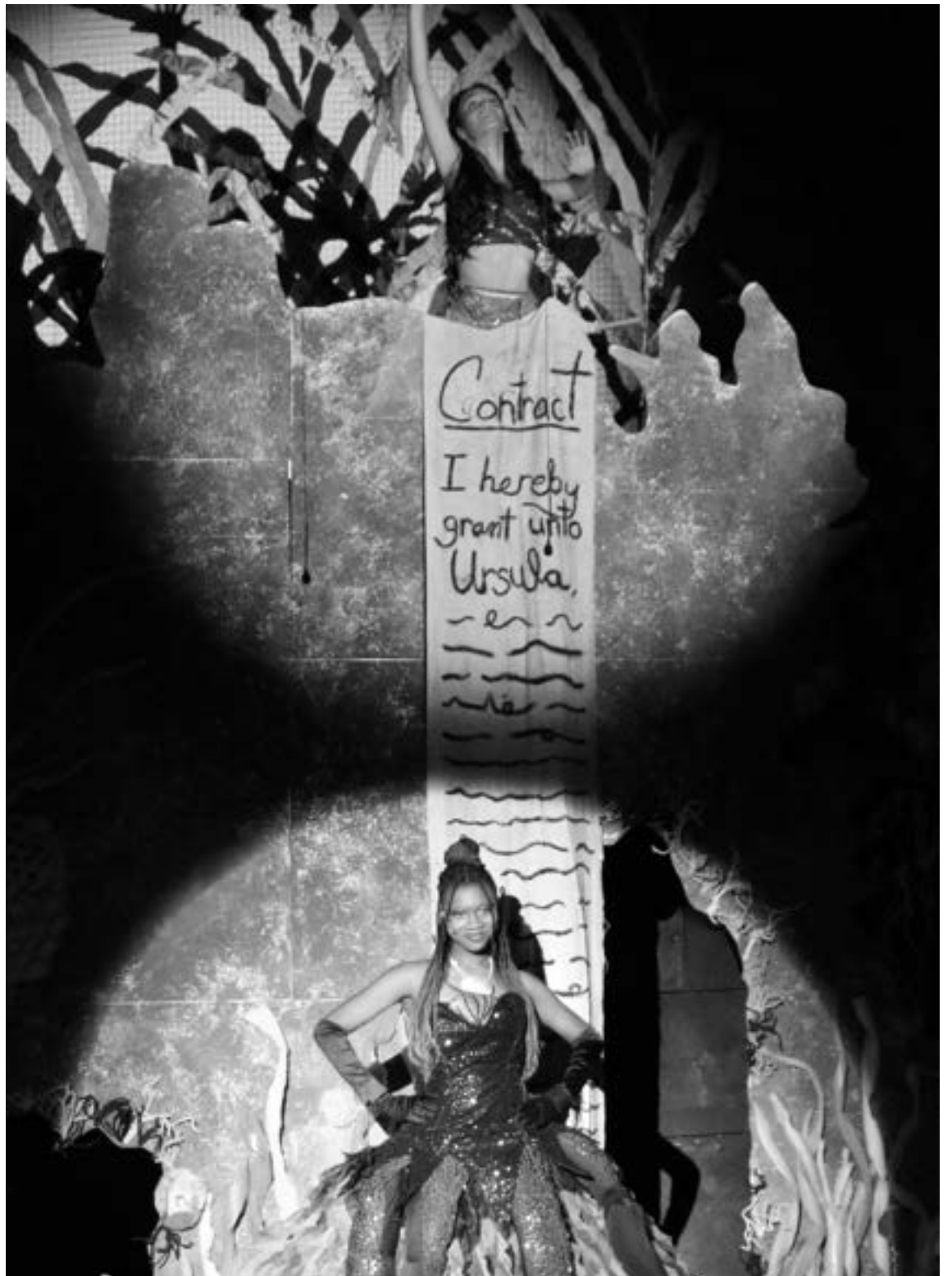
The underwater world was difficult to bring into reality. The production crew worked hard and tirelessly to make magic happen and sell the world of “Little Mermaid” as something real. “This was the most tech-heavy show we have done post covid, and it was a challenge to bring fantasy into reality,” said senior Tien Nguyen, who worked on tech

and played mersister Adella in the performance. In a show with so many moving parts, each person involved knows their place and their job and works hard to make it happen smoothly and realistically.

The production makes use of a double cast, where two actors are used for each primary role. This presents a lot of benefits, but also a lot of extra challenges. In the end, it’s two casts that have to be trained and ready to perform, that means double the work. Many actors had comments on how the show challenged them and strengthened them in their work.

“One of the most challenging things is preparing, so that when you step onstage it’s memory and not something you force,” said sophomore Kennedy Quick, who terrifies as the evil sea witch Ursula. “Being in front of everyone can make you really nervous, but you have to take pride in what you are doing.” The show is filled with many difficult scene transitions, costume changes, and acting challenges, which proves it to be one of the most engaging productions CVHS students have been involved with.

A challenging production imbued with Disney magic is sure to make “The Little Mermaid” an unforgettable show, and it has pushed the CVHS actors to a different type of challenge. This undersea adventure is an amazing trip into a magical world nothing like our own, one for the kids and for the parents. Ariel, Ursula, and all of their friends await you on this journey, so be sure not to miss it!



Kennedy Quick and Nora Layne dazzle as Ursula and Ariel.

MASON JORDAN

“Elvis” connects audiences to the king of rock

By Grace Lopez

Elvis Presley was a huge part of the birth of rock and roll. His music was one of a kind. But many argue he had heavy inspiration from southern Black music.

“Elvis” the movie and musical depicts his rise to stardom from the time he was an innocent, curious and gifted child in music and spirituality to a middle-age man who loses himself along the way to fame.

The rock and roll star was known for his remarkable voice with hints of southern Black musicality. You could feel the hormones in the air, as the teenage girls first saw the way he shook his hips on the



stage. They screeched for Elvis with excruciating excitement, sometimes making it almost impossible to hear the music over the screams.

The opening scene shows a young boy in a small, southern

town who is curiously hiding as he and his friends search for the source of the exhilarating sounds of a revival. He is running to the music, you can feel his desperation to feel the rhythm of the base, the

percussion and voices of the music of “That’s All Right.”

This experience opened his heart and soul to music. Each time he began to hear music, he felt electrified and pulled as if a magnet into the sounds. You can feel a rush of anxiety rush through your legs, when watching his love for music burst out into dancing and shaking.

Elvis’ upbringing made him vulnerable and gave him a thirst for fame. Ironically, Elvis was chasing fame, while The Colonel, a struggling artist manager, was chasing Elvis. The Colonel was a predator hungry for Elvis’ profitability. He guarantees to Elvis that he will become “the biggest star in the world,” and his family will

never know poverty again.

As time goes on, The Colonel became a father figure to Elvis during his hardships in the film. As Elvis gains his riches, he begins to lose himself. As he loses different parts of himself, the cinematography drastically changes to graphic and darker scenes. The spinning and bursts of blasting, loud music at each scene can almost make you feel ill. It feels so real, as his mind unravels from the intoxication of drugs and alcohol.

This raw musical takes you on a rollercoaster of exhilaration, excitement, happiness, fear and grief. After watching this movie, you will begin to realize the impact that Elvis had on the world, not only with music, but how he expressed himself.

Audience becomes detectives in ‘Whodunnit?’

By Ethan Dinh

The honors advanced drama class hosted their newest original performance for one night only in the auditorium, with doors open to all that had arrived. As the crowd began to move in, the performers of the night had already become one with their characters.

Before long, many in the audience learned the names of the Dudleys whose wealth funded the whole school and met several students and staff of the fictional high school, noting the attire matched what one would see in the 1980s. Before long, everyone settled on the lunch table seats watching the performance as they were given official introductions to each character and their relationships.

Midway through the assembly, Debbie Dudley (played by Nora Layne) was officially done being in a school that showed no respect for her wealth, announcing that she and her family would be leaving, going to get her three million dollar



ETHAN DINH

The detective accuses the thief of stealing the diamond.

ring.

Ignoring Mrs. Dudley’s outburst, the spotlight stayed focused on the teachers. For a moment, everything seemed as normal as Dudley High would ever get, before the cafeteria began to get noisy as the audience members muttered to each other when Mrs. Dudley’s scream rang out, followed by a tall man stumbling after her.

The two went onstage before Mrs. Dudley hid behind her husband while the security guard (played by Emon Dost) who had watched the entrance collapsed on the stage, a knife embedded deep in his chest.

Almost immediately, a man named Jack (played by Pebble Galli) marched onto the stage, claiming to be a part of the FBI, deduced that the murder

happened thanks to a certain Dudley’s missing ring, only to be interrupted by another FBI agent (Tien Nguyen) that exposed him as a notorious thief. Yet even though he was a thief, Jack claimed to never steal the ring, proving it with his flight ticket. So that left the question to the audience. Whodunnit?

Papers were distributed to audience members as the news

was announced to the unwitting students of Dudley High that they were all now a part of the investigation to find who had killed the guard and more importantly.

“FIND MY RING!” screamed Mrs. Dudley.

And whoever unraveled the mystery first would be able to grab free tickets to the Little Mermaid performance later this month. With delicious chocolate cakes, cookies, and other delicious treats locked behind finding one clue, all of the audience moved to investigate the six clues scattered around the cafeteria. Grouping up with friends and family with a wild fervor that many people scampered for any hint of a clue.

“I thought it was really cool and entertaining how the audience got to be involved and a part of it,” said junior Austin Tang.

During the whole experience many found their hearts pounding with pens scrawling down notes to find whodunit, or maybe a few wanted to find a seven-figure ring to pocket for themselves.

Cabaret captivates audience



Cabaret singers ended the night with ‘Louder Than Words.’

MARIO JOSEPH

By Mario Joseph

CVHS choir students came together to showcase an unforgettable event at the Choir Cabaret on the evening of Oct. 6.

The students took to the stage to perform different musical arrangements from many classics, leaving the audience in awe. The evening’s highlights included various solo and group performances, all demonstrating the remarkable musical talent of the school’s talented students.

Mac and cheese was served to complement the evening. In addition to the musical performances, raffles were held, adding an element of excitement as lucky winners went home with fantastic prizes. One such prize was the Alan basket, which

included multiple treats and a framed picture of Alan, a CVHS choir alumnus.

“[Cabaret was] exhausting,” reflected junior Brandon Lee. “Really exhausting, but it was so fun.”

The performers poured their hearts and souls into each and every one of their own performances.

The evening featured a diverse selection of songs. Some of the standout performances included “My Favorite Things” from The Sound of Music, “Proud of Your Boy” from Aladdin and “Let It Go” from Frozen. Each piece was met with applause from the audience.

The Choir Cabaret allowed us to experience a shared love for music. It was a testament to the incredible talent and dedication

of the school’s students and the unwavering amount of support from their families and teachers.

As the night ended, it left a lasting impression on the audience, setting the stage for more choir events in the future. CVHS choir members demonstrated that music has the power to unite, making this event a success.

The evening of music was a reminder of the spirit of the school’s community and the potential of the talented students that are at our own school.

“Keep coming to choir events, man,” concluded Lee. “We love to see you there. And we hope that you love to see us. The next choir event will be the Winter Concert. Are you going to come?”



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CVHS opens community health center

By Luis Ochea

The Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center at CVHS had its grand opening after nearly a year of planning.

The opening came with an excited response, with Superintendent Parvin Ahmadi saying “There are lots of students and community members who really have an increased access to a clinic to help get the health care that they need, right here very close to where they are.”

The health center is sponsored by Tiburcio Vasquez, being the group’s fifth opening in a school site. The CVHS location will provide many services aimed towards students but also to the community as a whole, being able to offer services such as immunizations and sports physicals. It will also provide medications such as Tylenol, a service currently unique to CVHS.

“It’s something that’s going



School officials cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the health center.

LUIS OCHEA

to be very unique compared to our clinics where we can provide medications, so when someone’s not feeling well, instead of going home, we

can treat them on the spot,” said Alfonso Alvarado, a representative from Tiburcio Vasquez.

The process to reach the

grand opening was rigorous, requiring several collaborations with the Wellness Center, Tiburcio Vasquez, and Fremont Bank, which gave the district

\$100,000 to construct the health center.

Despite the massive achievement, however, there is still much discussion on how to expand the services of the health center.

“It’s going to be a work in progress. [CVHS]’s health center is very unique compared to the other four we manage, and I feel like it has a lot of potential to be able to expand and do a lot more,” said Alvarado.

District behavioral health coordinator Marian Meadows also stated her vision of building a set of connections between only the wellness and health centers, but also having the conversations become student-led.

“The end game is really beyond the adults getting together but the kids getting together. These systems are adapting to what the students are saying, not what the adults think kids are saying,” said Meadows.

Teachers’ take on standards based grading

By Matthew Wong

A recent survey of over 80 CVHS teachers shows that staff are divided on what standards-based-grading (SBG) policies to implement and how effective they are.

Almost all of the respondents have implemented some SBG policies but only 55 percent have switched to the 0-4 grading scale. Some SBG policies like 50 percent being the lowest possible grade are only implemented by about 12 percent of respondents, but 63 percent have implemented other policies like not grading non-academic standards such as group work.

“Using ‘no-zero’ grading has created a safety net of sorts for students to pass the class... I’m not sure that fewer Fs, however, is the same thing as more learning or a reduced achievement gap,” wrote an English teacher.

“Students have passed my class who I didn’t feel should pass. Standards Based-Grading allows a person to complete D- work on a few assessments and then pass,” wrote another English teacher.

For assignments, almost all respondents accept late work with parameters/penalties and it is usually less than a quarter of the gradebook. Some find this valuable in its forgiveness for students who cannot complete homework on time, while others believe homework and meeting deadlines are crucial lessons.

“Classwork/homework is a significant fraction of the grade because it is one of the ways that students are actually demonstrating understanding,” wrote a math teacher.

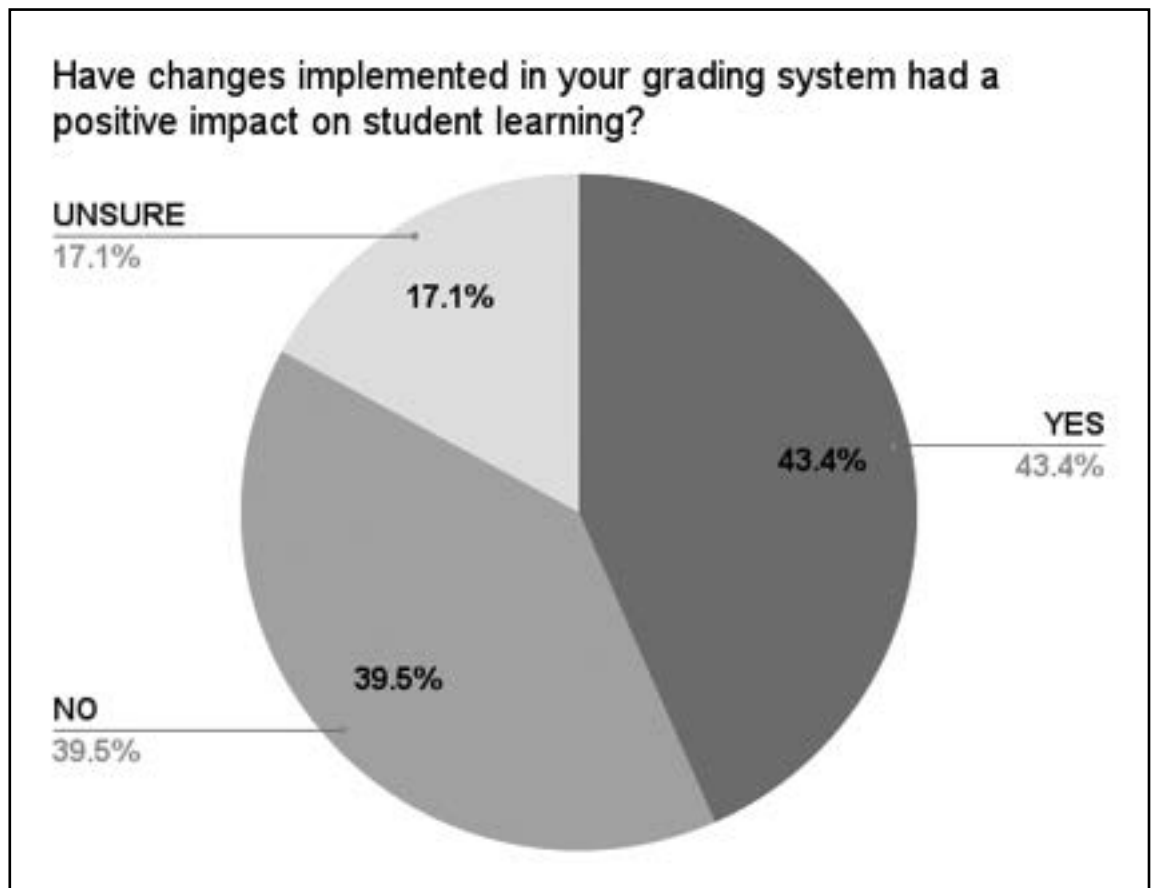
“I have found that expecting less of students and removing deadlines/consequences reduces student effort. [These methods] generally widen the gap between those who try and those who completely disengage. It feels like we’re setting up our most delicate populations for failure,” wrote a social studies teacher.

For assessments, 93 percent of respondents allow retakes under certain conditions such as completion of required assignments. Many respondents noted that retakes place more responsibility on the student; it ensures that a student tries to understand the material and they stay motivated to try. Some teachers, however, believe that this is causing students to rely on retakes.

“I firmly believe that a student should come prepared for the assessment on the published date of that assessment,” wrote an English teacher.

Whether or not SBG benefits student learning is almost evenly split among respondents. Some teachers see students taking more responsibility for their learning and succeeding by applying themselves more in class. Others believe that the high forgiveness of SBG is conditioning students to struggle in stricter work environments. Additionally, SBG is argued to be a more equitable grading system, but whether or not this is true is debated.

“This new system is actually causing issues that were not foreseen. It’s actually negatively affecting higher achieving students and average students. It’s showing no positive impact



MELISSA BOUSSAROQUE

on poor performers,” wrote a science teacher.

“SBG doesn’t punish slow learners, or students who struggle with homework. It allows students who are absent time to make up and relearn. Students starting with poor grades are able to bring their grade up over time,” wrote a math teacher.

“The kids who don’t want to participate will still not participate,” wrote a PE teacher.

Many teachers believe that SBG needs more polishing before it can be implemented well. How it compares to the A-F grading system, however, is disputed.

“Achievement towards

learning goals and skills has improved... typical grading allows kids to skirt by and inflate grades without any achievement towards learning goals (hw cheating, parent help, extra credit....),” wrote a social studies teacher.

“This is setting them up for failure. Colleges don’t let you turn in things late. Colleges don’t let you retake exams as many times as you want. Jobs don’t let you repeatedly turn in work late. Jobs don’t let you redo something multiple times until you get it right,” wrote an English teacher.

“SBG is yet another thing that leaves teachers feeling like they aren’t doing enough when really

what is being asked of us would be wonderful in theory but nearly impossible in practice,” wrote a language teacher.

“I did this survey because I was concerned about a disconnect between what was being communicated to the community and what teachers were actually doing... I was also worried about the inconsistency of the implementation of all of these different policies so in order to represent my department on the district grading committee, I wanted to make sure that I understood what teachers were actually doing,” said social studies teacher Jenny Sitkin, who administered the survey to staff.

Trojans walk and roll to school



CVHS students run the Walk and Roll stand.

ZOE SCHWARTZLE

By Zoe Schwartzle

About 363,000 tons of carbon dioxide are released into the atmosphere every year due to people driving their kids or students driving themselves to school. Green energy companies themselves say that parents driving their children to school are inflicting major harm on the planet. These scientists and companies suggest alternative ways to get to school such as biking, public transportation, walking, or taking a carpool. CVHS students accepted this challenge on Oct. 4 with Walk and Roll to School Day. Students could win multiple prizes such as pencils, paper busses, stickers, sunglasses and granola bars for making the effort to walk, carpool or take public transportation.

Students from the leadership class were waiting by the entrance of the school with prizes asking the most important question of that day: “How did you get to school?”

Many showed up for school

saying that they walked or rode their bike that day, earning a round of applause from the leadership class.

“I drive my brother to school every day,” said senior Sophia Pereira. Driving her brother counted as a carpool, earning her a prize.

Others however, forgot about the event that day and looked at the table with quizzical expressions and confusion.

Small events like this can really make a difference to help our environment. Carpooling can reduce the carbon footprint of an average household by up to 2,000 pounds (one ton) of carbon dioxide annually. Taking public transportation reduces carbon dioxide emissions by 45 percent. Carpooling can also be a great way to catch up with a friend in the morning if you’re sharing a ride.

The annual CVHS Walk and Roll to School Day showed that small things can make a positive impact on our environment and our community.

CVHS prepares for exam

By Hailey Young

As the first quarter of this school year ends, students are not the only ones anticipating their report cards. CVHS is preparing for its very own grade, the accreditation evaluation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, also known as the WASC. This important process holds the power to certify the school’s commitment to education and continuous improvement.

WASC is an essential accreditation organization that plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality and educational standards of schools and colleges in the Western United States. CVHS, like many other educational institutions, undergoes the WASC accreditation process every six years. This accreditation serves as a validation of the school’s commitment to maintaining high standards of education and providing a quality learning environment.

The WASC accreditation process starts off with a self-study, where CVHS conducts an in depth self examination of academic programs and policies, school performance, and more. Administrators, teachers, and staff are actively involved in the self-study process, and this year students have the opportunity to give their input on various aspects of the school’s operations.

Through a survey made by Assistant Principal Kevin Baker, students can give their opinions via a Likert Scale with prompts such as “Are your classes equity-centered?” and “Does CVHS have a clearly stated vision and purpose?” Participation in the survey allows WASC school administrators to collect feedback from a diverse set of students to ensure a large sample of voices.

Additionally, the WASC Student Committee is an opportunity for students to directly advocate for their needs and concerns. It is

highly encouraged that students participate in either activity.

“Everyone should get involved in the WASC year evaluation to help students and staff know what aspects of the school’s environment need to be improved on and what is working well,” said junior Sam Leber. Having joined the WASC Student Committee, she added, “I joined because I think it’s important for students to have a say in what they’re learning and how the school they’re attending is run. Taking a survey or joining the committee gives you an opportunity to make change at CVHS within our next six-year cycle, and keep our school running smoothly.”

At the end of this self-study process a report that details school strengths is written, acknowledging areas where it excels, while also equally recognizing areas that require attention. The main focus of the report consists of a reflection on WASC goals, which are specific goals and standards set by educational institutions at the beginning of each six year cycle. The self-study report plays a crucial role in demonstrating its alignment with its past four goals, which include the centralization of standards, integration of special education and English learner students, revaluation of AP/Honors selection process to ensure the equity of students, and building leadership skills of Admin/Department chairs.

Once the self-study is complete, a committee of experienced educators and administrators will visit the school. They will conduct interviews, observations, and gather feedback from stakeholders to confirm the self-study findings.

“CVHS needs a good evaluation to be accredited by WASC and be able to give students diplomas accepted by colleges and job opportunities. Without this accreditation, our diplomas wouldn’t really mean anything, it would just be a piece

of paper, so it’s super important to get involved and help CVHS get a good evaluation,” Leber added.

The “report card” CVHS receives from WASC represents not just a corroboration of the school’s current efforts but a vision of the school’s future.

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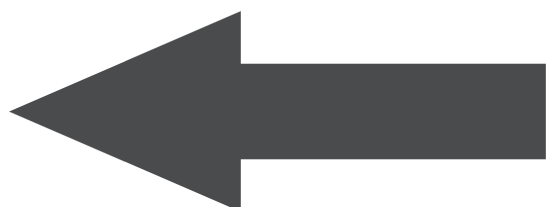


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