

The Plaid



March 20, 2025

Volume 68, Issue 3

The Importance Of The Freedom Of The Press

Assistant Editor,
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Recently, the relationship between politics and journalism has been tested like never before. With political divides growing sharper around the world, the media's role in informing the public, holding those in power accountable, and delivering accurate news is facing serious challenges. Misinformation is spreading like wildfire; the media has been manipulated, and populist leaders are trying to undermine the press. It all makes for a tough climate for journalists. Now more than ever, fact-checking is key to maintaining the media's integrity and supporting our democratic processes.

Journalism has always been a foundation of a healthy democracy, giving people the information they need to make smart decisions. But these days, the truth seems more contested than ever, and media outlets are often caught in the crossfire of accusations of bias from both sides of the political scope. The tactics not only chip

away at public trust in journalism but also create a culture of fear and self-censorship within newsrooms.

The situation poses a big threat to journalism's most important job: seeking and sharing the truth. Journalists are facing more pressure than ever, with risks that range from legal attacks to physical threats, and powerful political figures undermining their credibility. When journalism is attacked or silenced, the public loses access to essential information needed to hold elected officials accountable, examine government policies, and engage in knowledgeable discussions about politics.

Fact-checking is one of the best tools we must use to protect the

integrity of journalism. In a world flooded with both information and misinformation, fact-checking acts as a safety net, making sure news stories are rooted in what can be verified as true. Trained fact-checkers evaluate the accuracy of claims made by politicians, public figures, and even

the media, providing a priceless service in a time when the truth often feels lost amidst loaded narratives.

The role of fact-checking goes beyond just refuting false claims; it helps rebuild the trust that the public has in the media. When news organizations put a focus on fact-checking, they show that they are committed to delivering accurate and unbiased information. The approach creates a buffer against the spread of misinforma-

tion, whether it is political propaganda or careless statements by public officials. Fact-checking holds everyone accountable, providing a necessary counterbalance to those who might try to twist the narrative for their own ends.

What is more, in a society where many struggle with media literacy, fact-checking can also be an educational tool that helps the public navigate the tricky media environment. By teaching people how to critically assess sources, verify information, and tell fact from fiction, fact-checking encourages a more knowledgeable electorate and a stronger democracy.

The political threats facing journalism are real and should not be taken lightly. When the press is under fire, so is the very foundation of our democracy. However, by actively engaging in fact-checking, journalists can take back their authority, restore public trust, and make sure that democracy remains anchored in the truth. In today's information war, fact-checking is not just a tool for journalists, it is a lifeline for democracy itself.



The Importance Of Activism

Co-Editor-in-Chief,
Kaylie Berry

In today's world, where social media is king and news travels faster than ever, activism has become a vital role for people who want to make a difference. Whether it's fighting for environmental justice, advocating for racial equality or pushing for changes in education, standing up for what people believe in is extremely important in today's world. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by the state of the world, but activism allows people to be a part of positive change.

First, activism encourages people to speak out against injustice. Throughout history, major social changes have been fueled by people who refused to stay silent. The Civil Rights



Movement, the Women's Suffrage movement, and more recent climate protests have all been driven by people who felt that being silent, in the face of inequality was not right. As young people, there is a responsibility to speak up when someone sees issues that are not right, whether it's in the community, school or globally.

Activism also encourages a sense of empowerment and belonging. In today's digital world, it is easier than ever to find like-minded people who share the same values and goals. Social media platforms, such as Instagram and TikTok have given people the opportunity to gain support for causes in ways that were not possible in the past. The sense of community allows people to feel as if they are part of something larger than

themselves, which can provide motivation to create change.

Beyond raising awareness, activism has a practical impact. When people protest and demand change, it forces governments and other corporations to notice. Activism holds powerful people accountable for their actions. People must only look at the successes of past movements to see the results of standing up for what is right. The #MeToo movement, for example, changed the conversation around sexual harassment and encouraged many survivors to come forward. Similarly, the global push for climate action has led to new rules, aimed at tackling climate change.

However, standing up for what

people believe in is not always easy. It requires courage and the ability

to face opposition. It is common for those who challenge the normal everyday routine to be met with criticism, but that should not discourage action. By standing firm in their beliefs, people can inspire others to do the same. At the end of the day, activism is not just about fighting against problems, it is about working toward a better future, ensuring that all voices are heard, and that people use our power to create positive change, no matter how large or how small. If people all stand up for what they believe in, then society can build a world that is fairer and more just.



Features

What Favorite Flowers Say About You

Co-Editor-in-Chief
Lianna Smith

Flowers are more than just beautiful to look at, they can reveal a lot about your personality, memories, and even the career paths that suit you. According to Kanjana Sritiang's article, "Your Favorite Flower Reveals Your Personality and Ideal Career!" at aprilflora.com, the flowers you are drawn to can give clues about who you are. Here is a look at what your favorite flower might say about you, with insights from real people who shared their personal connections to certain flowers. Sunflowers: Positive and Energetic Sunflowers represent positivity, energy, and enthusiasm. Sritiang suggests sunflowers are perfect for those who spread happiness and take on challenges with a cheerful outlook. Monica Sanchez, a senior, said, "My Nina's favorite flower was also sunflowers, and whenever I see them, they remind me of the time spent with



her." Senior, Heavenly Sanchez said, "When someone likes sunflowers, I assume they're a happy, energetic person." Sunflower lovers may be drawn to careers in teaching, motivational speaking, or sales, where they bring energy and enthusiasm. **Tulips:** Elegant, Adaptable, and Hopeful Tulips symbolize elegance and hope, representing adaptable and graceful individuals. Sanchez said, "I really like the light pink and yellow colors. I do not know if they reflect my character, but I just really like them." Senior Danielle Shelton, also said, "Tulips remind me of summer and always make me feel happy and optimistic." Tulip lovers might enjoy careers in wedding planning, interior design, or diplomacy, where they can help others feel hopeful and at ease. **Peonies:** Ambitious and Generous Peonies symbolize ambition and generosity. Sritiang explains that those who love peonies are often driven and focused on others. San-

chez said, "I love baby's breath and peonies just because they're both really pretty," reflecting a caring and warm nature. Peony lovers may excel in business, philanthropy, or writing careers, where their ambition and generosity can shine. **Baby's Breath:** Delicate and Gentle Baby's breath is known for its delicate and calming nature. Sritiang says it symbolizes purity and appeals to those who are nurturing and emotionally balanced. Sanchez said, "They have delicate structures and calm me down. The soft colors are soothing." Baby's breath lovers might enjoy careers in teaching, nursing, or counseling, where they can offer support and care to others. **Daisies:** Free-Spirited and Adventurous

Daisies symbolize freedom and joy. Sritiang notes that daisy lovers are often spontaneous and enjoy adventure. Sanchez said, "When I was younger, I used to love daisies because I grew up with a lot of them around." Daisies are perfect for those who enjoy creativity and embracing change, making them

a great fit for careers in the arts, travel, or entrepreneurship. **Orchids:** Sophisticated and Intelligent Orchids are elegant, symbolizing intelligence and exclusivity. Sanchez said, "Orchids are beautiful and really symbolize strength and thoughtfulness." Orchid lovers might excel in careers like architecture, luxury consulting, or science, where they can highlight their intelligence and appreciation for detail. Your favorite flower can reveal a lot about your personality and life experiences. Whether it is the energy of sunflowers, the elegance of tulips, or the simplicity of daisies, your flower preferences may reflect your



character, memories, and life stages. Flowers can symbolize emotions, appreciation, and growth—just like the flowers you love.

Behind the Blooms: Caretakers of Our Not-So-Secret Garden

Staff Writer,
Audrey Aguirre

If you have been around the K and J buildings, you may very well be aware of our not-so-secret garden that sits right between these buildings. However, while some may be led to believe these are simply there for the gardening club, the activities that go on in this garden are not so simple. The care of it is entrusted not only to our resolute students and staff in the Gardening Club but also to the students of Mr. Weatherell's class in Field Biology.

Field biology, for those of you who are unaware, is a class that is available to students in tenth grade and higher, to fulfill your science credits. Mr. Weatherell said, "In the first semester, students focus on Botany (the study of plants), learning how to classify and identify plants. We also get to grow plants. The second semester focuses on Zoology (the study of animals) and students raise Rainbow Trout to release on a field trip at the end of the year."

In addition to offering opportunities for firsthand learning experiences with plants and animals, students can gain more experience about agriculture and human influ-

ence on plants and animals. However, the unique learning opportunities offered by this class are not the only reasons to consider taking the class.

One of Mr. Weatherell's students, junior Nathaniel Lentz, even went as far as explaining that, not only did he enjoy the fact that the classes focus on firsthand learning



but also said, "The food days are nice. We do salsa on Fridays. We all get the stuff to make salsa and get to talk or hang out." Senior Isabella Nunez said, "The class has a very welcoming and chill atmosphere."

With students being able to interact with each other in ways that they are unable to in other classes, using firsthand work or their various food days, students can grow closer with their peers. Lentz said, "We grow to be like a family rather than just a class."

Now, for those of you who have a green thumb or even just an interest in the environment but not the sciences, there is a club just for you. The Gardening Club, which meets in the garden every Wednesday after school, is suited for aspiring gardeners of any skill level. The Gardening Club grows a wide variety of plants, from poppies to potatoes, for club members to take home to admire or eat. Members, such as senior Isabella Alcocer said, "The whole process of planting and then harvesting, it gives you a sense of fulfillment." Alcocer additionally said, "We learn how to cook things with the food we grow...it's really fun and diverse... We're all really close... You learn a lot of teamwork here."

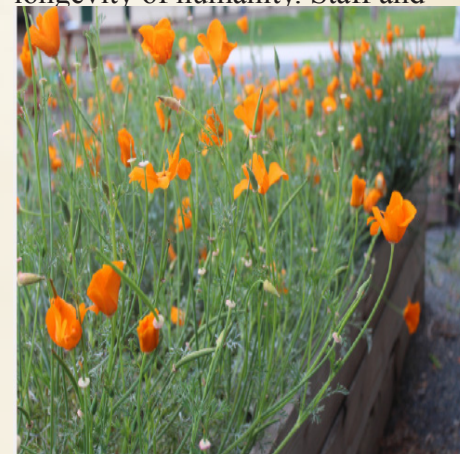
Working in the gardens brings the members of this club close together, through fulfilling and insightful opportunities for teamwork. Others, such as senior David Aviles said, "It can really open your eyes to the beauty of it (nature)." However, the club does so much more than just teaching students useful skills. It opens their minds to the beauty of nature and helps them to grow not just plants but also their relationships.

One of the club's advisors, Kayla Casillas explains that the Gardening Club is partnered with

the California Climate Action Corps (CCAC) and in the California Climate Action Corps website, it explains that they seek to drive climate action and support and lead projects related to urban greening, organic waste and edible food recovery, and wildfire resiliency.

Casillas said, "As a CCAC fellow, we are working on implementing compost bins on all the campuses across the district...it (food waste in landfills) has eighty times the warming impact of carbon dioxide. Right now, we have green food waste bins in the cafeteria and soon, they will be available across the entire campus."

It is no secret that matters such as global warming are of the utmost importance for the future health and longevity of humanity. Staff and



students should be incredibly proud of the work that is being done to promote such positive changes in our community.



Features

Roots And Shoots Club

Staff Writer,
Leilani Broussard

“Roots and Shoots” is one of the many diverse clubs on campus. Its objective is to help the community by keeping it clean and replenishing it with greenery. The club did go through a rebrand, since it was originally known as the “Environmental Club.” Senior and leader of the club, Christian Gonzalez felt that more awareness towards the environment was needed. However, the original club was not really doing anything productive. As a result, Gonzalez said, “I am a ‘Roots and Shoots’ youth council member. I do a lot in the environmental field ... It’s just a great platform to continue to make an environment change.”

One of the recent activities the club participated in was a river clean up. The club ended up picking up 192 pounds of trash in that area alone. The event takes place on the third Saturday of every month. Having an activity such as trash removal helps not only the community, but the students involved, as they are



bound to develop strong connections with each other.

Freshman and club leader, Serigo Zapata said, “The club helps me in a lot of ways. One of the big ways it is helping is with my leadership skills.” The students within this club are a main factor, when it comes to organizing different events as these experiences are for them.

As AP Environmental Science teacher, Megan Christensen said, “I’m just there to support the students. It’s all their ideas and they work so hard.” Mrs. Christensen takes a step back to give the club members another level of responsibility. All aspects of the club help

both the leaders and the normal members as well.

“Roots and Shoots” does not keep their work in only the Upland area but expands out into different coun-

ties. Senior leader, Nadia Castro

said, “We often times events with the city or the global ‘Roots and Shoots’ organization at our LA base camp.” The club is like a gateway into the organization in case that is something the students enjoy. It also helps the students gain connections within the actual organization once they graduate.

The environment is always in need of help. So, it is not shocking that the members of the club are already thinking of activities they want the club to participate in the future. As Zapata said, “Well, there’s this river clean-up that we’ve already gone through once ... I just hope we can continue that.” There are many areas within San Bernardino and Los Angeles County that are filled with garbage. Since the club just had a recent rebrand, there will be plenty of opportunities for these clean-ups to expand in the future.



There are other projects besides cleaning up trash the club does, as Gonzalez said, “The project I’m most excited about is our native plants grant ... It’s a \$1,500 grant

we’re going to use to plant native plants in messed up areas in southern Upland.”

It is just the beginning of the outstanding work the club has pursued. There is much to come as the “Roots and Shoots” Club expands not just on campus but throughout the city. Like every club on campus, The “Roots and Shoots” Club gives students a chance to connect with other students they see every day and make new friends, all while making a significant impact on the environment as well.

Tips For Beginning Gardeners

Staff Writer,
Ariana Escalante

Gardening is the process of growing plants for vegetables, fruits, flowers and more. There are many ways people can start gardening. In the article, “These are the Best Tips on Gardening for Beginners, According to the Pros,” by Kat Brancato, it said, “As with any new hobby, gardening can be intimidating for beginners. But, like anything new, jumping in headfirst is usually the best way to get started,” says Nathan Heinrich, horticulturist and botanical designer. “If you’re struggling to know where to begin, one of the best ways to pump up your confidence level before getting your hands dirty in the garden is to learn from the experts.”

One of the best tips you can follow is to scout your location,



decide what you want to grow, plan your plot, and prepare the basic gardening tools you need. Also, you need to make sure you are prepared for the gardening journey. It may take time to get used to gardening but once you get used to it, you can become a pro gardener. It is a therapeutic activity that helps you connect with nature and nurture life from the ground up. It provides an accomplishment and a chance to enjoy fresh and home grown produce.

Mr. Adams, a Spanish teacher on campus, is a Pro Gardener and gives out helpful tips about gardening. Adams said, “The best inspiration for a beginner gardener is seeing how they grow during planting season.” There are a variety of plants that are good for growing but Mr. Adams said, “It depends on the season. There are several types of plants during the winter and there

are different types of plants for the summer. It is easy to grow broccoli, sweet peas, green beans, and tomatoes.” Adams has been a gardener his whole life and said, “The best part about gardening is being in connection with the seasons and the weather, also the soil

and microorganisms. One of my favorite parts of gardening is to be able to watch my plants grow and use my hands for them.

Adams enjoys seeing his plants develop overtime and said, “Broccoli is my favorite vegetable to grow, and I also love growing fruits.” If people go by Adam’s classroom, they can ask him about the plants and have a talk about certain types of plants and how to grow them as beginners.

Senior Izabel Nunez is a lovely gardener and has been gardening since she was in eighth grade. Nunez started to garden with her family outside in their backyard and said, “I think the best Inspiration for gardening is to just be patient with the results of your plant after they’re done growing and to enjoy the process and doing of it.” Nunez explained what she saw as the best part of gardening when she said, “My favorite part of planting is to plant different types of fruits and vegetables, like Broccoli, Tomatoes and Oranges.”

Nunez offered her advice when she said, “The biggest gardening tip I would have to consider is to be prepared with everything you need to help you grow your plants.” Nunez also explained that she loved the outcome of her efforts because

of how her plants looked after the challenging work she puts in for her plants to grow.

Senior Karissa Hidalgo has been gardening since she was about eight-years-old. Hidalgo said, “Me



and my brother love to garden. We learned so much about different types of plants, fruits and vegetables, as we continue to grow

them.” Hidalgo revealed one of her gardening tips when she said, “One of the biggest tips for gardening is to be prepared and patient. You must put a lot of time and effort into your plants to come out the way you want.” Hidalgo also explained that it is particularly important not to rush, while gardening because it is a beautiful way to connect with nature, when she said, “I think the best way to start your gardening is to start with a simple type of plant then once you get the hang of it you can start doing the fruit and vegetables you love.

Feature

The Unsung Hidden Roots Of Our Campus

Staff Writer,
Andrew Sepulveda

Hidden Roots is about the unsung heroes that are the foundation of our campus. The staff are doing this solely for the benefit of the school, looking for little in return. They are people who work, rain or shine, to keep our campus healthy and beautiful. The staff works diligently to problem-solve and overcome any challenges that many people do not realize and take for granted. They lift the school up and are true role models for the students to imitate.

Staff, such as janitors, clean up all the mess that careless students leave, and the students do not appreciate them enough for their efforts. The janitorial staff is one of the most important parts of the campus, otherwise, trash would be everywhere. Janitorial staff mem-



ber Joycell Foy said that the hardest part of her job is, "People throwing food at each other and not cleaning up after themselves." Students should remember to pick up after themselves and thank the staff who help them.

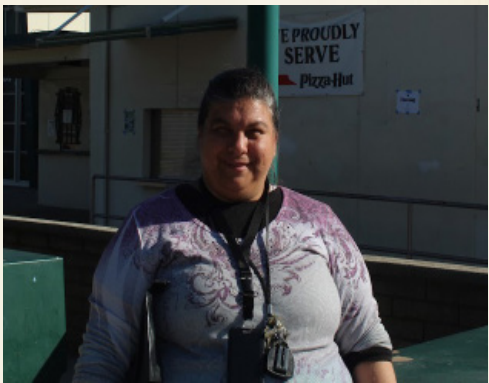
Another example of people who help the school is the proctors, who keep everyone in check, making sure everybody is where they need to be. They rush to wherever a fight may take place, for the safety of others, sometimes putting themselves in harm's way.

Proctor, Nate Mchenry spoke about why he is motivated when he said, "I love my job. Kids appreciate us for keeping them safe and I'm motivated to help kids have successful futures." Even when students give him an attitude, he keeps his mind focused on the goal and protects the futures of the students. The



fight has reduced, because of proctors' influence on the students for the better.

The lunch workers manage the most dangerous students of all, the hungry students. When the students are hungry, they are willing to do anything to obtain food. The staff keeps orders, so everyone can order food, and nobody takes more than they need. Lunch lady, Yvonne Mcallister, who cares for



the students said, "Talking to students motivates me and taking feedback on what people like and don't want and making sure they have a good meal today." She works tirelessly to make sure everyone is happy with the meal and that it is

the best of nutritional standards, checking off every food group.

Senior, Jack Shool, when thinking about what it would be like without staff said, "The kids at this school are terrifying. They would make it monstrous and dirty, but the staff do good work." Without heroes like the proctors, lunch staff and janitorial staff, to name a few, the campus would run rampant with trash everywhere, numerous fights around campus and people wandering the halls and being a distraction during class.

Overall, the staff cares about the students, making their day the best it can be. Janitors keep everything clean; proctors keep everyone safe, and lunch workers make sure everyone is full and happy. They work to support students, not themselves. They would not be in this profession if they did not want to help the students. However, it is still important for staff and students to remember to keep others safe, clean up after themselves and to support other people's basic needs like nutrition and hygiene.



Helping On A Global Scale



Editor-In-Chief,
Sofia Erskine

Environmental crises are topics of gravity in the age of industrialism. Upland High School's Global Aid Club has taken matters into its own hands as members consistently elect to maintain the weekly waste produced by our school. According to Earthday.org's article, "Public School Reliance on Plastic Harms Student's Health and the Environment," by Lia Manukyan, the average public school in the United States produces "over 14,500 tons of waste every day." As a student-maintained organization, Global Aid pinpoints its focus on one of the most harmful types of waste today: plastics.



through the plastic waste that has been collected from every building on campus. "There's an assumption that you can recycle everything, but they definitely reject stuff," said Mr. Taggart, the advisor of the club. "Some of the bigger, harder bottles; certain kinds of plastics aren't made for re-use, so they'll get rejected." It is the job of the club members to sort through the types of plastic,

determining what is recyclable and what is not. Once this part of the process is complete, one or two students take the recyclables to a nearby recycling center. The job is usually done by the president of the club, Chloe Butarbutar.

Butarbutar has been an avid member of the club, realizing her environmental passions through

the organization. "I've been in this club since my freshman year," said Butarbutar. "I'm a very environmentally inclined person. Instead of just leaving [the waste], I want to be the person who makes a change."

While the members and advisors would not directly label the club as humanitarian work, they have found a way to support human welfare organizations through their work.



Approximately \$50-\$60 is accumulated from each visit to the recycling center. However, the club does not retain the profits. Rather, they donate the proceeds to Kenya Children's Home (KCH), an organization that houses orphaned, abandoned, and destitute children. Club Member Cha-

rissa Wong said, "Humanitarian work helps bring- for lack of better terms- humanity and the sympathy that we have for other people around the world."



However, the charitable work of Global Aid is shared by others than just the club members. The Adult Summit Transitional Program's students retrieve the plastic waste from around campus every Wednesday, relaying it to the club for them to finish the job. The recovery and clean-up project requires all members on deck, incorporating dozens of students, between the transitional program and Global Aid, who have invested themselves in the pursuit of keeping the school environment clean for the student body. With their continued efforts, the hope is that they can influence others to act in the environmental crises of today. "Be the change you want to see," said Butarbutar.

Features

The Cats And Comics Rescue

Staff Writer,
Jasmin Trujillo



The card and comic collection community is massive, with a variety of stores dedicated to the art of trading and collecting. However, just a handful of those stores often have no inviting environment with which they can draw customers to spend time. Recently, a store has opened in downtown Upland, titled “Cats and Comics Rescue” that is breaking away from the competition and instilling customers with pure joy.

Founders Jeremy Guerra and Marcie Guerra have been volunteering at different animal shelters for many years. Jasmine, a staff member who has worked with Jeremy Guerra from the start of Cats and

Comics said, “We wanted to bring the two ideas together and make a home for cats to get adopted and a place where people can play their favorite card games.”

There is no surprise at the number of stray cats people see on the sidewalk and even running across the road. “The Cats and Comics Rescue” works with all local shelters to bring in their cats, but mostly does, as Jasmine said, “Trap, neuter and release.” Jasmine ex-

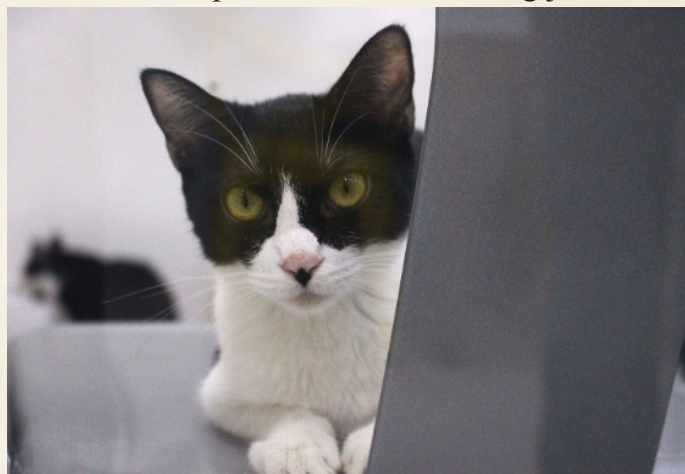
plained that the cats that are taken into the rescue range from newborn kittens to elderly

cats, who are picked up off the streets in places like the Colonies or even local parks. While the store has only been open for around four months, it has

received wonderful feedback on the rescue, with multiple adoptions and plentiful business, and with friendly groups coming to play Magic the Gathering or Pokémon at their location.

The card trading and collectibles they have helps to assist the cats, as Jasmine said, “When we sell cards and other things, it helps us feed the cats and cover medical costs, to make the adoption process easier.” The adoption process for “Cats and Comics Rescue” consists of a digital sign-up form and an in-person interview to see if the cat is best suited for an individual’s lifestyle and personality. Along with adoption, “The Cats and Comic Rescue” store is always open to new volunteers willing

to clean the cat enclosures or even working just for the array of cards that are found there, such as



Pokémon cards, Magic the Gathering, Yugio and many more.

There are not only comics and cats at the location. They also have small trinkets, handmade keychains, posters, and stickers, to entice a diverse audience into their store. So, whether people are looking for a place to relax with their friends, while playing a few card games, reading some comics, or shopping for small toys, there will always be a fuzzy friend by their side and they can even give these adorable cats a new forever home.



The Adventure Club Awaits



Staff Writer,
Sara Koussa

In the heart of our campus, the Adventure Club is igniting a passion for exploration and friendship among students. Founded by a group of enthusiastic outdoor lovers, the club aims to foster a spirit of adventure and teamwork, through activities like hiking, rock climbing, and camping trips. Every other Thursday, members gather to plan their next escape, share stories of past adventures and brainstorm exciting new challenges. The club also focuses on building skills, confidence, and lifelong friendships. Junior Sophia Estrasa said, “This club to me is about friendship and creating relationships with people with similar interests.”

President of the Adventure Club, junior Siena Gorman, embodies the spirit of exploration and teamwork that defines the

club. Gorman inspires her fellow peers to embrace the outdoors and tackle new challenges. Gorman said, “I try to encourage people to join and unlock a new passion. You’ll basically have a lot of fun,

experience new things, and meet some genuine people.” Under her leadership, the club has expanded its activities to include rock climbing and environmental clean-ups. With her dedication and vision,

Gorman fosters a sense of community that leaves a lasting impact on all members.

The club has embarked on a series of unforgettable trips, including their very first trip to Stoddard Falls, Mount Baldy, where members hiked, swam, and cleaned up any trash laying around. Rylee Mathews, a junior and member of the Adventure Club said, “Our first ever trip was very memora-

ble. It was during the summer, and everyone jumped in the water. It was fun.”

The club also ventured to Hangar 18, in downtown Upland for some rock climbing. The gym features an array of indoor climbing walls, ranging from beginner-friendly routes to advanced overhangs, with various textures and angles designed to challenge climbers of all skill levels. Mathews said, “Hangar 18 was so fun. We did partner rock climbing, and it was fun to see everyone try to complete it with a partner.”

The Adventure Club is not just about thrilling hikes and challenging rock climbs; it also champions the cause of environmental stewardship. The club organized a series of cleanup events, encouraging

people to give back to the community, while enjoying the great outdoors. Every activity the club goes on, it makes sure to bring trash bags. The Santa Ana River Cleanup event was an extraordinarily successful cleanup. With all the teamwork from the members in the club, they picked up 192 pounds of trash. The club’s commitment to environmental awareness instills a sense of responsibility in its members, fostering a deep appreciation for nature that extends beyond their outdoor adventures.

By combining action with advocacy, the Adventure Club not only creates a memorable experience but also nurtures a generation of eco-conscious leaders dedicated to protecting the planet. Ultimately, the club enriches the high school experience, shaping adventurous individuals, who are prepared to tackle both the challenges of the wilderness and the responsibilities of caring for their environment.



The Secret Garden Bloomed And Bloomed...

Symphonic & Wind Ensembles

Staff Writer,
Cesar Garcia Gonzalez

A wise man dressed in a suit and tie waves a rod, signaling a sea of instruments to begin playing. Instrument by instrument, each unique sound creates a new ambiance, unified under the same note.

Upland's symphonic and wind ensembles have participated in multiple music festivals this year. February 22nd and 21st marked the date when the campus held the 51st Western State Jazz Festival. On March 4th, both bands went to their first festival at Riverside City College. However, there are still more events to come. Both concert bands will perform at Lakeside High School on March 20th. The Advanced Jazz band will compete in a jazz championship in Folsom, California, on April 25th and 26th. The events and more are held annually, with further details found on their respective websites, or Upland's music program website, uhrb.org.

Like every other program that supports students in extracurriculars, both students and staff come together to resolve any problems

or challenges. When asked about common obstacles in the program, Director of the school's music program, Derrick Nuno said, "Symphonic band is a large group and is made up of a very diverse skill range [...] I think the hardest thing at first is to even the playing field."

The initial challenge becomes significant at the beginning of the marching season and the concert season. Furthermore, the number of members contributing to the program, by performing in the different available styles of music, is substantial. It also raises the question as to whether everyone is committed to playing in their respective bands. Junior musician Andrew Pol said, "Mostly everyone contributes.

There are a few sections of people who don't commit." Since Upland's music program has been growing in numbers every year, the hassle of improving the skill set of every member of the program is always an urgent matter.

For a program that finds oppor-

tunities for student musicians to compete with other bands in the fall and spring, sufficient funding can either make or break the season. Thankfully, there are many ways for parents of these musicians and students outside of the program to give support. Nuno said, "We do accept donations, to help our program; to buy new instruments, music, coaches, and so forth." In the marching band season from summer to fall, the ability to pay for these expenses becomes a reason for the future

success of everyone in the program, both students and staff. The easiest and quickest way to donate money for the developing program is through the program's website, uhrb.org. On the website, information on different musical groups is listed, along with the performance-heavy symphonic and wind ensembles.

Besides donating, Nuno discussed another major way of supporting the ensembles, which was showing up to performances. When

asked about major ways to support, Nuno said, "Coming out to festivals. We charge very low fees, usually around ten dollars [...] presence is the biggest donation, including any support we can take."

Nevertheless, band directors Earnest Miranda and Derrick Nuno make a great promise to raise everyone's level of musicianship. When asked about what goals are by the end of the concert season, Mr. Nuno said, "I want everyone to feel they've made progress, not on their instruments but as students in the program."

As mentioned before, everyone has a unique skill range that is all unified under the commitment to excellence. However, as each year brings in new, clean slates of freshmen, maintaining expectations is necessary for the bands to succeed. One of the unique offerings of the program is the ability to prepare students with summer camps. Similar to football, incoming first-year students, along with everyone else, learn the fundamentals of marching band and with it, expectations, and boundaries of being a musician student that should last them until their graduation year.



A Special Mother's Day DIY Celebration

Staff Writer,
Bruce Ly

The roots of Mother's Day can be traced back to ancient civilizations. James Hardy, in his article, "The History of Mother's Day: The Origin Story Behind Mother's Day," said, "These early celebrations provide a fascinating insight into how societies have historically revered the concept of motherhood, highlighting its universal significance across different cultures and epochs."

This year's traditional celebration is going to be held on May 11, 2025, which gives people plenty of time to produce a wonderful gift to honor their mothers. The day is also a wonderful way for people to use their imaginations to create a personal gift, to show their appreciation. For students, junior Josh Kirland, junior William Ascencio, and freshman Savannah Marquez, they have made plans for Mother's Day to display their

DIY crafts that they plan to make. They all have different ideas; however, their intentions remain the same-to make a meaningful gift for their moms.

Kirland, who likes creating a variety of gifts to give said, "I aim for items that are practical but have a meaning, like a favorite color or like flavor, or a little inside joke that connects me with my mom and so and so item." For Kirland, he also likes to provide a variety of essentials with little treats, as well

as wrapping the gift or displaying it in such a way that everything is set out in a beautiful presentation.



Ascencio heavily focuses on very sentimental crafts. Ascencio enjoys making cards with words that show his appreciation, as well as giving a wanted item that his mom desires. Ascencio said, "Having a card with my thoughts and feelings is a powerful way, I think, that can display your gratitude very well and

having a gift/item to pair it up, makes it where such an item brings remembrance of the card." Ascencio strongly believes that a heartfelt card with a gift is a very memorable experience to help connect with his mom and to show his gratification.

Marquez, enjoys making gifts out of ribbon, specifically roses. It motivates her to create a gift that is long-lasting and has a sentimental value. Marquez said, "I enjoy making roses with ribbons, and being able to put the time into and make large amounts of roses can show off my time and dedication." She also remarked that going on trips to a new restaurant or a store and spend-

ing time with her mom is also a part of her Mother's Day plan.

It is never too late to create a memorable gift for a special mom. It just takes a little time and effort to plan a way that demonstrates how much a person cares and appreciates a special mother.



"Swan River" by Hannah Fernandez, Grade 11

And Every Morning Revealed New Miracles

To Ban A Book Or Not To Ban A Book

Staff Writer,
Penelope Lopez

The idea of banning books is not new. According to Guides.library.harvard.edu's online article, "Book Banning in the United States and Beyond," it said, "What is considered the first book ban in the United States took place in 1637 in what is now known as Quincy, Massachusetts. Thomas Morton published his New English Canaan which was subsequently banned by the Puritan government as it was considered a harsh and heretical critique of Puritan customs and power structures."

As the years wore on, more books have been banned for even the smallest of words or even the titles. But one must ask whether these books really deserve to be banned. Do people deserve to have knowledge taken away just because others do not want their children being exposed to a book?

According to library.triton.edu's online article, "Who Challenged Books," it explains that in order to challenge a book, "The person who

initiated the challenge must read the whole book, fill out a challenge form and explain why, how and where in the book the offensive action took place, then the case will be presented in a hearing and decided whether it should be removed from the collection or retained."

However, English teacher Ms. Erlanger believes that it is not the case, as "It tends to be people who haven't read them that want to ban them, and they hear bits and pieces about what might be in them and are concerned about those but they are oftentimes out of context." The belief is that sometimes the person wanting to challenge the ban would only read a little bit.

Books, such as The Hunger Games, 1984, and "To Kill A Mockingbird" have each been banned in different states across America. The classic books do seem to have more serious topics in them. When it comes to 1984, written by George Orwell, the reason for its ban, according to Kayla Ashbrook's article "George Orwell and Recent Censorship," has been

due to it being too "Immoral" and making people uncomfortable. Ashbrook explained that the work was repeatedly banned for either obscenity, or its pro-communist theming, as well as the dangers of media censorship. Ashbrook said, "While Orwell's dystopian society seems theoretical to readers, its message against media censorship is quite real."

And then there is To Kill A Mockingbird, which, has its own challenges of being banned all over the country. Becky Little, in her article, "Why 'To Kill A Mockingbird' Keeps Getting Banned," said, that the director of American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom, James LaRue explained that "The most current challenge to it is among the vaguest ones that I've ever heard." Little also explained that LaRue said the novel made people uncomfortable.

Along the way there are books being banned, even if they are not as graphic as others. Mrs. Erlanger said,

"I've seen books banned because of sensitive topics, or at least come up to be banned because of conversations parents don't want their kids to have, depending on their ages. Sometimes, I find that it's because of conflicting belief systems." Another point made is about parents and their children and whether it is all right to shield children from anything too graphic if it is seen as not age appropriate. However, as they grow older, it will be time to have those types of talks.

Regardless of belief systems or talks of the banning of books, the fact does remain that society has been guaranteed inalienable rights. People cannot let ignorance define the choices of others and what they choose to read.



The Spring Lineup for 2025 Films

Staff Writer,
Brook Lynn Kydd

As the cinematic calendar turns to spring 2025, audiences can anticipate a vibrant lineup of films poised to captivate and entertain. Tasha Robinson and Petrana Radulovic's article, "The 20 Most Exciting Movies of Spring 2025," said, "Summer movie season is starting earlier and earlier every year, and this one is no exception. This spring has all kinds of exciting movies, and maybe even a few of the best and biggest movies of the year." The season's offerings range from beloved animated tales, reimagined in live action to the continuation of epic sagas, promising a rich tapestry of storytelling and visual spectacle. The new movies enlighten the hearts of new symbols and old animations to the livelihood of action and real life, by bringing the old into the new and forming longer enhancements to the stories of what was once only the beginning of the series.

"How to Train Your Dragon" a live-action adaptation scheduled for release on June 13, 2025, brings the cherished animated story to life under the direction of Dean DeBlois, according to Radulovic. Junior Angel Cerna stated, "I am really looking forward to the new, live action How to Train Your Dragon. Many have seen the mechanical dragons and how they bring the once-animated movies to real life."

Radulovic explained that the film stars Mason Thames, as Hiccup Horrendous Haddock III, a young Viking who forms an unlikely

bond with a dragon, named Toothless. Nico Parker portrays Astrid Hofferson, Hiccup's courageous companion.

Finally, Gerard Butler reprises his role as Stoick the Vast, Hiccup's formidable father and chieftain of Berk. The ensemble cast also includes Nick Frost as Gobber the Belch and Julian Dennison, as Fishlegs Ingerman. Filmed in the scenic landscapes of Belfast, Northern Ireland, this adaptation aims to blend the original's heartfelt narrative with stunning visual effects, offering both longtime fans and newcomers a fresh perspective on the tale.

In addition, James Cameron's Avatar: Fire and Ash, the third installment in the groundbreaking franchise, will be released this spring. Video Production teacher, James Miura said, "This movie entails so much detail and background from the first two movies. I am eager to see and enjoy the cinematic experience."



Radulovic said that early screenings have elicited enthusiastic responses, with some viewers suggesting it may be "perhaps the best of the three." Cameron has expressed satisfaction with the film's outcome and the cast's performances. The narrative is expected to delve deeper into Pandora's rich ecosystems, introducing new clans and challenges that assess the protagonists' resolve. Technologically, the film promises to surpass its predecessors, utilizing advanced visual effects to depict

the elemental themes of fire and ash in unprecedented ways.

Marvel Studios continues to expand its cinematic universe with a robust lineup for 2025. According to the article, "Every Marvel movie and TV release set for 2025 and beyond," by Michael McWhertor, it explains that in March,

Daredevil: Born Again brings the vigilante back to the screen, exploring new facets of Matt Murdock's complex life. It may introduce Thunderbolts*, a film that



assembles a unique team of anti-heroes, adding depth to Marvel's storytelling. According to McWhertor, in July, Fantastic Four: First Steps, reintroduces the iconic quartet, setting the stage for future cosmic adventures. Junior Adrian Herring said, "I am most looking forward to the action within each movie. Marvel is something I come to watch and rate throughout the experience. I have high hopes for this upcoming movie in March." McWhertor said that each release is poised to offer fresh narratives, while maintaining the interconnectedness that fans have come to cherish.

Spring 2025's film lineup offers a rich tapestry of stories that blend familiar favorites, with innovative narratives. Audiences can look forward to a season of cinematic experiences that promise to entertain, inspire, and provoke thought. The inspiring movies will share heart and ground-breaking experiences with those who used to watch them in childhood or are eager to see them come to a large screen.

"Shattered Flower" by Abigail Sanchez, 10th grade

Features



Earth Day, 2025



Staff Writer,
Kayla Biggs

Earth Day is one of the most important annual events and according to the article, "The History Of Earth Day," from History.com, it states that the first Earth Day was on April 22, 1970, in New York and Washington, when an estimated twenty million people attended. Since that first Earth Day, temperatures have increased, sea levels have risen, and carbon dioxide concentration has increased significantly. As a result, Earth Day is even more important for people to take notice and do something to help the planet.

Sophomore George Sutliff said, "It's the only planet that we live on." When asked about what motivates him to clean the Earth he said, "We should take care of the only planet we live on. Although the earth will never be healed to the full extent, we can still take care of it and make do with what we have." Sophomore Andi Stigart affirmed Sutliff's position and said, "This is the only planet we live on."

When it comes to the topic of trash in the ocean, animals have been impacted by the litter that surrounds them. Many animals, such as turtles, fish, seabirds, dolphins, and other marine animals either strangle in the garbage, swallow it because they think it is food, or end up drowning. From the online Article, "WWF Australia: Plastic in our oceans is killing marine animals," it said, "It's estimated that 56% of the planet's whale, dolphin and porpoise species have consumed plastic."

As Sophomore Leila Cas-

tro said, "What motivates me the most to clean the Earth is the safety of the animals." Not only are the marine animals in the ocean affected by trash, but mammals on land are also dying because they consume the discarded material, believing it is something to eat.

Littering is common everywhere, which is why peo-



ple need to desperately keep our campus tidy. Castro said, "It is our school. We need to keep our school clean." Sutliff believes that the cam-

pus of UHS is beautiful and said, "We have lots of trees and grass. A lot of other

school campuses are straight concrete. I have visited many other schools, and they are not as green as ours." Sutliff further added the need to keep the campus clean when he said, "This is a place where we all come together to learn. It is much more pleasant to learn in a clean environment."

The question then remains as to how society can motivate people to help with Earth Day. Sutliff said, "You cannot truly make people do things. People have their own ways of life. People will always do

their own thing. But you can encourage them. Recycling is one thing we can all easily do. Everyone should have a recycling bin at home. Encouraging others to buy more biodegradable and reusable items also helps. Planting trees is also a fun activity that is simple."

For Stigart, she shows online videos to other people

to the point where you could build a city in them. A lot of that inside the landfill is plastic. Recycling plastic will help reduce the amount of waste enormously." Stigart said, "Not cleaning up can hurt our plants and animals." While Castro argues recycling is important because, "It helps not waste valuable resources."

Still another way to benefit Earth Day is by using environmentally friendly products. Castro said that all-vegan products are great to use, since they do not hurt animals of any kind. Sutliff said, "There are biodegradable plastics people can buy, which is better for the environment. Glass bottles take over a million years to fully decompose and glass is tossed in trash a lot."

Sutliff also spoke about the plastic straws versus paper straws debate, when he said, "Yes. Paper straws come from trees, which is bad for trees. Plastic is still equally as bad. If you prefer plastic straws, you can buy plastic straws but recycle them. If you toss the plastic straws into the trash, make sure to snip it, so nothing can get stuck inside it."

Earth Day does not have to be labor inducing. Instead, people should focus on bringing a little joy to the day by making bird feeders or Earth Day ornaments, or even just taking a walk in the park. Sutliff said his favorite

activity to do during Earth Day is to enjoy nature itself, as he said, "I enjoy spending my time in my garden planting things." For Stigart, she said she likes to spend her Earth Day cleaning up at the beach and she said, "It's especially more fun with friends."

of the trash in our ocean, and she said, "Showing pictures online to others of the trash in the ocean and the hurt animals affected by this can really make a difference." Castro further concluded with the idea that it is the right action to do.

Another way to make a change and help with Earth Day is to recycle. Some items people can recycle include paper that does not have a large amount of ink, plastic, bottles, glass, and cardboard. According to the Environmental Protection Agency's

article, "Recycling Basics and Benefits," it said, "Recycling can benefit your community, the economy, and the environment." - Recycling Basics and Benefits." Sutliff said, "Landfills are getting larger



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time in my garden planting things." For Stigart, she said she likes to spend her Earth Day cleaning up at the beach and she said, "It's especially more fun with friends."

Sports

Boys' Soccer Makes It To CIF



Staff Writer,
Dani Varela

As the 2025 soccer season ends, it is time for the team to take a moment to reflect. The team faced numerous challenges and celebrated some great victories along the way. Competing in the CIF games was a major highlight, testing the team's skill and determination. While the season had its difficulties, the players showed effort, skill, and teamwork. Now, as they look back on the season, there is a sense of accomplishment and valuable lessons learned that will carry forward into future seasons.



The team won the Baseline League but lost during the second game of CIF. Although it was a loss, there were many accomplishments this season. The team continued to stay motivated. Senior Ricky Maldonado said, "My main motivation throughout the season was honestly keeping the same momentum from last year. We had a great season last year, and I wanted to keep it like that. It was my senior year, and I did not want to end it knowing we had left effort on the field. Similarly, senior Drew Shoji said, "It is my last year here at Upland and I wanted to give it my all for the last season with my team."

Soccer is a very tactical game, so it is important to be the best. Maldonado said, "At higher levels in soccer, the game is more tactical, so to help get the team to CIF, we tried our best to get goals early



in the game. That meant pushing numbers higher on the field, keeping the ball and playing beautiful soccer, passing combos. All what soccer should be. After we got goals, we focused on defending well to win the game. I go by a saying that says, 'Forwards score goals but defense wins championships.'"

When playing a sport in school, new friendships are made, and memories are cherished. Senior Nico Giron said, "The most memorable moment was winning league in overtime on Senior Night." Also, exciting traditions are made as well. Maldonado said, "Before games we tend to get together and listen to music, banter, and joke around before the games. Then it leads to our warmup. Before the game starts, we say our prayer that we have been doing since freshman year. I believe

it will continue for many years for the future soccer players here at Upland."

For the players and coaches, the team has grown immensely. Despite the challenges and tough competition in the CIF games, the players demonstrated resilience and teamwork. The season was a journey filled with valuable experiences and memorable moments. As the Highlanders look forward to future



seasons, they carry with them the lessons learned and the pride of their accom-

plishments. Supporters can rest assured that the team is well-prepared for whatever challenges come next.



Track Team Gears Up For New Season

Staff Writer,
Manuel Contreras

The school's track team is gearing up for an exciting season. The dedication, challenges, and victories of the school's track team highlight their rigorous training, ambitious goals, and excitement for the upcoming season. The team has been training intensely, pushing their limits to improve speed, endurance, and technique, under the motivation of track coach, Tyler Shea. The Coach inspired his athletes with words of encouragement when he said, "Some words of motivation I use for the team are 'Work your hardest,' 'Think your biggest,' 'Be your smartest,' and 'Be your greatest.'"

Through intense workouts, conditioning sessions, and strategic race planning, the athletes are committed to achieving both personal



and team goals. Many runners aim to break personal records, qualify for championships, and refine their performance in key events, such as sprints, distance races and relays. Coach Shea said, "The most important quality of a track athlete is being consistent and willing." To be a great track athlete, one must be mentally present and willing to improve. Despite the physical and mental challenges, the athletes continue to strive for excellence, determined to make their school proud as the season progresses. Coach Shea's favorite part of coaching is "The opportunity to build relationships with the students and be blessed enough just to be in their lives."

Track athletes have their own way of mentally preparing before a big competition or race. Junior, Damian Alfaro readies himself before a big competition or race by mentally preparing himself. Alfaro said, "Listening to music helps calm my nerves, along with a proper warm-up." Sophomore Joshua Cornejo prepares differently by explaining that he likes, "Drinking an energy drink to stay focused and excited for the race."

Each athlete faces unique challenges, but some common struggles

include dealing with losses, finding the motivation to keep going, and comparing their times to faster competitors. Junior, Samuel Perea's biggest challenge "Is balancing my football and track career, often going from one intense workout to another." Perea explained that he overcomes this issue by changing his mindset, powering through, and taking it one day at a time.

Motivation plays a key role in every athlete's journey, driving him or her to push past obstacles and strive for success. For Cornejo, the dedication and passion of those around him serve as a powerful source of inspiration, as he said, "Seeing people work hard every day with passion pushes me to try even harder." Witnessing his teammates give their best effort encourages him to stay focused and continue improving.

Similarly, Alfaro finds motiva-

tion in his own progress, recognizing that even small improvements add up over time. Alfaro said, "Seeing myself improve little by little every day" keeps him going, reminding him that hard work and consistency lead to growth. Whether inspired by others or by their own achievements, these athletes use motivation as fuel to keep pushing forward, both in practice and in competition.

As the season unfolds, the track team's dedication and hard work will be on full display in upcoming meets and competitions. With their commitment to im-



provement and unwavering team spirit, they are prepared to face any challenges that may come their way, whether it is breaking records, achieving

personal bests, or simply growing as athletes. No matter the results, their growth and effort will be what truly defines their success.

Features

The Effects Of Nature On Well-Being

Staff writer,
Nathan Munoz

The connection between nature and well-being means however long a person spends in natural environments can have a significant positive impact on their physical, mental, and emotional health. In the article, “The mental health benefits of nature: Spending time outdoors to refresh your mind,” by Sara Youngblood Gregory, it said, “‘There are many studies that demonstrate how spending time in nature can improve mood, lower anxiety, and improve cognition and memory,’ says Mayo Clinic nurse practitioner Jodie M. Smith, APRN., C.N.P., D.N.P., M.S.N. ‘Making time for nature is important in order for us to maintain resiliency and promote self-care in a world that demands a lot from us.’”

Gregory further pointed out that Smith said, “Nature can be an effective tool to manage stress and “‘Stress stimulates our sympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for increasing our blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar in order to react to a stimulus that is

causing us stress.’” Gregory also explained that nature does have the ability to combat stress and its effects, as, “one study showed that exposure to nature can regulate the sympathetic nervous system in as little as five minutes. This means



that we can get an almost immediate benefit from stepping outside,” says Smith. And doing so on a recurrent basis may prevent cumulative effects from stress, which could mean a lower risk for chronic disease, illness and mortality.”

Sophomore Ricky Munoz, when asked how often he spends time spend outdoors, as well as the activities he enjoys, said, “I usually spend most of my time outside of school, when it's nice weather, like windy because it just makes me

feel better, even if I step out for a little bit. I feel way less stressed, and I feel like it clears my mind, whenever I'm upset.”

Munoz explained that his favorite activity to do in nature is to play basketball at the park with his friends. When asked if Munoz would prefer to live in the city or country he said, “I would prefer to live in the country because I like areas with few people, and I like the feeling of being around more nature than buildings everywhere, because it feels more natural, and it just makes me nostalgic to when I was younger for some reason.”

Senior Angelica Mendoza, when asked what she likes to do in nature said, "I feel the best activities to enjoy nature would be running because not only is it healthy for you, but you can run around your local park or just the neighborhood, to enjoy nature for what it is. I mostly run because I want to get in shape for the Nation-

al Guard. But it's still something everyone should look into doing more.”

When asked about her opinion on the importance of children spending enough time outside and whether to do, Mendoza said, “I believe no. I don't think kids spend a lot of time

outside, like before because it's mainly a safety issue, since parents don't let kids outside alone as much because of all the potential risks. Kids also don't spend a lot of time outside because everything is about technology, and kids rather spend the whole day inside on their phones or tv, rather than playing outside with friends.”

When people combine nature into their lives, they can improve their physical, mental, and emotional health. As Gregory points out, being in nature does not require anything of people and Gregory said, “Perhaps the best part is that nature makes it easy to soak in these benefits.” It is never too late to stop and smell the roses.



Has Easter Lost Its Significance?



Staff Writer,
Michelle Tiang

For countless decades, Easter has been associated with bunnies, decorated eggs, candies, and everything pastel. However, there is more than meets the eye; Easter holds a collection of religion and tradition, most of which is overlooked, due to its over-commercialization. All holidays have their roots, and if they are ignored, there is little point in celebrating them. Therefore, it is important to honor Easter for its religious significance.

Easter is the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, specifically the third day after his Crucifixion. Although the exact origin of the term “Easter” is unknown, it is believed to be related to Eostre, a goddess associated with spring and fertility.

Easter contains a variety of folk customs. For starters, Christians would sacrifice and bless food before consum-

ing it, which often included lamb meat, eggs, ham, cheese, bread, and sweets. The decorating of eggs originated during Holy Week, when Christians painted eggs within the week to differentiate them from regular eggs. According to Britannica.com's article “What Do Eggs Have to Do with Easter,” it said, “The egg itself became a symbol of the Resurrection. Just as Jesus rose from the tomb, the egg symbolizes new life emerging from the egg-shell.” They were traditionally painted red to symbolize Jesus' blood on the cross, soon shifting to assorted colors as it spread into non-religious people's lives.

The tale of the Easter bunny remains mostly the same nowadays; the rabbit would hide Easter eggs and deliver baskets of candies and toys

to children and families. However, this was not the case for other countries. According to Britannica.com's article “Easter,” it said, “In some European countries, however, other animals—in Switzerland the cuckoo, in Westphalia the fox—brought the Easter eggs.”

Egg rolling was a favorite game played among children.

According to English Heritage's article, “Traditional Easter Games,” it said, “Nobody knows how long people have been rolling hard-boiled eggs down grassy slopes at Easter. Some people think this originally symbolized rolling away the stone from Christ's tomb [...]” Similarly, egg hunts were enjoyed by children and adults alike. They even took place on the White House lawn but were quickly removed, due to mass gatherings and heavy traffic.



Nowadays, we continue to support these traditions but for the fun of it. The commercialization of Easter has companies in fierce competition. Due to all the bling and sparkle, some students believe the pasts of Easter are forgotten and should be recognized. Sophomore Austin Sedighi said, “I think we should have more honor to the religious roots of what Easter really is.” Others believe it is exceedingly difficult to achieve. Sophomore Ayannah McGowan said, “I think it still is remembered for its religious roots. But to be fair, there's a lot of holidays that start off with religious roots that a lot of people don't pay attention to.”

While painting eggs and savoring sweets is entertaining, we should still respect the origins of Easter. More important than that, we should spend quality time with friends and family. As Austin said, “[...] I also think the family aspect is very important because it helps people to connect in a multitude of ways.”

Lifestyle



Spring Break on a Budget

Staff Writer,
Akeela Palmer

Finding ways to enjoy Spring break can often be a bit pricey. However, with a little time and planning, finding something enjoyable to do that does not cost much or is relatively free can be achieved. There are several activities for people to choose to do, however it is important to plan a budget for the break.

One option is to find a place for friends to hang out, which is on the less expensive side. Senior Sofia Perez said, "Each friend can take a part of what they plan to pay for wherever they hangout. And for the

most expensive, they can split it." Perez also explained that the best course of action is to budget during break and go to cheap places or make sure you are not spending too much money at any one place.

Senior, Andrea Valdiva explained one of the activities she likes to do during break, when she said, "The beach is fun and cheap. You can walk around and maybe go to a pier." Valdiva also said that there are different shops and antique stores that are affordable that people go to near the beach.

Another activity that is popular, which is a little bit more expensive, is going shopping. However, Valdiva explains that there are ways to shop during spring break on a budget, when she said, "I like to go to thrift stores, there are a lot of cute items like clothes and handbags. It

is very affordable and there could be good finds." One fact to remem-



ber is that it is a wise idea to assess your finances and set a limit on what will be spent, while shopping.

Senior, Danya Gonzales explained how to save money on food during the break when she said, "I like to make a certain dish with my Lola that lasts all week." Gonzales explained that she does not grow tired of the dish either. But it does help to prevent her from

constantly having to pay for food. Gonzales said her idea of going to aquariums during spring break. The aquariums are local and it is either free or a small fee for admission. Gonzalez said she enjoys the aquariums because, "It is fun and cute getting to see all the different sea animals."

Fortunately, with planning, careful budgeting and smart choices, a fun getaway is possible. Just remember to be mindful of your spending habits and you can have fun during spring break without breaking the bank.



How to Effectively Recycle Your Clutter

Staff Writer,
Gianna Smith

Spring is the time for cleaning, and it is the time of the year where the earth and people seem to reset. Spring is also the time of the year where people like to focus and start working towards their personal goals, such as earning good grades, being more organized, or just simply being a kinder or better person. According to Workplace-options.com's article, "Mental Health Benefits of Staying Organized," by Tiara Puspita, it states, "Living in clutter can cause stress, feeling overwhelmed, depression, anxiety, problems with personal relationships, and more. When you declutter, you are alleviating disorganization in your environment and in your mind. Studies found that people who experience adverse or traumatic experiences fare better and are more resilient when they can create a sense of control and a sense of autonomy over their lives."



Most people like to keep themselves nice and clean, and have their workspace organized and functional. They have an extremely specific system, so they know where their items always are. Most people tend to like to be organized but there are also people who could care less about being organized and just throw their items anywhere.

Puspita said, "In one scientific study, women who have messy homes have higher cortisol levels (the stress hormone) in their bodies throughout the day compared to women that saw their homes as organized and relaxing. Clutter tends to leave a heavy feeling on a home-

owner, as it weighs you down both physically and emotionally, which also applies to men as well."

Freshman Ellie Scoggin explained that it is especially important to stay organized and clean, as she said, "I think being an organized person can help a lot with many things like navigating different tasks, staying focused, and keeps me motivated while doing things like homework."

Freshman Logan Allan thinks of herself as the opposite of Ellie and said, "I am a very messy person.

I do not enjoy cleaning or organizing but I do like when things are finally clean."

Allan does not like to clean but is relieved when it is all done. Allan does not really mind having her room or workplace messy and said, "If I did have motivation to be cleaner and organized, I would be, but I just do



half clean and organized person. Ventrella said, "I like to think I am an organized person at work but

not so much at home." Ventrella explained that she likes to organize because it makes her feel accomplished and she can relax.

Ventrella also believes that being an organized person is especially important, as she said, "I do think being clean and organized is important because if you are not, problems may occur, like losing things or missing due dates and stuff like that."

Puspita revealed her final thoughts when she said, "Now that you know why decluttering and organizing can be good for you, physically, mentally, emotionally, and even socially, how would you like to move things forward? Why do you think it is going to be beneficial for you—to declutter your space? And what do you think can be the first step to start organizing your space?" Puspita's questions are all ones that people should examine in their own lives.



not get motivated, so it is difficult to."

U College teacher Christine Ventrella thinks of herself as a



Features



Perfecting The Perfect Picnic

Staff Writer,
Perla Vargas

As the school year starts winding down and the flowers start to bloom, picnics are a timeless tradition that can form connections with people and nature. According to the online article, “How to plan the perfect picnic” by April Lisante, it said, “Picnics are a wonderful way to get outside and enjoy beautiful weather. They can be designed specifically around the things you and your guests will love.” Picnics bring people together through the delicious food, company and the great outdoors. They also offer a perfect escape from the difficulties of life and provide some much-needed relaxation.

It is important to know what exactly makes a good picnic fun and memorable. According to Harryand-David.com’s online article, “How to Plan a Picnic” it said, “Choose a theme or the type of mood you want to create and stay consistent with it.” A theme for your picnic is a great way of making

sure the whole picnic is centered around what your friends and you have decided upon together. It will help to organize the food, drinks and activities and provide a unified idea for the whole event.

For a picnic, it is important to avoid foods that cannot be unrefrigerated for an extended period.

Harryand-David.com said,

“Centering your picks around fresh seasonal foods, such as fruits and salads, along with foods that hangs well and can withstand sometime in the open air.” Lisante said, “Choose finger foods that you can mix or match, like crackers with olives, cheeses and dips and make mini sandwiches. . . You can also never go wrong with fresh fruits, or baguettes with brie.”

Another key aspect to consider for having a great picnic is the location. It

anywhere near water — can all provide fantastic, lush, and unexpected settings.”

When planning a picnic,



When planning a picnic, having the people that are important to you really enhances the picnic experience, making it memorable and a hard-to-forgettable moment. As Lisante said, “The great part about a picnic is that you don’t need to go very far. . . Just find a grassy patch, a deck or a yard and grab your family, significant other, or a friend who misses those weekly meetups at the coffee shop.”

member makes a picnic special and meaningful, as he said, “Just you are being around that special person, or family makes a picnic more enjoyable because it’s about the people you’re with.” Overall, Negrete enjoys spending quality time with a special person and forming strong meaningful connections.

Negrete also insists on bringing fun activities, or to-dos that can make the picnic more fun and have everyone doing something. Negrete said, “Some activities I have done with friends are painting together or playing at a park after the picnic.” Overall, Negrete has a distinctive perspective on his ideal picnic, which consists of being around the people who are dear and special to him.

Many individuals who plan a picnic love to capture the moment with a single shot of a camera. Junior, Jaylah McKinzie always in-



is recommended to try to think creatively when it comes to the location of the get together. Harry and David said, “For a picnic that will go down in history, think grander. Beaches, lakesides, and riverbanks —



When sophomore Orlando Negrete hears the word picnic, he thinks of life-long connections among other special people in his life. Negrete believes being with a special significant other or family

when going to a picnic with my boyfriend or friends is to always bring a digital camera. I always bring a camera because I like to capture the moment and look at it later.” McKinzie strives for a peaceful picnic.



Features



What Your Scent Says About You

Staff Writer,
Santina Irisbel Barrera

The first impression is always important and can say much about your personality and style. The article, “What Does Your Fragrance Say About You,” by Argos Fragrances said, “There are thousands of fragrances on the market today but breaking them down into a few genres can help to determine what your scent selection might say about you and some of your character traits.” The type of scent or fragrance someone chooses to wear says a lot about how a person may be. There are many types of body sprays and perfumes to choose from, which range from fresh, warm, spicy, floral, to fruity. Florals are one of the most popular scent notes. Argos Fragrances said, “Fragrances in the floral range are often comprised by using notes such as roses, jasmine, lilies, and peonies.” The type of personality who would suit floral scents, according to Argos Fragrances is, “A floral-centric fragrance might suit your

personality best if you are friendly and flirty.” Junior, Madison Tepet said, “People who like florals are playful, but they aren’t so extreme about it, because they still know how to tone it down and keep a calm

space and be serious when it’s important.” So, if you like floral scents, you may have a fun sense of personality, but you are also a trusted and reliable figure with your friends. A nice floral perfume that Tepet enjoys is Cherry Blossom, from Bath and Body Works. Argos Fragrances said, “Fresh fra-



grances are usually comprised of citrus, water, and green notes.” People who favor fresh and aquatic scents are considered as calm and collective. Argos Fragrances said, “Calm, refined, and carefree are some-



times characteristics of the person who favors fresh and aquatic scents.” Math teacher, Ms. Sharline Dababneh said, “People who like these scents are calm and are probably not as bold. They can be introvert-

ed but still have the ability to be extroverted, just like me.”

If you like fresh and aquatic scents you are inclined to like calm and quiet places and are laidback and friendly. A few brands that Mrs. Dababneh recommends, that are full of fresh, clean scents are Givenchy and YSL.

Warm scents also known as Amber and Oriental are known to be romantic and sweet. Argos fragrances said, “Oriental fragrances are warm, sweet, and even a little spicy. A more luxurious fragrance family, oriental fragrances vary from floral oriental, soft oriental, and woody oriental.” Sophomore, Evelyn Ayala said, “Warm fragrances remind me of baked goods and pastries.” Ayala believes that the type of personality that correlates with warm fragrances has warm and comforting qualities. Ayala said, “These personalities are sweet just like their perfume!

I believe people who like this scent can comfort you, since these personalities keep such a warm space.” Argos Fragrances said, “The oriental fragrance enthusiasts tend to be impulsive, intense, and a bit sensitive, and possess artistic

inclinations.” So, if you are into warm fragrances, you are someone who people like being around, since you are so addictingly sweet and nice, just like your perfume. A warm perfume that Ayala recommends is Vanilla, by Kayali. There is one more fragrance type on our list and that is spice! According to Argos Fragrances, they said, “Mysterious, warm, sensual notes of cardamom, incense, and pepper are common.” Argos Fragrances also states that spicy scents allow a wide array of scents since there are so many spices that can be used. Freshman, Ashton Sandiego said, “Cold weather reminds me of my winter fragrances, which tend to be spicy. These scents remind me of late nights with my friends and Vegas.” Argos Fragrances said, “Do you like to give off a sense of mystery? If you are inclined to wear perfumes like these, then you’re most likely to be a night owl, naturally bold and unafraid to let your personality show.” So, if you are into spicy fragrances, you have a bold sense of personality, who loves a good night out with friends. A fragrance with spicy notes that Sandiego recommends is Azzaro’s The Most Wanted Eau De Parfum Intense. There is a wide array of scents to like, and they are not limited to these few mentioned. Just like personalities, each one is unique in its own way. However, you do not need to limit yourself to just one fragrance or to one personality. Life is about variety, so mix your perfumes and enjoy the scents that come your way.

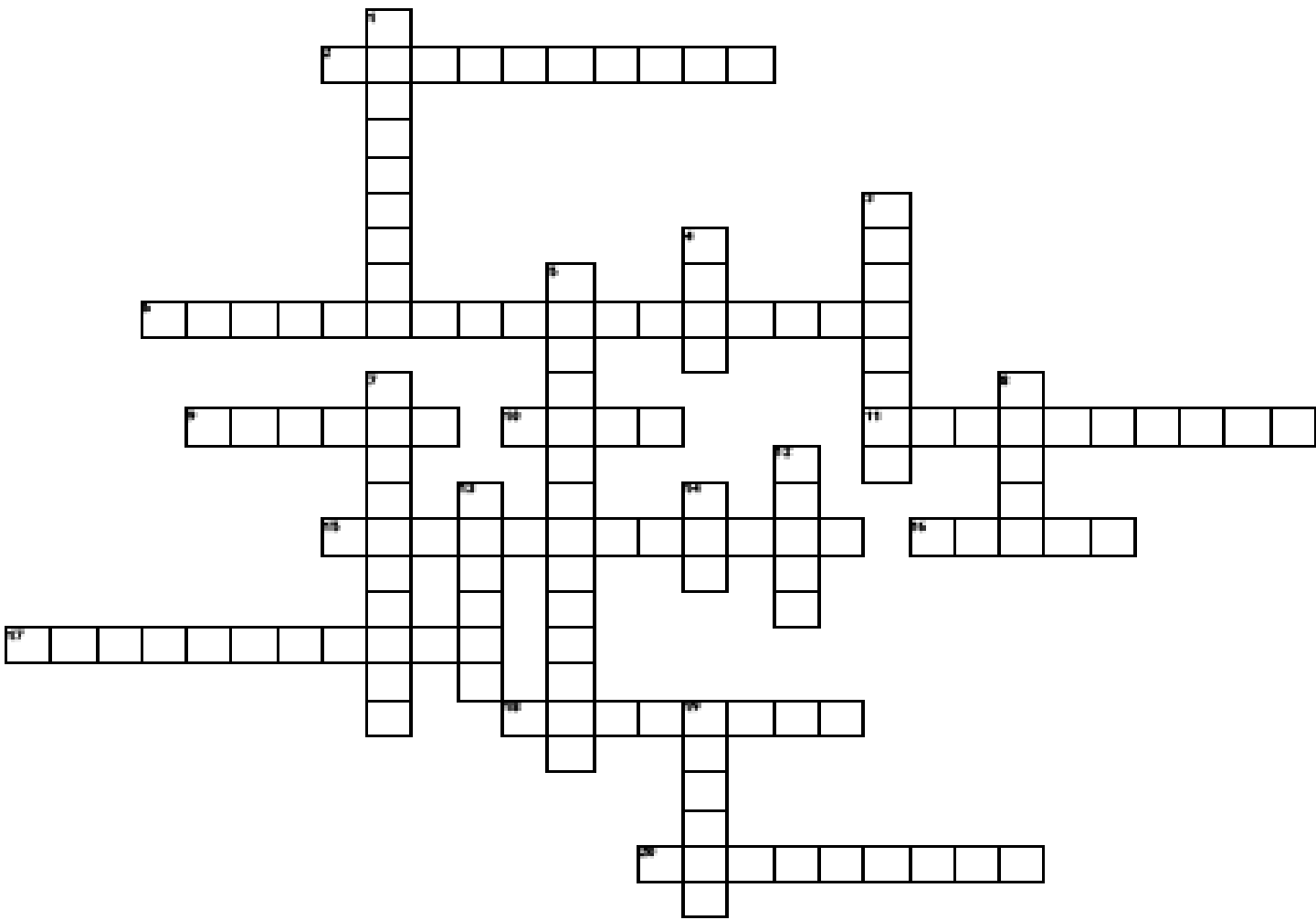




Entertainment

Secret Garden Cross Word

The Secret Garden



Across

- 2. The name of the head housekeeper.
- 6. The flowers that look like bells.
- 9. What did Mary hear in the corridor?
- 10. The instrument that Dickon used.
- 11. The two colors on Mary's jump rope.
- 15. What is the name of Dickon's mother?

- 16. Who said "I will live for ever"?
- 17. What did Mary ask Mr. Craven for?
- 18. The name of the song they sang in the Garden.
- 20. What does Martha speak?

Down

- 1. Name of the family that took care of Mary after her parents died.
- 3. How long did they say the garden had been abandoned.
- 4. Who took care of Mary in India?

- 5. The station that they got off at.
- 7. How many rooms are there in Misselthwaite Manor?
- 8. Name of the boy who made fun of Mary.
- 12. Kind of bird Mary met in the Garden.
- 13. Who tended to the fire at Misselthwaite Manor?
- 14. Where did Ben Weatherstaff go when he was a boy?
- 19. What is Mary's last name.

Word Bank

Susan Sowerby	lilies of the valley	robin	Ayah	Thwaite Station
Mrs. Medlock	Yorkshire	Martha	Crawfords	Basil
ten years	red and blue	one hundred	Lennox	sea
crying	Colin	Doxology	pipe	A bit of earth

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