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English Department Walks the Aisle

Sofia Cohen & Elizabeth Rudd

Moving into the 2024-2025 school year, the English department announces their summer weddings. One of the beautiful weddings was of Mrs. Jones. On July 26, a gorgeous sunny day in Nashville, Mrs. Jones's wedding took place. It was filled with family and friends, and because of the setting, the guests were advised to attend in Western clothes. Mrs. Jones had an item with more significance than it seemed,



"When you know, you know," says Mrs. Christensen about her husband, Tim Christensen. On August 2, 2024, the two tied the knot in a small intimate wedding at *The Chapel at Hannibal Square* in Winter Park. Mrs. Christensen's sister, Audrey, officiated the marriage. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Christensen. All graphics by Emily Cypher.



(Above) While having the unique opportunity to be married by Elvis, he sang for the newlyweds and their families. He was able to perform all throughout the night. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Amanda Jones.

a bouquet of roses. She had chosen roses as her flower as a symbol of her friend who had passed away last year. She held them during the ceremony and after in her wedding photos. She symbolizes her strong friendship with her friend. Mrs. Jones says, "There was just a bit of rain, a sign of good luck." Rain on a wedding day signifies good luck by showing that your marriage will last forever. What makes this marriage unique from others is that Mrs. Jones and her husband were married to Elvis. Following the wedding, a small amount of family and friends went to a local restaurant called *The Mockingbird* where they celebrated the newlyweds and the start of an amazing

new life together. Though they didn't have a honeymoon, they plan to sometime in the future. Meanwhile, they continue to do their favorite activities together like reading the *New York Times* together, going on walks, and watching their favorite shows.


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LHP Counselors Renew S.W.A.T.

By Emily Cypher

S.W.A.T. (student welcome and transitioning) has been a part of the Lake Highland community for nearly 15 years, and with every year, the student-led team becomes more and more a part of the school's culture. S.W.A.T. is an opportunity offered exclusively to the Juniors and Seniors at Lake Highland. The program came about after the school's head counselors realized the impact upper-classmen could potentially have on Freshmen and new students. With that in mind, any person who joins S.W.A.T. automatically becomes an ambassador for new students. Ms. Amanda Flader, one of the lead organizers of S.W.A.T. and orientation for incoming Freshmen and new students, explained that, "Student ambassadors share their personal cell phone numbers with the new students, so that the new student has a point person for any questions they may have, and also has a person to sit with at lunch and introduce them to other students."


S.W.A.T.'s main focus is making new students and excited Freshmen feel comfortable and




(Above) Ms. Amanda Flader and Ms. Meredith Malkin are counselors at LHP, and they are the head organizers of orientation. All photos and graphics by Emily Cypher.

received from students and parents, Ms. Flader, as well as the other counselors, concluded that, "Helping to get information to the students and also helping them feel comfortable with the new campuses are two of the most important goals, which is where the design of a conference-style tour came about."

LHP Counselors Renew S.W.A.T., Continued on Page 4...



Scan this QR Code using your phone's Camera App to access our online edition.



(Left) As students enter the HCCA (Harriett Coleman Center for the Arts) S.W.A.T. members lead them to their seats to begin orientation.



The Hidden Truth Behind Junior Year

By Alyssa Wiboon

Whenever the thought of “Junior year” comes to mind, most high schoolers dread it. Looking back on the summer before Junior year, I remember how terrified I was. My brain was flooded with fear: how was I going to manage all my classes? What even is the college application process? Will I ever get any breaks? There’s a stereotype that surrounds Junior year, where most people would say it’s the hardest year of high school. However, this isn’t as true as one may think. After finally completing Junior year, I realized that the real culprit is Sophomore year. The second year of high school is largely overlooked. Sophomore year is actually the one to look out for.

In reality, there are many perks to Junior year. Juniors have the opportunity to choose most of their own classes. This allows them to tailor their education to their interests and goals. This means more freedom to enjoy classes that students not only do well in but will also match their chosen career path. Effectively, there is a boost in motivation and engagement. I remember being so excited to pick out my courses for Junior year because I felt like doors of opportunity were opening. I couldn’t wait to take Physics and Human Geography. Since I was able to choose more classes that I was interested in, I saw a more consistent record of A’s on my report cards. Unfortunately, this is difficult to relate to for most Sophomores. Sophomores still have to take a world language class and have limited options for their core subjects. One of Lake Highland’s own students, Sophia Safder, grade 12, commented, “When you have more control over the classes, you feel more motivated to do well and study for your classes because it’s directly benefiting your grades and also your future in the long run.”

Additionally, Junior year counts so much more on college applications in comparison to Sophomore year. This is typically viewed as a bad thing, but because Junior year is the last school year that



(Above) The first day of school was an exciting day for every Highlander. With Sophomore year complete, Katie Mathews and Hannah Thomas, grade 11, can’t wait for their Junior year classes. Mayren Comenencia and Kylie Kiefer, grade 12, love to reminisce about their Junior year and offer advice to them. Photo by Alyssa Wiboon.

colleges can look at in full before applications are due during Senior year, students are more motivated to stay on top of their work. This prevents students from falling behind in their workload. Many admissions committees pay extra close attention to Junior-year grades and activities because it gives the schools a better idea of where the students will be when they reach college.

Ms. Lynn Stewart, Dean of College and Career, labels Junior year: “The Year of Maturity.” She said, “Preparation for college is the foundation here at Lake Highland. It’s in the name! So, you have to lock in. You got one shot at Junior year—and that’s it. Everything at Lake Highland is designed for you to have success in the college process. All you have to do is engage.” With this in mind, Juniors have more motivation to do well in their classes and boost their GPA for their applications. Personally, I took the importance of doing well in Junior year as a chance for me to get rid of bad time-management skills and reach my full potential as a candidate for competitive universities. After all, admission officers want to see growth from Freshman year to Junior year because every student significantly grows throughout that period of time.

Freshman year students are not as prepared to transition from Freshman year to Sophomore year compared to transitioning from Sophomore year to Junior year. Many can agree that Freshman year is the easiest year in high school. As a result, getting thrown into the challenge of Sophomore year can prove to be a struggle. However, those challenges that come with Sophomore year make Junior year so much easier to get through. Mayren Comenencia, grade 12, agreed as she explained, “As soon as I started my Sophomore year, I could already feel my teachers’ expectations increase. But when I entered my Junior year, I felt as if the level of expectation was a step back because I was already used to what was expected of me and the typical high school work ethic, given that I had gone through two years of high school instead of one.”

The further students dive into high school, the deeper the relationships students build with other students and teachers strengthen. As a Junior, friend groups and bonds with classmates are better established. People already know each other better and are more comfortable branching out to welcome new faces. In the end, this makes the school year all-around more enjoyable: there is a better sense of community and self-security.

There tends to be a lack of leadership Freshman year due to the fact they are new to high school.

So, during Sophomore year, students are more inclined to start being involved in leadership opportunities to build themselves up. With school clubs, Freshmen are more likely to be in the position of club members rather than club officers for the first year of high school. After a year of sitting back as a club member, students are better prepared to take on a leadership role the next year, such as starting a new club as a President. However, this new role comes with more responsibilities that take time and effort, on top of doing regular schoolwork.

By balancing an academic workload and leadership duties it adds an extra layer of stress to Sophomore year. However, with Junior year, students are already used to what it takes to be a club officer and focus on schoolwork at the same time. When I first became President of *Paws for a Cause* as a Sophomore, I struggled to be an active leader and juggle my duties as President with regular schoolwork. As President during Junior year, I felt much more prepared and confident with a year of experience.

Although Junior year has its own set of challenges, many students find it easier than Sophomore year for several different reasons. Deeper connections with peers and teachers, familiarity with the school environment, and more opportunities and experiences, all contribute to a smoother school year as a Junior. Juniors often have a clearer understanding of how to handle the workload and pressure that comes with high school. So although Sophomore year can be more of a challenge than some may think, advice from Juniors who have already gone through that year can help ease the unexpected difficulties that come along with it. Ms. Stewart advised, “If I could have it my way, I would have Juniors enjoy the moment. Don’t focus on leaving Lake Highland. One day when you look back on Junior year, you should say, ‘I had an awesome Junior year.’”



(Above) Switching lanyards at the start of every school year is an exciting, yet big, reality check. It serves as a reminder of how fast high school is moving. Junior lanyards are a ticket to becoming an upperclassman. More students look up to you, which is a proud moment for many. Photo by Alyssa Wiboon.




(Above) Beatriz Beraha, grade 11, explained, “I am so excited to go into Junior year! I feel like Sophomore year prepared me for the workload that I will take on this year. Though I wish summer could have lasted a little longer, I feel ready to tackle whatever Junior year throws at me.” Photo by Alyssa Wiboon.

Italian Lifestyle Influences American Trends

By Yara Koteish

T raveling to other countries can be a great way for people to reflect on how different lifestyles are outside of the United States. Many life lessons can also be learned from traveling to places around the world. People often overlook the places they travel to and don't realize how much they can learn from their experience. When traveling to a place like Italy, it is truly mind-blowing how different the culture and lifestyle is compared to the United States. When looking for places to eat in Italy, there is an endless amount of restaurants from which to choose, and most of these restaurants are a much healthier option than most of the food in the United States.



As stated by Dr. Cindy Jakubiek, “Roughly 60% of the American diet is made up of processed foods.” Traveling to Italy is not only a good travel destination but is also better for eating healthier foods and living a healthier life in general. As part of my experience in my trip to Italy, the food was lighter and didn’t make me feel like I was eating a bunch of junk. Even the pastas and pizzas tasted fresh and didn’t feel like they were drenched in oil or butter. When eating out in America, the food can be really heavy, and places often use a lot of butter in their dishes which makes people feel full faster. To further promote healthy living, one of the main modes of transportation in Italy is walking. The average Italian walks about 5,300 steps a day. Italy’s beautiful landscape provides the perfect scenery for a casual walk to dinner or long strolls with friends. In the United States, people are used to driving cars everywhere because most of the cities in the United States are not as walking-friendly as Italy, hence the big roads and small sidewalks. According to abcnews.go, “Less than 4% of respondents in the United States and Canada said they walk or bike, and just under 5% take public transit. The 100 least active walkable cities were all found in North America,” which is why Americans should start incorporating more daily walks into their routine. In Italy, my family and I walked about 10,000 steps a day since we were sightseeing and walking to all the famous landmarks. When I’m at home in Orlando, I don’t walk half as much as I do when I’m on a trip.

Another thing to learn from traveling to Italy is the importance of spending more time with your family. In the United States, people often overlook making time for their families and don't spend as much quality time with one another. Due to people living closer to each other in Italy, people are easily able to see each other and spend time together. According to languagealive.com, "Maintaining daily interactions with extended family members are vital aspects of the Italian way of life." As I was in Italy, spending time with my family was a big part of my



(Left) The *Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II* is famous for being home to Italy's oldest shops and restaurants in Milan. It is also the oldest shopping mall in the world. The first *Prada* store was opened there is still open to this day.



(Left) Gelato is surprisingly healthier than ice cream. Gelato is made with milk instead of heavy cream, has a lower fat content, has no eggs, and contains added ingredients instead of added flavors.

trip and made my trip a lot more enjoyable as we made new bonds. Going to restaurants, going on tours, and just enjoying new experiences with family lightens up one's mood and builds lasting memories with your family.

Fashion is also a very important part of Italy that can be used as an inspiration for us. Americans usually wear athletic and lounge clothing when leaving the house, dressing more for comfort and not style. In Italy, the manufacturing and export of fashionable items and clothing are a big part of the economy. Many designer brands have also originated in Italy, including *Prada*, *Gucci*, *Fendi*, *Versace*, *Valentino*, *Miu Miu*, and many more, which shows how being exposed to these big fashion brands can impact the style in an area, with events such as Milan Fashion Week. In Milan, Florence, and Rome, people wear clothing that is considered “dressing up” in the United States. Clothing items like dresses, heels, fancy blouses, and fashionable clothes in general are worn as a common thing in Italy. Compared to America, people wear clothes that are more comfortable to them like sweatpants, hoodies, t-shirts, crewnecks, and comfy shoes.

All these things that are learned from Italy can be incorporated into the American lifestyle. For example, eating healthy and staying active can improve overall health. Spending time with family and loved ones can be good for our happiness and will improve mood which is proven to increase the levels of satisfaction with life and even lead to a longer life. Having a good sense of fashion and style is just a fun way to add a little color to your life and boosts confidence and creativity. So as John Mark Green once said, “Some journeys take you to a new destination, but Italy has a way of taking you to a new version of yourself.”



(Above)
Pasta is not only one of Italy's most popular foods but also a symbol of national pride, cultural identity, and the enjoyment of sharing fresh, good-quality food with family and friends. All photos by Yara Koteish.



(Above) Many tourist trap gelato shops are located around the busy parts of Italy displaying mounds of vivid and brightly colored gelato. These shops sell low-quality gelato to catch the attention of tourists to make money. Authentic shops will store their gelato in metal tins and a lid on top.



(Left) Lake Como is a great place to visit when in Italy. Boat rides are offered that show the beautiful scenery along the lake. There are also restaurants and shops to visit along the streets.



Ticket Prices Break the Bank

By Mary Collins

With concerts being one of the most popular forms of entertainment in today’s generation, it is essential to address that ticket prices for a few hours of entertainment have gotten outrageous. Fans are spending over \$2,000, driving miles without a ticket to see if they can sneak in, and even flying across the world because the tickets are cheaper. This says a lot about this generation. So why are tickets so expensive, and what can we do about it?

This summer, multiple artists headlined at festivals and went on world tours. This includes singers like Taylor Swift, Bruno Mars, Drake, Bad Bunny, and many more. A lot of their fans expected these artists to live up to high expectations after spending loads of money on them. Bruno Mars’s tour, *An Evening with Silk Sonic*, was one of the biggest events of Summer 2024, but people posted videos comparing it more to a high-luxury show rather than just a regular concert. People paid thousands of dollars for this concert and were astonished by the results, but what would happen if that expectation was not met?

Before going to a concert, there should be an extensive amount of research done. This includes seeing what others received from the concert they went to and how much things like merchandise, food, and upgrades. would cost. Another point to make is that although it may not always be the case, seeing smaller, less popular artists will usually be a more exciting night out. This is because

these artists are usually the ones trying to build their names up and pay attention to the smaller details of their fans. Not only that, but the tickets are inevitably cheaper due to their small popularity. It is always great to try new things, and finding new up-and-coming artists may lead to a new obsession. If supporting small artists isn’t really too interesting, or there is a very famous person that everyone is going to see, here are some tips.



(Above) Fans go crazy as Latin star, Bad Bunny steps on stage playing his hit new song, “Monaco.” As he raps and sings to the melody, thousands of people are making the most out of their experience, trying to account for the hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars they spent to be here. The tickets in the *Kia Center* for Bad Bunny ranged up to \$2,000 on May 17, 2024, but right before the event began, multiple prices dropped to around \$50. These two prices range so much, and what time the tickets are bought depends on how much money a fan could save. Photo by Aashi Khirbat, grade 11.

This year, a lot of sparks came up with Taylor Swift’s new *Eras Tour*. Lots of her fans noticed the outrageous ticket prices and did not have enough money to afford to go to her concert—let alone get any good seats. This led to her fans doing some research and finding out how much her ticket prices dropped in countries outside of the U.S. Her fans traveled to countries like France just to watch her sing for a few hours. Another action fans took was waiting up until the last second before the concert started so they could go outside and see if there were any last-minute seats that were available. This has been going on for a long time now, but it has gotten to the point where people drive and fly thousands of miles, sometimes even to different countries, just to see if there might be a chance of securing concert tickets.

Concert lovers are not to be taken lightly. They will always find a way to get their hands on a ticket to their favorite artist. But at the end of the day, is it really worth it? Paying an extreme amount of money for the tickets is, crazy, and in some people’s opinions, not worth it. It also adds to the question of why these wealthy artists are making their concerts so expensive. Is it because of the expense, or because they know they can manipulate their fans? Whatever it may be, there are some ways to avoid these high prices when buying tickets. However, sometimes it is going to be inevitable to pay the price for a two-hour show.

LHP Counselors Renew S.W.A.T.

By Emily Cypher

...*LHP Counselors Renew S.W.A.T.*, Continued From Page 1.

The students are the most influential source for the design of the conference and the role that *S.W.A.T.* plays, but *S.W.A.T.* also has an important role outside of the conference. On the very first day of school, *S.W.A.T.* members wear a shirt specifically made for the group. Ms. Flader explained, “The purpose of the unique *S.W.A.T.* shirts is to make the members recognizable on the first day of school so that the Freshmen and new students can easily identify students who are willing to answer any questions they may have or to help them find their way around campus.” This, by extension, helps to differentiate the members of *S.W.A.T.* who were selected to help all new students around campus.

The selection for *S.W.A.T.* comes near the end of each year, and Ms. Flader explained that in their selection process a, “*S.W.A.T.* membership does not require a student to be the ‘best’ academically or to be the best athlete. It simply requires a student to have an interest in helping and leading. It is a leadership opportunity on campus that is suitable for all students.” Ms. Flader continued to add that students may be unaware of a lot of the benefits that come from being a part of *S.W.A.T.*, and that “They may also be unaware that we reward volun-

teer hours for helping, and that being a *S.W.A.T.* membership is a great thing to add to a college resume because it shows involvement in a leadership role.” In *S.W.A.T.*’s history, the group has never had to turn down any applications, as the



(Above) Improvising is one of the most important things a leader can learn to do, and that’s something all the *S.W.A.T.* members are constantly achieving. So when asked to help organize groups, many members quickly volunteered to help each counselor. Photo by Emily Cypher. LHPs teaches students more than academics.



(Above) *S.W.A.T.* isn’t always constantly moving. Sometimes the group has to sit back and wait for students to finish an activity, but they are always nearby in case someone needs them.

counselors expect to receive anywhere from 70 to 90 students interested in applying each year. With nearly 700 students and parents on campus on orientation day, the counselors will take all the help they can get, and the students are then happy to help.

Many students are often ready to do more outside of orientation, and it’s the same for the counselors. Ms.

Flander stated, “As the school continues to grow, with more and more students each year, the *S.W.A.T.* team has become more and more valuable to the school counselors, who oversee the massive Orientation undertaking.” Though Lake Highlands’ Dean of Leadership and Character Development, Mr. Garth Parke along with the counselors, wish for *S.W.A.T.* to grow into more. As a whole, Ms. Flader reported, “We have a few more new events being planned for this year and upcoming years that we hope to request *S.W.A.T.* members help with.” *S.W.A.T.* is in an exciting stage of its existence at Lake Highland and is breaking boundaries.

S.W.A.T. is undefinable because it still has so much potential for growth. With every year comes new students, and with students, more student leaders have endless potential to keep *S.W.A.T.* alive and growing. This year’s group will pave the way for the next *S.W.A.T.* members. Ms. Flader explained that this year is opening a new chapter as she exclaimed, “We would love *S.W.A.T.* to be a well-known fixture of our campus that we can call upon for just about anything, and we are taking steps to get there.” The counselors continue to work to meet the goals for the year, but Ms. Flader added that overall, “Our goal this year is to get *S.W.A.T.* members more involved in other events than ever before.” *S.W.A.T.* is undoubtedly rebranded, but in no way have its core values changed. Instead, they have intensified as the group continues to seek new opportunities to help its community.

R E V I E W S

Films Launch New Series

By Hiba Bilal

A movie series with heroic duels using lightsabers, the power of the force, and the battle between the dark and the light side, *Star Wars* has had its place in cinema history for more than four decades. Audiences have been pleased with all of the *Star Wars* projects that have been released so far and are excited about the next upcoming *Star Wars* movie or TV show. The movies have been known for their tales of friendship, betrayal, love, and mystical adventures. Finally, when it comes to iconic movie characters, *Star Wars* is the first franchise that comes to mind. Audience members of all ages have loved and popularized characters such as Princess Leia Organa, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Darth Vader. Ever since George Lucas first created these films back in 1977, the franchise has grown in popularity with many fans anticipating more projects.

Sometimes, when it comes to watching the *Star Wars* franchise, it can be troubling to understand where to start first. So let's buckle up and fly through this franchise! The *Star Wars* original trilogy came out in 1977 and ended in 1983. This award-winning trilogy starts with *Episode IV – A New Hope*, followed by *Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back*, and ends with *Episode VI – Return of the Jedi*. Every single film takes the audience into a galaxy far, far away and gives many audience members nostalgia when they see beloved characters and the iconic theme song. Starting with *Episode IV – A New Hope*, we are introduced to the main character, Luke Skywalker, as he is on his journey to discover the ways of being a Jedi and learning how to use The Force.

The second movie from the trilogy is *Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back*, which starts immediately after the events of the first movie. Audiences will still get to see Luke Skywalker as he is on new adventures while still learning how to use the force. This movie includes a lot more character development and a storyline of Darth Vader and has plot twists coming in every direction; for instance, the true identity of Darth Vader. The last film of the series,



(Above) The Storm Troopers are known to be the galaxy's soldiers and serve as the Galactic Empire's military force. Additionally, in *Disney's Hollywood Studios*, visitors can experience the iconic characters up close as they surround almost the whole area. All photos by Hiba Bilal. All graphics courtesy of Canva.

Episode VI – Return of the Jedi, had more of a familial aspect between Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader. It does not reveal too much, but in a way, implies a reason why Darth Vader joined the Dark Side. The movie eventually ends with the death of Vader and the victory of the rebellion. These movies are available to watch on platforms including *Disney+* and are perfect for anyone who wants to, again, witness nostalgia and one of the most iconic stories in cinema history.

Following the trilogy, Lucas directed and wrote the next three movies, considered prequels for the original trilogy. The movies include *Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, *Episode II – Attack of the Clones*, and *Episode III – Revenge of the Sith*. This series is a significant introduction to understanding the origins of Darth Vader when he was a Jedi and how he eventually gets corrupted by the Dark Force. *Episode I – The Phantom Menace*, introduces young Obi-Wan Kenobi when he was a Padawan (a Jedi in training) and Luke's father, Anakin Skywalker, when he was a child. Additionally, it shows audience members how Anakin became a Jedi. Additionally, it introduces Luke Skywalker's mother, Senator Padmè Amidala.

Episode II – Attack of the Clones, continues the story ten years after the events of the first one. It shows how Anakin is all grown up and is now Obi-Wan Kenobi's student, a padawan, and how they are both sent to save Padmè Amidala. As the movie goes on, viewers get to see how Anakin is starting to become more aggressive with the Force and his power as a Jedi, especially when it comes to people that he loves who are getting hurt or killed, which starts to foreshadow his future. *Episode III – Revenge of the Sith*, explains the story of a hero's downfall, or more specifically, the fall of Anakin Skywalker and his transition into Darth Vader. The prequels are perfect to show audience members' character and story arcs and explain how the characters became the

characters they were in the original trilogy.

Years after the prequels and the original trilogy, and after the end of Darth Vader, new movies emerged on screen and new adventures followed. These three movies include *Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, *Episode VIII – The Last Jedi*, and finally *Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker*. These shows are a good way to show audience members that in *Star Wars*, there is never an end to an iconic story. In *Episode VII – The Force Awakens*, we are introduced to new villains in the franchise: Kylo Ren and Supreme Leader Snoke, who plan to destroy the Resistance. Carrie Fisher, who plays General Leia Organa, makes an iconic return and decides that she must protect the galaxy and will not surrender. In *Episode VIII – The Last Jedi*, and finally, *Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker*, Supreme Leader Snoke is still seen trying to destroy the Resistance as the First Order has taken over the galaxy. It is then up to Luke Skywalker and a new character, Rey, to team up and help the Resistance win this battle. In the final movie of the trilogy, *Episode IX – The Rise of Skywalker*, Rey must continue her journey as she finds a way to end this war and get freedom.

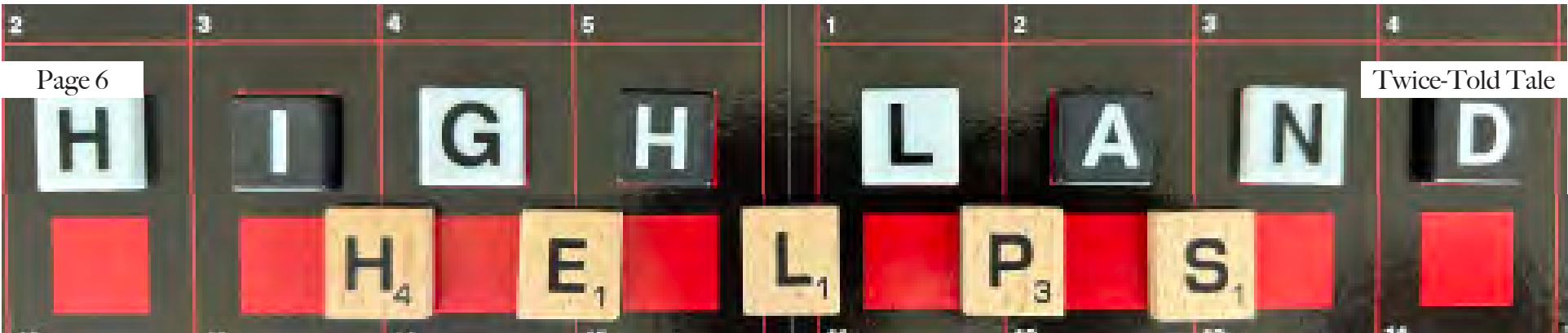
The *Star Wars* franchise also includes live-action and animated shows and movies that fill in gaps in the *Star Wars* timeline. Some of the more recommended ones include *Star Wars: The Clone Wars*, *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi*, *The Mandalorian*, and more. It is important to start with the movies to get the ultimate foundational base of the story before watching any of the shows. It is also important to note that this franchise is continuing, and more shows have been coming out recently, including *The Acolyte*, but also, theme parks, including *Disney World*, have brought the franchise to life in their *Disney's Hollywood Studios*, and many people have appreciated the attention to detail. From themed food to rides to characters, it is as if everything stepped directly out of the movie. So whether we are traveling across the galaxy with our popcorn buckets while watching films and shows or having an adventure in *Disney's Hollywood Studios*, the *Star Wars* franchise will continue to strive across the cosmos light years away.



(Above) Kylo Ren is known to be a villainous character later on in the *Star Wars* franchise. He made his first appearance in 2015 in the film *Episode VII: The Force Awakens* and was introduced to be the grandson of Darth Vader.



(Above) R2D2 is a well-known and loved character by many in the franchise. According to starwars.com, he is "a reliable and versatile astromech droid" and helps serve many characters, from Anakin Skywalker to Leia Organa.



Deciding Your Organs' Fate

By Fiona Knight

When most teenagers consider the milestone of turning 15, getting their driving permit is almost always the first thing that comes to mind. Swept up in all the excitement of being one step closer to independence, these teens often overlook the other important decisions that turning 15 brings. What many people do not know until the very day that they are set to get their permit is that the time has finally come for them to decide whether they wish to become organ donors or not. For some, this question is one that has been answered their entire lives. Many families, including my own, strongly believe that donating one's organs after death is a nonnegotiable because of all the lives it saves. However, countless families couldn't feel more differently. When evaluating the positives and negatives of becoming a donor, the universal truth is that every individual is entitled to his or her own opinions and decisions. It is perfectly normal for many teens to feel lost when making this decision, making the opinions and experiences of their peers that much more valuable.

When interviewing peers regarding their opinions on becoming an organ donor, two of the three students strongly supported organ donation. When asked why she chose to become an organ donor, Anna Loshuertos, grade 9, stated, "Having the opportunity to save [even] one person's life is a reason to donate." What many people do not know is that by becoming a donor, their organs alone can save the lives of eight other people. So many individuals are under the impression that, once they are dead, their body is rendered useless, but this statement couldn't be more incorrect. Evie Knight, grade 10, perfectly illustrated the value these organs hold, even after the death of their owner, when she said, "I believe in helping others in any way that I can, and if I'm dead, it's not like those organs are go-



(Above) Ms. Cheryl Bartch (right, center) Ms. Kristen Knight (right, middle), and Mr. Greg Knight (back, right) gather on the front steps of *The Bartch House*, ready to witness its official opening. The ribbon-cutting ceremony for *The Bartch House* marked the beginning of what is now considered a foundational part of *The Advent Health Transplant Institute*, helping families navigate through their individual transplant journeys. Photo courtesy of Ms. Cheryl Bartch.

ing to help me out any longer so I would rather donate them and save someone's life." Marissa Cole, grade 11, chose not to become a donor and did so because she wasn't sure what was involved in becoming an organ donor and felt better to be safe rather than sorry.

The topic of organ donation is an extremely controversial one, and everyone is entitled to their own opinions and decisions. Whether these decisions are solely their own, are influenced by their family, or have some kind of connection to their culture, every choice is valid. This being true, the impact an organ donation can have on the life of someone who is struggling to survive is something only someone who has received an organ donation, either personally or for their family, will ever be able to understand.

While I have not experienced this impact and the gratitude that comes with it myself, I do have a direct connection to an organ donor recipient. My grandfather, Dale Bartch, received a kidney transplant himself, and if it weren't for the generosity of his donor, his life would have been cut far too short. While his many health issues made much of his adult life a constant struggle to stay healthy, his

kidney transplant not only saved his life but also his sense of hope in the generosity and kindness of others. While my grandparents were fortunate enough to have the resources to accommodate the expenses of my grandfather's transplant journey as a whole, my grandmother still describes the time of his transplant as one of the hardest times of her entire life. This bittersweet experience inspired my grandparents to establish what is now known as *The Bartch House*, which is a house for transplant recipients and their families to stay for extended periods to make their transplant experience less financially and emotionally strenuous. What makes *The Bartch House* so special is that everyone is welcome, even those who cannot offer any payment for their stay. While kindness is just one of the many values of the transplant house, it is by far one of the most important as without the kindness of my grandfather's organ donor, he would not have been able to live his life to the fullest.

In the words of Evie Knight, grade 10, "The concept that one can help others even after their deaths, and in a way 'live on' through their acts of kindness, is beautiful." By choosing to become an organ donor, teenagers will be doing just that. While this may be true, organ donation is not for everyone, and the decision to not donate should be respected just as much as the opposite. Regardless of how certain people may feel about organ donations, and the need to force those around them to feel the same way, the decision of whether or not to become an organ donor is fully in the hands of the teen getting his or her driving permit and his or her family. At the end of the day, teens have to choose the path that feels right for them.



(Above) Opened in 2016, *The Bartch House* is a popular place for organ donors and their families to stay during their transplant journey, providing patients with a safe space to temporarily call home. As part of *Advent Health*, *The Bartch House* and its employees are dedicated to caring for their patients and making their transplant journey as smooth and painless as possible. Photo courtesy of Ms. Cheryl Bartch.



(Above) Evie Knight, grade 10, is a perfect example of an LHP student who has decided to donate her organs for future use. She commented, "I don't regret my choice to become an organ donor because people waiting to receive transplants are still living and have people around them who would do anything to help them live out a healthy life." Photo by Fiona Knight.

Slang Shapes Gen Z

By Tessa Guerra

TikTok is responsible for the spread of some of the most outrageous new terms you'll ever hear. From "skibbidy toilet" to "rizz party," many of these trending phrases are as meaningless as they sound. However, one notable term that has sparked on the app in recent years has been established as a valid, and even worthy, way to describe one's personality: "Girl's Girl." Being classified as a "Girl's Girl" can surprisingly signify more than one might expect.

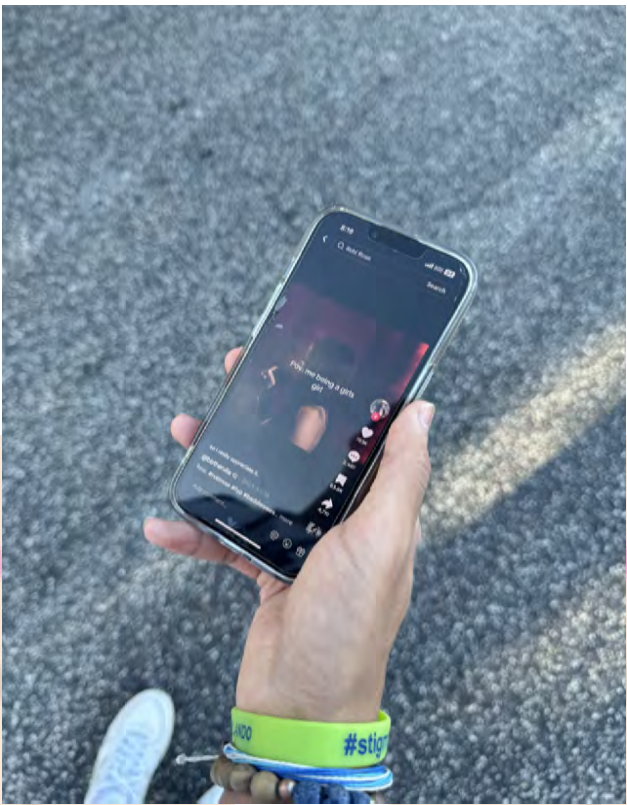
Urban Dictionary defines a "Girl's Girl" as a female who has, "Respect for female etiquette" as well as one who, "Is not petty and strives to be ethical and decent in her dealings with her female friends." Essentially, a "Girl's Girl" won't go after your boyfriend, or talk badly about you for the sake of attention or validation. She doesn't feel the need to try and intimidate other females and believes in supporting or being there for a girl because she is a fellow female. A "Girl's Girl" is especially eminent because her concern and respect for other women applies equally to both the ones she likes and dislikes.

The phrase began circulating in recent years on *TikTok* and has now inserted itself into people's day-to-day dialogue as a legitimate term and topic of discussion. The term was named as such because it represents the ideal type of girl that another girl would want on her side. A "Girl's Girl" is for the girl in the sense that she acts, consciously or not, with compassion to and in consideration of another girl's feelings.

To further demonstrate what a "Girl's Girl" is, it may be insightful to explore what the opposite would be. A separate term that arose from *TikTok* just a few years before the infamous "Girl's Girl" phrase gained virality was the term "Pick Me Girl." A "Pick Me Girl" is a female who acts out, most commonly by putting other females down in front of males, in hopes of appearing more appealing to men. Hence the name "Pick Me." The difference between these two types of women is that a "Pick Me Girl" views other women as a threat to the validation and attention they are desperate for. Meanwhile, a "Girl's Girl" does not view other females as competition at all, but rather as teammates.

Well if there is such thing as a "Girl's Girl," how come there's no "Boy's Boy?" There in fact have been discussions floating around online regarding what a "Boy's Boy" is and how it compares to a "Girl's Girl." A "Boy's Boy," while less prevalently talked about, is exactly what you'd imagine. A "Boy's Boy" is a male who automatically has other males' backs simply because they are of the same gender, just as a Girl's Girl automatically has other females' backs for the same reason. This phenomenon, in regards to males, is less discussed, but why?

The reason a "Girl's Girl" seems to be much more recognized and widely regarded than a Boy's Boy is because Girl's Girls are simply more rare. We live in a society where it is extremely common and even extremely encouraged for women to be pitted against each other. Mikaela Kiner with Harvard Business Review explains that, "Women can and do internalize patriarchal messages that women are not as strong, competent, and capable as men," and because of this, "Women unconsciously absorb beliefs about their rightful place." This allows women to be vastly critical of, and compare themselves to, other women's every move. They also seek the approval of those who they believe to be superior: men. This can also explain why the term "Pick Me Girl" blew up on *TikTok* when the app first came out, long before the term "Girl's Girl" was created. For



(Above) The term "girls girl" is one everyone is familiar with, with over # hashtags on TikTok and # on Twitter. Many other terms and phrases have gained popularity such as "Slay" meaning to exceptionally accomplish something, and "Rizz", meaning charisma, most commonly used to express having charisma with the opposite gender. Photo by Tessa Guerra.

females, society does not set them up to be spiteful or judgemental of other men as there is no competition for them to feel the need to do so. This is because males and their attention are the ones that others are competing for. Most boys are already "Boy's Boys," but few girls are set up to be "Girl's Girls."

A recent example of someone who caught a great deal of heat for not being a "Girl's Girl" was the "Deli" rapper Ice Spice. This summer, Ice Spice found herself in a controversy involving fellow rapper Central Cee and his now ex-girlfriend Madeline



(Above) Listeners of Ice Spice's and Central Cee's "Did It First" aren't happy. Central Cee's girlfriend shared on *TikTok* that she expressed her disapproval of the lyrics he had written before the release of the song, and that she was unaware he would proceed with them anyways. Photo by Tessa Guerra.

Argy. Madeline took to *TikTok* to explain that she was not aware of the release or contents of the music video that the two rappers collaborated on and uploaded to *YouTube* on July 11. The shots within the music video heavily suggest they are more than just friends. This was a problem as Madeline was still dating Central Cee at the time. This, along with other promotional work Central Cee did to intentionally generate dating rumors between him and Ice Spice to advertise the song, was enough for Madeline to expose his behavior online and be done with him for good. Shortly after, Ice Spice posted a clip of herself doing push-ups and captioned the video, "Mood after takin ha manzzz." Ice Spice received a lot of backlash for this as many thought it was a mean and uncalled-for direct reference to the controversy. One user commented, "She's not a Girl's Girl" with another saying that she was, "Dirty for doing that."

While many believe it is important to be a Girl's Girl, others argue that it isn't needed. Rather than the, "Girls supporting girls" phrase that is associated with being a Girl's Girl, others insist that moral obligations aligned with the, "Girls protecting girls" phrase are the only necessary ones to adhere to. The phrase, "Girls protecting Girls" represents the responsibility of females to step in, if possible, to protect another female if they suspect or know she is being put at risk by a male. Whether it's a man trying to lure an intoxicated woman somewhere private at a party, or a boyfriend getting aggressive with his girlfriend at a grocery store, a girl who believes in, "Girls protecting girls" will, if possible, insert herself in a situation to protect and/or remove the girl in danger. "Girls supporting girls" and, "Girls protecting girls" both seem to represent inherent duties that some would say come with being a female. However, not everyone agrees with these obligations.

The biggest difference between a female who believes in girls supporting girls or being a "Girl's Girl," is how they feel the women they don't like deserve to be treated. "Girl's Girls" feel that women must regard each other with an impromptu high level of courtesy as women owe it to each other to change the fact that women are typically the ones who tear down other girls. These girls are trying to deconstruct and rebuild a flawed social construct. Therefore, there is no exception to the respect they demonstrate for other women, even when it comes to those they dislike, as it must apply to all to work. Women who only believe in girls protecting girls feel as though it is not up to them to fix something they did not corrupt. These girls do value the importance of watching out for other women's safety, as it is way too often that we hear unjust stories of women being sexually assaulted or abused. However, these girls feel that looking out for other girls' safety is the extent of their ethical duty. Unlike a Girl's Girl, they do not feel inclined to show benevolence or even tolerance towards a person they dislike solely because they share the same gender.

Whether you agree or align with the ideology of being a Girl's Girl or not, it is useful to be informed about the discourse surrounding certain up-and-coming sayings or phrases, as terminology can say much about the direction in which today's society is going. Such terms could become integrated into the masses' vocabulary as permissible vocabulary. No term encompassed all of what it meant to be a "Girl's Girl." However, the term "Girl's Girl" has shown to be a highly functional and truly productive way of revealing a great deal of a person's beliefs, morals, and personality.



Art Speaks Louder Than Words

By Hayden Roberts and Alyssa Wiboon

Florida is a mixture of different cultural and artistic expressions as seen through various different art forms. With different cultures spreading their wings through murals across the state of Florida, graffiti has become a larger attraction for art lovers. Since buildings have started to become more modern and professional, hiring artists to work on the side of them and bring architecture to life has been at an all-time high. Furthermore, artists have taken their artistic talents beyond typical buildings to highways, tunnels, and abandoned buildings, transforming cities into a burst of color while making skylines look modern and sleek. Murals are a powerful outlet to express an artist’s vision or tell the story of a community. Many artists have begun to collaborate with other artists from different cultures to bring out the best of both worlds. Artists have also used their works of art as protests against certain laws and actions using their city as a canvas for justice. The art of the mural is hot in the Sunshine State, and there are numerous must-sees and hidden gems that are picture-perfect.



(Above) Located on the patio wall of *Tako Cheena* on *Mills 50* is a string of different mural pieces brought together through a collective color palette consisting of reds, blues, oranges, and yellows, to create one cohesive masterpiece at this Asian fusion restaurant. Just near school, *Mills 50* is known as "The intersection of creativity and culture," according to its *Facebook* page. There are countless opportunities for artistic expression, as there's murals everywhere that paint the streets in color. This allows for representation of Orlando's many talented artists and attracts Orlando residents to enjoy *Mills 50's* unique restaurants, nightlife, live music, museums, and shopping opportunities. Check out some of this district's murals the next time you drive to school! Photo by Alyssa Wiboon.



(Above) Mr. Robbie Lee, Middle School art teacher, took his watercolor painting *A Robot's Arc* and turned it into a mural located on the side of *Sam Flax* on 1800 E Colonial Dr, Orlando, FL 32803. He says, "My paintings use robot and animal imagery to explore the human experience." Photo by Hayden Roberts.



(Above) Florida, especially Winter Garden, is famous for its orange groves. Its deep history dates back to the 1500s when Spanish explorers brought orange seeds to the region. In a corner of Main Street in Downtown Winter Garden, PJ Svejda's mural of an orange tree symbolizes one of the most important aspects of the town, including a carved heart with Winter Garden's initials etched in the tree. Photo by Alyssa Wiboon.



(Above) Nadya was invited to work on the side of *Pho Vinh*, a Vietnamese restaurant on 657 S Primrose Dr, Orlando, FL 32803. Nadya is known for her bright color schemes and use of culture in her art. She takes traditional patterns and uses different modern nontraditional colors to bring her roots and her passions to life. You can check out more of her graffiti work on her *Instagram* @nadyablo. Photo by Hayden Roberts.

Art Speaks Louder Than Words,
Continued on Page 9...



Art Speaks Louder Than Words

By Alyssa Wiboon and Hayden Roberts

...Art Speaks Louder Than Words, Continued From Page 8.

(Right) Many memorials have been painted of famous singers, historical figures, activists, and more. The Dolly Parton mural on Mills is a representation of modern styles with 70s colors. This mural was done by HUMAKERART, who is known for doing murals of famous actors and actresses who have passed away. HUMAKERART has lately gotten attention for work in midtown Miami. HUMAKERART recently redid this model with butterflies at the *Sam Flax* in December two years ago. Photo by Hayden Roberts.



(Above) Many artists have competed in *Sam Flax's* mural showcase. This showcase dates back to the mid-2000s as the start of the *Sam Flax* Wall Project. The purpose of the wall project was to create a sense of community outside the store. After starting in 2011 it would have follow-ups in 2015, 2017, 2019, and 2021. In 2021, 11 artists participated bringing their visions to life. Photo by Hayden Roberts.



(Above) Last year gangs destroyed many different works of art along Colonial Drive, causing many artists' works of art to remain damaged, mainly because artists were scared that they would get damaged again. However, *Sam Flax* has invited artists to come back and restore their works. Above the lightbulb was originally painted to have yellow hues along the outside as if it were illuminated, but after the change the lightbulb is painted to be turned off and broken reflecting the feelings of the artist after his work was destroyed. Photo by Hayden Roberts.



(Above) *Sam Flax* has many different artists come work on the side of their buildings for the art festival bringing different styles of art. Lately, Mr. Guerrier has gotten a lot of publicity for his work grabbing the attention of larger companies and businesses like *Sam Flax*. Mr. Guerrier is known for his style and works representing the African American Community through traditional shapes and colors. Photo by Hayden Roberts.



(Left) A few years ago Orlando suffered a horrible loss in the LGBTQ+ community with 49 people being shot at a *Pulse Night Club*. Ever since many have protested in marches, on social media, and art. In the *Milk District*, there are many different types of murals, most of which are on the sides of taverns or clubs. This mural serves as a memorial above an abandoned gas station on the corner. Many people use the Orlando United heart as a symbol of protest, while others use quotes from famous singers, actors, or activists. The mural uses Marvin Gaye and his most famous quote, "For only love can conquer hate" to pay tribute to all of those who lost their lives that fateful night. Photo by Hayden Roberts.

SPOTLIGHT

Disney Villians Echo *Universal's Dark Universe*

By Savannah Fondo

Orlando, Florida is home to two of the most popular theme parks in the world and hosts tens of millions of tourists each year, grabbing attention from all over the globe.



(Above) This conceptual art illustration sums up the entire context of *Dark Universe*, and it captures the essence of the land as a whole. The thrill, the lighting, the monsters, the flaming windmill, and the dark energy add previews to the *Halloween Horror Nights*-like environment. The Halloween feeling will now be able to be felt all year round and for everyone who does not get to make it to *Halloween Horror Nights*. Concept art courtesy of *Attractions Magazine*.

Every parent wants to make their children's dreams come true at *Walt Disney World* and *Universal Studios*. *Walt Disney World* has always been known to be in the lead when it comes to their rivalry with *Universal Studios*. *Walt Disney World* opened *MGM Studios* in 1989, now known as *Hollywood Studios*, while *Universal Studios* opened in 1990, and both parks are based around the entertainment industry. *Disney Springs* opened in 1975, at *Lake Buena Vista* which is a dining and shopping center; in 1993, *Universal Studios* opened *CityWalk*. In 1999, *Universal Studios Islands of Adventure* opened as an addition to *Universal Studios* to compete with *Walt Disney World's* four parks. *Walt Disney World* opened its *Typhoon Lagoon Water Park* in 1989, along with *Blizzard Beach Water Park* in 1995. To no surprise, this led to *Universal Studios* opening *Volcano Bay* in competition in 2017. *Universal Studios* has always been catching up to *Walt Disney World*, when *Walt Disney World* added *Cirque De Soleil* and *Universal Studios* brought the *Blue Man Group*, but now the tables have turned and *Walt Disney World* is trying to catch up with *Universal Studios* for the first time ever.

Universal Studios's newest creation, *Epic Universe*, has been under construction since 2021 and is set to open in 2025. *Epic Universe* brings the "park" back into "theme park" with their *Celestial Park*, which mainly acts as a portal into the other four worlds, *How To Train Your Dragon - Isle of Berk*, *The Wiz-*

arding World of Harry Potter - Ministry of Magic, *Super Nintendo World*, and *Dark Universe*. It also has two rides, a water play area, shopping, and dining, and is surrounded by beautiful flowers and greenery. *How to Train Your Dragon - Isle of Berk* transports guests into Berk, the setting of the popular animated trilogy, which is an area with something for everyone: from thrill rides, such as *Hiccup's Wing Gliders* to *Dragon Racer's Rally* guests feel the experience of flying on a dragon. It also includes family-friendly attractions, such as *Frye Drill*, where guests will split into teams and battle each other on a boat ride full of obstacles to shoot. It also boasts shopping, dining, and a live entertainment show.

The Wizarding World of Harry Potter - Ministry of Magic will bring a Parisian twist to the *Wizarding World* at *Universal Studios* as it incorporates elements from the *Fantastic Beasts* series. It will transport guests into the "muggle world" of 1920s Paris with Parisian-themed wizarding entertainment, such as the *Le Cirque Arcanus* show from *Fantastic Beasts*, shopping, and dining. Walking from Paris into the *Métro-floo*, a transportation system through green magical fires, guests will step into the *Ministry of Magic* and embark on *Harry Potter and the Battle at the Ministry*, a journey where guests must help stop the ways of Voldemort from returning.

Super Nintendo World is a vibrant land that will feature both a *Super Mario Bros.* area and a *Donkey Kong* area that includes rides and engaging entertainment throughout the land. The highlight of the *Super Mario Bros.* area is



(Above) With little announcements about *Villains Land*, and what will officially be inside, it leaves the mind open to imagine what nightmares might take place within its land. A classic *Disney* tale is never complete without a villain, and this goes back decades of tales and tells the story of *Disney's* history. *Disney's* magic is undeniably a part of most Americans' childhoods, and people will want to see the other side of the magic be brought to life. Concept art courtesy of *Entertainment Weekly*.

the ride *Mario Kart: Bowser's Challenge* where new technology combines the video game with the ride for a unique experience to race Bowser to the finish line. If guests wear their *Power-Up Bands*, they can interact with coins and other commands throughout the park to unlock the experience of taking on Bowser Jr. at the *Shadow Showdown* to return the stolen Golden Mushroom. Walk through the tunnel over to the *Donkey Kong* area, guests can ride *Mine-Cart Madness*, where they have to help *Donkey Kong* protect the Golden Banana and get to experience a fierce journey through the enchanting temple.

The last area is called *Dark Universe*, which is so creative, that *Walt Disney World* decided to take inspiration from their idea and translate it over to *Magic Kingdom*. *Dark Universe* is an area that brings the classic *Universal Studios* monsters to life with rides such as *Monsters Unchained: The Frankenstein Experiment*, where guests have to escape Dr. Victoria Frankenstein's, Frankenstein's great-great-granddaughter, most recent experiment. Meanwhile, she attempts to control the monsters, but monsters such as Dracula, The Wolf Man, The Mummy, The Creature from the *Black Lagoon*, and more decide to revolt. There is also the *Curse of the Werewolfride*, where guests have to escape werewolves from the spooky forest. There is an experience for guests to transform into monsters at *Darkmoor Monster Makeup Experience*, where guests can not only be surrounded by monsters but become one themselves. Get served a steak on a stake by vampires at *Das Stakehaus*, which depicts the vampires as how they see themselves, which is heroes. This land has not only brought these characters back to life, but it has given them a fresh, appealing thrill that will spark the interest of all the adults seeking nostalgia and a new audience, who will fall in love with these monsters seeking attention.

Shortly after the announcement of *Dark Universe*, *Walt Disney World* quickly imagined *Villains Land*, which will take the place of *Tom Sawyer Island* in *Frontierland* at *Magic Kingdom*. The theme is very similar to *Dark Universe's* theme, as it is also built around the classic villains of the *Disney* storylines that we all know and love from Maleficent and Cruella de Vil to Captain Hook and Scar. There have not been many details released on what precisely will be at *Villains Land*, but it is described as a nightmare that will have attractions, shopping, and dining.

Walt Disney World has discovered, with the invention of *Dark Universe*, that to complete the story, the parks need more than just the magical princesses and heroes. *Disney* has also announced other expansions to their parks, but it is uncertain if it will keep them up with *Universal*, as they have brought the epic in *Epic Universe*. In this race to the most popular theme park in Orlando, *Universal Studios* has officially taken the lead. As they say, "The last time I checked, a universe is larger than a world."



Maitland Renaissance Delivers *Maitland Social*

By Zane Rimes

Over the course of 10 years, the humble city of Maitland has been undergoing a rebirth—a real Renaissance of activity and growth. Though commonly associated with old and somewhat run-down buildings, Maitland has recently added new and improved places for the citizens. Shovels broke ground in June of 2016, and work on the new *Maitland City Center* was completed on October 5, 2018. Over the years, businesses have come and gone throughout the entire center. Currently, the most flourishing businesses are *Kelly’s Ice Cream* and *Fleet Feet*. Having *Kelly’s Ice Cream* shop move into Maitland was a huge summer surprise, as their locations are mainly outside of Maitland near the Orlando, Oviedo, and Winter Park areas. Over time, Maitland has also gained the new additions of a *Floyd’s Barbershop*, complete with unique *Orlando Magic* and *The Sandlot* murals that add some vibrancy to the surrounding commercial area and most recently, the new *Maitland Social* opened on August 1. It is located at 360 East. Horatio Ave features familiar food and businesses from the Orlando area such as: *Foxtail Coffee Co.*, *Pizza Bruno*, *Wave Sushi*, and *Urban Body Works Fitness Center*, with a later release of *Thrive Cocktail Lounge*, which opens its doors in October.



(Left) The *Kelly’s Ice Cream* shop in Maitland is unique with art decorations around the whole store. The murals depict the business’s first start with its timeline continuing to the present with its newest shop set in Maitland. *Kelly’s* has popped up over the years with showing up to events serving ice cream and also participating within community events all around Orlando. Graphics courtesy of Canva.

Many will remember that Maitland used a certain run-down type of vibe. Over the years, the city has gone from a so-classy strip mall with *Jermiah’s Italian Ice* and a *Subway* on the corner to exciting and fresh new businesses that keep up with modern trends. Amid this, the city’s look has grown with new and more modern architecture. Later this year, Maitland will also be gaining new restaurants within the heart of the city and on Maitland Boulevard. *Melt Brownie*, recently had a grand opening on August 17. Maitland Boulevard serves the community in a *Crumbl Cookie*-type fashion with different brownie flavors of the week. *Lazy Moon Pizza* opened a new location, and it has been an absolute flavorful delight. With its opening back in May *Lazy Moon Pizza* has by far been one of the second most popular spots in the city. With all of the new and exciting improvements to Maitland, Maitland is on the road to becoming a new place for people to come and hang out. Maitland has it all with amazing food establishments along with places to shop. In the future, one place to look for is *Parea Greek Taverna*, owned by the creators of *Bosphorus*. *Naya Comida + Barrita* on Maitland Boulevard is still in the planning phases but will be a new high-end Mexican restaurant. Maitland is less than a 15-minute drive from Lake Highland. All of these establishments are within a five-minute distance of each other when walking. Maitland also has the beautiful Maitland Art Center which is a amazing art exhibit area. The ability to be able to live and go to these really unique places with their amazing sense of taste is very interesting and overall is the definition of a rebirth. Overall Maitland has taken a large leap forward with its services and establishments. while also still being a home for others.

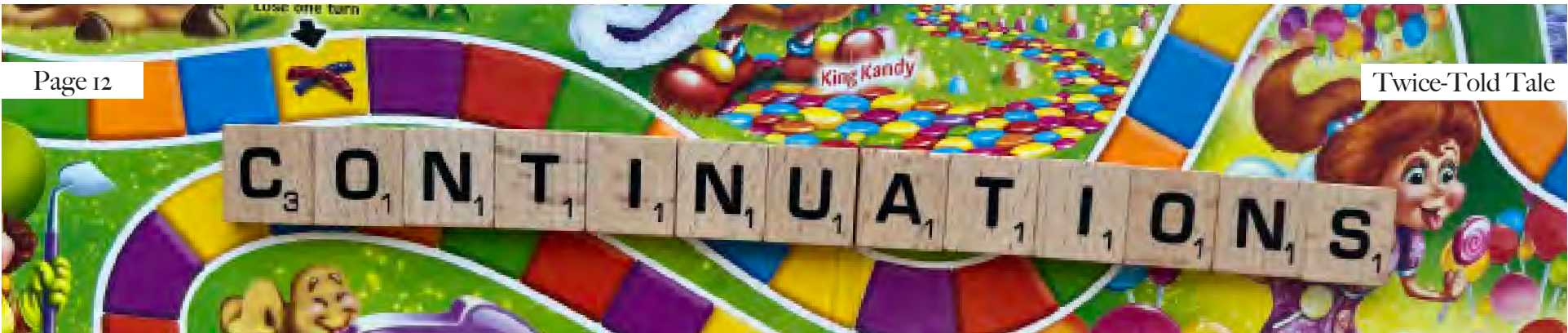
(Right) The new *Foxtail Coffee* shop, with its unique flavors of coffee and assortment of drinks, accommodates those who need to work on homework, work, or other things with their free wifi. The best thing is the fact that a person can get coffee at *Foxtail* and afterwards get some fast and really fresh ice cream at *Kelly’s* right down the street. All photos by Zane Rimes.



Due to the increase in new amenities, more people should come to Maitland to enjoy the new businesses. There is great food and great places to shop. Another attraction to look for is the local farmer’s market on Independence Lane, open every Sunday from 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The reason most of Maitland looks as if it has taken in a breath of fresh air over the past couple of years starts with the new development that the city approved for construction. *Allen Morris Company*, which was the contracting company for the *Maitland City Center*, stated, “Located across the street from *Maitland City Hall* and the city’s *Independence Square Park*, the project is focused on reactivating this affluent submarket by creating a walkable village in the center of the city.” Upon construction’s completion, it has completely revitalized an entire city, enthusiastic to have new opportunities for commerce and activities.

(Right) *Foxtail Coffee* also sells more than coffee with an assortment of foods like croissants, bagels, cookies, and hot, ready-to-eat dishes. *Foxtail* has been popping up around Orlando offering over 61 locations in the entire state of Florida. *Foxtail* has the amazing vibe with the music and the lighting which act as perfect study spot. The best part about *Foxtail* is its ability to offer the same, if not better, coffee than *Starbucks* all for a much lower price.





English Department Walks the Aisle

By Sofia Cohen and Elizabeth Rudd

...*English Dept. Walks the Aisle,*
Continued From Page 1.



(Above) Mrs. Christensen had a beautiful bridal shower hosted by her close friend, Mrs. Jessikah Cook, an Upper School math teacher, in her home. Lots of the LHP family came to celebrate including Ms. Lauren Oliva (right), and Ms. Madeleine Glasscock, (second from left).

Summer love began when Mrs. Christensen, formerly St. Clair, tied the knot with her husband, Tim Christensen who is a social worker at the University of Florida Health, on August 2, 2024. Their story began on Mrs. Christensen's birthday, August 18, 2023. Mrs. Christensen was at *Disney* for the weekend with some of her best friends from college to celebrate their milestone birthdays together. Mr. Christensen, who lived in Gainesville at the time, was visiting Orlando for a health conference. They first started communicating via *Bumble*, an online dating network, for a while, before they decided to meet at a *Chick-fil-A* near *Disney* to see if they could connect in person. Needless to say, they did. "I knew

Tim was the one during our first month of dating," says Mrs. Christensen. She added, "He is an incredibly kind, thoughtful, and loving person with great emotional depth and maturity." Mrs. Christensen also stated that since they, "Met a bit later in life with a good amount of lived experience between us, so we are very grateful for and appreciative of each other."

Their heartwarming engagement soon followed this past June in the chapel inside the *Morse Museum* in Winter Park, which is where they had their second date. With the help of Mrs. Christensen's sister and mother, Tim surprised her with the beautiful moment. After their engagement, they celebrated by having dinner on the roof at *Antonio's*: an Italian restaurant. Afterwards their family joined the celebration at Lake Lily where they'd planned dessert for them. Then the wedding festivities began! Mrs. Jessikah Cook, an Upper School math teacher, and a good friend of Mrs. Christensen's since sixth grade hosted a bridal shower for her in her home in College Park. Many members of the LHP family went to celebrate. Teachers including Ms. Amanda Jones, Mrs. Miriam Campbell, Mrs. Cindy Wray, Mrs. Lauren Oliva, Mrs. Jennifer D'Andrea, Mrs. Jen Neldner, Ms. Desiree Allison, Mrs. Lauren Fuhler, Ms. Angela Wohltman, Mrs. Clara Velazquez-Levin, Ms. Lori Moore, Ms. Jenny Stein, Ms. Madeleine Glascock, and more.

With the help of Mrs. Christensen's sister, Audrey, and her mother, the wedding was able to take place in August. Although they decided to have a smaller wedding, preparation still took a good amount of time. Audrey, her sister, actually played an immense role in the wedding: she offi-



(Above) Mr. and Mrs. Christensen first made a connection on *Bumble*, an online dating app before meeting up at a *Chick-Fil-A* near *Disney* to see if they could connect in person. Mrs. Christensen was visiting *Disney* with her friends while Mr. Christensen was visiting from Gainesville.

ciated the marriage. The Two shared vows at *The Chapel* at *Hannibal Square* in Winter Park, where only close friends and family attended. Guests including Mrs. Christensen's high school English teacher, who wrote for the couple a poem entitled "For Life," which she read during the service. Both of their mothers also read poems during the ceremony. "The ceremony was so special and intimate," stated Mrs. Christensen. Their wedding reception was at *AVA MediterrAegean* on Park Avenue. The newlyweds stayed at the *Alfond Inn* in Winter Park during their wedding weekend. They will soon be officially honeymooning in October, when they will be seeing the fall foliage and go hiking in Bar Harbor. They will also visit Maine, Woodstock, and Vermont. The whole LHP family is so happy for Mr. and Mrs. Christensen and wishes them the best!

...*English Department Walks the Aisle,*
Continued From Page 1.



(Above) Mrs. Amanda Jones walks down the aisle with her son, Harper Jones. Both have big smiles on their faces while excited to start a new chapter in their lives while surrounded by their loved ones including a small group of family and friends. The people that attended the wedding would have agreed with the quote from Mrs. Jones saying, "It was a day filled with love, and we are so grateful for it." It is easy to say how happy everyone was while Mrs. Amanda Jones walked down the aisle. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Amanda Jones.

On July 26, a gorgeous sunny day with intermittent rain showers in Nashville, Tennessee. Mrs. Amanda Jones's wedding took place. It was filled with family and friends, and because of the setting, the guests were advised to attend in Western clothes. Mrs. Jones had an item with more significance than it seemed: a bouquet of roses. She had chosen roses as her flower as a symbol of her friend who had passed away last year. She held them during the ceremony and after in her wedding photos. The floral arrangement symbolizes her strong friendship with her friend. Mrs. Jones explained, "There was just a bit of rain, a sign of good luck." Rain on a wedding day signifies good luck by showing that your marriage will last forever and your wedding day is going to be memorable for everyone including family and friends. What makes this marriage unique from others is that Mrs. Jones and her husband were married by an Elvis impersonator. Following the wedding, a small amount of family and friends went to a local restaurant called *The Mockingbird* where they celebrated the newlyweds and the start of an amazing new life together. Though they didn't have a honeymoon, they plan to celebrate sometime in the future. Meanwhile, they continue to do their favorite activities together like reading *The New York Times*, going on walks, and watching their favorite shows.



(Left) The newlyweds sit on a swing outside of the chapel, where they started their amazing new lives together. Making new memories even after the ceremony, where a handful of friends and family went to a local restaurant called *The Mockingbird*. *The Mockingbird*, is a restaurant near the chapel known for their delicious and amazing reviews. An amazing choice for a wedding night dinner with a group of loved ones. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Amanda Jones.



(Above) The wedding rings were accompanied by a bouquet of flowers that possessed much more significance than they appeared. The flowers were a vibrant red and had a silk white ribbon around it which gave it much more beauty. Mrs. Jones not only chose the flowers for elegance but also for her friend, who passed away last year. She chose the roses for her big day which shows how important her friend was to her and her life. She holds the flowers close to her on her big day in remembrance of her friend and the special bond they shared. The bouquet makes a memory for everyone and for Mrs. Amanda Jones as well. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Amanda Jones.

Say Ciao to *Simply Capri*

By Hayden Roberts

In all of the tourist areas in Florida, visitors and locals alike have trouble finding fresh food that doesn't have a ridiculous price. Many visitors of popular theme parks such as *Walt Disney World* and *Universal Studios* feel trapped into eating at greasy on-site locations because they are stuck in an expensive resort scheme and don't know where

When guests walk through the doors, they are greeted with views of murals depicting the coast of Capri. There are vases filled with rolling pins and flowers lining the walls and the tops of the chandeliers. One recommendation is the *Cherry Blossom*, which is a mocktail made with lemonade, cherry syrup, and a splash of vanilla. The menu is loaded with many different appetizers, but the waiters will always recommend the burrata and the grilled octopus. The dishes are presented beautifully. The burrata dish is served over olive oil and blistered tomatoes with a bit of basil and cracked fresh red pepper. Opening the burrata is an experience worthy of an *Instagram* reel. The dish also comes with bread, which is perfect for building your own sandwich. It was something so simple but so delicious. The octopus melts in your mouth, leaving you in a sense of awe. However, the dinner was a whole different dining experience. With something as simple as a Margarita Pizza, it is hard to go wrong. It boasted fresh mozzarella and an eight-hour sauce with a flakey, crunchy crust topped with fresh cracked red pepper. However, pasta is what everyone comes for, and it did not disappoint. Two of the most popular dishes are served with

As the dining experience was coming to an end, the waiter handed a small menu filled with espressos and different types of desserts. The *Delizia al Limone* is the most popular dessert. It is a form-shaped sponge cake with a lemon glaze that is not sour. However, it has the tangy sourness of a lemon and the sweetness of fresh cane sugar. Even so, the dish was not overly



(Above) The three main courses are all perfect to share amongst your party. Each dish comes with separate plates to share. All photos by Hayden Roberts.

else to go. When looking for something that is not fast food, *Simply Capri* is the perfect choice for visitors in the tourist district who want to get away from high prices and enjoy an authentic family meal. *Simply Capri* opened in November 2023 with one goal in mind: bringing the taste of the food from the island of Capri to the Orlando area. *Simply Capri* offers a taste of authentic Italian cuisine. With waiters guiding visitors through the menu. If choosing one dish from the menu is too difficult, bring your family in for a traditional Sunday dinner with a pre-selected course. What makes *Simply Capri* so good? Why is their food better than that of other restaurants near the parks?



(Above) The restaurant is filled with multiple different chandeliers. Decorated with murals and beautiful plants hanging from the walls.

seafood. The *Linguine Alle Vongole Veraci* and the *Scialatielli Dei Faraglioni* were incredible. The linguine was a freshly made pasta cooked in a garlic olive oil sauce with fresh clams, Calabrian pepper, and cherry tomatoes. It was then lightly coated in parsley. The pasta is made fresh in the kitchen with every dish and perfectly portioned to let the sauteed clams carry the dish. A slight saltiness brought the flavor of the cherry tomatoes mixed with the parsley, which balanced perfectly with the fresh clams. The *Scialatielli* was the best dish of the night, with fresh egg pasta cooked with fresh shrimp, clams, muscles, cherry tomatoes, parsley, and fresh red pepper. The freshly cooked egg pasta, with the perfect al dente taste was easy for everyone to enjoy over the conversation.



(Above) The appetizers paired perfectly with the drinks, each of which bringing their own unique flavors to the table. Along with a beautiful presentation worthy of an *Instagram* reel.

sweet. The sponge cake was perfectly moist and was the perfect end to the dining experience. And a perfect dish to sip with a nice small Italian espresso. Without a doubt, *Simply Capri* is a new favorite Italian restaurant in the theme park area and a perfect place to go after visiting a long day of roller coasters and walking. *Simply Capri* offers quality food without having to pay a hefty price tag for a meal. With exceptional customer service and a great dining experience, and beautiful views in the restaurant *Simply Capri* is a new restaurant that will welcome new flavors and tastes. So say, "Ciao" to this restaurant the next time you go to the *Disney* or *Universal* parks.



(Above) The grilled octopus was the best appetizer on the menu. The dish is served with an arugula salad coated in a lemon vinaigrette dressing with juicy and ripe tomatoes on top.



(Above) The *Delizia al Limone* is a whole dining experience in its own with a lemon flavor. The light sponge shape of the dessert is perfect for sharing with the entire table.



Balenciaga Takes Out The Trash

By Kacie Palla

In 2022, *Balenciaga* released its *Winter Collection* at *Paris Fashion Week*. Their line featured winter coats, tight body suits, and bags. One of these bags has caused significant controversy online because it looks like a trash bag. It is made of red and white calfskin and costs almost \$2,000. Since then, *Balenciaga* has created other strange pieces, including tape roll bracelets and chip bag purses for unreasonable prices. While *Balenciaga* has made many weird products, this idea is not new to the fashion industry. For years, brands have been creating insane pieces that don't have a discernible meaning. Perhaps they are creating fashion for attention, or maybe there is a secret meaning.

Either way, people are still buying them. Celebrities like Kim Kardashian use these absurd designs to garner attention from press and fans, but is the attention positive? Kim has always been particularly controversial, and fans often question her fashion choices. In 2022, she wore Marilyn Monroe's dress to the *Met Gala*, and the public was outraged, worried she had damaged or stretched it. But this is only one example of Kardashian's abnormal fashion choices. Kim has been the face of *Balenciaga* for a few years now and has modeled some very interesting looks from the designer brand such as their 2022 *Winter Collection*, when she covered herself in *Balenciaga*-printed caution tape. She later posted a video of herself on *Instagram* opening one of *Balenciaga*'s garbage bags. She was very eager to open the gift and said, "I'm so excited; I love this trash bag." Since then, many influencers and creators have commented on her bold choice and even criticized her and *Balenciaga* for making this insane bag.

This idea that the bag is unreasonable goes along with the rest of the general public as almost everyone thinks that the bag is overpriced and poorly thought-out. When asking administrators at Lake Highland what they thought of the bag, they had some interesting comments. When Mr. Garth Parke, Dean of Students, was asked if he would buy the bag he said, "On a scale from one to 10, that bag is mid, so no." Mr. Jonathan Heitt, Director of Stu-



(Above) *Gucci* has opened for the day, inviting in customers with wood floors and a modern carpet. This stores seems to lean into a modern style, with a marble entrance and large glass doors. All photos by Kacie Palla.



(Above) Two ladies walk towards one of the 52 *Burberry* stores in the United States, a small amount compared to the total number, having 422 stores worldwide.

dent Services, agreed with this comment, and called high fashion a, "Wild world." Not only did the admin dislike the bag, but so did students and teachers.

Kate Caborn, grade 11, called the bag, "Weird and gross." Rachel McKenzie, grade 9, said, "I would rather get a bag that I like and would not think of how anyone else would see it." All other students who were interviewed agreed that they would not buy the bag due to its looks and price, and some made some interesting comments about the meaning of the bag. Emma Larson, grade 10, said that, "It probably represents how stupid luxury can be," and that she, "Hope[s] it

was ironic, otherwise, it was a failure." Mrs. Amanda Jones had a similar idea and stated that she is, "Wondering if there's some sort of modern art statement being made that I'm missing, but what I see is a fancy trash bag that costs almost \$2,000."

But why did *Balenciaga* make this bag? And why are people buying it? I believe that designer brands are a scam and made for people who want to control the way others think of them. While some designer pieces are high-quality and pretty, they are never worth the price they are set at. People don't buy for looks. They buy for the brand, which is exactly why people still buy the garbage bag purse. Carrying around a \$50 purse from a normal business does not give the impression that you are wealthy, even if the bag is high-quality and beautiful. However, carrying a leather trash bag definitely gives the impression that you have money to spend or to waste. It seems that as well as people buying the bag to draw attention, *Balenciaga* made the bag to attract attention. Demna, the creative director of *Balenciaga*, told *Women's Wear Daily* that he, "Couldn't miss an opportunity to make the most expensive trash bag in the world, because who doesn't love a fashion scandal?"

Balenciaga had a great opportunity with this bag to spread an important message like overconsumption or living wages, but they instead used it for their own benefit. A big problem with designer brands is their ethics, or lack thereof. They create products at the same production cost as other high-quality brands and give them an extreme upcharge. Overpriced or expensive items are now only bought for the name, not for the looks, quality, or meaning. This trash bag could have started a fundraiser to clean up landfills and to make our world more sustainable. It could have encouraged people to look into reusable bags and spread awareness about the amount of waste we produce, but it didn't. *Balenciaga* had a great opportunity to start a campaign or a protest about the value of designer items compared to the price, but instead they went along with the negative norm and created this bag to make money. This bag was made to be trashed.



(Above) Located on the second floor in the left wing of *Mall of Millenia*, there are 22 luxury stores. One of the most popular is *Prada*.



(Above) The Lake Highland dumpster is filled with construction materials, garbage, and trash bags. These less than a dollar bags work just as well as luxury.



(Above) Appealing to everybody, *Prada* connects their high-fashion to everything, with their luxury clothing and mannequins that are always in style.



Constuction Relocates Athletics

By Ava Anderson and Reily Green

As the new school year begins, football season, school drills, and Homecoming are quickly approaching from right around the corner. However, an issue is running through most students’ and teachers’ minds: “When will the track and field construction be over?” The field construction process started around the end of April 2024, and from recent *Unity* meetings, the Director of Athletics, Ms. Charmaine Schreiber, stated that we can expect construction to conclude around the end of September 2024. It has been proven that turf should last around eight to ten years. The turf at *LHPS* has not been replaced since around 2016. With the new turf, we can guarantee that in the following years, we won’t have to deal with this issue again. However, there are still lots of unanswered questions circulating: “What about home football games? What can we expect with the new field?”

For the duration of this construction time, cross-country athletes have been running outside of campus while the football players have been practicing at the *LHAC*: the *Lake Highland Athletics Complex*. Varsity football player, Nicholas Seferlis, grade 11, otherwise known as “Big Nick,” also stated that because of the recent rainy weather, it causes the *LHAC*’s grass to get muddy and wet, leaving players to slip more easily and get dirtier. Players have even mentioned rolling ankles as one of their concerns. Will these issues leave players less prepared for this new season?

One thing that a lot of students look forward to in the new fall season is the football games. However, we will have home football games in the second half of the season. At the moment, the first scheduled home football game is on September 27 at 6:00 P.M. against Legacy Charter. So, there are three home football games we can put on the calendar for this season: September 27, October 11, and October 18. Players also claim that they are craving the atmosphere of home games at the moment. Very few Lake Highland students attend away games, so the support is missed there. However, let’s hope the Lake Highland support shines twice as bright when the home games start.

Surprisingly, it was gathered from some cross-country runners and football players that there were not many issues with the old field. However, Nick Seferlis claims that in last year’s football season, the turf was too rough to handle. He explained that this caused, “Turf burn to be twice as painful.” JV cross-country athlete Coco Chopra, grade 9, also stated how she hopes the new field has a, “Better surface and has a better grip.” Knowing the field is getting resurfaced, we can most likely expect what these students are wishing for. There are also wishes for new and improved event area for the tailgates and Fan Zone. However, it was just recently announced that



(Above) Nick Seferlis, grade 11, is a current football player at Lake Highland. When asked if he was excited about the new field Nick said, “Yes because I am starting to get tired of the grass,” referring to the *L-HAC* lot. The new location is a condition for the football team. Nick also explained that it is different playing his home games on the road he said, “It is very empty. Kind of funny.” Nick Seferlis mentioned he is going to be thrilled when the new football field is finished. It will make game days even more exciting and enjoyable for him and the rest of the team.

son, the turf was too rough to handle. He explained that this caused, “Turf burn to be twice as painful.” JV cross-country athlete Coco Chopra, grade 9, also stated how she hopes the new field has a, “Better surface and has a better grip.” Knowing the field is getting resurfaced, we can most likely expect what these students are wishing for. There are also wishes for new and improved event area for the tailgates and Fan Zone. However, it was just recently announced that

they are building a new scoreboard. From this scoreboard, we can expect the best technology the scoring system has to offer. Teachers even mentioned how any students who are interested in tech will have the opportunity to help work on the scoreboard.

Other than construction on the Lake Highland property, there has been recent road construction from the City of Orlando. This construction is going to take place until the end of October 2024. For phase one-construction is also going to be barricading the *LHAC* student parking lot, which leaves the students’ only way of access through Alden Road. *Lhps.org* announced that “Lane closures on Highland Avenue will continue from 8:30 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The full closure of Marks Street and Highland Avenue has been rescheduled to Tuesday, September 3, through Thursday, September 5, and will occur nightly from 8:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M. Expect a full closure at Marks Street and Highland Avenue at night on Sunday, September 8, and possibly Monday, September 9.” Advice given to all driving students and teachers is to leave earlier than normal to guarantee a spot in the parking lot on time before school hours start.

Not only will there be a new football and track field and field, but there is a new additional field being added to the *LHAC*. This field was funded by a total of \$1,000,000 donated by the Bray family. This new field can be used for soccer, lacrosse, and much more. The new field in the *LHAC* also offers a new multisport facility. According to *Lhps.gov*, Ms. Charmaine Schreiber stated, “The Brays’ generous gift is a true game-changer. Right now, we have 14 different teams from soccer, lacrosse, and football constantly juggling for field space. This lighted turf field will transform the opportunities we can provide all our student-athletes, helping them reach their greatest potential.” This new facility offers space for over 17 sports, from volleyball to even archery. Students and coaches look forward to using it soon.

Although it is unfortunate to have only three home games this season, everyone has been anticipating these three games. Fortunately, this can lead to overwhelming support from students and teachers. So not only will they be playing on a better field, but they will possibly get one of the biggest crowds in Lake Highland history. So mark your calendars and get out your red and white fan gear for September 27th!



(Above) The sound is loud, the hammers are banging nails, and the track is one step closer to completion. Currently, workers are renovating the track by removing the old surface and installing a new, cutting-edge material. This makeover aims to improve athletes’ performance and safety while also modernizing the track’s look. All photos by Reily Green. All graphics courtesy of Canva.



(Above) The all-new scoreboard will be revolutionary, allowing for a new sound system and fan interactive experience. Lake Highland donors and fans can’t wait. The latest football field boasts a state-of-the-art artificial turf for new playing grounds in hopes of winning more state championships. The modern facility is designed to provide a top-notch environment for athletes and fans alike, elevating the high school sports atmosphere.



(Above) As the turf gets laid down, The suspense builds as the new stadium is nearly complete. On the football field at Lake Highland, workers are painstakingly installing new artificial turf to ensure a level playing field for upcoming games. Their meticulous implementation should improve the field’s aesthetics and functionality. This field should be state-of-the-art and a perfect new field, much softer than what we are accustomed to.



Social Biases Skew AI’s Creations

By Sofia TENGHOFF

Artificial intelligence performs well when it learns from us. But, what if it doesn’t learn from an honest representation of us? This is the question that people have been seeing answered in the results that AI companies now produce. *Chat GPT* has manually set guidelines for a reason: without those restrictions, the bot creates controversial results. *Dall-E-2* has been criticized for creating movie posters that carry extreme social bias, often shown on *TikTok* and other social media platforms.

However, these problems run deeper. Any AI model that generates biased results by default “subconsciously” weaves subtler, less noticeable biases into most of what it does. This becomes jarringly obvious in the art world, where image-generative AI creates designs that inaccurately and oppressively represent different demographics of people. *MIT Technology Review* states that, “Bias and stereotyping are still huge problems for systems like *DALL-E 2* and *Stable Diffusion*, despite companies’ attempts to fix it.” However, before we explore how this affects us all, it is crucial to understand why this happens. The answer starts with data collection.

An AI model’s entire purpose, in any scenario, is to predict an output, “Y,” based on a hypothetical “X.” This “X” does not actually exist. In order for an AI to do this, it must first learn the outputs for “X”s that do exist. These real-life “X”s, or inputs, are parts of datasets that AI models receive. While computers work mathematically and logically, the people feeding datasets to AI models are programmers, data scientists, and people who work in other related fields. Therefore, people can absolutely be biased, so when people collect data to give AI models for training, they may subconsciously collect data samples that don’t accurately represent the human population.

Accordingly, abundant evidence exists that AI facial recognition today is racially biased. For example, the University at Buffalo reports that, “When researchers in the *2018 Gender Shades Study* for *IBM* and *Microsoft* dug deeper into the behaviors of these [facial recognition] algorithms across various systems, they found the lowest accuracy scores were obtained for Black female subjects between 18 and 30 years of age.” Similarly, the University of Calgary reports that some facial recognition technology has as much as 99 percent accuracy in recognizing white male faces, compared to an accuracy rate of 65 percent with non-white female faces.

This greatly impacts the world of visual art. Ms. Kathryn Tucker, Lake Highland’s photography teacher, says, “Photography has expanded rapidly since the introduction of digital imaging in the mid-1970s and has accelerated along with AI tools.” With biased visual data in creating faces, AI’s depiction of

human faces now carries heavy demographical biases. Its capacity for generating visual art has already taken over countless marketing jobs due to its ability to create art. Ms. Tucker’s advice to students about handling the impact of AI in the future is: “Your creative voice as an artist is your commodity. It has unlimited value.”

This is important as the advancement of AI continues to skew future prospects or perceptions for students interested in art. Brianna Yoskin, grade 12, a photography student at LHP, says she likes that photography, “Sometimes helps you to slow down and see the small details or patterns that you don’t usually see, but also allows you to capture moments that pass in an instant, like the view out of a plane window or someone’s expression.” However, she also says that AI, “Probably will continue to change the game in terms of editing and processing photos, as it has already created tools like generative fill and stuff that have already become very popular.”

So, with AI having such a heavy impact on visual arts, something that people value so highly, it’s important to ensure that it trains on the right path without excluding certain groups of people. That doesn’t mean consequences have to fall on programmers, however. In fact, many of the biases built into AI can be accidental or resultative of already-biased circumstances. Ashna Maathur, grade 12, a computer science student at LHP, says she thinks, “AI has allowed for more thought on creativity and innovative ideas in Computer Science.” Renessa Ghosh, grade 12, a former computer science student at LHP, says that her favorite part of computer science class has been, “Making projects that (sort of) have real-life applications.”

By fostering such a healthy learning environment and a positive attitude towards artificial intelligence, LHP helps ensure that future software developers have a constructive approach toward AI. This stresses the importance of considering all factors for the bias that exists in AI today. In the instance of *Chat GPT*, the official *Open AI* website says, “When you [users] use our services for individuals such as *ChatGPT* or *DALL-E*, we may use your content to train our models.” Because people can ask *ChatGPT* or *DALL-E* anything they want, this creates bias.

Therefore, AI generative models need more than just manually inputted guidelines to guard against extreme bias. AI needs people to actively work to ensure that the machines of our future are evolving into unbiased tools. This involves everyone, not just software developers, who are interested in an inclusive, progressive future. Kathleen Forster, Lake Highland’s art teacher, says students should, “Bravely trust themselves to become the artists they want to be, and cautiously use sources of inspiration that maintain their artistic integrity.”



(Above) Dr. Brenda Walton, instructor of Freshman Seminar, created this image in *MagicStudio* which is AI generated. She wanted a bedroom with *The Beatles* featured in the decor. Instead, it gave her an image of one of *The Beatles* sitting on the bed. This octopus-like creation wasn’t what she wanted so she tried to refine the directions. Photo courtesy of Dr. Brenda Walton.

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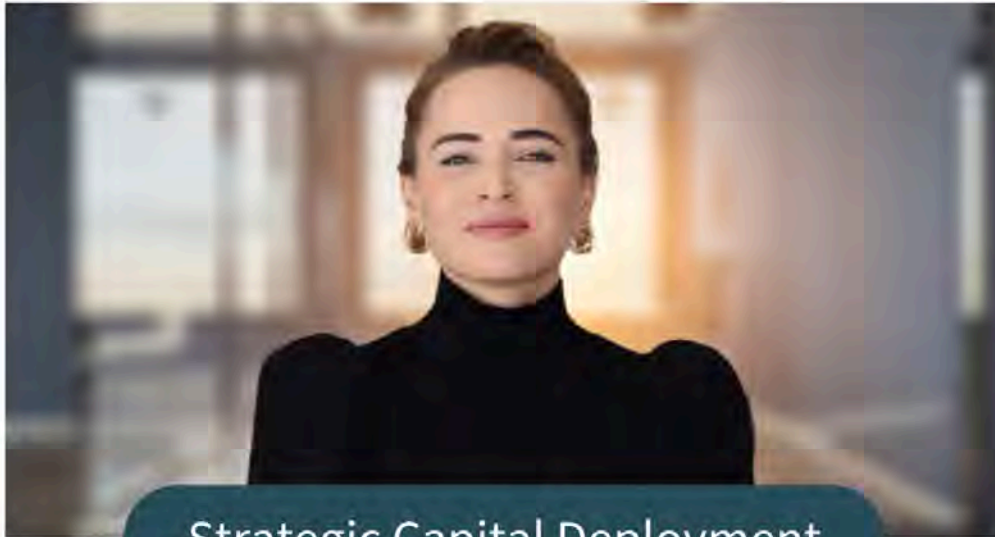
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