



EAGLE'S SCREAM

HALLOWEEN SKIT '19



CLASS OF 2020 TAKES THE CROWN



"IT" VERSUS "NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET"

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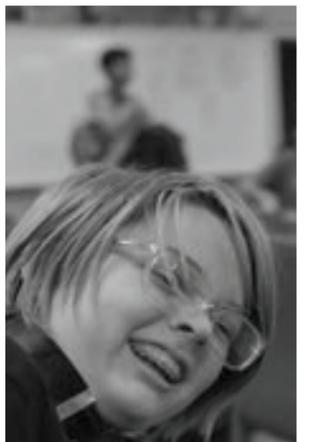


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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Happy Halloween, Eagles! October is coming to a close, and although today we celebrate by stuffing ourselves senseless with candy to the point of cataonia, it also signals what we here at the Eagle’s Scream call “crunch time.” What does that mean? For seniors, it means kneeling at the mercy of admissions officers; for any class officers or ASB students, it means devoting your lifeforce to looming proms and dances; and for any student or human being, it means dragging yourself through finals when all you want to do is fall asleep to the soothing sounds of Black Friday commercials. But persist, Eagles-- and more importantly, read our October issue and remind yourself of all we’ve accomplished this year, whether those accomplishments be school events like SCO’s Haunted Halls (page 3!) or personal projects (see Lucien’s feature on Jacob Bernadino’s cinematic opus, *The Peter Movie*, on page 8). Pat yourself on the back for all you’ve accomplished this year, and hang in there until Thanksgiving Break.

— LOVE, LOLA —



THE EAGLE'S SCREAM: The September Issue

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AT THE ROCK

PENNY FOR YOUR FEARS: HALLOWEEN SKIT 2019



Mathilda Barr|Staff Writer

Each year, as the days inch closer and closer to the end of October, students at Eagle Rock are itching with the fever of class spirit, each day bringing the junior and senior class closer to the culmination of 'spooky season' in one epic battle that we Eagle Rockers know as our infamous Halloween Skit. It's a tradition that we've protected well for years, and this year, the classes of 2020 and 2021 were well prepared to fight until the finish for the coveted title of the 2019 Skit winner. Yesterday's verdict was a close call between the two skilled performances, each bringing their own spirit and determination to a peak, yet, emerging victorious at their final chance for the title were the lavender and silver Aetherians, claiming the win for the class of 2020.

This year, the junior class of 2021 made their debut on the quad for their first ever Hallow-

een skit with their performance of "Nightmare on Elm Street", where an Eagle Rock student played by Mariah Beccera, slips away into a daydream during detention, only to be ruthlessly terrorized by the infamous villain Freddy Krueger, played by Nathan Gurriola. Representing the red, black and gold team of '21, Raesa Martin, Diana Meza, Leela Zamora, and Nalan Westbrook spoke about their experience coaching their team. Crediting skit for bringing the class and cliques of 21 closer together, all united toward the goal of victory, Raesa emphasizes how their goal was not only to win, but "to inspire younger grades to think they can do [skit]" Diana credits their high-energy performance to the close-knit friendship of the cheer coaches and their effective communication, combined perfectly with their prior cheerleading experience and skills. According to Leela and Nalan, the other junior coaches who managed the

drill-inspired aspect of skit, the opportunity to lead and connect with their fellow classmates was an experience beyond compare. As best said by Nalan, "Seeing a big group of people, it's about 60-70 people, seeing them listen to you and the things that you teach, it's really rewarding." And with the class of 21's performance yesterday, it was just that, rewarding, despite their near miss of the win. Combining cleanly synchronized drill segments with the thrill of well-rehearsed stunts, the juniors cer-

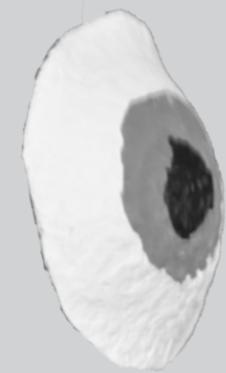
tainly made a lasting impression with their first skit battle, setting the standard high for next year's competitors to match. The Aetherians finished their last skit performance and went out with a bang, solidifying their legacy at Eagle Rock with their performance of "It", the well-known story of Pennywise the clown and his personification of everyone's deep childhood fear, brought to life by senior Katelyn Alexander, dressed in head to toe shiny silver. Oliva Blaire performed in the role of Georgie, wearing his infamous yellow raincoat, accompanied by fellow leads Destiny Perez, Francesca Walker, Eric Garcia, and Lani Tunzi. After Georgie is snatched and killed by esteemed

It's about a legacy. Our legacy as the class of 2020." Serena speaks in reference to the sense of community that Skit has created among this year's seniors, who pride themselves on their tight friendships and unity as a class, claiming that their unity stems from their shared desire for friendly competition, or as Serena puts it, "Giving the juniors, a phat L."

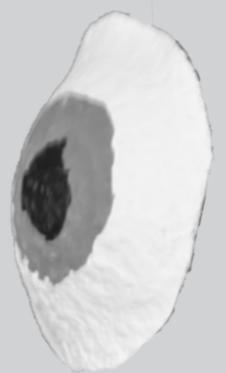
No matter the results of each year's Skit, there's one thing that both the class of 2020 and 2021 can agree on, and it's the tradition and sense of community that the Halloween Skit brings to Eagle Rock, which in the long term, supersedes any winning title. All of the hard work, smiles, bruises and tears gives rise to focused and determined individuals, banded together to represent their class with a sense of school spirit and pride that cannot be matched.

"IT'S NOT ABOUT WINNING, IT REALLY ISN'T. IT'S ABOUT A LEGACY."

villain Pennywise, the rest of the gang fend off the terror of the clown's pursuits. However, in reflection on the endless nights of practice and repetition, captain Serena Strickland said, "It's not about winning, it really isn't.



CORALINE'S HAUNTED HALLS



Dylan Kirk|Staff Writer

Anyone who's been on campus after hours can tell you; it's spooky. On one particular night, the sky is almost pitch black above you and you can hear the screams of children coming from the building ahead. You and your friends are escorted into the library, passing the secret staircase, and after a short spiel from a girl dressed in all black, you're sent up the staircase, where you're immediately immersed in darkness, aside from the purple light at the end of the hall. As you walk through the now-dark school hallways, a number

of senior classmen reach out at you, chasing you around corners and through curtains.

It's the night of the Senior Haunted Halls, and the haunted house is in full swing. By seven at night, there's a line wrapped around the cul de sac and toward the recreation center across the street. Kids and adults of all ages are bouncing in place, tickets eagerly grasped against sweaty palms as they wait to enter the building. Some familiar faces appear in line, such as those of the ERHS Broadcast Team, or a pack of Totem Yearbook members, all eager to get inside.

With a commit-

tee of only six members, a large production like haunted house proved to be a difficult task. An interview with commissioner Ava Balise-Zsarko explained some of the hardships the committee faced during the planning process and set-up. "Because it was the first year anyone's had haunted house on campus, it was a huge struggle getting through admin and the district's safety restrictions, so there was a huge delay when it came to the actual implementation of all of our ideas. It made it really hard to use our best ideas because they weren't deemed 'safe enough',

and it put us weeks behind schedule. A lot of what we did the day of was compromise."

But the Haunted House itself was no small feat; from 8AM Saturday morning, and the entire week before, hordes of Senior Class Officers worked hard to prepare decorations and props for the event. But the haunted house committee has been working hard long before October; their planning began in June, and as the year progressed, their efforts didn't dwindle. From choosing their theme (Coraline) to taking countless trips to the halloween store their hard work didn't

come without benefits. Haunted Halls had more than 300 visitors over the course of the night, and a number of students were eager to go through more than once, even though the fear factor was toned down after the first time through. Despite all of the struggles they faced during the planning process and set-up, the execution was nothing less than outstanding. While the committee played down their success, many of the attendees were beyond impressed, admiring the atmosphere while still being scared out of their wits.



AT THE ROCK

THE EAGLE FLIES OVER THE RAINBOW

ERHS Faculty reflect on their experiences as members of the LGBTQ+ community.



Above: Mr. Jacobson. Below: Illustration of Ms. Kissam, by Jilian Machacon

By Leslie Sanchez
| Staff Writer

We are students of ERHS. Many of us have been here since we were practically babies, and have had the privilege of a safe environment to flourish. As children we needed to be taught, cared for, and most of all accepted. A lot of acceptance has come up around us over recent years which has led to us being a more open generation. Thankfully, our school district mirrors the acceptance of its students. LAUSD is known to be a huge advocate for the LGBTQ+ and its members. When you search up LAUSD and LGBTQ+ you find articles upon articles on LAUSD offering assistance to students and staff.

The support can even be seen on our campus with the LGBTQ+ club, SAGA, and on many other campuses all around the world. Yes, there is a rather large amount of hate still circulating, yet our love and support for each other constantly drowns out that negativity. We as students of LAUSD have grown into an exceedingly tolerant generation, yet our teachers and staff had to await for such an environment for they themselves to flourish. Have we ever sat down and truly listened to the stories of members of the LGBTQ+ community that have been there for us? Our teachers are some of the most amazing people that we'll ever encounter. So I decided to do just that and have a talk with two of my favorites.

The first was Mr. Jacobson. He is the type of teacher that can make you comfortable with a

single joke. You can always hear Mr. Jacobson absurdly praising Dr. Pepper and otherwise joking with his students. There's a lot of laughing in his classes for sure. But on a serious note, here is what he has to say about being a member of the LGBTQ+ community.

"My name is Eric Jacobson and I started working at ERHS as a tennis coach in '96 and as a full time teacher in '98." Mr. Jacobson, teacher of AP Psych and our school's tennis coach, is known as one of our open staff members here at ERHS, but it wasn't always like that. When he first started working here, he was closeted, mostly because he felt that being gay had nothing to do with teaching.

"It's no one's business to know what I am or what anyone else is. We're just here to teach and learn," he says. "But then I changed my mind about that. First of all, I could be a role model for other students who may be afraid of coming out. And also it's just a part of who I am. Why do I have to hide? It's like the color of your skin or your ethnicity or anything else." When it came to changing from closeted to open, it wasn't a hassle for him. He didn't really come out; he just didn't hide it anymore and the word got around. Students and co-workers began to realize and understand his orientation. Upon asking his students, it took me by surprise to find that he only started coming out to students last year. This reporter felt very honored to be

a part of the first class to whom Mr. Jacobson came out to.

When I asked Mr. Jacobson about how the times have changed since he started teaching he said there used to be a lot more slurs and put downs calling people things like "gay" or "fag". "These are heinous words," he said, looking down at his hands.

"When you're comfortable, when you're ready," he continued, "it's going to be different for every person, but when that happens, be out because then more people feel safe coming out as well."

Nancy Kissam is ERHS' theatre and stage design teacher and theatre director and has been working at ERHS for six years. She came to ERHS open, and has been open with her students for 10 years. When I asked what made her feel comfortable to come out to her students and co-workers, she said it was her environment.

"I used to teach middle school and I didn't feel comfortable or safe coming out to inner-city middle school students, so when I started teaching that's when I came out." With a more mature setting, she felt more able to express her true self.

Once again, ERHS staff were very supportive of their LGBTQ+ members. The low amount of repression on campus shines a beautiful light on how times have changed and how we've become such an accepting society.

"It's even still a little

awkward coming out because you never know how people are going to react. More often than not, it's not a big deal. So what I feel is different is that I'm out since when I first started teaching with LAUSD," Kissam says.

When I asked about possible challenges she faced as an educator and LGBTQ+ member, she said it was encouraging students to feel comfortable.

"I'd really like them to join SAGA (ERHS' LGBTQ+ club) because it strengthens our club and makes us more visible and prominent on our campus." She adds that some students may be fearful of word getting back to their families that they joined SAGA, which shouldn't be a worry because SAGA is a confidential club that doesn't share any information whatsoever to anyone unless the student is comfortable with that.

"It's their safe space," says Kissam.

The challenge of becoming more visible on campus is so big because with more exposure there is less stigma around sexuality which leads to more people feeling comfortable attending SAGA meetings and expressing themselves.

"If you feel comfortable, be vocal or just be present with yourselves and who you are because I think it just makes more people feel comfortable. It'd be great to have more of that exposure on campus," Ms. Kissam said, finishing the interview with a warm conclusion.

KEEPING MEMORY ALIVE:

The stories behind ERHS' plaque dedications

The memorial plaques around our campus conjured up the idea for me wanting to write about these honored subjects - not so much about the way they died, but rather about the life lessons these people taught and what made them memorable for the people I interviewed. It was the person they really were, that I was interested in learning about. It was also my own need to understand who Mr. Kim a counselor, and Mr. Henniberg a math teacher in life as a student who passes their plaques that sit in front of the trees that celebrate them. I knew only a bit of Kim's life, never met Mr. Henniberg, and I myself remember our after school coach Ms. Barbara who; came to school whenever possible. Respecting anonymity for those who do not want to be quoted I shall paraphrase their words parallel to their image of the people they knew. However I did interview friends, and teach-

ers about the subjects.

My idea of Mr. Kim was a happy father and educator who loved to work with children. I would be surprised why he chose a counselor of all things. I personally only met him through a small interaction in the auditorium before remodeling. I had answered simple questions correctly on what the R.O.C.K stood for. He gave me a frisbee in return and I went home and broke it. Well not intentionally but the fact that I broke a cheaply built frisbee still sullied me in guilt for something I just received. The people I interviewed changed my view on how many people the college counselor has to work with outside his own department of teachers. I interviewed coworkers who gave me insight on how the man worked as someone who was actively guiding teenagers towards a future of hopeful success.

Mr. Kim works with diligence at his job and the balance of being a father and counselor was easy for him to live with, on top of the fact that he often did kind gestures for his coworkers. Their first impression of Mr. Kim was an outgoing person with an accepting feel around his smiling face who could make even the most pessimistic person succeed. They met him through being a counselor here at Eagle Rock or another school in the past,

all things necessary to build a friendship by enjoying friendly conversation with the man. Kim enjoyed spending time on his plans to create a helpful and effective workplace.

I had no idea who Mr. John David Henberger was, not one bit when going into this article. The only information I heard was the passing of him and that was in 8th grade. A literal and metaphorical ghost for the students who don't even have a picture to look at the man. However if you felt just as inclined as I was make sure to find a yearbook before the year 2008, and under the math department you will see him. The people who knew him were more than coworkers, friends that understood and forgave the little quirks this teacher had. Because of him being on the higher end of the autism spectrum he would have trouble connecting to people or understanding the actions and emotions of people around him. Mr. Henberger was a photographer, using his pastime to take pictures around the golden state, and share them with his students or teachers he worked with. He took great pride in his work, and helping others who struggled in his classes, often staying afterschool for hours on end for groups of students and often teachers would find themselves talking to him after hours also. Their first impres-

sion of him was someone who enjoyed conversation and could sharpen dull words into meaningful ones. A case of math puns was also in play with one being remembered by a fellow teacher. "What did the acorn say when he grew up?" "Geee... I'm a tree!" (Geometry) Maybe the name is not so much as important as the person which may contrast what lies on the plaque, but it is the person we should remember that gives it meaning.

Ms. Barbara, a great after school coach I knew a bit personally because I practically lived at the after school program in my middle school years and a bit into my 9th grade year. The people I talked to all knew the same thing I would have to say about someone who was very accepting of students and was very easy to approach with an attitude that may seem

cranky about life at first but you could've greatly appreciated if you met here. She taught others to stay with their gut, to trust yourself about the decisions you will make in life and never do anything you're not comfortable doing. She used to work in a business before becoming a coach here. I really miss her for the way she acted when I broke a rule in the program, she never shouted at me for the purpose of punishment and instead, made it clear why what I've done was not appropriate for the Beyond the Bell program which continues to have a variety of great coaches and administrators that strive for a comfortable environment for all students.

By Benicio Barbosa
| Staff Writer





AT THE ROCK

HUMANS OF EAGLE ROCK



"I don't know, I'm going to school. SO there isn't much for me, that's exciting other than like getting closer to my degree. I want to major in Public health, I really want to help children be healthy, and help them achieve wellness."



"In my first communion, all my family was there and I was able to see them all in one place. It really made me happy to see everyone that day... A lot of them are immigrants from Mexico, so they're farther north."



"The best thing in my life is the person I love. I can't say the person I love, it's classified, but it's what keeps me going. She keeps me really entertained, she gets me. I enjoy it when I see her, I have a blast, makes me smile, gives me energy."



"Eagle Rock kind of changed me at first because I wanted to be a "cool" person and I wanted to be popular or whatever. I kinda threw all my other values away. I didn't really care about grades. I have this mindset that I wouldn't end up anywhere in the future. And that my grades didn't really matter. Like the way my parents thought about me didn't matter... Now I'm hanging out care more about my future. They're trying to go in the same direction as me and they don't also have the mindset "I'm just gonna do nothing."



"The best thing in my life right now is the fact that I am getting married on Friday. And so I'm really excited about marrying the love of my life, and being able to celebrate with my friends and family. And I'm Just looking forward to the day. I've been with my fiance for 6 years, It's really tough, like I kind of wish I would have taken the whole week off because it's really hard to concentrate, and like work and deal with wedding stuff. I'm doing a good job."



My happiest memory was when my brother was born because it was a very happy and touching moment in my life and now I get a brother that I can wrestle and play with



"The most exciting thing that's happening in my life right now is I have to say that school itself. I love this place, you know I have a lot of memories here from last year, and I love the teachers here. And it's actually kind of fun to do the work. Some teachers that I look up to are Mr. Kolbassi, Ms. Villegas, and Ms. Torrez."



"My mom's always telling me, if you really want it, don't let anyone get in the way. It's really up to because once you turn eighteen, you make your choices. She's really made me independent and I rely on myself more than other people."



"My worst fear is probably death because I have really bad anxiety and I'm very claustrophobic. So there are a lot of things that contribute to that. And I would hate for me to die or be in that position if one of my family died."



"I'd have to say the most exciting thing in my life is the Upcoming Skit performance. I just say that because it's really thrilling and I know it's going to be a lot of fun the competition, and rivalry between the Seniors and Juniors. I'm one of the main characters, I'm a child who died 27 years ago named Matthew."



"I don't really see moments in my life as the type of moment that's above others. Everything just feels the same. You know how you're going through your daily routine, and you kind of zone out and your brain's just going through the motions? That's what it kind of feels like when I think about my memories."



"My worst fear is not being in control because I think that's something I struggle with when I'm scared. That my mind is too powerful for me. So not being able to think clearly or in the way that I'd want to."



AT THE ROCK



GREETINGS FROM CENTRAL MONGOLIA

Mathilda Barr | Staff Writer

In central Mongolia, just a few hours away from the coal-streaked haze of capital city Ulaanbaatar, hills of wildflower-filled grass stretch as far as the eye can see. It's a place where picturesque meadows, melt into a horizon of dense forests and an endless expanse of sky. And that very word, "endless," perfectly encompasses the vastness of this wide country, a nation nestled comfortably between Russia and China where the majority of land is wide, wild, and free from the constraints of city life.

Despite its vast appeal, Mongolia isn't usually thought of as your usual Instagram-perfect teen travel destination. Over the summer, I had the chance to visit and discover the beauty of the country for myself through the Girl Scout ATS Destination program. Escaping the suffocating California July heat, I boarded a plane with eight other girls from all across the US, none of whom I'd ever met before, all of us headed far East to Mongolia, where we all forged close friendships, both among ourselves, and also with the young Mongolian horsemen and ATS guides who led us through our adventures.

Our typical Mongolian morning began as we crawled out of our camel hair sleeping bags and unzipped our tents to a flood of early morning light. Even in the early morning hours of 5:30, the Mongolian countryside was alive, as the youngest of the children herded cattle across the grass, bouncing along with the puppies nipping at their heels. Unfortunately, our early morning adventures began with a trip to the "bathroom," if it could even be called that; picture a narrow, deep pit dug in the ground with two skinny wooden planks, layered above. So a simple run to the 'ladies' room' meant balancing on unbolted strips of wood above a fly-filled cesspool, praying that you didn't fall in-and this was if you were lucky enough to even come across this makeshift bathroom at all in the wilds of the steppe.

After a hearty breakfast shared with our guides and cooked by fifteen year old Ulaanbaatar residents, Nomaneerden and her

mom, the other girls and I tacked up our horses for a full day of trekking. Horses are best described as the life and blood of Mongolian history and modern culture, with Ghengis-or more accurately Chinggis-Khan's famous and bloody rides into battle.

However, these fierce creatures of war and work can more accurately be described as, well, short. Despite their height, Mongolian ponies are built with a short and stocky stature, complete with the ability to gallop for hours on end up and down hilly terrain—a quality that makes them extremely durable. My pony partner for the trip was a cute little brown horse, with a spiky mane and equal sense of spunk to match. Living most days of the year completely wild, he was fiery, fast, and only half-tamed, proving his spirit by galloping faster than every other horse in the races we had against the other girls and guides.

Our day closed with setting up camp as we found a perfect, quiet spot in the middle of a forested meadow to pitch our tents. Well, almost perfect. The ever present buzz of biting horse flies came in such terrible swarms that we were eager to escape to the safety of our tents. Only, we didn't have any tents to escape to, for the World War II era Soviet van that drove ahead of us, toting all of our gear had managed to bury itself deep into a ditch of mud, with no clear way to escape. While our guides galloped off on the horses, in hopes that they'd find a van rescuer hundreds of miles outside of the city, us girls decided to pass the time with what we thought would be a short and simple walk up the tallest hill in the valley. This trek could more accurately be labeled as a strenuous hike up a mountain, but it still yielded the most breathtaking view I have ever seen, with acres and acres of untouched land and sky spreading as far out as the eye could see.

Once our van had been rescued from the muddy predicament, we closed the evening with a bonfire—a perfect opportunity to create community, and also keep away the horse flies. As the sun set on the tips of the tallest trees, our guides sang us traditional Mongolian folk songs, their perfectly

melodic voices meshing together in beautiful harmony. We closed the night singing together, us Americans with the traditional Scout songs we know, and the Mongolians with their own versions of campfire songs. Even though our languages couldn't have been more different, we were connected on the same plane of thought and community as we shared smiles and song under the last embers of the campfire.

After several more days of exploring the countryside, highlighted by an impromptu thunderstorm, river crossings, visits to lost temples, wrestling our friends by the fire, and galloping through the trees, we said goodbye to our equine companions and Mongolian horsemen guides as we headed off to the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Ulaanbaatar, or as it's more commonly referred to by the locals as "UB" is a sprawling metropolis that only recently sprung into being, as more and more Mongolians decided to make the shift from nomadic to urban life. We were lucky enough to have been in UB at the same time as Naadam, the equivalent of the Mongolian Olympics, where men and women of the highest caliber compete in archery, horse racing, and wrestling. We all attended the national Naadam opening ceremony, a massive cultural festival held in a huge sports stadium, where we heard traditional Mongolian throat singing, saw parades and dancing, and watched young contortionists show off their skills. Contortionists? It sounds crazy, but similarly to how many young American girls participate in ballet for a year or two when they're very young, most young Mongolian city girls have at least a year of contortion under their belts.

Our flight out of Mongolia came all too soon. Having to say goodbye to this beautiful country only further convinced me that this would not be the last Mongolia saw of me—I know one day I will return to explore all of the other vast corners of the nation: the Gobi deserts, snow-covered steppes, and eagle-hunting archers of the East. Mongolian hospitality and the longing for the open country is a feeling that you will always carry with you.

GREETINGS FROM THE PHILIPPINES

Megan Alcaraz | Staff Writer

It's 4:00 am, and I have just touched down at my destination, my brain is fried from the 16 hour flight from the USA to the Philippines. 16 hours without fresh hair, or the ability to stretch my limbs. Funnily enough, I was not too ecstatic with the fact that I was going to have to spend 4 weeks in a country hotter than the United States. I cried the first few days of my trip, I felt overwhelmed, and I didn't want to be there, I felt that all my opportunities of self growth, artistically and academically were all left behind in the states. Spending time in a country that I already knew like the back of my hand was idiotic to me. But over the course of 4 weeks my feelings were taken on a rollercoaster ride, as I island hopped through the hot, but gorgeous country called the Philippines.

My mom, my sister, and I landed in the capital of the Philippines Manila and we were bound for Batangas, my Dad's hometown. We stayed at a dainty little resort amidst the impoverished city. Nevertheless we made it, and soon enough we began exploring the local food, often needing to drive hours to get to the best eating spots. One of the spots we traveled 2 hours, was a little cafe hugged by the mountainous terrain and strong winds, it was worth the drive for the amazing desserts and cute little Little stands and some sort of pop-up shops were everywhere ready to serve us. And the occasional, weird misplaced Shakey's and McDonalds reared their familiar heads. We were accompanied by my Dad's relatives whom were all joshing me about how much taller I've grown (I haven't seen many of these people since I was 5). Anyway, I stayed in Batangas for 3 days and I enjoyed finally being able to speak in my Native tongue to anyone, despite my Tagalog being pretty choppy. We visited local sights and since it was fairly far from the coast, we visited a couple of lakes, that were dotted with mini islands, along clouds of fog gently painted into the landscape. And of course, I ziplined multiple times and every single time, no matter how many times I do it, I managed

to almost tinkle in my pants every time.

After the three days, we depart for the airport once more, to our next destination, Bacolod, a significantly wealthier city, riddled with shopping centers and food. We stayed at my aunt's house, and my sister was ecstatic to finally have a TV and her own bed to sleep on. Staying there had the bitter cost of my aunt and her friend, waking up at 2am and cleaning the whole house, on a whim, with all the lights on, mind you, I was sleeping on the couch. While I was there I swam the mile length to a neighboring small island with a group of other swimmers. What I lack in land sports, I make up for in swimming; I was a fish. The rest took a boat.

We took many road trips to the mountains, and the black and white sanded beaches. There I climbed the boats the fishermen used and jumped off the mast, I had so many fresh mango smoothies, and I picked up a vast amount of scary sea creatures, accidentally thinking I was holding a shell between my feet. We eventually stayed at a Four Seasons Hotel, and oh boy by this point I was craving some fatty, sugary American food, and thank the heavens they had it. With two-three weeks of exploring and eating, it's taken good and bad tolls on my emotional and physical health. But I'm glad I threw myself into every environment that came towards me.

Finally, 5 days until the end of the trip, this duration was spent in Manila. It was in these five days, I was introduced to, Mall of Asia, an insanely large and exquisite building, putting the size of the Glendale Galleria, Americana, and Santa Anita to shame. There I took full advantage of the "emergency" money given to me. It was amazing to see the Chocolate Hills (cool huge brown hills that look like chocolate) later in the day, and to zipline from each major landmark. Alas my travels must come to an end, and 21 hours later, including the flight, TSA, and ride home. I'm home, I'm so happy, It's so great to see my bed, it's so great to see, oh God I have school tomorrow.



AT THE ROCK

GREETINGS FROM NAGOYA, JAPAN

By Karina Morales | Staff Writer

What do the cities of Los Angeles, USA and Nagoya, Japan have in common besides their bustling metropolitan energy? This summer it was my job to find out; tasked with living with a Japanese family, attending a traditional high school, and meeting with local legislators to foster mutual understanding between our cities. President Eisenhower created an initiative to foster the bond between the cities of Los Angeles and Nagoya, the hub of industrial companies such as Toyota, Honda, and Mitsubishi. Since then the two cities on opposite ends of the Pacific have embraced their status as sister cities. Every year, reciprocal student exchanges between the cities occur in a longstanding tradition of an immersive cultural opportunities for high school students. My turn came this summer to act as a bridge between our communities.

Right off the bat, adventures in Japan began with an early start, woken up to the sound of my host mother calling my name across their house, beckoning for us to come down and enjoy a typical Japanese breakfast. A common one was miso soup, rice, local fish, and chili paste. After struggling to exit my dorm-size twin bed, and raking on my school uniform, we made our way to the car, for a ten minute car ride to our local train station, where we proceeded to stand in the cramped subway for another forty minutes.

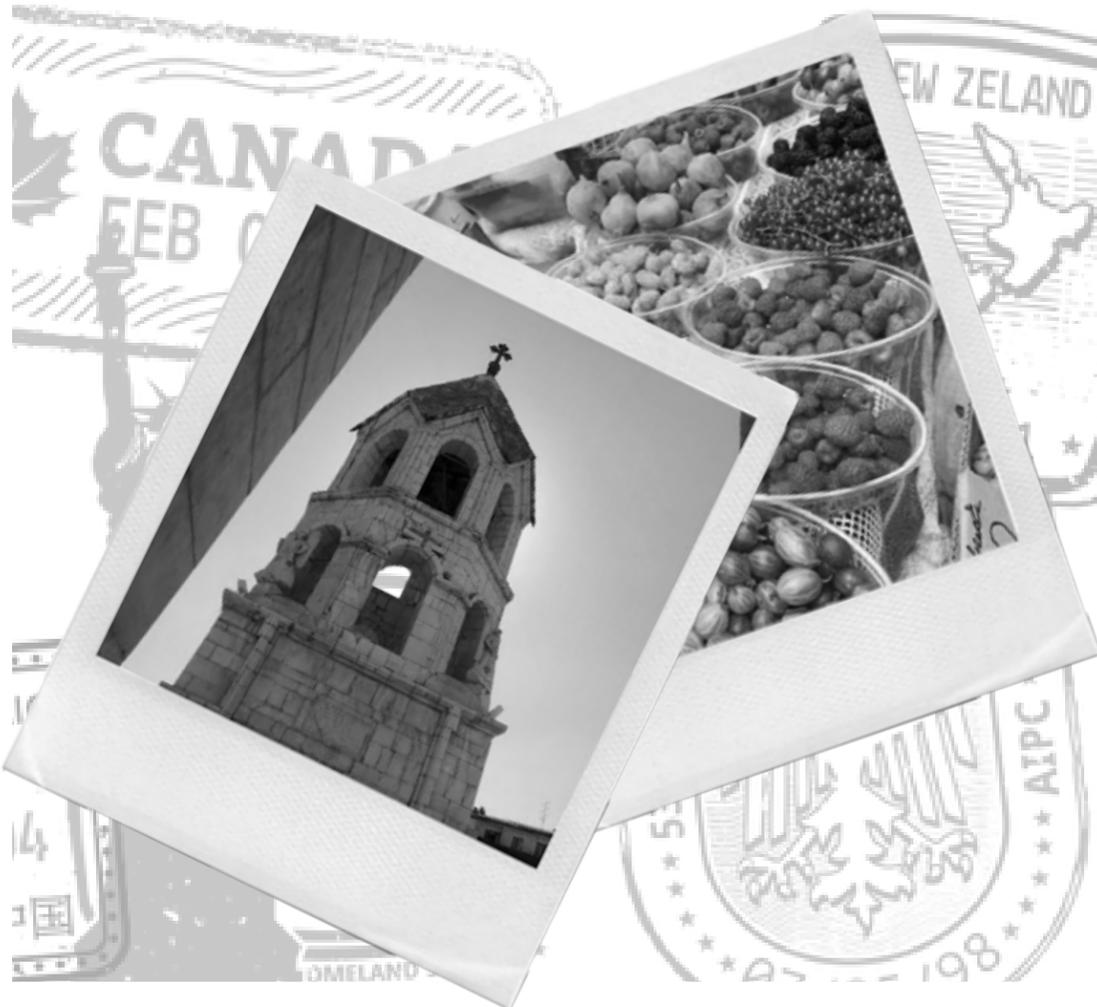
A shocking contrast to the life I lead in the states began on my second day of being in the country. Considering the grueling flight I sat on the previous day I expected to have a relaxing morning consisting of little physical exercise (a common pattern in the states). A surprising twist to the hypothetical plan began at 7am, when we visited the Higashiyama Zoo, a part of my research project in which I compared the influence of animal rights movements on urban structures. In an attempt to learn about the endemic species the nation had to offer, my host sister and I traversed through the zoo for hours. It was at this time when I encountered the first major cultural shock; the lack of trash cans. De-

spite the surplus of iconic Japanese vending machines, decked with an array of fruity sodas and iced coffees, trash cans were a rarity. The few I was able to locate had signs indicating to please not dispose any outside trash. Something of this nature would not be typical in the US where a sense of entitlement over resources is prominent.

Now the train station, that is a story of its own. Notorious for its exuberant amount of etiquette, passengers following a procedure to the T each and every day. After stepping into the train, especially during rush hour, riders are packed like sardines, each with less than a square foot of space. Prior to boarding, passengers line up single file into the car they wish to ride in, leaving space for people walking past. I was shocked upon seeing grown adults line up single file similar to elementary school students. After the train arrives, everyone enters the train and the process then initiates: passengers who've been standing in their cart for a while transition into the center of the cars and move into empty chairs (which rarely exist). The newest addition: incoming passengers stand closer to the doors, placing their bags in between their legs, standing in silence. And the silence is deafening, no small talk, a common sight was a young school girl, decked out in a sailor uniform, headphones on, cellphone six inches from her face, bag atop her lap.

The universal understanding of subway etiquette in Japan highlights the country's appreciation for polite behavior, illustrating the norm I noticed throughout my three week stay: compassion. Wherever I went, the individuals did everything in their capacity to make me feel welcome. From stepping aside to not bump me on the sidewalk to gifting omiyage at every event, it was evident that the Japanese felt strongly on welcoming guests.

This trip taught me all about my perception of the world and its perception of the US as a country. While we perceive ourselves with the utmost respect, the expectations other countries have for themselves in regards to their performance exceeds anything we would do.



GREETINGS FROM YEREVAN, ARMENIA

By Mireille Karadanaian | News Editor

It's been 17 hours since I was in the United States. After 12 hours on a plane to Russia and then another 5 hours on a second flight we arrived in the capital of Armenia. I'm tired and dizzy and waiting impatiently for my uncle (who arrived last week) to pick us up. My mom is crying tears of joy as she hasn't been back to her home country for 30 years, but I'm less eager to explore and more eager for a bed.

We settle into the shuttle we had rented, exchanging hellos and even though it's nighttime, my mom is staring out the windows like a child at a candy store. I'm content staring at the floor and remembering my own home, now 7,201 miles away. But my dad taps my shoulder, giving me that knowing "dad look" and I force my eyes up. Yerevan is overflowing with a contagious energy - the city is alive, street lights are blinding me, there's people bustling around - eating and talking and laughing despite the late hour of the night.

I'd get used to this soon; the restaurants that stayed open until 3 am and the live musicians on the streets. I'd get used to seeing waiters my age and people walking everywhere - the girls wearing sneakers with their fancy dresses because they knew they wouldn't be taking a car. I'd also soon understand that there were no street rules, just the taxi drivers zooming away, adhering to the unspoken rules of the road. But most liberating was knowing that all of Yerevan was at ease. The people woke up late, seemed relaxed with their lives and jobs so different from the robotic stressful mechanics of an American life.

The next morning we already began packing for our big

trip 7 hours away to one of Armenia's breakaway states, Artsakh. Our itinerary is overflowing with famous landmarks to be visited and our first stop is said to be one of the most religious sites in the country. Khor Virap monastery is known for being where Gregory the Illuminator was imprisoned in an underground dungeon by King Tridates III of Armenia for 14 years. A rickety metal ladder took us down to a stone cavernous room where legend has it, Gregory stayed eating nothing but a piece of bread that an old lady would sneak down to him everyday.

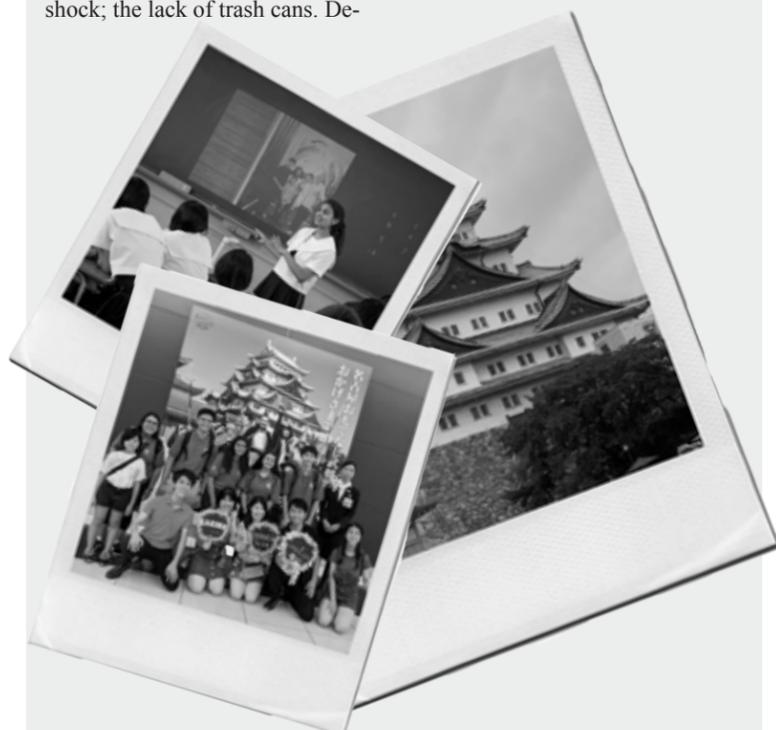
Afterwards we stopped at Noravank monastery, carved into a narrow gorge made by a river. The monastery is known for the tall, sheer, brick red cliffs across from it and for its two story Surp Astvatsatsin (Holy Mother of God) church. The second floor could only be accessed by a narrow stone staircase jutting out from the face of the building, one of the earliest models of cantilever architecture. I didn't think I'd be flying on this trip, but later we rode the Wings of Tatev, a record aerial tramway that was 5,752 meters long. It takes you from Halidzor to the Tatev monastery in 12 minutes, nothing compared to the 40 minute windy road your car would have to take.

Artsakh is comprised of many small villages, each rich with their own cultures, foods, landmarks and accents and we visited quite a lot of them. Most notably was Stepanakert where we visited an authentic bazaar or marketplace. Outdoors, there were women and men alike with their booths set up, selling everything from shoes to pickled foods to chickens which they beheaded right in front of you. We ate breakfast there, gorging on Jinalov Hats (spinach bread) and Perashki (bread stuffed with warm potatoes.) Everywhere we walked

old women were tugging on our sleeves inviting us to buy bushels of fresh mint and bags of nuts and watermelons the size of our heads. Fruits I'd never seen before, grapes with veins and small round sour berries, were arranged in front of me in perfect rainbow arrays. Everything was fresh and organic, as close as you could get to mother nature, something I had never experienced living in America.

We even had the once in a lifetime experience of seeing a close friend get baptized in Ghazanchetsots Cathedral in the village of Shushi. During the Nagorno-Kharabakh War, Azerbaijan stored their missiles in the cathedral, knowing the Armenians wouldn't bomb their own beautiful work just to destroy the weaponry. The cathedral was porcelain white with one tall spire in the middle and blue stained glass windows. I remember standing underneath the shining chandelier and looking up at the skylight, noticing the way the sun filtered through the air, suspending the dust particles in an image I had only ever seen in photos before.

On the plane ride back home, I kept grasping onto wisps of memories, trying to hold onto them forever and make my trip last a lifetime. It was empowering to know that somewhere across the sea was this place, brimming with history and culture and food and people so different from what I had known my entire life. I started the trip feeling nervous and in a state of total culture shock, but at the end I couldn't have been happier. To get to truly be an Armenian for three weeks, live in my mother country and understand my roots on a whole other level was surreal. America might be where I live, but I knew after this trip that Yerevan would always be my home.





AT THE ROCK

EPISODES VOL 2:

BROKEN AND BLUE

Sarah Goldstein | *Sports Editor* and Mireille Karadanaian | *News Editor*

Someone messed up Nova's wall where, yesterday, she'd painted a red target, tracing over each ring in blue lilies. It had taken 3 hours of her time. She curses, putting down the spray can. Her plan was to paint a globe, but now she had to track the culprit and destroy them.

Looking around, she wonders if the culprit's hiding, but the alleyway is silent. Picking up a can, she approaches an empty wall, ready to pour her anger out when someone taps her shoulder. Nova whirls around, finger against the trigger, unaware she's spraying the stranger with blue paint.

"What the-" the stranger sputters, blue dripping onto the pavement.

"I'm so sorry!" Nova yells, dropping the can with a

clang. She scrambles to find something he can use to dry off, but after ransacking her pockets, the best she comes up with is a tissue.

The boy looks amused. "I don't think a tissue will help." He wipes blue off his face. "I forgot my question."

Nova leans against the wall, eyeing him suspiciously. "Maybe you were going to ask why I was vandalizing an alleyway instead of going to school?"

The boy smiles wryly. "No, because then I'd have to explain why I'm here too."

"Do you come often?" Nova asks. "First time, I needed to be alone."

She nods. He seems familiar, like she'd heard that voice before. "We go to school together?"

"Yeah, Nova right?"

"And you are?" she asks, unable to identify him under the paint. He hesitates. "Zach."

Nova freezes, realization creeping over her like a cold wave. "I'm so sorry," she says, remembering it was Zach's father who'd just been killed. "Are you ok?"

His expression softens, as if nobody had asked him. "No, but I don't want to talk about it."

Nova tries to find words, but none exist. What can you say to someone who's father is now gone forever? She could see grief hanging over him like a cloud. Something about the vulnerability in his expression compels her to comfort him.

"Do you want to help?"

"With?"

"This painting, I need her to. to fix it."

Zach picks up the blue can off the floor. "Where do I start?"

Nova smiles at the awkward way he holds the can. She adjusts his grip, pointing it at the right angle. He squints, pressing down on the trigger, stepping back as a stream of blue settles against the wall in an imperfect circle.

"Sorry," he says.

"It takes practice," Nova says, showing Zach how to refine the shape. She can see how hard he's trying and it's endearing. For a moment, Zach doesn't think about his dad's sudden absence - he's just thinking about making the perfect circle. Nova's not sure why she decides to share her art, but something about the broken boy in blue convinced

her to.

"Nova?" She refocuses. "Yeah?"

"Do you hear that?" he asks as a stream of sirens echo down the alleyway.

Not a minute later, an officer appears, boots clicking against the pavement. Nova's tempted to run, she was vandalizing, but Zach grabs her wrist.

"You kids take your business elsewhere unless you want to become suspects," the officer says, eyeing paint-covered Zach.

This area's officially a crime scene."

"Suspects in what?" Nova asks.

"Aidan Salman's murder"

"THE PETER MOVIE"

Lucien Thompilson | *Layout Staff*

Peter Feng might seem to be so much more than an ordinary student, but to many folks around Eagle Rock, Peter is so much more than an ordinary student. The story of The Peter Movie begins with a group of friends, and more importantly Peter Feng and Jacob Bernardino. In 2016 Bernardino decided to make a short comedic film called His name is Peter. This video hailed Peter as a champion of their friend group, who would "cut people down with his Katana collection if

you didn't vote for him." Although His name is Peter wasn't meant to continue, this video sparked a saga of short films by Peter, Bernardino and their friends known collectively as The Election. Bernardino has a youtube channel called Flipbookstudios, which has been evolving since its inception in 2012. The Election series parodied the real life election, but instead of Clinton and Donald Trump it was Peter Feng, and "Horseman" played by James Avila. This character is a parody of

Trump, and is later elected as President. Near the end of the election an improvised scene by Peter where he yells, "Help I am being kidnapped by ISIS!" laid the groundwork for The Peter Movie, according Bernardino. "Without Peter getting kidnapped, this would have never happened." This is where Peter's story in The Election ends, Peter being kidnapped by ISIS and taken to their headquarters.

Over the next few years Bernardino's Cinematic Universe would continue without Peter. Until was until Bernardino's next major project, Tim Vendetta Justice Hunter, a dark and broody public execution in an ISIS stronghold, during which Peter escapes. This is all that's known about Peter's whereabouts in the Cinematic Universe before the start of The Peter Movie. Bernardino has said in an interview that the corrupt government of the universe, Isis, and a place called "Puppet Africa" (I have no idea what Puppet Africa is, but I'm sure we'll find out) will all be prominently featured in The Peter Movie.

Although Bernardino does the lion's share of directing, cinematography, and writing, his group of friends have supported and even created many of projects by writing, directing, acting, and performing stage crew duties. The extent of this production is surprisingly extensive with around 14 to 15 people involved in the production of the film. One actor I spoke to, Danner

Renfro several characters along with CIA director John Conway "I've spent around 36-48 hours filming, and writing for The Peter Movie" The amount of videos they have made together is outstanding. Many of these films take place in this shared Universe. This reporter was lucky enough to participate and view during a production. The amount of time and effort put into costume, set design, and acting. For a friend group with other obligations in school and life, it's incredible what they have managed to do.

Every production, no matter how big or small, well funded or not, features well-produced drama. Production of The Peter Movie has spurts of "doing everything" with much of the time spent "doing nothing." Timing and stress seems to be a major issue for production. For example two of the filming days were delayed because the director along with the camera equipment arrived later than any of the cast or crew. "Filming takes hours upon hours." Says Renfro

Why make a movie on Peter Feng? Well it depends on who you ask. I have heard many different descriptions of Peter Feng's character. There are two views about Peter Feng as a character shared by his friends. The first theory believes the Peter Feng that is in the movie is more powerful than regular Peter. This idea is that Peter Feng wants to become as powerful movie Peter.

The Realistic Feng Theory states that Peter could do everything in the movie and it is almost a documentary. These ideas are ultimately left up to the viewer to decide, but it is safe to say that his friends have a very interesting view of him.

The Peter Movie wouldn't be in anyone's mind if it wasn't for his friends. This project has been based around his friends' ideas, and without them Peter Feng would be in everyone's mind a lot less. Director Bernardino cited his friends as a major inspiration when writing the script for The Peter Movie. "I think we all see Peter as kind of a god." These friends have been together making video since 2016, while Bernardino has been making videos on his Youtube channel since he was 11 years old in 2012. The Peter Movie is significant for these group of friends, as it may be one of the last videos they make together. This is the final chapter of all their hard work, and I cannot wait to see it! The Peter Movie is expected to come out around December. All the cast and crew are going to attend a special screening in a theater in Downtown LA, and as one cast member has said, "It is all worth it in the end, just to go to the screening!" If you want to watch The Peter Movie subscribe to Flipbookstudios, and be ready! And remember, as Director Bernardino has warned "It is all a joke! Don't take it seriously!"



AT THE ROCK

IS INFLUENCING A JOB?

Gizelle Vasquez | *Entertainment Editor*

Before the rise of social media, we depended on popular culture and celebrities as our inspiration for the way we dressed, did our hair and makeup, and as our overall guide on what to buy. Today, it's not much different. However, you don't need to be a famous actor or singer to be influential. To be a model, you no longer have to get on the cover of *Vogue* to be recognized anymore. In this modern age, all you need is a camera, good lighting, and a large following on social media. Seems easy, right? Well, not quite. Although it may look like a piece of cake to many of us, who have only participated in the liking, following, and subscribing part, it's more than that. In reality, there's so much that goes into this. People make a living off of being influencers, and it's become their primary occupation. So here's the question: is what they're doing a real job? The answer is yes.

A job is defined as a "paid position of regular employment," and being an influencer is exactly that. Most influencers will have partnerships with specific companies and brands, which they will do paid sponsorships with for long periods of time. In addition to this, many will sponsor multiple brands at once. This

means that they have a consistent source of income throughout their careers. The amount of money they earn by being social media influencers is so substantial, that a significant amount of them are financially stable enough to leave their day jobs completely. Therefore, this is more than just a hobby for them. In fact, some social media influencers take it a step further and create their own businesses, relying on the fans they've

gained through being active online. A primary example of this

is Huda Kattan, a makeup blogger turned beauty mogul. Her company, Huda Beauty, has gained international success, and was listed as one of the top three influencers by *Forbes* magazine. Her products can be found in numerous Sephora stores across the globe. Kattan has reached such monumental success that her company's net worth is worth over \$610 million. Because

of her status as a beauty influencer, she was able to capitalize on that to make a name for herself in the beauty community.

Many doubt the legitimacy of being a social media influencer because of how easy it seems. The perception is that you take a photo or video, you post it, and boom, instant fame and likes! The truth is, there's a lot more that goes into it. Brad Mondo, a popular youtuber, famous for his expertise in hairdressing, has shared with fans that many of his videos take 8 hours to film and edit. This is around the same amount

of time one works at an average 9 to 5

job. However, we only see around 20 minutes of their labor on our screens. As for the photography aspect of being an influencer, they too have a long and tedious process that goes on both

on and off camera. No matter what you're putting out, you need to think of your own creative projects and fulfill them to the satisfaction of the thousands who are following you. Social media influencers typically focus on a certain area of expertise, whether it's beauty, fashion, or even gaming. As a result, they form a specific brand, which is what all of their content should reflect more or less. Not having a trademark personality heavily threatens an influencer's success. Their image is everything, and if they don't have one, then they also don't have anything unique to offer.

The life of an influencer goes beyond their social media, and not everyone has what it takes to be in this lucrative profession. With a single Instagram post paying upwards to \$1,000 per 100,000 followers, not every social media account can take part in getting paid for likes. With that being said, not every account would want to because the life of an influencer comes with sacrifices that the average person might not be up to. However, with "34 percent of kids wanting to be a YouTuber and 18 percent wanting to be a blogger or vlogger," the benefits seem to outweigh the bad for today's youth, and it's still a highly desired occupation. Many will try, but only a select few will have what it takes. Will you be one of them?



BOTTLES and BOTTLES

Jillian Machacon | *Staff Writer*

The boiling sun causes beads of sweat to roll down the side of your face. It's another hot day, and you need a nice glass of cold water to quench your thirst. What do you pull out? Your Hydro. Once your mouth tastes the crisp water, your body immediately feels relief. Hydro Flasks are highly popular in this day and age. Everywhere you walk at school, someone's holding one probably covered in stickers. However, there are a variety of bottle flask brands of similar quality but at different price ranges. To determine the pros and cons of these double-walled and vacuum-insulated bottles, I tested different bottle brands (Hydro Flask, Takeya, Yeti, ThermoFlask) each day, with constant variables of similar weather conditions and times of day when I drank from the bottle.

Day 1: Hydro Flask

In terms of the structure, the metal bottle is top notch in containing the water without leakage. In addition, I found that even after taking sips every hour or so, the water managed to stay cold throughout the day, a pleasant surprise for a first time Hydro Flask user. However, compared to the other tested flasks, this one is on the pricier end, from \$29.95 (for the 12 ounce kids size) to \$59.95 (for the 64 ounce Wide Mouth bottle). In addition, despite the bottle being a heavy load with the rest of the items I carry throughout the day, the sips



of cold water was definitely worth it. If you are looking to invest in a long-term, durable, and high-quality bottle, the Hydro Flask might be the one for you.

On a plus note, the website has a variety of 14 colors, 2 lids, and 7 sizes to choose from.

Day 2: Takeya

Similar to the Hydro Flask, this bottle has great durability, with a solid double-wall metal structure. In addition, it does the job well, keeping the water crisp and cold throughout the day. Honestly, I did not find much of a difference between this and the Hydro Flask, except that there are more color op-

tions to choose from on the website, and that the handle was slimmer and more flexible to swing around. According to double Takeya and Hydroflask owner Lesly Diaz, she notes that, "I've compared both and I feel like Takeya keeps the water colder longer, but that's only my opinion." Another pro is that, compared to the other bottle, it is less expensive by about \$5-10 depending on the size, at \$19.99 for the 14 ounce Active kids size to \$54.99 for the 64 ounce Actives Bottle.

(Active - 24 colors, 2 lids, 6 sizes) (Original - 4 sizes, 5 colors)

Day 3: Yeti

Like the other insulated

metal flasks, this bottle indeed maintains cool temperature water for the whole day. In terms of differences, the Yeti felt more durable, perhaps because the metal walls are thicker compared to the other competitors, and the handle is more solid. After testing the Yeti, I was starting to question if the only major difference between the bottles were the customization options, or maybe I'm just not a bottle flask connoisseur. So I decided to ask Tonantzin Rodriguez, a bottle flask lover. "The quality of [the Yeti] lives up to the Hydro, and my Takeyas are good but I feel like the ice doesn't stay cold as long, and it's melted by the end of the day."

Adds Diaz, "even if it doesn't have ice, it keeps the water cold and it dents less."

(6 sizes, less color options with larger bottles, such as the 26 oz having 9 color options but the half gallon with 4, customization with logos for colleges, Greek life, and more)

Day 4: ThermoFlask (made by Takeya)

Similar to the other brands, this bottle performed the job of maintaining cold water. I found myself questioning again if all these flasks are simply variations of color and sizes at different prices; because with this as most inexpensive option, with \$17.99 for the 18 ounce and \$39.99 for the 64 ounce, and it also kept the water chill throughout the school day. If you are looking for an inexpensive bottle that does the job, and customization is not too important for your bottle needs, the ThermoFlask may be your ideal bottle flask.

(5 colors, 5 sizes, 2 lids)

All in all, there were no significant differences between the brands, aside from the customization options and the slight distinction of how long it they keep water cold. But based on these findings, the best bottle flask (without considering the price) would be the Yeti because of its ability to maintain ice and cold water for a longer period of time compared to its competitors, as well as its sturdier metal structure and handle. However, in terms of both cost and quality, the Thermoflask wins for executing its mission for a lower price.

FEATURE



MINECRAFT? MORE LIKE MINDCRAFT

Maria Gonzalez | Staff Writer

Minecraft. No boundaries, no limits. A fun and unique game loved by adults, teens, and kids. You start off knocking down some trees and next thing you know you're in full diamond armor, living in a mansion. It's one of the most creative video games of our generation. I mean, people have built incredible things. Holy cow.

If you've built a home on minecraft it means you've dabbled in archi-



itecture. If you've ever "modded" it, that means you've dabbled in coding. If you've ever played with a group of people, you're bettering your social skills. And finally, if you've ever played minecraft education edition for the sole purpose of going in there and making a balloon, you've messed around with elements on the periodic table, and that's some type of chemistry! The point is that minecraft isn't just a game.

We're not all just chopping trees and running around fighting zombies, we're learning things. All the time. That's the beauty of it. It's more than a game, and though minecraft teaches the skills mentioned in the paragraph above its important to acknowledge that it is

a supplement, not replacement. Kids still



need school. Minecraft definitely can't replace all school subjects, but it can help emphasize them. An example, maybe, is a modded world replica of historical sights used in a history classroom. Minecraft: Education Edition being used in chemistry classroom to teach compounds and elements. Attention all teachers! Your students would love this. Whether it be code practice, history mods, or chemistry I can guarantee there will be kids ecstatic to just have minecraft on their screens. Though, if

none of that seems appealing to you, you could always just play some music. More specifically, Minecraft music. My journalism teacher, Mr. Hicks, plays Minecraft music for his 7th graders. Its relaxing and mellowed, just right for focusing and working.

Speaking of focus, it's also important to note how Minecraft also improves attentiveness. When you play a game of minecraft (in survival) your main objective is to, well, survive. You pay attention to the world around you to keep building your way to the top. Applying that to everyday life is just as natural as blinking and breathing. It also improves hand-eye coordination, seeing that to pay the most attention, you have to spend less time looking at the controls and more time looking at your screen. Kind of like typing.

Look, if you got this far, I know what you may be thinking. It's just a game. This is silly, but it's a loveable game with educational benefits. Even if you don't want it for classroom use or you're just a kid reading this I recommend just playing it. It's a nice game with nice music where you build houses and plant sugar cane (and maybe fight some mobs). It's not just some silly game, and if you think it is, it's a silly game we can all learn from.



JUST MEDITATE, MAN



Jei Wilkinson | Staff Writer

For every movie, book, or story with an anxious character freaking out, there's always another character there to console them. The first thing they do to help calm them down is telling the person to breathe. Either they'd give them a paper bag to breathe into or have the afflicted friend just take long deep breaths. I became so tired of these portrayals because it seemed like an endless cliché. But when you stop to think about it, and actually use that method, it's practical; it works.

Just recently in my life I've had many problems come up with family, school, and even just myself, but who hasn't? We all have issues in our lives, but not everyone does something about it. I decided to do something about it, and I looked to meditation. I've always considered meditation

as a possibility, but never thought that it could help. I've done it a few times before, but it never stuck because I didn't feel improvement afterwards. The concept seems easy. You sit for 10-15 minutes, think about "nothing", and just breathe. The previous trials that I attempted were much more difficult than I thought they would be. When I meditated, I found it almost impossible to do nothing. I found myself in doing the opposite. Lost in thought, I started thinking about what I'd needed to do the next day, what homework I needed to finish, or what I was going to eat for breakfast the next morning. Minutes would pass by and I would realize the entire session was a bust.

But with all the problems that I faced, I thought that I needed motivation, or more importantly, that I needed to challenge myself. So one day while I was browsing through YouTube, I found a video

by a YouTuber, Matt D'Avella titled I meditated 1 hour everyday for 30 days. I discovered that we had very similar problems when first meditating. After the video, he didn't have much improvement in his life. It didn't seem like the hour everyday of meditation did much for him. So I decided I should challenge myself and D'Avella by meditating for 30 days, to see if real improvements would occur. Before I could do anything I had to tweak the "challenge". He is a YouTuber, and has all the time in the world to do an hour a day, so I changed it to ten minutes the first ten days then added five minute increments to each 10-day period, or when I felt I was ready to do more. I changed the meditation duration to conform to my needs, which is what anyone should do for themselves as well. Meditation is all about making it comfortable and manageable for you.

Then it was time to start. For the first five days it really just felt the same as the previous trials I had done before. I remained optimistic; but I realized I needed some information or a foundation to go off of in case I were to ever lose direction. Essentially, I wanted to know how to meditate. Just sitting still for 10 minutes couldn't have been what it is all about. The stereotype of not thinking about anything when meditating is impossible. Everybody has thoughts appearing in their minds every second, every day. To regulate thoughts while

meditating, focusing on breath and the physical movements around you, you can push emotions/ thoughts in the background of your mind, and actually meditate.

Leading up to the tenth to fifteenth days I began to feel a lot better about meditation and my overall well-being. It was actually the first time that I felt like I really meditated. I wouldn't say that prior to this experiment I had anger issues. But I was the type of person that would bottle things up and just snap at people, or displace my anger on a door that just wasn't cooperating with me. But ever since I started, I haven't bottled any feelings up or felt the need to be angry.

The entire experience wasn't always so holly jolly. My attitude didn't suddenly change to "Oh man! My whole life is so much better!" I went through many ups and downs/ slumps and jumps over the course of the month. There were a few multiple day streaks of me just falling asleep while meditating. And even days where I felt horrible and just didn't want to do anything at all. But every time that would happen, the next day I'd try to just get back into it. Everything you do is always your responsibility. You can choose to get annoyed by life or not. It's your attitude that can dictate your life.

Everybody can sit down and meditate, but everybody could also have different outcomes from it. What I feel meditation can do is

fix or at least help you with your biggest problems in life. It really helped me become more of an optimist and happier in my day to day life. But for somebody else, it could assist them in their love life, or help them accept the death of a loved one. It seems as if it's a magical pill that you can take without the worry of any unforeseen side effects.

A day to day benefit that meditation could provide for you is the ability to be in the present moment. It actually helped me listen in class, when before I wouldn't care to finish an assignment. Even when I'm having a conversation with somebody I can notice how much more engaged I am. It may seem to only have that "being present" ability, but it leads to so much more. For example, when conversing with somebody I'm not only present, but I feel that I care more about the conversation than just wanting it to end.

Meditation can be the solution to many people's problems. However, nobody even tries to fix their problems. It's that first step to mediating that can really make an impact in the long run because it means that you're not putting it off anymore, and that you're trying. All I'm saying is that if you at least attempt it, you might like it. In my opinion, it is the ultimate remedy to your issues in your life. All you need to do is to just make an effort.



SPORTS we SHOULD have at ERHS

By Jacob Bernadino-Lucero |
Staff Writer

Athletics: Eagle Rock's second favorite pastime, next to littering. Nothing beats a Friday night at whatever our football stadium is called watching people tackle each other on the field for sport. If that doesn't tickle your fancy, plenty of other teams hold games throughout the week as well. With that being said, I still feel that ERHS is deprived of sports teams. The fact that we don't have our own golf team is a borderline crime on admin's part. Plenty of fun and unique sports exist outside of ERHS, some of which would be a great fit for our school. Here are a few I've thought of:

• Cricket •

Out of all the sports on this list, this is the most complicated one to implement at ERHS. Picture this though, Yosemite Park is set ablaze. In its place, a shiny new cricket stadium paid for with Meal Application money. It's the perfect plan!

Shuffleboard

The hallway floors will serve as the perfect shuffleboard. They don't even need to be sanded, just let some kids walk on it and boom! Add some BIC pancakes as pucks, and you've got yourself an ideal shuffleboard setup.

• Fencing •

This sport is gonna take the school to court for sure. Liabilities aside, I'm sure we can all agree that fencing in the North Gym would be a highly popular sport at this school.

STAYING INFORMED:

Meet ERHS' branch of the Planned Parenthood Peer Advocacy Program

Often times, sexual health is often a sticky topic for many teens to discuss with parents or adults, and teens tend to turn to friends to answer questions about relationships and sexuality. But in our world of "alternative facts", how can teens insure that the information they are receiving is safe and accurate?

So enters the Planned Parenthood Peer Advocates program, a network of informed and trained teens across greater Los Angeles armed with the resources, knowledge, and information to facilitate open conversations about sexual and reproductive health.

Within the Peer Advocates program, the power all lies in the hands of the teens. Linking schools across Pasadena, La Canada, Los Angeles, and surrounding areas, the program connects representatives from the schools and trains each extensively in order to become a resource for other students and advocates for change, answering students questions

with accurate and reliable information, and implementing sustainable projects in their communities. The mission of Peer Advocates is encompassed by their statement, per their website: "Peer Advocates help change social norms by promoting healthy relationships, responsibility, and equality, while also providing safer sex information to reduce the rates of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases."

How exactly do high school teenagers work to accomplish such a seemingly broad and daunting goal? The secret lies in their hard work, determination, and dedication to the cause. Last year, Peer Advocates worked with each of their schools to provide students access to free condoms. Here at Eagle Rock, the hard work of the Peer Advocates is still in place, and students have access to these resources both in the nurse's office and directly from the school's Advocates themselves. Programs such as the condom project insure that students of all incomes, backgrounds, and family situa-

tions have access to the same resources to be able to maintain healthy and safe relationships. On the nature of such accessibility and health resource, Ms. Keipp stresses, "We want to make sure we empower students and families and teachers with the best information we have available so that our community is healthy." And this very empower-

ment is the very foundation that the Peer Advocates program has built itself on. The Peer Advocates program first made its mark here at Eagle Rock when graduate Maya Bellew-Hopper became our school's first representative in 2018, creating a legacy of student change-makers who followed her Peer Advocate footsteps, such as class of 2019 alumni Monica and Julie Keipp who spearheaded the condom access project at Eagle Rock. This year, juniors Karina Morales and Itzel Whyte-Aguayo are continuing to facilitate change through their involvement in the Peer Advocate program.

Though Aguayo and Morales hire their community-based project for

the year is still under wraps, Morales emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and resources for all students, pointing out that "Many times the sex-ed that we learn is extremely heterosexual or non inclusive, putting marginalized people in a position to get STDs." For Itzel this community, inclusivity and access that the Advocates provide was the spark that fueled her involvement in the program and inspired her to start making change in our Eagle Rock community.

While navigating teenage health and sexuality can be a tricky maze, these Peer Advocates are well prepared for their responsibilities, undergoing a week of extensive summer bootcamp sessions to become accurately informed, prepared to answer questions, and aware of the rights that teens have to certain free health resources. Citing several grants initiated and offered by Planned Parenthood, Itzel highlights the access such grants provide for teens to free birth control options, such as the pill or the hormonal implant. Whether you're looking for information on safe relationships and decision making, or

are interested in learning more about different birth control options, Itzel and Karina swear to confidentiality, ensuring that anyone who approaches any Peer Advocate is in a safe, open space without judgement or fear.

In addition to the advocates work surrounding sexual health resources, the program has also tackled crucial social subjects in the community, such as sexual harassment in schools, Title IX rights throughout Pasadena Unified School District, LGBTQ+ digital space spaces, panels on teen advocacy, and reducing the stigma around members of our community with HIV and AIDS. And their bimonthly meetings, nestled in the Altadena Planned Parenthood facility, are often described as vibrant, welcoming open space where the advocates discuss anatomy, birth control options, human sexuality, gender expression, and other important conversations aimed at reducing stigma around these "awkward" topics.

Mathilda Barr | Staff Writer

Rugby

We have a football field, need I say more?

Chess Boxing

Just add a game of chess between each boxing match and boom, chess boxing!

Bossaball

I feel like the younger, greener Gen Z kids will appreciate this sport being added to the roster. Liabilities aside, having an inflatable Bossaball court in the quad every Tuesday would be a great addition to our school.

Sepak Takraw

Minus the complex name that most students will mispronounce, Sepak Takraw, also known as Kick Volleyball, would be a great addition to this school. Like Rugby, we have a preexisting volleyball court that can be utilized for Sepak Takraw games every week. I mean, there will surely be some lawsuits since students will use their heads to hit the volleyball, but that's a sacrifice we should be willing to make.

Surfing

Imagine this, a massive tsunami hits the California coastline, wiping out all of Los Angeles, including Eagle Rock. Out from the rubble, or in this case sand, a surfing team representing a WaterWorld Kevin Costner-ish version of Eagle Rock. Surf meets happen every Thursday, the prize is a spot on dry land for the following week until the next meet.

With the North Gym fully booked and the city completely flooded, our list of hypothetical sports at ERHS is complete. Although most of these sports will likely never come to fruition, it would be nice to see a few unique sports added to make ERHS stand out amongst the other 1,147 schools in LAUSD. In all seriousness though, the sports teams at this school are a standout quality that should be recognized more. Many athletes and coaches work day and night to prosper throughout season, and in my opinion, that's a win in my book.



ENTERTAINMENT

DOES *The Joker* promote gun violence?

Cedrik de Guzman |
Staff Writer

Since *The Joker* first premiered at the Venice Film Festival, it has been surrounded by a cloud of controversy. Starring Oscar nominee Joaquin Phoenix, the film is centered around failed comedian, Arthur Fleck, who wanders the streets of Gotham City. Isolated and bullied by society, Fleck slowly morphes into the iconic villain, the Joker. The film was released on Friday October 4th, marching to financial success and praise. However, the film's portrayal of a murderous psychopath who embraces chaos, has raised concerns about what the film might incite.

Bringing forth a newer, darker, and grittier reality to the comic book character, *The Joker* demonstrates how a sad party clown can be pushed to the edge and transformed into a king of terror. Suffering from a condition that makes

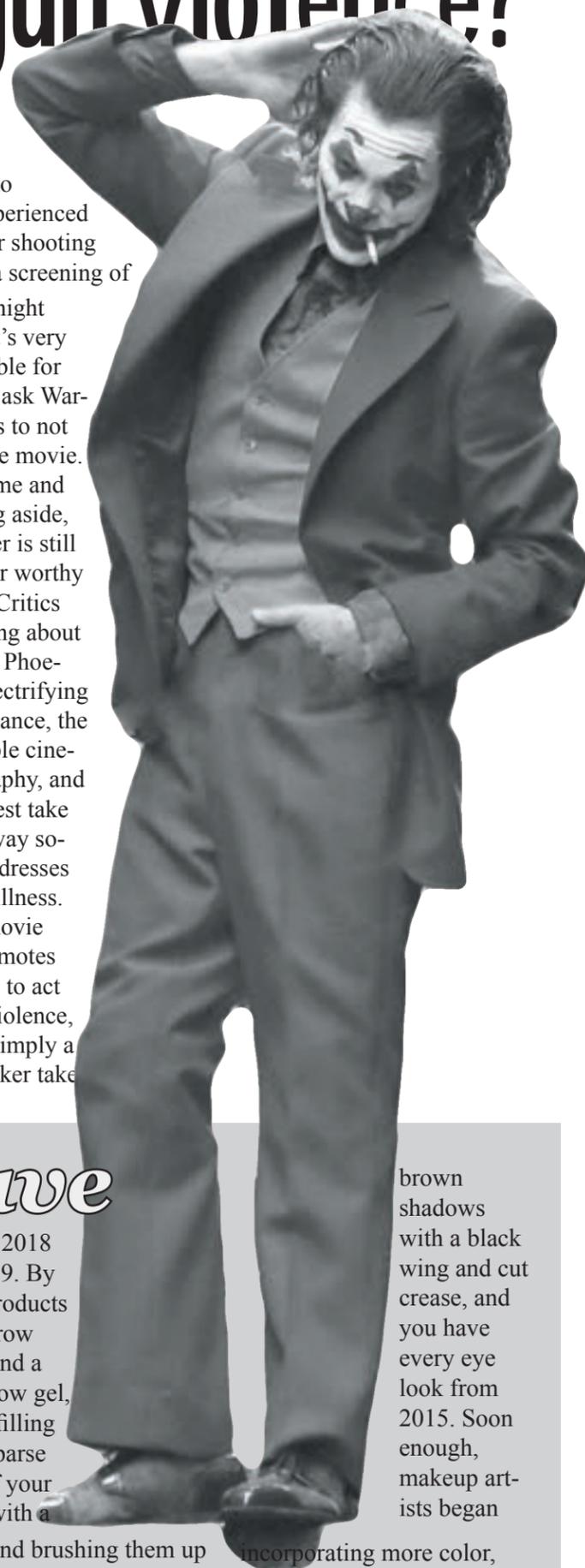
him laugh uncontrollably at ill-timed moments, Fleck is treated as a human heavy bag his whole life. Suffering one final injustice by 3 Wayne (Bruce Wayne's company) employees, Fleck finally snaps, kills all three of them, and finds the joy in that power. After that, he folds into his delusional psyche and adopts the face of the Joker. In most origin stories, the audience can sympathize with the protagonist. For example, Bruce Wayne and his murdered parents, or Superman and his decimated planet. The audience can feel and relate to the hero. But in the *Joker*, the movie instead paints the Fleck as a man worthy of compassion. Presenting Fleck as the protagonist, does the film cater to the incel crowd? His whole life, he has gotten the short end of the stick, and that's what worries people about this film. In an era of mass shootings, is it really the best idea to glorify such a character? Real people who feel cast aside by society, isolated,

and bullied may look up to *Joker* as a hero and may use violence as a way of revenge.

Even before it's premiere, the US Army issued warnings of possible extremist incels carrying out mass shootings at local theaters. In an Army memo marked "For official use only", it advised service members to identify "two escape routes" and to "run, hide, fight" in the event of a shooting. To add onto the chilling warnings, officials from the Army's Criminal Investigative Division received intelligence from Texas law enforcement concerning "disturbing and very specific chatter" on the Dark Web about "the targeting of an unknown movie theater during the release." Fortunately, there have been no mass shootings since the release of the movie apart from a minor disturbances resulting in arrest and no injuries.

So should you be worried to watch it? Well, that depends on your experiences. For

families in Aurora, Colorado who experienced a theater shooting during a screening of *Dark Knight Rises*, it's very reasonable for them to ask Warner Bros to not show the movie. But theme and meaning aside, the *Joker* is still an Oscar worthy movie. Critics are raving about Joaquin Phoenix's electrifying performance, the incredible cinematography, and the honest take on the way society addresses mental illness. Is it a movie that promotes outcasts to act out in violence, or is it simply a new darker take



How Makeup Trends Have Changed

By Sam Gonzalez | Staff Writer

We're seeing it now more than ever; creative minds are stepping into the spotlight! Art is being appreciated in a new way, the more unique the better. It feels like the diverse personalities of people are finally being embraced, and what better place to show off your individuality than through makeup? That being said, what trends have we watched transform? Through the influence of both runway looks and the minds of significant figures in the industry, we can see a change in makeup that can only be described as a growing expression of originality. If you travel far back enough into makeup's past (i.e. The early 2000's) we can see that eyebrows have come a long way. It's kind of hard to believe plucking your eyebrows into a thin line used to be in fashion, but ask anyone who's done it; it's something they regret. Bushier brows used to be unfavorable until

runway models embraced the trend, and Instagram influencers soon followed suit, but with their own twist. The phrase "Instagram brows" became well known for the next three years. These blocky eyebrows were usually achieved by using products like Anastasia Beverly Hills Dipbrow Pomade, and a thick concealer like Tarte's Shape Tape to make clean lines. Soon enough, most influencers were drawing on their brows, but it

quickly became easily overdone, and eventually turned into a trend hated by many. However, thanks to editorial artists (those who create looks featured on the runway), a new, more natural, but equally dramatic style was created. True "bushy brows" eventually took the

reins in 2018 and 2019. By using products like a brow pencil and a clear brow gel, simply filling in the sparse areas of your brows with a pencil and brushing them up into place achieves a natural, softer look, while still appearing bold. Another way to make a statement with your makeup is through colorful eye-liner, shadow and bold eye-liner. A few years ago it wasn't really common to see colorful eye makeup; almost every nude look you'd see on social media was achieved using the Urban Decay Naked palette or one of Morphe's endless warm-toned palettes. Combine your

brown shadows with a black wing and cut crease, and you have every eye look from 2015. Soon enough, makeup artists began

incorporating more color, glitter, and even gloss into their eye makeup. Now we're seeing the full artistic potential of makeup artists being uncovered. There's more color than ever, green shadows with a white wing, red lids that shine, even colored liner in curved lines above the eyelid; there are no lines makeup artists aren't willing to cross. This is a booming trend recently, as it gives artists an outlet to treat their faces like a canvas and get experimental with their routines. One major pioneer in makeup trends is Pat McGrath, founder of the luxury brand Pat McGrath Labs. Known in the industry as the "Mother of Makeup," many of her runway looks serve as inspi-



Original Art by Jillian Machacon



ENTERTAINMENT

CAMPUS FASHION

Francesca Walker | Staffwriter

Waking up in the mornings, sleeping past your alarm, and rushing to get out of the house trying to find a cute outfit can be the least of your worries. Putting in an effort to what you wear to school can sometimes be tiring and feel like a chore, however some students and even teachers at ERHS can effortlessly pull off killer looks.

First off, we have Junior, Noelani O'Hare, a new student to the school, transferring from Marshall. She has a unique 50's inspired style, and tends to buy most of her clothes second hand, taking lots of inspiration from her dad. On days when she is in a rush or couldn't care less about what she's wearing, she opts for a pair of jeans and a hoodie. Noelani defines fashion as confidence and comfort, comfort being, "Something you can own," but also physical comfort as well. She admits to also taking inspiration from people at school, and is currently on the lookout for a brown pair of corduroy pants to complete her wardrobe.



Next up, we have Ms. Clark, an English teacher here at ERHS with an eye for jewelry. She tends to wear tons of jewelry for she feels, it's a way in which you can express yourself. She can connect to her childhood, her family, where she's been, who she's loved through these precious treasures. Sadly, a few years ago, all of her jewelry was stolen, including things from her great aunt she wanted to pass down to her daughter, and a black pearl from her trip to Fiji. Jewelry is more than an accessory, it can complete a look, it can make a statement such as her staple "SMASH THE PATRIARCHY" earrings. Although she doesn't have much jewelry, she loves it, and finds a deeper meaning into loving nice things.



Another fashionable student was featured in our last paper, Lauren Arriola. Lauren has always had a unique sense of style and finds that her androgynous look creates a blurred line between masculine and feminine. Lauren's main goal in her appearance is to feel happy and not care about what others think. She describes finding her style as a huge advancement in self growth. She also takes great inspiration from her Grandma, who tends to have a story to every piece of clothing. She especially admires her ability to wear anything she wants. Lauren has strong feelings against retail stores and believes that secondhand shopping is more "expressive, creative, and unique." She loves to be different, and a prime example is her two person horse costume she is wearing for Halloween in hopes to take the Halloween parade crown.



Jan Pascual, a sophomore, tends to take fashion influence from people like his brother, taking some of his outfits and slightly altering them to his liking. Jan tends to wear clothes that are a bit bigger for a fashionable oversized look. On days when he struggles to pull together an outfit, he throws on a pair of Adidas pants and a basic shirt, paired with a necklace to make up for the basic fit. Jan also opts for second hand clothing, and he is currently on the lookout for a vintage 80's style windbreaker. For people struggling with outfits, Jan recommends looking at profiles or models who have completed outfits that are "aesthetically pleasing" to you. From there, you can go to thrift stores and sift through the variety of clothing to form outfits that resemble those you got inspiration from.



HOLLYWOOD HIGH



Daniza Guevarra | Staff Writer

THE PROBLEM WITH HIGH SCHOOL MOVIES

"You got your freshmen, ROTC guys, preps, J.V. jocks, Asian nerds, cool Asians, varsity jocks, unfriendly black hotties, girls who eat their feelings, girls who don't eat anything, desperate wannabes, burnouts, sexually active band geeks, the greatest people you will ever meet, and the worst. Beware of the plastics." This quote from the 2004 chick-flick *Mean Girls* has resonated with many people as to what the high school social hierarchy should be like when they enter. In reality, it is quite different than the average high school movie, but Hollywood would rather portray us differently than the rather annoying teens we are.

To give a sense of who high schoolers are, a band kid, a football player, and a robotics member were interviewed on the stereotypes that the media has placed on their roles at school and how it has affected them. Senior Citlali Torres has been a band kid for a year now,

playing the violin. Citlali states that usually, the typecast for band kids would be "that kids in band are super dorky, look dorky, are unpopular and only do just band." In reality, band kids display more characteristics than the classic nerds we see in our media. They are quite unique individuals, who range from peaceful to crazy and screaming from the top of their lungs when outside the band room, who also do other extracurriculars, such as football and cheer. At first she had thought they would be more intense. "I don't know why but I expected it to be sophisticated but then I realized that they're just kids so they're gonna act like kids." She has learned her lesson, but she wonders why Hollywood hasn't. She says that, "Society painted art and music to be nerdy, when in reality it isn't. Without these dorky kids doing what they do, you wouldn't see a lot of cool expressions come out of

the students." As a football player, other people expect them to be dumb, have girls who want them, guys who want to be them. According to the stereotype, their only personality trait would be that they play football. Sophomore Dominic Ventura wanted to prove that wrong. As someone who had been interested in football since he was four, the stereotypes never really affected him growing up, except for the fact that people think they have nothing to care for but the sport. In fact, it's the complete opposite of that, he has a lot to care for, and his teammates are a part of that. "There's a lot of communication going on, and you have to use a lot of teamwork, it's one of the reasons why I like this sport so much." The sense of camaraderie was noticeable at the homecoming game, when they pushed through together and JV won at a whopping 52-15! Adding

to that, the games are not as hyped up as they are in the movies, but they're interesting nonetheless. A piece of advice Ventura would like to give to Hollywood is that it'd be better off if "they showed them outside the sport, like checking grades, and actually getting along with everyone." Finally, there's the Robotics member, Daniel Adryan, who not only has to deal with the nerd persona, but also the Asian stereotypes that come with it. Growing up, he struggled learning to deal with the Asian stereotypes that he fit into: nerdiness, good grades, and heavy, practically unintelligible accents. Adryan said that he thinks that, "It is offensive to not only myself, but to other people or it can just give too much expectations for other people to be like that." His tone clearly indicates that the stereotype is something he feels strongly about. Adryan also adds that many people like to comment

on it, and that it irritates him. He'd love for Hollywood to be able to lessen the emphasis on the movies that portray these stereotypes, and though they've had less and less over the years, those movies are cult classics in Hollywood's pop culture era. That makes it harder for these stereotypes to go away for the younger generation.

With pop culture writing more stories accurately about people of color, sports, and musically inclined students, the issue of inaccuracy won't be able to go away as previously stated, some of Hollywood's most popular movies contain these stereotypes. Though they will be there for a while, just know that in conclusion, these people don't fit into their stereotypes and have amazing personalities shown off in their respective hobbies. High school is about having fun, growing up, and fitting into your own mold, instead of fitting into the personalities of jocks, band kids, and robotics members that the movies portray with such exaggeration.

OP-ED



Dylan Kirk | *Staff Writer*

As someone who has never been in a relationship, I find it hard to believe any high school relationship could last longer than a few months when even the concept of a highschool sweetheart is outdated. In the '70s, it was expected not only that you date, but that your relationship would last. According to a study done by UCLA, one third of high school seniors reported being in a relationship in the '70s, yet in 2017, only about one sixth of seniors can say the same, with a plethora of reasons why.

Some want to stay focused on academics and are insistent on not being distracted by a significant other, so as to not ruin their chances of getting a 1500 on the SAT or have their AP Lit grade drop below a 90%. Others say they're simply not interested in dating someone, and understand that they're not mature enough to be in a relationship yet. A large

Together Forever... At least Until College

Let's Talk About High School Relationships

majority of teens simply don't have the confidence, and find themselves unwilling to try asking someone on a date based on the possibility of embarrassment or a lack of reciprocation.

Even those who had previously been in a serious high school relationship are less likely to be in another, based on past experiences, a point mentioned by the US Department of Justice, as well as the Department of Health and Human Services. At Eagle Rock, for example, the majority of students wouldn't think twice about dating.

In a poll taken at ERHS, 62% of students had said they hadn't been in a relationship, and that they wouldn't want to have a relationship in high

school. Of the remaining 38%, one third said they don't plan on dating again in high school for "a while". But one ERHS student we interviewed makes an interesting point: when you're young and dating, every person you meet is "the one", and a week after the break up, there's someone new to fill the gap. It feels as if there's a major distance between those who date and those who stay away from romance altogether.

"I want a relationship, but I know my own worth without one." One Eagle Rock student claimed. Another student talks about her current relationship, which has lasted more than a year and a half. "Obviously, you need to put effort into a relation-

ship, but you should know how it's affecting you. If it's not healthy, maybe it's not the right person, you know? Maybe they're not right for you, and you have to understand that for yourself."

Even when considering the less pleasant elements of each endeavor, many teens have a grasp on what is best for themselves.

Despite all of the perceived negatives to dating in high school, there's significant evidence to suggest it's not all bad. An article by the Washington Post recognizes why high school relationships should be not only permitted, but encouraged- fear and shame surround high school romance because of the environments created by others, when really,

romantic teenage impulses should be normalized. Teens can make mistakes and work to fix them when their older and their relationships are more serious.

One Eagle Rock teacher was adamant about convincing me teenage relationships are important. He said "You need to learn what you want from someone else, and why not do it with someone that you care about, but you already know it won't last- It's, like, the perfect opportunity." He makes a point; with heightened emotions, the passion in a high school relationship is at its peak, so it would make sense that one would be learning as they go.

At the end of the day, there will be supporters and deniers of teenage relationships. Despite the information that suggests there are benefits, there are avid opposers of teen dating. So maybe, just maybe, high school relationships deserve a bit more credit than they receive.

Ethan Horn | *Staff Writer*

As I enter the LA Zoo, a childlike nostalgia overcomes me. I remember coming with my family on the weekends, and spending excessively long amounts of time at each exhibit, begging my parents to move along. Recently in a moment of impulsiveness, I decided to revisit the Zoo.

I entered, and after paying the inordinately expensive admission price (\$22 for adults), and was immediately greeted by annoying camera crews begging to take a photo of me and my fellow travelers. I chose to decline this service. However, The Zoo makes up for their admissions price with free parking in their vast open lot, although some of the areas are reserved for people who are willing to pay for a shorter walk to the entrance.

Right after getting past those pesky cameramen, you have the opportunity to look through the

MONKEYING AROUND

REVIEW OF THE L.A. ZOO

scratched glass of the seal exhibit. Most of the encounters with glass, which are presumably there to make sure you don't give the animals a hug, are dirty and hard to see through.

Luckily, many exhibits are fenced, and the only difficulty you might have seeing is looking over tall, bald dads with children on their shoulders.

The layout of the Zoo makes it easy to just mindlessly explore. When you buy your ticket you are handed a map of the Zoo. Not only that, but posted around every corner stands a map pinpointing where you are. Despite easy access to the map, I found them confusing and difficult to navigate. Walking around the Zoo is quite enjoyable because of the nice environment, plants, and

trees, but if you become tired of walking, close to the entrance is a shuttle that will take you a different path from most people. If you get hungry, it's not too hard to find food, and it's relatively inexpensive for a burger and fries compared to other amusement and outdoor attractions.

The popular exhibits like the lions, chimpanzees, and gorillas, usually have crowds of people around them. The hippopotamus and swan exhibits, some of the emptiest exhibits I visited, were infested with squirrels enjoying the free areas they co-opted from the previous tenants. Squirrels will even hang out with the animals in their exhibits, even if there's a giant lion staring them down as they eat the acorn they found

on the ground next to its toes. I found this interesting because even though its not intended by the Zoo keepers, they really don't seem to care about these squirrels. Every encounter is carefully designed so that certain animals don't eat each other, and in some cases, that certain animals do eat each other. However, this one little flaw that could result in a corpse of squirrel floating in the water next to a crocodile is either unnoticed or not a concern to the groundskeepers.

There are also many events and "Zoorific" shows you can go to that are listed in your map and guide. There's so many that it's impossible to view them all in one day, and not all shows happen on the same day. If you're



interested in viewing these shows, though, weekends are the most packed, so that's when you should plan your visit.

In total, I spent around 3 hours at the LA Zoo and was able to explore the majority of it. I was exhausted at the end of it, mostly because I didn't follow some simple steps. On hot, sunny summer days it might be tough to walk around the Zoo all day. I would recommend going on cooler days, especially if you plan on spending lots of time there. If you choose to go on a hot day: bring a hat, sunscreen, and don't wear any heavy clothing. Even though I had a lot of problems with my experience, it was pleasant and nice to reconnect with myself. If you haven't been in a while or never been at all, the LA Zoo is definitely worth checking out.

OP ED



WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT OUR DRESS CODE

Gizelle Vazquez | Staff Writer

From the second we started going to school, we knew there was an expectation of what was appropriate for us to wear on campus, whether it was a uniform or following a dress code. We may even have clothing restrictions that are given by our families, or ourselves for that matter. As a girl who grew up on more of the feminine side, I've always felt my best when I was wearing some kind of dress or skirt. However, to this day, people still feel the need to comment on my choice of style, both peers and adults. Some have been positive and others negative, but I continue to dress the way I do because it's what I like, and my parents don't have any problems with it. I imagine that many other people have a similar understanding with their family. However, while our parents have some authority in what we wear, should the school? And if so, how much control is appropriate for them to have over what we wear? Here at Eagle Rock, despite having a dress code in place, we hardly ever see it

enforced. While there are some rules that definitely need to be restricted, a lot of them seem rather random and possibly even run afoul of our rights to express ourselves freely. There are some reasonable exceptions to this, but, in my opinion, only very few rules adequately cover these exceptions. Moreover, most dress code regulations are directed towards females, and this is most likely because the school wants to avoid girls dressing in a provocative way.

At Eagle Rock, some may say we're "lucky," and such restrictions aren't necessarily wrong. Plus, other than a few sticklers on campus, most faculty and staff will not even point out a girl showing off a little skin. But again, is it even their right to approve of this or not? Our unspoken lenience can't even fully be appreciated because what should be a liberty is being viewed as more of a luxury. And that's the problem. We shouldn't feel lucky being able to wear what we want on our bodies. So no matter how fortunate we are in comparison to others, there's still the possibility of running into the one rare staff member who will care, and it does matter.

If you've never experienced this, then you'd never know just how embarrassing it is, uncommon or not. Imagine being under

18 years old and told your new skirt is too provocative. It's not pleasant. Or the day before Halloween when the costume dress code is being announced, and they make references about "revealing" clothing jokingly being addressed to the boys, but you know it's really towards you

That isn't even legal in public. Section III of the dress code, the unisex section, is, in my mind, the most fair of them all. It's the only one that doesn't directly call out any one group. The first section of the code prohibits any article of clothing displaying anything drug related. Although

symbols that defame other groups or ethnicities." We are a very diverse school, and any indication of racism on campus should not be allowed. School is supposed to be a safe and accepting place, and it should feel that way for anyone, regardless of one's racial or ethnic background. For that reason, the school is in the right to not allow it, as they are with any other rules that are meant to protect us.

There is a fine line between criticizing the person's clothing, and condemning the person. Just because our society tends to be old-fashioned in their ways, doesn't mean our school needs to be. I believe girls should be able to wear tube tops, shorts, and mini skirts without being seen as provocative. I believe boys should be able to do just the same. Everyone should feel comfortable wearing what they please, especially if no harm is being done in doing so. Whether you agree or not is up to you, but one apparent truth in all of this is that it's time for change. As our school continues to grow, so should its rules evolve. Only then will we finally reach the level of security and equity that the dress code is supposed to promote, without taking away the liberties we are given as citizens at birth.

"Our unspoken lenience can't even fully be appreciated because what should be a liberty is being viewed as more of a luxury."

and every other girl at school -- that also doesn't feel good. These things can go make young women see themselves as doing something wrong, when it's simply untrue. And all it takes is that one person to make an uncomfortable comment. Of course there are reasonable dress code rules that should not be ignored at school. I don't think the idea of a dress code should be completely abolished. There are things that should be regulated, like with anything in life. For example, no matter what gender you are, you shouldn't come to school completely nude.

this isn't necessarily offensive or harmful, it is still illegal for minors to partake in using drugs for recreational purposes. Therefore, unless you're 21, you shouldn't really be promoting it. The next one rules out "obscene symbols or language, gang symbols or affiliation, cult membership or symbols/scenes of violence." Not only does any kind of affiliation disrupt the safety of others, it may also potentially jeopardize yours. Because of this, I'd say it's right to not allow this for security reasons. The last justifiable regulation is that "clothing may not contain language or

WHY DON'T TEENS PLAY TEENS?

Sam Gonzalez | Staff Writer

Being a teenager in this day and age has proven time and time again to be more stressful and overbearing on our self-esteem. We are surrounded by media that attempts to relate to our struggles, and sell a depiction of what our generation is like. Unfortunately, as we can see, especially in television, our media depicts teenagers so inaccurately that we can quite literally see the decline in teens confidence.

In the trendy teen-drama series, Riverdale, we see our leading cast act as troubled teens trying to deal with a widely varying series of situations. The audience is able to watch them tackle dangerous secrets while trying to deal with their characters complicated relationships. Riverdale follows four leads, who all play sophomores in high school. But it's pretty obvious that the producers want to make the viewers envision them as at least four years older than their characters actually are. Putting teenagers in mature situations could be executed in an impressive way, one that makes the viewers feel comfortable and

recognized while also being entertained by a brooding plot.

But to get away with putting their teen characters into extreme and over-sexualized situations they cast young adults in the place of teenagers, and it can be seen throughout the history of film and television. Sissy Spacek in Carrie (1976) was 27, Rachel McAdams was 25 when she played a 17-year-old in Mean Girls (Amy Poehler, who played her mother, was just 7 years older). Even the 34-year-old Stockard Channing played a highschooler in Grease. This kind of age difference in actors and their characters can cause needless anxiety for teenagers, and has been for ages. Teenagers go through a lot of physical changes in their adolescence, to cast an adult as a teenager is not only an inaccurate depiction of what a teen should look like, but it can also cause harm on real teens own self-esteem. We are constantly taking in what we see on screen and applying it to ourselves. So, when an undeveloped 14 year-old girl watches a completely matured woman acting as if she just entered freshman year, it can

build up insecurities and cause comparisons.

The same can be said about the actions of these teen characters. When you watch what these writers make their characters do, you can understand why they'd want to exclusively cast adults for these roles, although the circumstances are also inherently problematic.

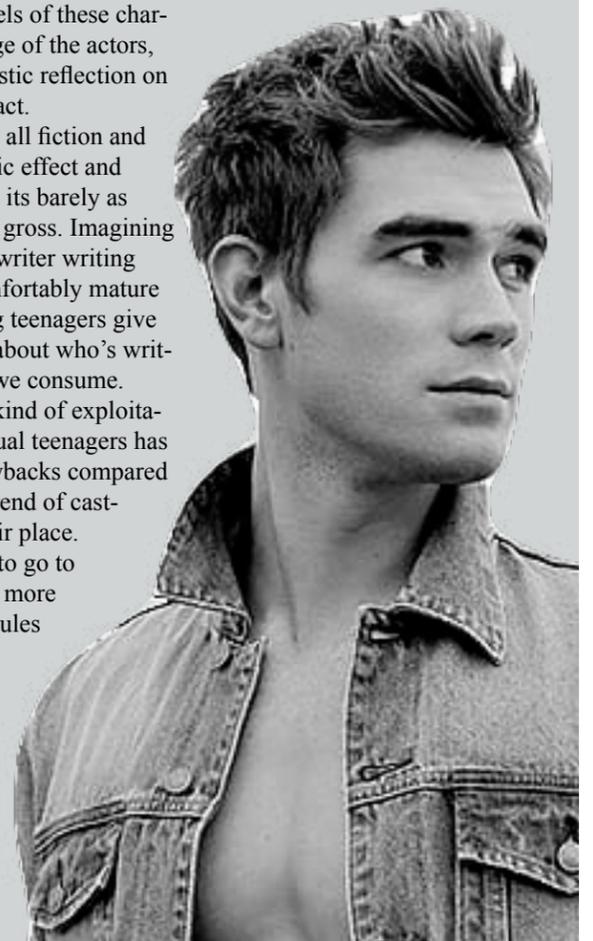
In the teen-drama Pretty Little Liars, we can see one of the four main leads get into an uncomfortable relationship with her teacher. It gets even more unsettling when, spoiler, they get married in the end. But the audience is meant to forget that this character is a high school sophomore and that the situation isn't romantic (instead in reality it's called statutory rape and grooming) by casting the 21 year-old Lucy Hale as the character in question.

Television shows do this more often than not as a way to over-sexualize teens. Revisiting Riverdale, leading actress- 21 year-old Lili Reinhart- who played Betty, the sophomore who eventually ended up pole dancing in an episode in one of their later seasons. This oversexualization can force

impressionable teenagers to make expectations for themselves. It gives them examples of beautiful, sensual figures and that they may come too admire and want to be like. But obviously the maturity levels of these characters suit the age of the actors, and are not realistic reflection on how we should act.

Of course this is all fiction and done for dramatic effect and shock value, but its barely as shocking as it is gross. Imagining an adult screen-writer writing glorified, uncomfortably mature scenes involving teenagers give major red flags about who's writing the content we consume. To combat that kind of exploitation, casting actual teenagers has only minor drawbacks compared to the harmful trend of casting adults in their place. Teenagers have to go to school and have more restrictive schedules than adults. it's a drawback that has simple solutions, and will

give the show more benefits than downfalls. It gives teenagers a chance to see realistic depictions of those in their age groups and can give opportunities to more young actors.



NEWS



Mikael Theba | Staff Writer

800 miles long, stretching from city to city across the coast of California, the looming threat of the San Andreas fault is one I'm sure most Angelenos are familiar with. Whenever LA is hit with another minor earthquake, the phrase "We're overdue" is thrown around, referencing the fact that it's rumored that the San Andreas fault could unleash a state crushing earthquake at any moment without warning; but is this really the case? As Eagle Rock is quite far from the fault itself, is our community even at risk?

Earthquakes aren't sudden natural disasters that happen for no reason. Earthquakes are the result of decades of stress on a fault between tectonic plates

building up and releasing all at once. The San Andreas fault is composed of two massive tectonic plates that hold North America and the Pacific Ocean, and each one slips past the other one at a rate of around 1.5 inches a year-or about the same speed that your fingernails grow at. However, when the land that sits on the edges of the faults get locked into place by friction, the stress from each plate attempting to move slowly builds up. The last earthquake on the San Andreas fault was in 1857, and with an average time between earthquakes of 100 years, we're very clearly overdue.

As for how soon an earthquake could hit us, let alone the Big One itself, researchers have been monitoring the San Andreas fault for over a decade now to

get a better understanding of the built up stress. According to Thomas Jordan, director of the South California Earthquake center, "The springs on the San Andreas system have been wound very, very tight. And the southern San Andreas fault, in particular, looks like it's locked, loaded and ready to go." After all, if the fault hasn't triggered an earthquake for all this time, what's the likelihood that it might anytime in the near future? According to the US Government Earthquake Hazards Program, there's a 20% chance within the next 20 years that it could happen at any moment near Los Angeles. However, if the slip starts further up north near San Francisco, the probability of it happening in the next 20 years spikes up to nearly 75%. The overall probability of an earthquake greater than a magnitude of 6.7 striking within the next 30 years is over 99%, just shy of being 100% certain. Quite clearly, we're at constant risk for an earthquake happening, whether we like it or not. Just because the earthquake could happen at any time doesn't mean we're necessarily at risk here in Eagle Rock, right? While it may be the case that Eagle Rock is over 100 miles away from the San Andreas fault itself, the main fault isn't the only possible trigger in the entire

IS THE BIG ONE REALLY GOING TO HAPPEN?

San Andreas fault zone. Many smaller branches of the fault break off all across California, making their way through spots all over LA. For example, a fault line runs directly under Dodger Stadium, threatening the entire surrounding area with a powerful earthquake. Leading seismologist Lucy Jones stated in an interview in 2012 that, "The earthquake is inevitable and disruption is inevitable." Still, even more worrying is that a separate fault branch runs directly under Pasadena- and right into Eagle Rock. Without a doubt, we're definitely at risk of a destructive earthquake.

Earlier this year, Eagle Rock High School became the first public school in California to receive a new early warning system for earthquakes that are to be installed across the city. The system was developed by Early Warning Labs, who've partnered with LAUSD to install the system into the already existing public announcement systems of three public schools. Through a hard-wired network of sensors that detect the initial wave of seismic activity, the early warning system can alert students and staff before

the shaking even begins. The warning also includes the level of expected shaking, and how much time is left to get to cover. A similar system is being used to develop Early Warning Labs' phone app QuakeAlert, which uses an online version of the same system across L.A. to warn you of an earthquake before it strikes. The app is free to download, and is highly recommended to anyone living in the L.A. area.

So what should you be doing about it? The easiest step you can take is to talk with your family about an Earthquake plan. Wherever you might be in your home, remember Drop, Cover, Hold. Drop close to the ground, Cover under anything you can, Hold onto a stable object with one hand to keep yourself as stationary as possible. It also is a great idea to keep gallons of bottled water and non-perishable foodstuffs stored somewhere safe and easily accessible. There are plenty of government resources on the internet to help prepare yourself better for an earthquake, and as someone living in a high risk area, it's important to know how to stay safe in an earthquake.



LOS ANGELES YOUTH TAKE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Keira Kevany | Staff Writer

On September 20th, over 4 million people participated in a strike across the world, united in determination to spread awareness of climate change and global warming. The demonstration, inspired by 16 year old Greta Thunberg, calls for nations to declare the world in climate emergency. "I want you to panic," says Thunberg. "Our house is on fire." While urging for panic, the millions of protestors calmly left their homes, schools, and workplaces to march peaceful demonstrations in their cities.

Here in Los Angeles, thousands of LAUSD students walked out and met other protestors at Pershing Square in downtown LA. Gathered on the corner of Hill and 5th, I met with fellow high school and college students, professors and researchers, climate activists, and indigenous youths and leaders, all vying for action. Parents brought their children with them, some barely old enough to have a voice, but holding signs and smiling nonetheless. My friends and I had made signs to join the students lined the streets and sidewalks, carrying their

posters with statements regarding climate change and even drawings. Some were humorous, and some eye-opening, highlighting what needed to be said. "There is no planet B," many signs read. "The climate is changing. Why aren't we?"

My ears rang through choruses of unending chants and the live band playing in the middle of the street that quickly collected a large crowd, while a generous family served free beans and rice from the back of their truck. A young woman taught my friends and I a song as an alternative to the chant-



ing, telling us that even though there were less than ten of us, our combined voices would be loud enough. Some people gathered to watch us as we repeated the lyrics after her, and I felt like I had become a part of a small choir.

We lined up on the

street, ready to march with our signs; a peaceful army. Two girls from a different high school had taken initiative along with the volunteers as they led chants and informed the crowd of the direction of the march. Side by side, signs in hand, we began to march through the streets of downtown, chanting at the top of our lungs: "Hey hey ho ho, climate change has got to go!" "What do we want? Climate justice! When do we want it? Now!" Cars, stuck in traffic, waved and honked at us in support. I shared

the brightest smiles and whoops with complete strangers, many with their phones out to record the event. I marched alongside youths and leaders chanted and banged a drum. A man playing a bagpipe, and a group of men in their twenties played various per-

cussion instruments. Even Calum Worthy, a Disney channel star from the show Austin and Ally came out to show his support, taking pictures with fans.

The rhythm of protest brought us to grand park, outside the Los Angeles City Hall. My feet were aching and my throat was sore, but the sight of hundreds of people gathered in the grass and on the steps in front of city hall, and being able to join them, was all worth it. I spotted more of my friends in the middle of the crowded protestors, sitting on the steps, smiling and waving while we anticipated the arrival of Mayor Eric Garcetti. We waited and waited, but eventually were joined by Mayor Garcetti as he announced the formation of the Mayor's Youth Council on Climate Action, a collection of 17 high school and college students who will help drive the City's strategy and policies to confront the climate crisis. The Los Angeles Police Department, whose officers had been closely monitoring the march and stood outside the doors of city hall, recalls there being "no reported arrests or complaints."

AT THE ROCK

Miguel Navarro | Staff Writer

Impeachment. It's a hot button issue in our Political climate. A few weeks ago, Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the House, ordered the House of Representatives to begin an impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump. But what exactly is impeachment? Many Americans today do not have the slightest clue as to what impeachment is or its history. It is a complicated process in our representative democracy and a process that leaves all 3 branches of government clashing for power.

Impeachment is one of the 2 ways (the other is invoking the 25th amendment in which the Presidential cabinet votes by a majority to remove the President). of removing the president from office. Many believe impeachment is when you remove the president from office by majority vote, but they are quite mistaken. It is a complex process as it involves multiple steps and a lot of patience. The framers of the Constitution stated that the president could be removed from office on account of "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." It all begins in the House of Representatives. An official inquiry must be made,

WHAT IS IMPEACHEMENT?

along with investigations that must be conducted to determine the scope of the offense. The offense then transfers into Articles of Impeachment. Next, The House votes by a majority on whether to land articles of impeachment on the president. If majority rules, the president has been indicted on charges and awaits a full-on trial. He is considered to be "impeached," but he is not removed from office YET at this point. The Next step is the Senate, where in essence, the Senate chamber is like a courtroom. The chief justice presides over the trial, and arguments are made from the prosecution and the defense. A 2/3majority (67 votes) in the Senate is needed to convict and remove the president. If there is no 2/3 majority, he is acquitted and stays in office. Throughout US history, 3 presidents have been impeached, and each left an impact on our country's history.

The first president to be impeached was President Andrew Johnson. You may know him as the man who bought Alaska, but he made history as the first president to face being removed from office.

President Johnson took power after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865, and right away a full-scale political war erupted between Johnson and

Congress. He was furious with his cabinet members and fired the majority of them. As a result, Congress passed a law: the Tenure of Office act, requiring that Johnson check-in with congress before firing his cabinet officers. Furious over the new law, he fired Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, violating federal law. He got impeached in the House, however, in the Senate, a 2/3r majority was not made. The vote stood at 35 to convict 19 to acquit. Johnson got off by one vote, and he left the trial beaten and humiliated. He served out the remainder of his term, but he had no political capital left. It would be 100 years before we see another case of impeachment pop up again.

President Richard Nixon is perhaps the most famous example of a president who was almost impeached. He may have opened up China, and created several new governmental agencies, but one thing comes to mind when you think of Nixon: Watergate. The Watergate break-in was an attempt to bug the Democratic headquarters at the Watergate hotel for a Republican victory in the 1972 election. Investigation after investigation began, and it was revealed that Nixon did indeed have a role in the scheme, as he orchestrated payouts to the burglars to keep them quiet. Articles of Impeachment were created in the House, and it was certain impeachment and removal from office was inevitable for him. To avoid political suicide, he resigned from the office of the Presidency,

becoming the first president to do so. The scandal rocked the Presidency and crippled his image. It would be 3 decades before we'd see yet another Presidency go down in flames.

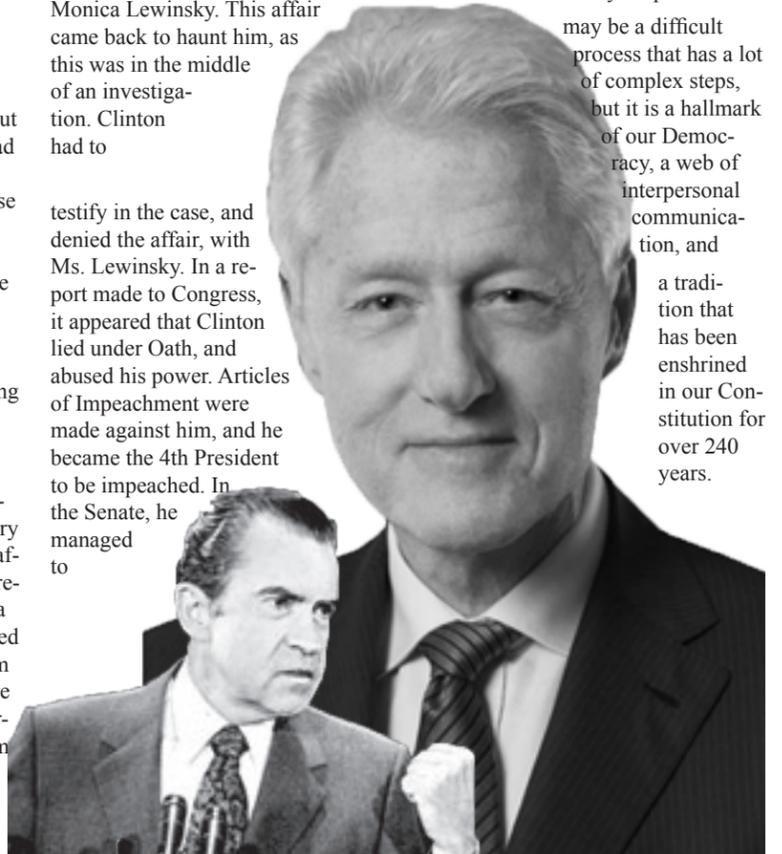
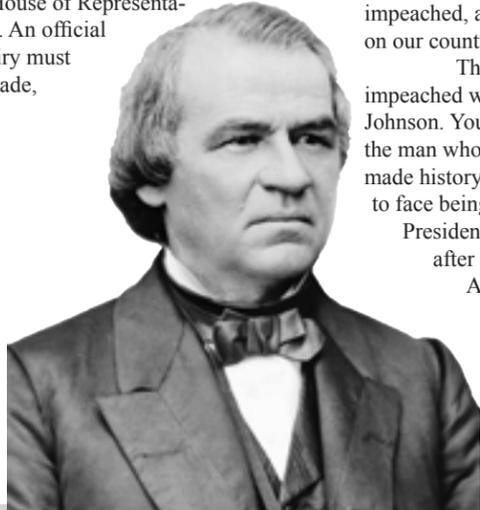
President Bill Clinton was the most recent president to be impeached. Throughout his presidency, he had an affair with a young White House intern named Monica Lewinsky. This affair came back to haunt him, as this was in the middle of an investigation. Clinton had to

testify in the case, and denied the affair, with Ms. Lewinsky. In a report made to Congress, it appeared that Clinton lied under Oath, and abused his power. Articles of Impeachment were made against him, and he became the 4th President to be impeached. In the Senate, he managed to

avoid conviction, and resume the duties of his office. Unlike Johnson who had no political capital, Bill Clinton managed to get a lot done after his impeachment, and his poll numbers soared as a result, nicknaming him "The Comeback Kid".

Impeachment is a controversial issue in American politics today, and not a day goes by where we don't hear the debate around it. With the impeachment inquiry occurring in the House of Representatives, proceedings can commence by the end of this year. History will judge the actions of the lawmakers of the 116th congress, greatly over this impeachment effect in history. Impeachment

may be a difficult process that has a lot of complex steps, but it is a hallmark of our Democracy, a web of interpersonal communication, and a tradition that has been enshrined in our Constitution for over 240 years.



THE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM



Sarah Goldstein | Staff Writer

A government of the people, by the people, for the people. These words from Abraham Lincoln are the very definition of a democracy, something on which this country has for so long prided itself. But this democracy, time and time again, has also proven that it is selective in those that they wish to include, despite the fact that this country was quite literally built on the backs of immigrants, whether it be the African enslaved individuals who were forced to build from the ground up, or the Europeans that we consider our founding fathers. Any way you look at it, we are here because of immigrants.

Contrary to what some people believe, the government isn't openly against all immigration. They only wish to eliminate illegal immigration, as do most countries. The problem with this, however, is how restrictive the policies and regulations surrounding legal immigration have become, especially under the current presidential administration. To be considered a legal immigrant, an individual must be in possession of a green card, which has the power

to grant them legal employment and residence in the country on a permanent basis, or a visa which does the same but on a strictly temporary basis. It all seems fairly simple, which begs the question, why doesn't everyone come to the United States this way?

Like I mentioned earlier, in order to come to this country legally, one must obtain a green card or a visa. Visas are for temporary stays issued to employees and students, allowing for those individuals to work and attend school legally while their visa is still active. They fall under two large umbrella categories, immigrant visas and non immigrant visas. There are 140,000 American visas given out each year, and many diverse categories with caps. Not to mention, a single person can count against multiple caps. For example, if a man has a brother who needs to work in the United States, that brother would count against both the family sponsored and employment sponsored visa caps.

In order to get a green card, however, there is also a complicated process. An immigrant can get a green card in one of 4 ways; family sponsorship, employer sponsor-

ship, political asylum/ refugees, or winning a green card lottery. The United States grants about 1 million annual visas, which sounds like a lot in theory. However, taking into consideration the number of people seeking a better life outside of their impoverished countries all over the world, that number doesn't seem so large. In fact, the window of opportunity shrinks further. According to the Migration Policy Institute, upto 50% of those visas are awarded to those already in the United States who have just changed their status. Because of these small numbers, the wait to enter legally can be outrageous.

On top of this, the Trump administration has made moves that severely limit legal immigration. According to the CATO institute, since 1992 the wait to enter the states legally has doubled. The average is anywhere from 5 to 8 years, but in some cases it can be as long as 50 years before an applicant is granted entry due to backlog. During the duration of the Trump administration, we have seen senate proposed bills that limit the numbers of immigrants let in legally severely. Aside from that, the administration has extended the adjudication process regarding immigration,

causing more backlog and longer periods of time before immigrants can become citizens. While this may not seem like a big deal, the longer that immigrants are not citizens, the longer that they cannot vote on political issues, working to the advantage of the current administration. Even the number of refugees accepted has drastically declined. During the Obama presidency, 110,000 refugees were accepted, which President Trump has managed to lower all the way to just 30,000.

Even after becoming a green card holder, there are still several obstacles yet to be faced. First of all, only 5,000 annual employment green cards are given to immigrants that don't have college degrees. Because immigrants often come from countries where there aren't practical educational opportunities, this can be very difficult to attain. Holders can apply for permanent citizenship only after 5 years of residence or 3 if they are married to a US citizen. Until then, they are considered non-citizens, meaning that they don't have the same privileges, like the right to vote or to public wealthfare systems, such as Medicaid and Housing Assistance. This can make living especially difficult, consider-

ing that most immigrants come here trying to escape the worse conditions in their home countries, most likely meaning that they are not in a good financial situation themselves. Because they aren't considered citizens, teenage immigrants also have less opportunities to go to a university. In a society that is so dependent on college degrees, it is hard to imagine thriving without one.

Aside from this, there is a more recent development. On Friday October 4th, President Trump issued a proclamation that all future visa applicants need to show proof that they can afford health care, once again promoting the immigration of younger healthy immigrants and discouraging the poor, the people who need it the very most. With all of these regulations, restrictions, and outrageous wait times, it isn't hard to realize why there is such a large problem with illegal immigration. If President Trump is truly concerned about the illegal immigration crisis and is dedicated to eradicating it, instead of building a wall to keep people out, he should instead shift his focus and power onto creating more oportunities that encourage legal immigration.



Tomas Diaz | Staff Writer

Unswum Heroes

I started playing water polo when I was 9 years old. I was a young boy with slight scoliosis and a mom seeking a cure for this problem, which was found in being in the pool all year long. Water polo not only cured this condition, one which I could barely understand at that age, but it also provided me with the opportunity to enjoy something in a way I never have before. Ever since that first time I dived into the water I loved to practice, play games, and the overall feel of water polo. Almost nothing could compare to the joy and excitement I got from this sport. This newfound passion for water polo was like an addiction for me; I never wanted to stop.

Eventually I graduated from novice water polo and moved onto playing in club. At club, when the practices and games were much more intense, I found myself flourishing. My skills and technique improved with everyday that passed. Old tricks and drills that were once difficult now came easy. The desire and love I had for this sport trumped any feelings of

doubt and ideas of not being good enough. But it was also from my starting of club and later high school water polo that I learned how small the world of water polo was. But, I also learned that my passion wasn't shared by everyone I met.

I had grown up in a water polo world but I was now exposed to a new one where almost nobody even knew about the sport I loved so dearly. To some, this sport is so foreign that I could practically be talking to them in a different language. Staff and fellow peers were puzzled by the mere mention of its name. Being unaware about of these sports was common at Eagle Rock. I can't exactly blame them though, not only in Los Angeles but in the US as well, water polo definitely is not ranked as one of the most popular or well known sports. But it is this simple fact that comes as a disappointment to me as this sport that has had a big impact on my life is not as big as I thought.

Eagle Rock was no exception to the "popular"

sports that occupied the lives of many. Water polo is never in the spotlight in the same way other sports might be, despite the team's numerous accomplishments. Just because on sport may be more popular than the other, the amount of time celebrating the sports at this school should be equal. But that is not the case. Even with all the success we have as a team I still find that we're left out of morning announcements or left with lockers without the paper badges ASB makes for sports. I know it may seem silly, complaining about a piece of paper, but it's not about that white sheet with a name and number taped on the outside of our lockers; it's about representation. And at our school, the representation of water polo simply lacks.

Even with both teams being undefeated league champs for many years, and the girls team establishing a winning CIF dynasty, water polo at our school has hardly garnered any fame. For having a team do well in a complex and difficult sport

in an already small community in LAUSD, the attention these teams deserve just are not there. Of course a big parade isn't needed, but a bit more acknowledgement for such hard work, dedication, and success would be appreciated. Especially for an already small sport like water polo, it can be very easy to be lost in a sea of sports at Eagle Rock High School. That is why the amount of coverage and acknowledgement that goes into a lot of other sports should be shared so everyone can have a chance in the spotlight. This underrepresentation for water polo

does not solely belong to the water polo team. Many other sports as well are somewhat in the shadows compared to other popular sports. This case of certain sports getting covered a lot while others are very underrepresented is a problem that needs to be tackled. Every student athlete, no matter the sport, should be recognized for their great accomplishments athletically and for the fact that they are able to balance school and sports. Here at Eagle Rock it should be a number one priority to remind our athletes that they do indeed rock.



Paolo Octoman | Staff Writer

The 2019 football season is underway and Eagle Rock has gotten off to what some would call a rocky start. Halfway in their league schedule, the Eagles have gone 2-3, and those 3 losses have been against higher ranked teams in San Pedro, Fairfax, and El Monte. There is reason, however, to believe the win-loss column is not indicative of how good they are as a team.

That's what the team feels, especially Head Coach Andy Moran, who is in his 8th year coaching at Eagle Rock. Here is what the coach had to say about the season so far: "Our preseason schedule is by far the hardest any Eagle Rock team has attempted...we're currently 2-3 but have played opponents far superior than anybody in our own league".

Of the 50 players on the roster, only 16 are returners from last year. The roster has seen a big turnover from the departed Class of 2019 which calls for returners and the new players who moved up from JV, to step up in new roles for the 2019 season. While you could say this is a relatively new team, there is

Time to Hit the Panic Button? ERHS Football 2019



great expectations of going far in playoffs as Eagle Rock has made deep postseason runs over the past two years (Last year they lost in the city Semifinals). But their strong schedule is also beneficial to the team as senior running back Daniel Zamora puts it, "we had a tough preseason, it helped us grow and get closer to each other". Regardless of the wins and losses, each game has helped build chemistry among teammates. Senior captain Aaron Buscato sums up why team chemistry is so important: "You need to learn how to communicate with your teammates. Communication is key in the sport

of football...It's a big factor in order to win".

Yet this team isn't perfect, and it still has some areas it needs to work on. Eagle Rock features a good balanced attack on both offense and defense yet this team lacks the consistency it needs to compete at a high level and "not be complacent". An example of this would be in their nail biting 36-35 loss against the fellow city section school, Fairfax High School. Some may not know this but the Eagles were without their starting quarterback, junior Axel Ayers. And while senior Jacob Martinez stepped up to the challenge of filling that

responsibility, who knows what the outcome would have been from that overtime thriller had that starter played. Especially since Fairfax was higher ranked, had a couple of inches against Eagle Rock at most positions (the Eagles are one of the more undersized teams in Div. 1). Eagle Rock displayed such heart and laid it all out there. The game was decided on a single play and that's why a win-loss column or a final score isn't going to tell you the full value of our team.

While any player will tell you they are confident enough that they will go 5-0

for the rest of their league schedule, the coaching staff and the team as a whole emphasize the importance of taking each game one at a time. Because of the bye week, the team had 2 weeks of preparation and 2 weeks of motivation from their last game, a 54-26 blowout loss against El Monte. On Friday 10/4, the Eagles are hosting Marshall High School in their annual Homecoming Game. A game like this draws much attendance from the students, faculty, and the Eagle Rock community.

The Eagles have played their game against Marshall and in summary, it seemed to be decided from the start of the game. Eagle Rock had complete control of the game and by halftime, their lead was 42-0. From that point on, the reserves were subbed in and cruised to a 49-7 win. Before the game was Eagle Rock's Homecoming ceremony where the school's Homecoming courts and several alumni are rolled out on the track in nice vintage cars, the Cheer and Drill teams on top of LAFD firetrucks, and the Band in full classic marching band attire. All in all, a very satisfying weekend!

AT THE ROCK

PERSERVERANCE: GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Jessica Lau | Staff Writer

Volleyball is a sport that depends on team work. Trista Limbo, defensive specialist of the girl's varsity volleyball team, says, "We always make sure that no one is left out. We don't like that." The girls of the team all share the same delight in volleyball. They enjoy each other's company, as they are very close-knit. Some people, outside of the volleyball team, even joke around and call them a "cult," due to the strong connection they have with each other. Sometimes, they watch movies together or go to Tea N Me to spend time with each other outside of school. Although they have fun outside of school, they're minds are focused on success during games and tournaments.

One special quality of the girl's volleyball team is to never give up and to stay positive, despite whether or not they are winning the game. Their coach, Tim Bergeron, mentions that our volleyball team is successful due to their optimism, support and determination. Anniston Smith, opposite hitter of the team expresses: "I've seen some of the teams we play, like when they're losing, they kind of just give up and like, fall apart." Our girls volleyball team is currently #3 in the open division. Clearly, our team's perseverance has paid off.

Our Eagles recently went against Palisades on October 15. Palisades is known to have an outstanding volleyball team, and our girls have always struggled



with them in the past. According to Majzezel Sarcol, outside hitter of our girl's junior varsity team, in the years that Coach Tim has coached volleyball at our school, our team has won only once against Palisades, during their last season. Before the game, there was a fear that the last game with the Palisades team invoked a retaliation for their loss. However, our team continued to stay optimistic and prepared for the upcoming game.

A team must win 3 out of 5 sets to win a game. The first four sets are played up to 25 points, and the last set is played up to 15. During the beginning of Varsity game against Palisades, Palisades won two sets; both sets were very close. The game was absolutely intense. You could feel the anticipation as

the ball kept going back and forth, until it eventually fell onto the ground, giving a team one point. The third set resulted in a win from Eagle Rock, and our girls had a chance to redeem themselves in the next few sets. Our Eagles ended up winning the next set after the third, and the last set of the game sparked an uproar in the audience. The ovation from each time only got louder as each team scored.

The last set was very close. After scoring 14 points, our girls just needed one more point to win, and suddenly, the benched players stood up, put one finger up, and cheered on their fellow teammates, giving them words of encouragement. Eventually, the Eagles won against Palisades, and their fellow teammates from JV and Frosh ran

to their Varsity team in excitement. There is no doubt that our volleyball team has one of the strongest support systems one could ever witness.

Before joining the girl's volleyball team, Anniston never thought that she would ever play volleyball. Aniston had no idea how to play volleyball, but had the courage to show up to try outs anyway. "I actually began to play volleyball because of this one anime called 'Haikyuu,'" she says. Many players on the team have been inspired by "Haikyuu." Even alumnis from last year's boys volleyball team, such as Nivram Castro and Alex Chhor admitted that watching 'Haikyuu' encouraged them to play. Try outs could be distressing, all the girls on the team have expe-

rienced it. "It was really nerve racking. There were a lot of girls, we didn't know who would make it. Plus, there's a lot of people watching you too," Kim Garica, freshman from the JV/Frosh team expresses. Our girls encourage many others to try out for volleyball. Trista advises: "Don't put yourself down. If you really want to do a sport then you should totally go for it. It's super fun and you'll meet nice people. Also our coach is amazing. He's fun to talk to." Another reason to try out is that you may never know what could happen. For instance, Anniston made it onto the Varsity team during her Sophomore year with little knowledge of how to play the sport. For all it's worth, joining the girls volleyball team will guarantee you support and new friends.

Overall, our girls volleyball team is about cooperation and bonding. Our girls enjoy spending time with each other, and the adrenaline that kicks in during a game or tournament must feel amazing, especially because they have such a wonderful support system. They remain undefeated, and their success comes from one another. It's incredible how close they are with each other. Why else would they memorize this radical cheer? "3, 6, 9, our sets are fine. Bump it to me, set it to me, one more time. Get low, get low. Put your knee pads on the floor. You know, for sure. Let's go eagle's, let's go!"



Anthony Aguirre | Staff Writer

Believe it or not, some people don't consider cheer as a sport. Although, cheerleaders themselves, would highly disagree. Cheer's coach, Christie Sanchez, would laugh if she was told such a thing. In comparison to other sports, such as football, typical athletes tend to carry gear about 20lbs or less as they play, or maybe not any at all. In cheer, how-

TAKING CHEER AS A COMPETITIVE SPORT

ever, they "practice stunts and have to carry, throw or catch other cheerleaders weighing 100lbs or above" says Coach Sanchez. Cheer doesn't really take more of a physical toll than that of members of other sports though, but it does take more out of the members themselves.

The cheerleaders all practice their stunts without any protective gear, which makes it much easier to get injured, especially if the stunts fail. They're not in the gym and don't have any mats, they're always practicing, whether it be in the extreme heat of the afternoon or the cold winds of the morning. Yet, the cheerleaders still nail almost all of their stunts. Cheer, of course, can also be extremely competitive. Everybody wants to be the best they can be, the same goes for

any other sport. "I feel like since it's mainly consisted of females, all the girls are ready to fight each other because [the cheerleaders] all want to be #1, of course." On top of that, the coach always needs to check in on the members and see if they're both physically, emotionally and mentally healthy, both on and off the squad. Coach Sanchez also has the responsibility to having to manage the team's paperwork and organize the team itself so that everything always runs smoothly. Not everything ends up going as planned, however. Sometimes untimely obstacles can suddenly pop up, whether it can be resolved in time or not at all. For example, an absent member or a failed stunt can derail a whole routine. The team always wants to try and implement a positive outlook

on every situation that arises, and they use it as a reason to practice harder and constantly improve the quality of their performance for the next time.

The cheer team practices with the same risk of injury, if not even more due to their absence of any protective equipment, and physical toll than the other sport offered at Eagle Rock High School. They also have to always excel in their classes in order to stay in their team, just as anyone else in any other school organization. To even consider cheer to not fall under the sports category would be like saying like apples aren't considered a fruit. This team clearly deserves recognition for all their dedication to the team. They inspire younger students who have just joined the school to become a part of the cheer



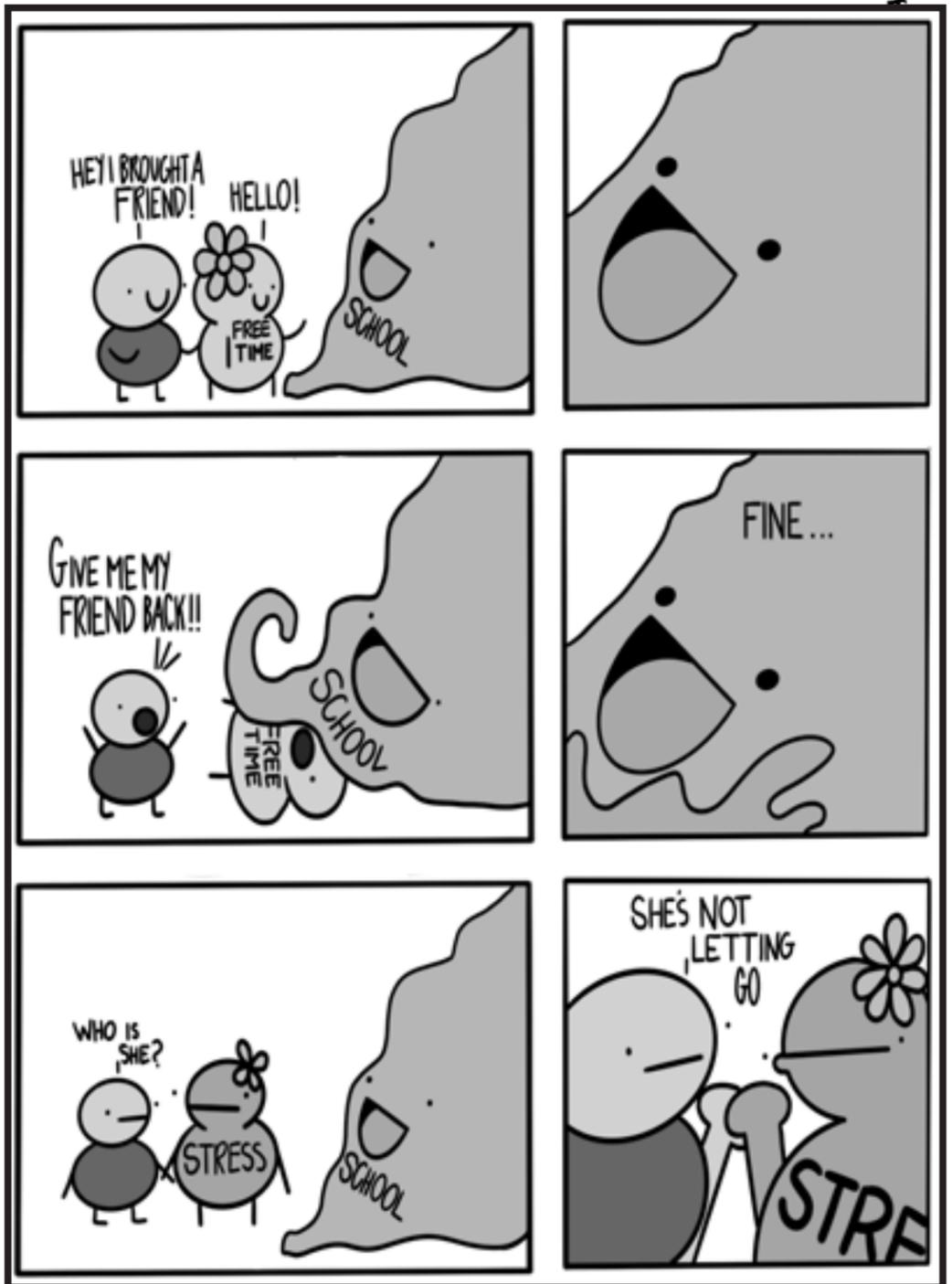
team and contribute their ideas and talents while showing school spirit. Considering all of the hard work this team puts in to perfect and display the fruit of their labors, no pun intended, it would be insulting to say that cheer is not competitive.



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