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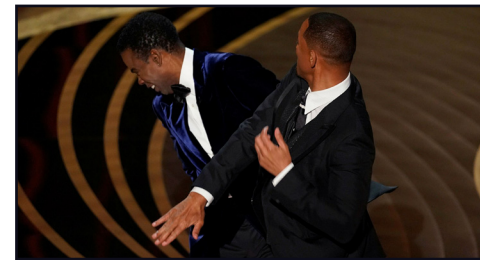
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1st Place award-winner from the American Scholastic Press Association



The Lion's Roar

The voice of Liberty High School students

Liberty High School
850 Second Street
Room T-13
Brentwood, CA 94513

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FREE

Be Exceptional and its exceptional community

By Mary Grace Contreras
Editor

Every day consists of a different schedule for the Be Exceptional community, from social groups to fitness classes to acting to ballet and cheerleading. Working out, having fun, and getting along with everyone, are three of the many goals of Be Exceptional. To clarify, Be Exceptional is a non-profit organization that has been managed for years by Lynda Green.

The non-profit organization that provides support for everyone aims to provide classes for individuals with exceptional needs. Lynda Green, the director and founder of Be Exceptional, was inspired to start the program for students, families, and sometimes, people with special needs.

Lynda Green states that she's "been teaching the classes since 2004, but became a non-profit in 2018." When they became a non-profit organization, it made the services accessible to everyone.

The non-profit organization hosts multiple classes and events throughout the year. The classes that are provided include acting, cheerleading, dance, fitness, gymnastics, social skills, skate-



During the fitness class of Be Exceptional, multiple volunteers are paired up with students in participating in circuit training, cha-cha slide, yoga, and more. Often, the class has dance parties towards the end to let the students (and volunteers) express themselves.

Photo courtesy of Lynda Green

boarding, and more. Some events that are hosted are Friday night outs, community events, and fundraisers.

There are different classes and events held each year. Lynda Green shares, "Each class varies but all classes are taught so that all can participate." In the program, their aim is to include everyone that is willing to join the community. Anyone in the community can join the classes.

The community that the organization

is a part of has many participants that consistently attend the classes. Specifically, one participant named Christina Remson has attended the classes and events consistently and claims that she likes making new friends and likes the classes.

"I feel like the Be Exceptional members are my family that I love very much," Remson mentions. She goes on to talk about how the director, Lynda Green, is an amazing teacher that

makes sure that everyone has a great time with each other. In particular, she adds on how there are a lot of parties and events hosted.

In addition, Lynda Green includes, "We also have local teens and young adults as 'buddies' that provide peer support for the students."

Currently, an estimated 150 participants attend various classes and events. Alongside Lynda Green, her son, Christian Green, her daughters,

Ashtyn Cook and Kassi Cook, and another director, Joey Ogo help run the program together. A couple of volunteers attend the classes as well, helping set up and accompany the participants. Lynda Green says that anyone of all ages and abilities can join the classes any time.

A volunteer that joined the program not long ago, Ayesha Dela Torre, expresses, "It's a really wholesome experience and I love spending time with our buddies. Doing activities like yoga or dancing makes it easier to be comfortable with each other and have a fun time."

The classes are held weekly and each day focuses on different activities. Monday classes at Antioch consist of social groups and fitness classes. Wednesday classes at Brentwood consist of acting classes and fitness classes. On Thursdays at Antioch, they have ballet and cheerleading classes. There are also skateboarding classes held on Saturdays at Antioch.

As long as the classes are held, Lynda Green will continue the programs because of the joy it brings to the students and parents. She plans to "open a center someday soon" for all ages and abilities.

Ballin' at Senior Ball

By Rià Sanghera

Editor

10 Things I Hate About You, Tall Girl, To All the Boys I've Ever Loved Before, Mean Girls, She's All That (and spin off, He's All That)...even Carrie, all share one thing in common: Senior Prom, or for us; Senior Ball.

Senior Ball was held on Saturday, April 16 and seniors danced the night away at the Lake Chalet Seafood Bar & Grill in Oakland, CA.

Amidst concerns and rumors such as a possible conjoined prom with the Juniors or Senior Ball at Liberty, the chance for an out-of-school venue such as Lake Chalet was more than appreciated by the seniors.

"My favorite part about prom was the location, the view of the water at night was really pretty," Kinza Chaudry, senior, responded.

Aside from the boundless picture opportunities, there were also plenty of activities from a photo booth to karaoke.

"Now I ain't sayin she a gold digga," Kaitlyn Ashby, senior, stated as her most memorable line from Senior Ball, recalling on her experience singing karaoke with a fully set up mic and speaker system.

Though, the fun didn't just end with seniors. Even chaperones got in and enjoyed the night, wishing seniors well and tasting the various food options.

"...it was exciting that nobody had an expectation as to what they should



Students sit and enjoy peace,

despite the water's chill heaters Mary Grace Contreras outside keep students warm.

be expecting (including the adults). The new can always be a bit scary but it turned out that everyone fell in love with this venue," Mrs. Seipel who helped to organize this year's Senior Ball shared.

Ultimately, Senior Ball is a night no senior will forget anytime soon and the class of 2022, are all extremely grateful for these opportunities to make memories together, one last time.



Inside the dance area, with a balcony outside, students raise their hands and dance to All I Do is Win by DJ Khaled.

Photo by Rià Sanghera.



Photo courtesy of Tia Curameng

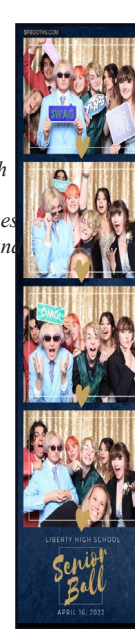
Seniors take full advantage of the photobooth as pictures snap with props and even teacher chaperones like Mrs. Seipel and Ms. Rodriguez.



Photo courtesy of Kinza Chaudry



Inside lights flash as the dance room was set up to a colorful frenzy. Outside, guests could eat and admire the scenic view of Lake Merritt.



Photos by Keira Mellevenna-Davis.

2022 Teacher of the Year sings her way into the spotlight

By Eeman Dela Torre

Staff Writer

All teachers were obliged to make changes in their classrooms for students returning to in-person instruction. A good lecturer is a crucial component of learning since it changes students' perspectives when they attend classes. Despite this, many wonder who the "Teacher of the Year" is.

When Laura Carreon, the 2022 Teacher of the Year was asked about her teaching experience, she replied, "I

am finishing up my 11th year teaching at Liberty. My favorite part of teaching is seeing the amount of growth students are able to reach when they fully commit. I often see this through their performances but it is often in rehearsal that I experience the most joy when all their hard work comes together."

After obtaining the award, she will be known as the 2022 Teacher of the Year and will represent Liberty High School at school and community

events.

Moreover, when asked how it felt to be the winner, she answered, "It feels great knowing that other teachers and staff recognize the hard work I put into my program. The students shine through their performances but our school, staff, and teachers don't always get to see everything they do."

At school, Mrs. Carreon is the director of choirs, with four choir classes. She also teaches Ukulele and rotates Music Theory & Technology with AP Music

Theory. She oversees small performing ensembles that don't meet during class time, advises the choir club and coordinates many community performances too.

Mrs. Carreon is different from the other nominees as she says in her own words, "I get to teach something that all students have a natural gift for. It is just my job to bring out the best in them. Being able to sing everyday at school and reach such a level of excellence is truly something special."

Hear us roar some more!



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Upcoming events:

- May 30 - Memorial Day, No School
- June 3 - Senior Sunset
- June 6-9 - Final Exam Schedule
- June 10 - Graduation

May 24, 2022

FFA takes home the bacon at County Fair

By Shelby Smith
Staff Writer

As the days get longer and the weather gets warmer, Future Farmers of America (FFA) students at Liberty prepared for and participated in the County Fair, where all their hard work is put to the test.

The county fair is an opportunity for FFA members to present the work and many hours they put into their show animals. For some students it is the most stressful and exciting time of year, they must prepare their animals to be shown in front of a crowd and livestock judges. Students can show a range of animals from pigs, goats, sheep and cattle to rabbits and chickens. They can win awards based on the build of their animal, and the student's ability to show the animal off properly. One of the most popular animals to show are pigs, also known as swine.

Drew Rang is a freshman at Liberty High School and an active FFA member, who showed her pig, Piggy Smalls on May 14th and 15th. When asked how she prepared, Rang replied, "Right now I am getting my utility box ready with everything I need and making sure that my pig is at the right weights." This year she expected the most challenging task to be assuring her pig looked its cleanest and most presentable, in addition to preparing herself.

Taking responsibility for an animal



Liberty's farm houses goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, cattle, horses, and pigs, including Piggy Smalls, the sale of these animals amassed over \$123,000 at the fair. Photo courtesy of Drew Rang

can be very challenging. Rang explained how her life and sleep schedule changed the most. Every morning she woke up early to get to school to feed Piggy Smalls and whenever she goes out with friends or family it is necessary for her to find another FFA member that can care for her pig.

When asked about her favorite memory Rang recalls, "I was putting shavings in my pigs pen when he ran out under my legs and knocked me down to the ground."

Students learn the importance of proper care, communication, management, and get to create a bond that not many can. Whether students raise a pig, goat, sheep, or rabbit, they quickly create a unique connection.

After the fairgrounds close, FFA members will say goodbye to their animals and clean up their pens. Students who enjoyed their experience can sign up to show an animal the following year.

COUNTY FAIR RESULTS:
Maci Lechtaler-1st Master Showmanship, Grand & Reserve Supreme Market Lamb, 2nd Lamb Showmanship
Angelo Baldocchi-1st Lamb Showmanship, 2nd Swine Showmanship, Grand Supreme Market Hog
Lacy Parsons-Reserve Grand Champion FFA Market Hog
Jackson Freyler-1st Swine Showmanship
Neveah Savage-Reserve Supreme Market Hog
Kaley Watters-Reserve Grand Champion FFA Market Goat, 1st Goat Showmanship
Isaiah Ramirez-2nd Goat Showmanship
Ava Jeans-1st in All Other Breeding Goats with Nigerian Dwarf Goat
Myah Merrill-1st FFA Showmanship, 2nd heavy weight FFA Market Steers
Liza Sherwood-2nd FFA Showmanship, Reserve Supreme Champion Steer, FFA Grand Champion Steer
Vanessa McKinley-FFA Reserve Champion Steer
Trinity Floyd-1st Heavy Weight FFA Market Steer
Riley McCullough-3rd Light Weight FFA Market Steer

April showers bring May flowers... and June rainbows



One of the country's largest Pride celebrations, San Francisco Pride attracts over 500,000 visitors annually, drawing in an estimated \$357 million for the city

Photo courtesy of 49 Miles Blog

By Keira McIlvenna Davis

Editor

Shed the shadows and cobwebs from the closet of the past year and step into the light; Pride Season is once again almost here.

With so much uncertainty and turmoil over the last two years, many have

been unsure of what 2022 Pride will look like. However, California may pull out all the rainbow stops.

Cities all over California will be celebrating for the entire month of June. Los Angeles, San Diego, Davis, and San Francisco, to name a few, will return to their regularly scheduled

celebrations of diversity. San Francisco's 52nd Pride Parade is back in person this year from June 25-June 26, marching down Market Street with the theme: Love Will Keep Us Together. In addition to the parade itself, there will be over 300 exhibitors and 20 community-run venues along the streets housing local dancers, mu-

Coral grief: World's reefs dying rapidly

By Annabelle Smith

Staff Writer

Coral reefs are dying at an alarming rate which could lead to the destruction of the entire ocean ecosystem. According to Secure International, over 50% of corals have died in the last 30 years and 90% could die within the next century as a result of climate change, overfishing, and pollution.

"This is the first major ecosystem that we feel could collapse," states Joanie Kleypas, a scientist at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research. Corals are extremely sensitive to water and acidity changes. As a result of climate change, the water's temperature increases too rapidly which creates a stress response from the corals. When the water is too warm, corals expel the algae that was within their tissues causing them to expose their skeletons and making them appear white. This is known as coral bleaching.

Bleached coral is not dead, but is at a substantial risk for starvation, disease, and death. Coral bleaching is a natural process, yet mass bleaching events continue to happen more frequently and intensely, and the natural recovery process cannot keep up.

"The most pristine section of the Great Barrier Reef is currently experiencing the worst mass bleaching event in history," The National Coral Bleaching Taskforce expressed.

The fact that the world's corals cannot keep up with recovering from these mass bleaching events causes worry because the coral reefs are biodiversity hotspots, which generate billions for fisheries and tourism.

Coral reefs provide shelter and food for the thousands of species that can be found living on them. Corals are a foundation species which others rely on like loggerhead and hawksbill turtles, for example.

The Natural History Museum notes

that over 500 million people depend on reefs for food, jobs, and defense. Reefs protect against waves by acting as barriers and reducing up to 97% of wave energy which prevents storm surges, erosion, and flooding.

This is especially important in coastal regions in developing countries since many do not have the resources to rebuild quickly after catastrophes. As climate change continues to bring on intense weather events, this will become much more valuable.

"The Great Barrier Reef is in grave danger," says David Attenborough, a naturalist broadcaster, "The twin perils brought by climate change – an increase in the temperature of the ocean and its acidity – threaten its very existence."

The increasing loss of coral reefs will lead to the collapse of the ocean's ecosystem, impact human activities, put fishing economies at risk, and increase the effects of natural disasters.

"Shots" fired: the game of Senior Assassins

By Juan Cebreiros
Staff Writer

For the first time since 2019, the Senior Assassins game is back. This student-ran game exclusive to seniors only had been put on hold due to the pandemic; however, this year it's made its return, but many students not participating are still confused on what exactly this non-school sanctioned activity is.

Sign-ups started in the beginning of March with a \$5 buy-in per player as players were allowed to pick who was on their team and what their team name would be. Teams receive their "target" at the beginning of each week and do what they can to try and get them "out" by spraying them with a toy water gun and catching it on video. All "assassinations" can be found on the student Liberty Assassin Instagram page as video proof is required of each "assassination" to prove that a person has been eliminated from the game.

Each team has five members and the game continues to be played until there is only one team left; however, a team is not completely out of the game until all players of a team are eliminated due to players being able to purchase revives for a price of \$30. Targets are not only issued each week to teams, but as well as adjustments to rules to prevent teams from exploiting and bending the rules in their favor to gain an unfair advantage. "Safe zones"

do exist in the game since other activities players might be participating in such as sports or clubs but as well as school being the biggest safe zone as long as school is in session. This is set in place to avoid conflict with admins at Liberty High School and prevent the game from being shut down.

One of the main goals of the game is to actually go outside and look for your target as at the end of each rules update the Instagram account states, "If your team has not killed anyone for two rounds, players from your team may be eliminated. So actually go out, have fun, and play the game". They also encourage safety as each rules update gives an example of actions that are unsafe such as offroading and trespassing in order to eliminate a target. Unsafe activity even includes having a water gun out at school due to the activity being not connected to the school in any formal way as well as going against school rules about weapons on campus. The Liberty Assassin Instagram page states, "If you are using your gun or shooting people on campus, even if it's a joke, you will be disqualified. Do not use your guns on campus at all".

The return of Liberty Senior assassin has been an entertaining one with players running each other down left and right, water being sprayed through the air, and teams strategically playing their cards right in hope of being the champions.

sicians, and food. As an homage to the LGBTQIA+ victims off the Holocaust, before the celebration begins, the community will once again install the Pink Triangle on Twin Peaks to remember those lost.

Suzanne Ford, Interim Executive Director of Pride, wrote that officials organizing the event "Know that San Francisco Pride is essential to our communities as we recover from the pandemic, and we are eager to give people the celebration they deserve."

Launching the creation of Pride Month, the Stonewall Riots may not be the uplifting story many hope for, but it is one of importance, resilience, and hope. On June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York. The bar, which served LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual) members of the community, was illegal at the time, leading to the police raid. However, this time, the patrons of the bar fought back, leading to the struggle that is today hailed as the founder of pride celebrations throughout the world.

When asked why Pride Month is essential, Liberty senior Chaz Callahan explained, "Pride is so important because it is a time of year where the world truly gets to see what the LG-

BTQIA+ community is all about. Without times like Pride, the bigots and people who aren't as educated as others on this topic won't get the opportunity to learn and grow an appreciation for queer people."

Callahan furthered that Pride creates unity and a sense of family for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, as they celebrate in a safe space.

Celebrating country to country, Pride Month is acknowledged in all corners of the world. Maspalomas, a town in Gran Canaria, Spain, hosts one of Europe's largest Pride events. Many other countries including Belgium, France, and Austria also boast some of the most renowned gay pride events in the continent.

Senior at Liberty, Kailey Jones, shares that she will be attending Pride in San Francisco because "I haven't been since 2019 and when I first went it was such an incredible experience where everyone is able to come together and express themselves around people just like them."

Many members of the LGBTQIA+ community feel that Pride is the one month out of the year where they can loudly and proudly feel free to be themselves. With the upheaval and chaos of the past few years, Pride 2022 appears to be preparing to make headlines across the globe, once again.

Day of the Arts

By Nia Green
Staff Writer

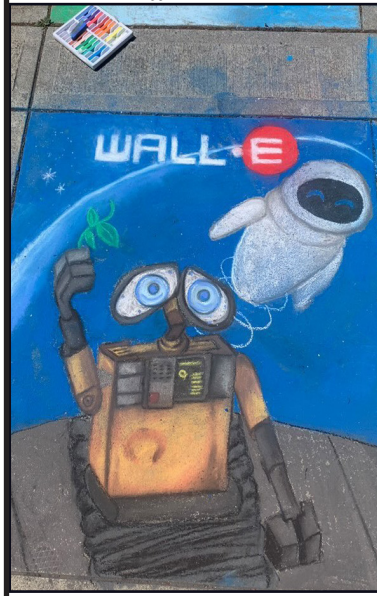


Photo courtesy of Makena Brown

Liberty High School's Day of the Arts took place on April 28, 2022.

The day is used to show the artistic side of incredibly creative individuals from the Public Art and Design Academy (PADA). It is a yearly tradition meant to be shared by the art students of Liberty for the whole student body to enjoy. This year's theme was movies and Liberty's concrete sidewalks have been covered with chalk art like no other.

The artist of this WALL-E piece, Makena Brown, explained, "I was excited to do [the Day of the Arts] and had seen it before from my sister when she was here and always wanted to take part." The art can still be viewed outside the aquatic centre and by the Performing Arts Center (PAC). Though now treaded with footsteps, the art continues to shine and the art students continue to be appreciated.

CAMPUS LIFE

May 24, 2022

Two Christmases may not be as jolly as it sounds

By Julian Nixon
Copy Editor

Almost everyone has a power couple they wholeheartedly idolize. While some ship co-workers, others find this dream pair in celebrities, fictional characters, or friends. Of course, it is only natural to oftentimes feel personally offended, heartbroken or even devastated when the two people split. It is not new to hear “Well since Steve and Jane didn’t work out, maybe romance really is dead” or “it’s official, I’m too scared to get married.” It’s even scarier when the lovers are parents. Sure, break ups are tricky but imagine divorce? Nothing like a legally processed, inherently public, lifestyle-altering breakup, especially when it is one’s parents.

It wouldn’t be surprising if “court” was ranked the least favorite word amongst the 36.5 million children of divorce. When uncertainty begins to



Arkansas has the highest divorce rate of all 50 states at 10.7% per 1000 people.

Photo courtesy of Fabio Balbi

fill every aspect of life, how does one function with a dysfunctional support system?

According to Wilkinson Finkbeiner Lawyers, roughly 50% of all American marriages end in divorce as of 2021. Having a split living situation for children of divorce may often make visiting different sides of the family complicated and daily life even more so. The boundaries of

compromise are seldom recognized and making accommodations is often an afterthought during homelife reconstruction.

Sophomore at Aptos High school, Ashley Grace, admitted that, “Packing clothes is a last-minute nightmare. There’s never a time I remember everything. Emergency trips to the store are regular at this point, so neither place feels quite like home.”

If everyday life wasn’t hard enough, family milestones and holidays may also cause conflict. While some believe two Christmases or Thanksgivings to be a blessing, most children of divorced parents feel quite the opposite.

“Holidays always feel like a competition between sides of the family. It’s the worst when they try to guilt-trip you for missing something,” explained Graham Beville who’s both a student at

Liberty High school and a child of a 10-year divorce.

The splitting of families is also notorious for shaping childrens’ futures in other ways unrelated to marriage or home life. Impacted decisions include when and where to attend college, or whether or not to acquire a job.

“I originally wanted to leave the country and study abroad for college but when mom and dad called it off it made me second guess leaving. I don’t know, it felt like it would be abandoning my younger siblings to go. I considered applying for a second job to make ends meet instead,” explained Timothee Sanchez, a track student from Aptos High school.

Choosing distance rather than drama simply makes sense for some families but it typically does not make the process any less difficult. Child development specialists encourage therapy, journaling, and extracurriculars while making the switch.

Steering away from a license

Why are so many teens opting to not get a driver’s license?

By Xavier Dollente
Staff Writer

Driving has typically been a reliable use of transport for many people all over the country in which gaining a driver’s license is an important milestone for some teenagers. The ability to drive wherever they want to go is why some teenagers desire to get their driver’s license. How-

ever, recently it has been shown that most teens are avoiding getting their licenses and are not, as many used to be. So what causes these teens to lack the motivation to acquire their driver’s license?

First of all, some teenagers do not attempt to acquire their license due to being too busy in their day to day lives. The process of finishing Driver’s Education, gaining the permit, and getting

training from an instructor can often be considered too long of a process for some teens and it also requires a lot of time. Trying to incorporate this process into a teenager’s life along with school and other activities can be thought too much for a teenager to shoulder along with their other responsibilities.

According to a research done at the University of Michigan, 37% out of 600 teens responded that they didn’t

want to get their licenses due to them being too busy. Teens were found to be too swamped with school work, along with some having jobs to attend to, which didn’t allow time to get their license.

Additionally, teenagers may have fear and anxiety about driving, another reason why some teens won’t get their license. Driving is considered a big responsibility and requires a lot of focus

in order to avoid accidents on the road. Having that weight on one’s shoulder may affect their mindset and cause them to be scared to touch the wheel.

According to a research done by End Needless Death on Our Roadways, it is recorded that 43% of first year drivers are involved in car accidents across the nation. Also, 37% of second year drivers are involved in car accidents across the nation.

Daylight Savings: Is it really necessary?

By Anushka Bhogal
Staff Writer

Recently, in March, the U.S. Senate approved a bill to make daylight savings time permanent, meaning it would be removed in 2023. However, is this the right decision for America?

To illustrate, daylight savings time was first implemented in the US with the Standard Time Act of 1918 as a wartime measure for seven months during World War I. It added more daylight hours in order to conserve energy resources. It was used again during World War II and has not been removed since. On the other hand, shifting between standard and daylight saving times is linked to several negative health outcomes, such as higher rates of heart disease, an increase in traffic accidents, child obesity (due to children cutting play time short at the end of the day), workplace injuries, male suicide rates, and a disturbance in many Americans’ circadian rhythms (body clocks). It can also trigger mental illness, such as bipolar disorder, and seasonal affective disorder (SAD), also known as winter

depression.

In addition, Eric Runez, the head of the DeForest Area School District in Wisconsin and an executive board member of the American Association of School members, is worried about early morning transportation issues for school children due to daylight savings, as it would put children on the streets just before sunrise. “That’s going to be a pretty dark environment, kids waiting in the dark for bus pickups or walking,” he said. “There are safety concerns around that.” However, there are a few advantages of daylight savings as well. The overall crime rate decreases, as well as energy consumption (which would decrease the monthly electricity bill).

Overall, the disadvantages of daylight savings time tend to outweigh the advantages. Research shows that the majority of Americans have been in favor of removing daylight savings time due to the many negative impacts. The opinions of our nation proves that daylight savings time is likely not necessary and many would rather it be removed.

Lion’s Cafe: Wanna Waffle?



One of Wanna Waffle? ’s choices, The Campfire which included marshmallows, crushed graham crackers and chocolate syrup over a waffle. Wanna Waffle? includes many other variations of waffles including savory and sweet waffles.

Photo by Josh Buenaflor

By Josh Buenaflor
Staff Writer

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day so it only makes sense to go to a restaurant that serves the best type of breakfast food, waffles. Wanna Waffle? is located next to the Brentwood Library near city hall. Wanna Waffle? is closed on Sundays and Mondays and opens from 7:30am to 7:00pm the rest of the week besides Friday and Saturday which closes at 6pm on Friday and from 8am to 2pm on Saturdays.

When I went there, I ordered The Campfire and the Mango Tajin Jalapeno Limeade. It cost \$9.20 for the waffle and \$5.52 for the mango limeade. The Campfire was a “waffle topped with marshmallow fluff, graham cracker crumble, toasted marshmallow and chocolate drizzle.” according to their website, in order to mimic a nostalgic summer treat. I waited about 5-7 minutes for my order. When I got The Campfire, it was a bit too sweet for me and I had to wash it down with my Mango Limeade, which tasted like

a regular mango drink but had a spicy twist to it.

Apart from sweet foods, their list includes savory breakfast food, gluten free, and low carb options. On their website, they claim that they use local, high quality ingredients in their food. The staff there was friendly and reminded me to get the drink I ordered when I almost left without it. Overall, I really enjoyed eating at Wanna Waffle? and I would recommend it to anyone wanting a quick bite to eat.



Clocks around America might not have to be adjusted twice a year.

Photo by Anushka Bhogal

May 24, 2022

Crypto to the moon or crashing down?



A popular "Meme Coin" which had wild success in late 2021 was supposedly to be used for funding a Mars mission by Elon Musk. Photo courtesy of Marcel Pechman

By Michael Davidson
Staff Writer

In the modern era where people are more than ever involved in investing in Crypto currency and NFT's (these are just art, images, even game items on a blockchain) rugpull scams are running rampant and hedge funds blowing smoke into the fire of dying corporations. With the expansion and popularization of apps like Robinhood, it is making investing easier for younger people, with less hassle of dealing with stockbrokers and the large cuts they take from their investments.

"I think crypto really is the future because it makes transfer of currency internationally way simpler and faster," said Joseph Ford, Crypto investor.

Crypto is the future according to many American investors, not only because of its simplicity and ease of transfer,

but also its privacy laws and security. Crypto currency is slightly complex on the coding side when taking into account the technology of it all. Simply put, Crypto is "A normal currency but just digitized and put on a block chain," explained Joseph Ford. A block chain is the security code on which NFT's and Crypto are written; it records the transactions in order to make a "peer to peer" transaction. "It's faster, the investment aspect is large, and is very private," emphasized Joseph Ford.

Crypto security is one of the first things that come to the minds of skeptics of Crypto, when it can be put onto a hard wallet which is an encrypted offline storage device, usually locked by a 12 key word password which is inaccessible by any other means and is locked forever if one loses the password. But this is ultra secure, it cannot be hacked by normal means nor physically bro-

ken into, like traditional currency.

Crypto does have some drawbacks like extreme price fluctuation, when the value of a trader's crypto will rapidly change. This can often be beneficial for the trader but not always, as it can also be very harmful to a business that sells a product for Crypto which then drops in value. For instance, a man purchased a Ferrari all in bitcoin, but by the time it had been delivered, the bitcoin had already dropped by several thousand dollars.

While it is wise to be cautious beginning to invest in Crypto, many investors suggest starting with a Blockfly account which accrues a lot of interest over time (roughly 3-6% annually). Or open a Robinhood account which may sometimes give a joining bonus of a few dollars in Crypto and sometimes entire stocks. But many investors say to only invest the amount that one can afford to lose.

Stop clowning around; go to clown college instead

By Gabbie Munoz
Editor

The struggle of trying to find a college is something many people have had problems with. The perfect college always seems so far away, and sometimes like it doesn't exist. Especially for aspiring artists like actors, screenwriters, and even...clowns.

Luckily for aspiring clowns, there's been schools for them since 1968. When the first clown college called 'Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College' opened, it taught nearly 1,400 clowns before its closing in 1997. Many different clown-based schools/programs have been made to fill the hole it left, such as The Clown School in Los Angeles that continues the tradition of circus teachings, such as Jester acts, and Clown acts. There are also many theater schools that help with the art of clowning, such as Pig Iron, Dell'Arte International, and Celebration Barn Theater.



Clowning gained popularity in the early 1900's and has gained popularity due to television and media coverage.

Photo courtesy of Michael S. Williamson

While these schools are all different, there is a connection between their teachings. For instance, these schools push for imagination to be the main art that is practiced amongst the students. These schools find art in people being

able to express themselves freely and on the fly. The skills they help build provide extra training for future actors, comedians, and improv students. Many actors have used these schools as a way to improve their craft and

talents, such as Matthew Gray Gubler (Criminal Minds), and Helen Slater (Supergirl), who both attended 'The Clown School' in Los Angeles. Other A-star celebrities such as Will Ferrell trained with a renowned clown named

"When the first clown college called 'Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College' opened, it taught nearly 1,400 clowns before its closing in 1997."

Philippe Gaulier. There has also been a history of clowns in Hollywood such as The Three Stooges and Lucille Ball who was the star of the hit show 'I Love Lucy'. There is also stuntman Steve-O from "Jackass" who attended

the Ringling Bros. Clown College' right before its closing in 1997.

Clown college could be the answer for many aspiring performing artists that don't know where to start in their journey. It may also be a good way for everyday people to form a new hobby and new relationships with people who they wouldn't have expected to meet anywhere else.

Clown College Resources:

<https://clownswithoutborders.org/our-work/>

<https://www.theclownschool.com/online-classes>

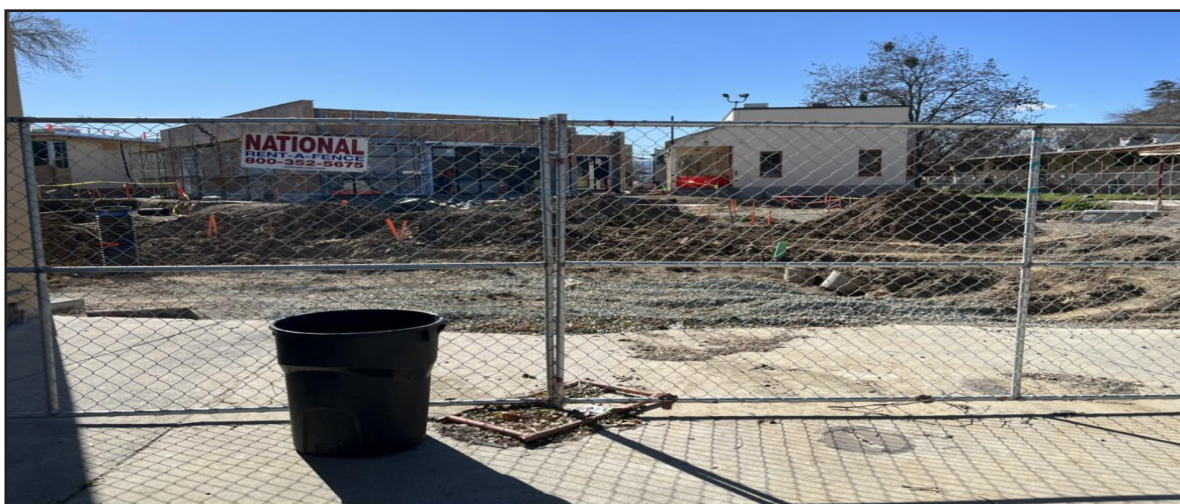
<https://worldclown.com/resources/>

Public versus private high schools: What's the difference?

By Lokesh Singh
Staff Writer

Students enrolled in both public and private schools often wonder what goes on inside the campuses of the opposing schools regarding aspects such as academics, school policies and regulations, and school life.

A particular scrutiny directed at private high school education is that it is only accessible to wealthy families who want to send their children to more costly schools as a way to preserve elite status, make connections with other families of wealth, and shelter their children from the "ills" of a public school and perpetuating disparity. According to Private School Review, the average tuition of private high school in California is \$21,260 as of 2022. In the United States, the average cost is \$16,040. This figure could limit the option of private schools to certain income brackets. However, it is important to note that approximately thirty percent of private school students receive a form of financial aid. Parents enroll their children in private schools for a wide variety of reasons ranging from academic specialization to students who require a more personalized education will benefit from the low student to faculty ratio at private schools. Parents who want religion to be a pillar of their children's education have the option to enroll their kids into private religious schools, this



A construction project being developed on the campus of Liberty High School. Due to Liberty being a public school, it can receive funding for this project through local and state funding.

Photo by Lokesh Singh

is mostly seen among Catholic schools. This also applies to parents who want to specialize their child's education to a certain field. Since private schools are not funded through the state, they receive more freedom in making curriculum. For example, some private schools such as BASIS Independent in Silicon Valley, CA are STEM-focused in curriculum.

Certain private high schools operate with an adherence to athletic recruitment and sports. De La Salle and Mater Dei high schools have both secured spots in California's top 25 football programs due to building talented

athletic teams filled with high-level recruits. These schools also prioritize and are successful in getting the athletic talent of their student body recognized by college scouts.

Public schools, rather than collecting by student tuition, receive funding through local taxpayer money and the state government. This funding system makes public schools free to attend for students that live in the surrounding district. Differing from private schools, public schools are more susceptible to state regulations due to being publicly funded. An example of this is the mandated K-12 curriculum set by the

state's education board.

Public schools also face more regulation when it comes to hiring of teachers and staff. By law, public school teachers must receive a state certification while private schools set their own standards for qualifying teachers. However, it is still highly recommended by the state for private school teachers to pursue certification to ensure competency of teachers.

Learn.org confirms that "Private school teachers have the option of not becoming state certified; however, following the path to traditional certification can be a smart choice in order to add proof

of their competency and help with job security. In following the traditional route to certification, private school teachers must hold at least a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university."

Despite not being required to hold a degree or state certification to be eligible for private schools teaching jobs, academically inclined private schools are selective in hiring faculty and prefer hiring faculty who demonstrate great competency in subjects they desire to teach. This competency is often defined by a degree, real life experience, or passion for the subject. Private school teachers statistically hold less master's degrees than their public school counterparts, but the difference is not monumental. 52 percent of public school teachers hold a master's degree compared to private school teachers' percent.

A large discrepancy between laws in public and private schools are privacy rights. Private schools have the legal right to act as an enrolled student's guardian. Public schools, on the other hand, do not have any parental-like authority over students. Private schools reserve the right to search phones, backpacks, or other personal items at will.

In a public school, these measures can only be taken if the school has a search warrant or there is an emergency.

May 24, 2022

A deep dive into this year's swim season



Swimmers Kayden Watts, Samantha Fehr, Stephanie Fehr, and Madison Santos get ready to swim at the Oakdale invitational.

Photo courtesy of Alison Watts

By Kayden Watts
Staff Writer

Diving into this year's season with a splash, the water lions dominated the competition and showed off their capabilities. Liberty's swim season started off with a dual meet against Deer Valley, followed by an invitational at Oakdale High School where all the swimmers worked extremely hard. The meet after that was the De La Salle Invitational, after that was a dual meet against Pittsburgh High School, followed by a dual meet against Antioch High School. Following that was another dual meet against Heritage High School, after that was a dual meet against Freedom High School, and after that was BVAL's where varsity girls won the meet for Liberty and Varsity boys came in second. The dive team followed the same

schedule except for the invitationals. One of the divers and swimmers, Qusai Drief, states that, "Everyone has worked so hard this year, we have won most of our meets and everyone has learned new dives." Liberty's swimmers have won four out of five of their dual meets showing the talent of the swimmers. The divers aren't the only ones learning new skills; first time swimmers are learning new things as well. Some of these skills include new strokes such as breast stroke, butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle. Both the swimmers and divers participate in practices that work on their skill sets for improvement. A swimmer, Stephanie Fehr, says, "This was my first year on the team and I have had so much fun. The people are great and it's amazing to see how much hard work people put into the sport." She also explains that "It's amazing to see

the good sportsmanship going on throughout the team like when people are cheering for each other during races." All of this goes to show that the Liberty swim and dive team were a strong competitor through this year's swim and dive season. They were able to win most meets showing that they were a strong competitor. Another factor to the Lion's season could have been the work of the coaches, Cindi Coats, Juan Gonzalez, and Rick Pierce for the swim team, and Cesar Munoz and Cassey Sanabria for the dive team. These coaches put in lots of time training these kids so that they would improve. Overall the swim and dive team have had a strong season and will hopefully have another good one next year.

From the movie screen to the field: Quidditch brought to life

By Ella Bracken
Staff Writer

Quidditch is no stranger to the *Harry Potter* universe. Serving as an iconic sport in the series, it has become quite the fan-favorite. So much so, it's left many college students wondering, "why can't we play too?" Famously known from the *Harry Potter* series, quidditch is a sport in which two teams, each made up of seven players, attempt to throw volleyball-sized balls, known as quaffles, through three large hoops on either side of the field. In *Harry Potter*, quidditch is typically played while flying on broomsticks. But, in 2005, a handful of Middlebury College students put quidditch to the test against reality, becoming the first school to form a "real", professional quidditch team. Since then, over sixty colleges including schools like Harvard, NYU, and UCLA, have all taken inspiration from Middlebury, creating their own quidditch teams as well. Still, the lurking question still remains- how is this beloved game played in real life? While some



Quidditch became a sport in 2005 when players at Middlebury College in Vermont decided to bring the game to life.

Photo courtesy of Sergei Bachlakov

choose to hold brooms, and others simply ditch them, the answer is simple: quidditch is simply played in the same way as it is in the books and movies for the most part, just without the flying. To distinguish the four player roles,

chasers wear white, while beaters wear black, keepers wear green, and seekers wear yellow. The classic golden "snitch" has been transformed into a tennis ball in real life. Because it can't fly as it fictionally does, the "snitch" is

stuck to a strip of cloth that is then attached to someone's shorts. This strip must be pulled off the player in order to achieve victory, just like flag football. The set-up for the game, such as the goals, can easily be made with leftover

materials like hula hoops or piping. Just like basketball, baseball, or any other sports, quidditch has fostered a community of friendship and refuge for many. Colby Palmer, a quidditch player alumni at Virginia Commonwealth University stated, "[Quidditch] gives you a sense of community as well as a sense of competition, and to me, nothing binds people more than being on a team and working towards a goal." The mixed-gender sport has been on the rise to popularity so much so in the past decade that there's even a higher governing body known as the International Quidditch Association. Because of this organization, quidditch has been able to reach over thirty different countries. "The people on this pitch right here are some of my lifelong friends," Palmer added. "These are the people that I'll be friends with for the rest of my life, and that's something that other sports really don't afford you in the same way that quidditch does."

The lasting effects of abusive coaches

By Abigail Wright
Staff Writer

Sports: a great way to let out energy, be a part of a team, learn new skills, and just have fun. All these lead many students to athletic extra curricuars, yet all of those benefits can be stripped away due to one bad coach. Coaches are the example for a team, a compass for how they will work as a team. So when coaches abuse their power, everything in the sport can go south. Forms of abuse can include emotional, sexual, physical, and mental. Coaches can often be caught up in their "power" and even small minded thinking. Old values can leak into coaching, including the belief that a coach must be tough on the athletes in order to show no weakness. A study done by childhelp.org shows that 40% to 50% of student athletes have received some form of harassment from coaches; where 8% of those



A NCAA study found that only 40% of women basketball players can agree strongly that they can trust their coach.

Photo by Abigail Wright

athletes have received sexual abuse. Oftentimes, nothing is done about these coaches, as the *Washington Post* says, "School boards and local athletic associations have of-

ten been left to determine whether a coach should be disciplined while balancing conflicting opinions on what separates valid motivational tactics from damaging behavior." This shows that schools can have a hard time drawing the line between just coaching and actually damaging behavior. According to the NCAA, signs of sport related abuse can be seen through post traumatic stress disorder, depression, shame or guilt, low self esteem, and eating disorders. Thirty percent of eating disorders in student athletes are caused by abuse (NCAA). Students can have a hard time fighting back since the coach is usually an adult they have been taught to respect. All of these effects are even leading to the growing number of suicide amongst student athletes. Teachers, parents, and other coaches can all look out for the signs of abuse from coaches. And anyone who sees it, can speak out against it.

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OPINION:

Is PE necessary for student athletes?

By Yasamin Tarin
Staff Writer

The role of physical education in the everyday routines of student athletes is sometimes questioned. According to state requirements, every student must receive at least 1.75 credits in physical education in order to graduate. Nevertheless, many student athletes have raised the following concerns: Should student athletes be exempt from physical education?

Many people believe that those who participate in sports should be able to use their participation as PE credit. Reasoning that exempting PE classes will allow students to have more time

to pursue additional subjects or study hall. It's challenging for many students to balance their schedules and fit in all of the classes they're entitled to take, as well as the ones they need to get into college and the classes they simply want to take. Athletes who have practice directly after school usually don't get home until after 5 p.m. on any given night. Rather than having a time that forces athletes to be more active than they are presently, the school should provide an exemption for athletes to either have a free period to better manage their work schedule or to attend a needed class that would assist students graduate.

However, exemption policies, accord-

ing to the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, are not beneficial to students because partaking in one sport does not introduce students to many of the other activities and standards taught in P.E. Physical education tends to enhance the learning experience by requiring self control and promoting good sportsmanship. They learn how to connect with students who aren't their teammates, and they develop leadership qualities that will help them in the future. P.E., like core subjects, aims to give a well-rounded education in a variety of sports, skills, and activities that will be valuable in the future.

Many believe that if students are ex-

empted from P.E. classes, they will miss out on important life skills such as nutrition and leadership. They say athletes should be required to attend gym class not just for the sake of equality, but also for the sake of their physical ability, around 17% of young individuals aged 11 to 19 are overweight or obese. This figure demonstrates the risk of a rapid increase in these figures if physical class is removed.

Athletes may set an example for non-athletic kids by participating in the many physical activities offered in gym class. Many after-school sports are only focused on one goal: winning titles. P.E. Activities, on the other hand, frequently focus on team-building and teach stu-

dents how to cooperate with people of varying ability levels while maintaining a positive attitude if evoked growth is more important than winning. Coaches can monitor their improvement outside of practice by engaging in a physical education class. P.E. teaches students about personal fitness and good living choices in addition to remaining fit and exercising out.

Athletes may appear to get enough physical activity, but they actually require more to adjust for their lack of exercise before and after practices. So they should not be exempt from their required PE classes.



Graphic courtesy of The New York Post



The World Cup celebrates its 92nd anniversary this year, after beginning in 1930.

Photo courtesy of FIFA.com

World Cup is back after four-year break

By Edgar Ortiz
Staff Writer

The world has over 7 billion people and the World Cup captures 1.1 billion that tune in for the full 90 minutes of the world's most watched event. The World Cup only comes around every four years adding even more suspense for the viewers who have been waiting. This World Cup will be start off in Qatar on November 21st and will come to an end on December 18th. There are 32 national teams competing against each other in a wild, emotion-filled tournament that has everyone's heart

racing. In 2018, France won against Croatia 2-1. Coming into the tournament strong, Brazil is ranked number one in the FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association) official ranks. Lee Astley, a seasoned sports journalist states, "Brazil are 9/2 favorites with bet365 to win the World Cup 2022, followed by France and England as joint second favorites at 11/2".

The tournament starts with a round of 16 and the winners play the runner ups of another group this is followed by the quarter final-semi finals then of course the finales. Although with all this excitement from the teams, there are still rules and regulations for the

World Cup regarding Covid-19. Currently all ticket holders are required to be fully vaccinated and international travelers are supposed to follow the safety protocols that are in place for Qatar. Travelers must wear masks at all times in transportation. Then according to Fifa's official Covid-19 rules they implemented, "Temperatures may be taken before entering the stadium and boarding public transport systems."

With all the protocols and this tournament only coming around every four years it is going to break records for viewerships and is expected to be an amazing tournament.

Say goodbye to the lazy days of summer: Fun activities to break the summer slump

By Norah Simmons
Staff Writer

It's here: summertime! The time of the year most teens look forward to. No more school, late nights, beach days, and so much more. But that also means lots of ice cream and late night runs to In and Out. Some might be wondering what the most effective way is to stay healthy and active during the summer months. Well, one location in Brentwood to definitely check out this summer is Rockin' Jump.

According to their website, "Rockin' Jump Brentwood - The Ultimate Trampoline Park...features state-of-the-art safety equipment in a clean, climate-controlled environment... Rockin' Jump provides a fun-filled atmosphere where children can burn off some energy without burning up in the summer heat, and parents can join in the fun or relax in comfort

from the sidelines."

This is one way to stay active, and out of the sun and heat. LHS students should check the website and schedule before planning time at Rockin' Jump, since they have specific time slots for toddlers, small children, and their families. At these times, teenagers are not allowed to participate.

Another great idea to stay cooled down and active this summer is going to the Brentwood Family Aquatics Center. The Aquatic Complex features an "expansive public swimming pool, showcasing waterslides, a fountain, and other features." They have so much to offer from the water slides, to diving boards, and they even have a lap pool to get some exercise in.

Some other simple ideas to do this summer is boating on the Delta, go rock climbing at Delta Valley Gym, go hiking at Round Valley Regional Preserve, and lastly, rent a kayak and go out on the Delta. These are some simple yet fun activities to do this summer.

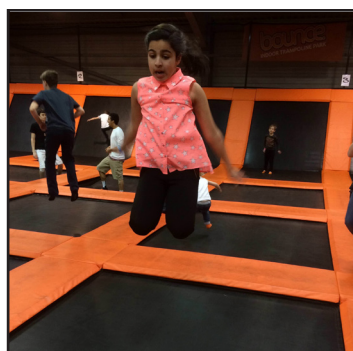


Photo by Sam Sanghera
Our editor Ria keeps cool while staying active during the summer heat at Rockin' Jump.



Photo courtesy of The Brentwood Press
The Aquatic Center opened up for weekend use on May 14.

Physical Education: Required in college



There are many fun options for college PE classes such as kick boxing, weight-lifting, tennis, and swimming.

Photo courtesy of Pomona College

By Anaya Tellado
Staff Writer

When on a team, social interaction is encouraged; there are more opportunities to meet new people and step out of one's comfort zone. This is likely one reason why physical education courses are required in some colleges for graduation. Much different from high school physical education, most colleges offer physical activities such as fencing, martial arts, yoga, and more, depending on the college and the area. Coastal universities close to the ocean often offer water-based choices such as surfing or sailing. Colleges typically allow students who are members of their NCAA sports teams to earn PE credits toward graduation, rather than take a PE class. However, students who are not college athletes must take a PE class as a graduation requirement at many schools.

Physical activity has been proven to positively influence concentration and help students pay more attention in class. In

some cases, students behavior improves. Aside from this, students may benefit from physical education outside the classroom because being involved in a sport requires more socializing and provides a way to relieve stress.

As of recently, fewer colleges are requiring physical education courses to graduate with a degree. According to Kim Painter in her article in USA TODAY, "Just 39% of four-year colleges said students had to meet physical education requirements in 2010, down from about two-thirds in the 1980s and '90s and a peak of 97% in the 1920s, say researchers who checked the websites of 354 randomly selected schools." The cause for this differs from school to school, but a main factor is that schools are only requiring students to take courses related to their major. In short, physical education has been required in colleges for years, offering exciting sports and activities.

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OPINION

May 24, 2022

You snooze, you lose: Should schools update their tardy policies?

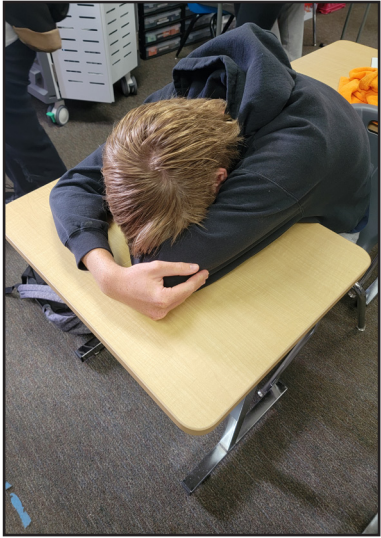


Photo by Lauren Davidson

Students doze daily after sleepless nights of catching up on not only homework, but work missed at school as well. Research has found that 73% of high school students do not get a healthy amount of sleep.

By Lauren Davidson

Staff Writer

Alarm blaring and heart racing, you wake up to the sun already up. The clock reads 8 A.M. You're late. Again. Students around the world find themselves in this exact position quite frequently. Reprimanded for being late for circumstances that they may not be able to control, the question on whether or not the late policies in the school system should be changed.

It's a difficult situation to gauge- how will teachers and school administrators know if a student is being truthful when it comes to the reasons for their tardiness? Especially if the student doesn't have a parent backing them?

Let's first start with some of the reasons why students wind up being late because of a reason they can't control. About 23% of children under the age of 18 are living with only one parent. In situations like this, responsibilities

may fall upon the oldest child, who may have to get their younger siblings ready for school while their parent gets ready for (or is already at) work. Some kids may even work a morning job to help support their families if their family is low income. Working late into the night can then cause an accidental sleep-in.

If a child has absentee parents, then they may find themselves in a position where they don't have a parental figure to vouch for them. The school will continue to reprimand the student for the unexcused absences and tardiness. While the school views these tardies as the irresponsibility of a teenager, in hindsight it could just mean that the student had adult responsibilities to tend to because of the absence of their parents.

Mental health and burnout have also been brought up. Students have often put aside their own well being for the

sake of school assignments and, furthermore, their grades. Students who struggle in school may find themselves doing homework for hours at a time, and late into the night. This can then lead to a late wake up call, and another tardy in their record.

Whatever the reason may be, it's not uncommon for some students to be tardy regularly for different reasons.

According to Liberty High Schools late policies, which can be found in the student handbook, the only excuses that will be counted as excused are, "(1) Illness or quarantine, (2) Medical or dental appointments of an emergency nature, (3) Attendance to funeral services for a member of your immediate family."

Furthermore, the handbook states, "If clearance is not obtained within this time period, the absence will be recorded as truancy and make-up privileges for work missed will be denied." Not

only do plausible excuses for absences not extend to matters such as mental health or family issues, students will then have the added stress of not being able to make up any missing work.

Possible updates that could be made to late policies is to make mental health a plausible excuse for missing school. This raises the question, though, on how many of these days students can really be allotted if this excuse is used excessively.

Many believe that late policies are outdated and do not reflect the needs of students today. Improving these policies could help students have a bit more flexibility, which could further be reflected in their grades. Giving this leeway can show students that school systems have their best interests at heart, and be a good way to spur them on when so many dread school because of the toll it can take on them.

Turn it up, seniors:

If you could make a HS playlist, what would be on it?

By Zaden Reeser
Staff Writer



As high school comes to an end, some of Liberty's seniors were asked to pick a song that will forever remind them of their high school years. Ten years from now, when these songs come up on shuffle or are thrown back on the radio, Liberty's very own will remember their class of '22.



Chase A.-- "Heads Will Roll (A-Trak Remix)"- Yeah Yeah Yeahs
Montez W.-- "Electric Feel"- MGMT
Mikayla L.-- "Time of Our Lives"- Pitbull & Ne-Yo
Angelo P.-- "Locked Up"- Akon
Kennedy W.-- "Graduation"- Benny Blanco & Juice WRLD
Ria S.-- "Live While We're Young"- One Direction
Jonathan M.-- "Gotta Get Away"- Vista Kicks
Olivia F.-- "Young, Dumb, & Broke"- Khalid



Jack D.-- "Just Friends"- Hayden James
Norah S.-- "Super Bass"- Nicki Minaj
Devyn J.-- "Senior Year"- Drew Baldrige
Haleigh R.-- "Good Feeling"- Flo Rida
Kathryn B.-- "Hotel Room Service"- Pitbull
Julian R.-- "Summer"- Calvin Harris
Tobenna U.-- "Bestfriends"- 42 Dugg
Sarah S.-- "You Belong With Me"- Taylor Swift



Dom B.-- "Talent Show"- Wiz Khalifa
Zach U.-- "We Are Young"- Fun!
Yahir M.-- "Still Dre"- Dr Dre
Kyle B.-- "Cargo"- Tyler The Creator
Casey S.-- "Pursuit Of Happiness"- Kid Cudi
Ava T.-- "Change Ya Life"- Haiti Babii
Shayna B.-- "The Spins"- Mac Miller



Photo courtesy of Disney/Pixar

Mei, as the Red Panda, dances with her classmates for the last bit of cash her and her friends need for her ticket to the 4-Town concert.

Parents should not be turning red over Disney's *Turning Red*

By Aiyana White
Staff Writer

Pixar's newest movie, *Turning Red*, premiered on Disney+ on February 21, 2022, and follows the story of 13-year-old Mei, who learns to deal with the trials and tribulations of growing up, and occasionally turning into a red panda. Meilin Lee, a young Chinese-Canadian teen living in 2002 Toronto, Canada, lives her life in an attempt to honor her mother, while staying true to herself. However, this comes to a crossroad when Mei wants to see her favorite boy band, 4-Town, live in Toronto, against her mother's wishes. *Turning Red* is a story of growing up, acceptance, and parent-child relationships, and it has become one of Pixar's sweetest and most popular new movies.

When Mei has a nightmare early in the movie, she wakes up to see herself in the mirror, not as her 13-year-old self, but as a giant red panda, the symbol of

her family's temple. As she freaks out about her new fur in the bathroom, her mother, Ming, assumes she has started her period. This plot line has become a point of controversy throughout some viewers of the film, with many complaining that the topic of periods is too mature for young viewers of the film. Some reviewers on Rotten Tomatoes have called the movie "horrible" and "totally inappropriate" for children. However, if anyone needs to learn about menstruation, it's children, as it is a naturally occurring fact of life, and kids need to learn to be unashamed and unembarrassed about having a period. Soon after her red panda transformation, Mei learns that her family is cursed, and that when of age, the young women in the Lee family turn into red pandas. However, this curse can only be broken by a ritual on the night of the next Red Moon, which happens to be on the night of the 4-Town concert. Mei has earned the

money for four 4-Town tickets for her and her friends by turning into the panda for pictures, and when it comes time for the ritual, she chooses to keep her power and leaves, heading to the concert and defying her mother. Her mother transforms into a much larger giant panda, and crashes the 4-Town concert, causing destruction to the arena and to Ming herself. In the end, Mei decides to keep her red panda forever, and her relationship with her mother is resolved. This movie makes it evident to many that parents can be wrong, and parents can apologize.

The most popular aspect of this movie, however, is the fictitious boy band 4-Town, a group of 5 pop stars, Robaire, Jesse, Tae Young, Aaron Z., and Aaron T. The band's song "Nobody Like U," written by Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell, peaked on many charts, reaching 49 on the Billboard Hot 100, and 37 on the Billboard Global 200. The band even has its own

website, 4town.com, and a dedicated fan base, known as 4-Townies.

Turning Red is a sweet story about growing up, and the animation style, although some may critique it, is very cute and fits the style and theme of the movie. This movie is a perfect representation of middle schoolers and young teens everywhere, as it shows the dorky, yet adorable side of 13-year-olds. The five teen characters in the movie all have distinct, yet similar personalities, and they show the good of young friendship, and how easy difficult situations can become when you have good friends by your side. The film also shows that even those without a connection to their parents can create a connection, and there's always a chance to build a healthy family relationship. Mei's time with the red panda may have been hard at first, but this movie proves you can make the best out of any bad situation.

The slap heard 'round the world: Was it justified?

By Michael Ybarra
Editor

Outrage surged across social media last March after the unexpected events of the 2022 Oscars. After world-renowned actor Will Smith, slapped comedian Chris Rock at the Oscars Academy Awards on March 27, 2022, for making a joke about Smith's wife, Jada Pinkett Smith. On April 8, 2022, Smith was banned from attending any academy events or programs for ten years. A letter sent by the Academy declared, "The board has decided for a period of 10 years from April 8, 2022. Mr. Smith shall not be permitted to attend any Academy events or programs, in person or virtually, including but not

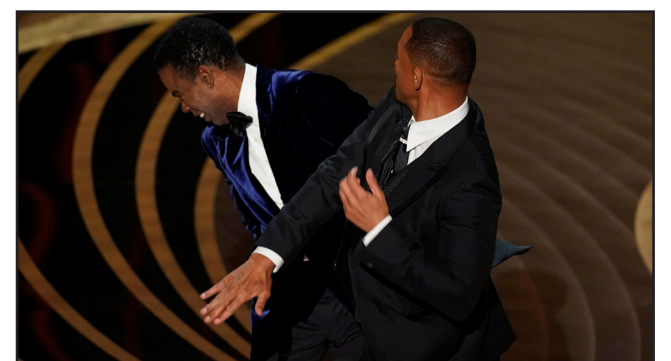
limited to the Academy Awards." A week prior to this ban Smith had resigned from the Academy and made a public apology to Rock for his unnecessary behavior.

On March 28, Smith issued an apology on Instagram stating, "Jokes at my expense are a part of the job, but a joke about Jada's medical condition was too much for me to bear and I reacted emotionally, he typed. "I would like to publicly apologize to you, Chris. I was out of line and I was wrong. I am embarrassed and my actions were not indicative of the man I want to be. There is no place for violence in a world of love and kindness." Although the apology was slightly pretentious, Smith accepted the Academy's decision wholeheartedly.

While many have condemned Smith's actions, some have commended him for what they see as him defending his wife. In an interview with Entertainment Weekly actress, Jane Hubert, said, "Yes, there is only so much one can take.. sometimes you have to slap back. Celebrate the win..nothing else matters. Both actions were incorrect but Chris didn't need to go there." In this situation, Smith's anger was warranted, nevertheless, he overreacted and his actions completely overshadowed the awards ceremony. It could have been sorted out in a peaceful way after the performance. While the joke about Jada Smith's wife was somewhat in poor taste, Will Smith did not have the right to strike Rock and he should have resolved the situation by communicating to Chris Rock after the show.

While Chris Rock may have been right when he said the incident was "the greatest night in the history of television," it could have been eas-

ily avoided. It ended up making the Oscars far more trendy than anyone could have expected, just not for the right reasons.



Audio for the Oscars live performance was cut after the slap which censored Will Smith's choice words for Chris Rock.

Photo courtesy of Financial Times

Should influencers be considered celebrities?

By Kylie Dourgarian
Staff Writer

As more influencers rise to fame and obtain TV shows and makeup lines, it raises the question of what sets an influencer apart from a celebrity. Influencers are usually much younger than celebrities, and their actions tend to reflect their age in terms of maturity. Teenagers are prone to making mistakes, and by putting influencers of this age on a pedestal, there is no room for mistakes since they are supposedly setting an example for other children. They are not ready to handle the responsibility of having all eyes on them. Influencers are people who have the power to produce content directed towards a certain community or platform. The most common platforms for influencers are TikTok, Instagram, and Youtube. Influencers who originated on TikTok such as Charli D'Amelio or Addison Rae were known for either creating dances, or dancing to a popular song. On Instagram, it's common to become popular for makeup looks or advertising products in a photoshoot. Whereas on Youtube, influencers such



As influencers gain followers through different social media platforms, many wonder if this is truly what makes one a celebrity.

Photo courtesy of medium.com

as Emma Chamberlain rose to popularity simply for being open and honest about her life with “no filter.” Celebrities gain success and popularity by being successful and talented within their field, whether it be singing, dancing, or acting. They usually do not appeal to a certain age group, and their content is more diverse, reaching a bigger audience. Since influencers typically appeal to a specific group, that group commonly

being teenagers since the interests remain similar, they have to be very careful with words and actions. So many influencers have been “canceled” within the short time that TikTok has been around, and they don't always set a great example for children. For example, many of the influencers who gain popularity set unrealistic expectations for body standards, since a lot of female influencers model or help advertise makeup products.

However, many chalk up being a celebrity as the amount of followers gained. “I think they should be considered as celebrities as they deal with similar fans and attention that famous actors might also have,” says Mars Knight, a seventh grader at Adams Middle School.

Many might say that being a celebrity has to do with the amount of followers or people who know their name. Others draw a very clear line in between

them and say that regardless of popularity, it's the impact they have on their audience as well.

“I don't think that all influencers are celebrities because an influencer can be a person you see every day in your life who has an impact on you. You don't have to have a huge following to be an influencer.” Says Emily Wilkins, a senior at Heritage High School. Unless they're prepared to handle their audience, influencers should not be given television shows or makeup products that sell simply because their face is plastered on it. Young teen influencers aren't ready for the amount of people watching their every move, and one slip up could be devastating for their career.

Not only are they too young to handle it, but becoming an influencer can strip them of an average childhood, especially for influencers who are still in high school. It can take them away from friends and family, ultimately causing rifts due to an uproar in popularity.

Overall, influencers should not be considered celebrities just because of the sheer amount of followers they may have.

We should rethink the death penalty

By Anayely Arreola
Staff Writer

Should the death penalty still be allowed? It should be illegal if the person had only committed a small crime. For example, if a person is arrested and kept in jail for the possession of marijuana then there is no reason for that person to receive the death penalty. If the person is arrested and kept in jail for child abuse, neglect or murder of a

child then that person has every right to be on the role for the death penalty. When a person has abused a child or neglected them, that means they are not showing any remorse towards that child therefore society should not show any remorse towards that person. For example, in 2013 a young boy named Gabe Fernandez was abused and neglected by his mother and her boyfriend. They both deserved the death penalty due to abusing this 8 year old child to death. The mother, Pearl Fer-

nandez, was sentenced to life in prison without a chance of parole and the boyfriend, Isauro Aquirre, was sentenced to death which is now pending for the death penalty. In 22 states and 106 countries the death penalty has been destroyed and removed but it is still legal in the United States. Death row should be allowed for convicted murders and people who have sexually assaulted others. These people do deserve the death row. These people are showing absolutely no remorse

towards the other person which is sickening. Unfortunately, the justice system has failed and has also put innocent lives on death row. In order for a person to be put on it, there must be absolutely enough evidence of them deserving to be receive the death penalty. As stated previously there must be enough evidence in order to put an inmate on the death row. A young man named Jimmy Dennis was put on death row for 25 years for the 1991 murder of 17 year old Chedell Williams. Den-

nis had become a suspect by someone saying “Jimmy from the Abbotsford projects” which is where Jimmy had been working. He had two daughters that he missed growing up, one of them was four and the other only one. When he was released they were all grown up, one even having a child of their own. There are so many other cases just like this or even worse. The system continues to fail and not look deeply into these cases to decide if they truly deserve the death penalty.

A solid friend group is the secret to HS success



From left, buddies Samuel Stone, Jonathan Cervera, Victor Leyva, Owen Basker, Jacob Chase and Jake Kruger display their solidarity at track's Senior Night.

By Jonathan Cervera
Staff Writer

Some people seem to have it all: A nice house, an expensive, car, but many may not have what truly matters. Having a supportive, inspirational friend group can be key in having a successful high school experience.

Friends groups are seen everywhere, walk around town and see a group of friends hanging out. But what most people don't talk about is what matters in them, friend groups are usually

based on how everyone gets along with each other. But what really matters is how everyone gets along of course, but also how they push and inspire one another to be a better version of themselves and to be able to have fun and enjoy themselves when they hang out. Liberty's own Jacob Chase stated “what makes a good friend group is communication, interacting with each other, doing things, keeping in touch, and being there to support each other when the other is feeling down”. Having mutual support for each other is

very important especially if someone in the group is suffering from a mental health crisis.

Sophomore Aly Acosta said “you have to have different personalities you cannot have two strong headed people because it would constantly clash against each other” Aly also stated “you have to have a balance of having fun but also being serious in situations that require that, you need common interest in hobbies”. This is also a very important factor because if your group does not have common interests it would be hard to

find things to do with each other. To conclude, different factors go into why a good friend group matters. They can also help increase our sense of belonging, improve our self-confidence and help reduce stress and anxiety. In fact, studies have shown that “those who enjoy close friendships over their teenage years have a lower rate of depression or anxiety later in life.” So having close friends that you trust and can have a good time with matters more than some think.

Kim and Kanye: From dream to nightmare

By Renee Bedard
Staff Writer

Kim and Kanye were the “it” couple from 2002-2021 and had many supporters who thought their relationship was “perfect.”

Even though it looked like their relationship was too perfect, there were many things that happened behind closed doors. They later announced to the public that they were going to officially get a divorce.

Kim has talked about her relationship with Kanye many times and how she's dealt with him and their co-parenting. As well as being very open and honest with their kids about her divorce with him. She stated, “For so long, I did what made other people happy. And I think in the last two years I decided, I'm going to make myself happy. And that feels really good. And even if that created changes and caused my divorce, I think it's important to be honest with yourself about what really

makes you happy. I've chosen myself. I think it's okay to choose you.”

The public had very mixed reactions to the divorce and also many rumors and allegations as well. Some say that Kanye's comments made Kim “look like a bad person, but it's not intentional.” And also how he “is just trying to win power back.” (Elle.com) Although Kim hasn't made any public comments about Kanye and his posts on social media, she stated, “Divorce is difficult enough on our children and Kanye's

obsession with trying to control and manipulate our situation so negatively and publicly is only causing further pain for all.” (Elle.com)

With everything going on, Kanye posted all of his thoughts on social media about the divorce and how he feels about Kim and his kids.

Kim has also said that they do have conversations privately and try their best to work everything out.

For example, Kim stated publicly, “Kanye and I have had conversations,”

she continued. “We have to talk daily for the kids. I hate that it had to play out like that, but when it comes to family, Kanye and I will always be family. At the end of the day, I just want my kids to be happy and healthy and think the world of their dad—and they do.” (elle.com)

Overall, it's great that Kim and Kanye are both finding ways to co-parent after their divorce and finding privacy for their kids as well, even through all this drama.

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