

THE BEAT

*Spring
March 2026*

PHOTO: SOPHIA OXENFORD '26

CONTRIBUTORS

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Letter from the Editors

Hello SHA Community!

It's been a long few months, hasn't it? The winter months of the school year are such a despairing time. They honestly remind me of a 5k; long, arduous, and there's nothing but joy and relief when they're over. But we've finally made it. As much as the weather doesn't reflect it, it's finally spring, and the days are only going to get brighter and longer from here. Set your clocks, the countdown to the end of the school year, and the end of high school for the class of 2026, is officially short enough to be in sight. No matter whether you're spending your spring doing sports, school, hanging out at Kiwi Yogurt with your friends, or doing nothing at all, we here at Chez Nous wish you a happy, safe, and healthy spring.

Sincerely,

Your Chez Nous Editors

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*LHA
News &
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OPEN MIC NIGHT REVIEW

BY: ABIGAIL OLEX

Each year, the entire Sacred Heart high school community is invited to perform their talents at the *Chez Nous* open mic night. This year's event was held on February 20th and featured many talented high schoolers who came to share their creative abilities. The night had a mystical and magical atmosphere as performers expressed their creativity through music, dance, and even stand-up comedy. From singers and instrumentalists to dancers and comedians, the variety of performances made the event both entertaining and memorable for everyone in attendance.

The supportive crowd created an encouraging environment where students felt comfortable sharing their talents. Many performers impressed the audience with their confidence and creativity, making it clear how much talent exists within the SHA community. Events like open mic night allow students to step outside their comfort zones and celebrate artistic exploration together in our well-knit community.

Much credit goes to Mrs. Schuster, Ms. Rufo and the editors of *Chez Nous* for organizing and supporting this wonderful event. Their effort helped create a night that highlighted the creativity and talent of SHA students.

LADY WHISTLEDOWN'S PROM INVITATION

BY: MARLEY WHITE



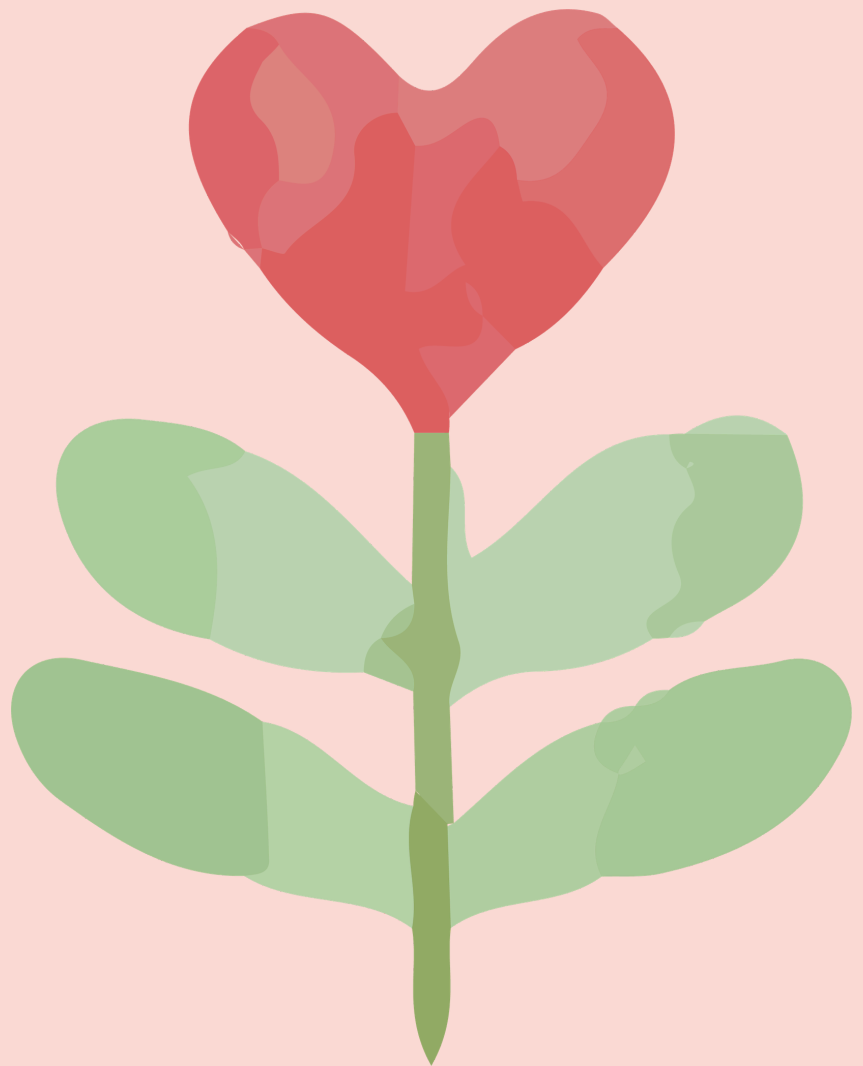
Lady Whistledown's SOCIETY PAPERS

DEAREST GENTLE READER,
THIS AUTHOR IS PLEASED TO INVITE YOU TO THE MOST
EXTRAVAGANT EVENT OF THE SEASON: SACRED HEART ACADEMY
PROM. YOU ARE ASKED TO WEAR ATTIRE OF THE UTMOST FORMALITY.
PASTELS AND SPRINGTIME COLORS WOULD GO BEST WITH THE
THEME OF THIS GATHERING. THE SOIREE BEGINS PROMPTLY ON THE
TENTH OF APRIL AT 7PM AND WILL COMMENCE AT 10PM. SPEND THE
EVENING INDULGING IN A FINE MEAL, PARTAKING ON THE DANCE
FLOOR, OR PROMENADING ON THE PATIO. IT IS, MY DEAR READERS, A
PLEASURE TO ANNOUNCE THE RETURN OF SIR HOWARD AS OUR
MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT. A BOOTH FOR TAKING ONE'S BEST
PHOTOS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL
ATTENDEES SUBSCRIBE TO THIS FINE AFFAIR BY THE NINETEENTH
OF MARCH. DEAR READER, IT WILL CERTAINLY BE A NIGHT TO
REMEMBER!

YOURS,

LADY WHISTLEDOWN

Seasonals



THE UNTOLD IRISH HISTORY

BY: NORA HORSTMANN-ALLEN

As St. Patty's, Easter, and Spring Break are upon us, I thought I would bring the mood down a tad. As you may or may not be aware, Ireland has had some pretty depressing history, as seen in the Irish Potato Famine, but wait! It doesn't stop there. I was recently on exchange in Ireland, and basically everywhere you go on the island something bad had happened, and there is something there to remind you.

Ireland (formally) became part of the British Empire in 1801 through the Acts of Union, but had slowly been conquered since 1196, and stayed a part of the Empire until 1949, though independence began to be legally established in 1922. And even now the six most northern counties are a part of the UK.

The British governed Ireland the same way they governed the rest of their colonies, with high taxes, forced military service, and little-to-no political or religious autonomy (hold onto the religion thing for when we get to the Troubles). The people were rightfully upset with this, so the very first rebellion seeking home rule happened in 1798 and is considered the first full attempt for Irish freedom. It lasted for four and a half months, and roughly 30,000 people died in the conflict. This rebellion was highly unsuccessful, but it did place the concept into the hearts of a few.

THE UNTOLD IRISH HISTORY

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After this there were four more unsuccessful rebellions, Robert Emmet's Rebellion of 1803 (an attempt to seize Dublin Castle from the British), the Young Irelander Rebellion of 1848 (a rebellion sparked by the Great Famine), the Fenian Rising of 1867 (a revolt organised by the Irish Republican Brotherhood) and, the most important one, the Easter Rising of 1916. The Easter Rising recieved the most publicity and support the Fenians had received in their attempts at a rebellion, but due to several miscommunications and mishaps it only occurred in Dublin.

One of the most important aspects of the Easter Rising was the proclamation declaring Ireland a free republic, "The Provisional Government of the Irish Republic to the People of Ireland."



This is one of the 15 remaining copies of the original proclamation. I got to see two of them. (Photo: me! @Kilmainham)

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But the fifteen men who organized the majority of the rebellion, seven of whom signed the proclamation, were arrested and executed in Kilmainham Gaol (a very old and honestly cool jail in Dublin. Fun fact: parts of *Paddington 2* were filmed there) in the following weeks. These executions in many ways truly sparked the Irish War of Independence three years later in 1919, lasting until 1921 when British forces pulled out of Ireland, allowing for the end goal of home rule. But, a year later, the Irish Civil War began. It started as a fight between the government and the IRA (Irish Republican Army) because of a treaty with Britain that ended the War of Independence, but required the Irish parliament, the Dáil, to swear their loyalty to the British monarchy. A year into the conflict, the anti-treaty IRA realized victory was not possible and lost the war.

The bulk of these conflicts occurred in Southern Ireland, but starting in the late 1960s, Northern Ireland looked much like a war-torn country, and it was, in a way. The Troubles is the commonly known name for thirty years of fighting that was concentrated mostly in Belfast. They began for political and religious reasons (see, I told you it would be important). Northern Ireland, which was, and is, still a part of the UK, was split between native Irish Catholics and primarily Scottish Protestants.

THE UNTOLD IRISH HISTORY

BY: NORA HORSTMANN-ALLEN

Because Britain was a Protestant country, the Catholics were heavily discriminated against, viewed themselves as Irish, and held strong nationalist ideologies. As a result, many of them became members of the IRA. The Troubles started in Derry during a march of the Apprentice Boys of Derry, which passed through a Catholic neighborhood. Residents were separated from the marchers, which led to three days of rioting that spread to Belfast. At this point, the British military was sent in to hopefully stop the fighting. Shocking no one, it didn't work, and citizens began forming their own paramilitary organizations, so the British decided to build "peace walls" between the Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods of Belfast. The next few decades were marked by terrorism and death at the hands of Catholics, Protestants, and the British military. Bombings and shootings were common in every space in Belfast and Derry, with more than 3,500 people being killed, with more than half of them being civilians. Peace talks began in the early '90s, and by 1997 there were ceasefires between the main paramilitary groups. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 is considered the true end to the Troubles, but shortly after, a group who called themselves the Real IRA and were against the ceasefire killed twenty-nine people.

THE UNTOLD IRISH HISTORY

BY: NORA HORSTMANN-ALLEN

To this day, the peace walls are still up in Belfast, and gates between the Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods close at 10:30 every night so that it is not possible to travel between the two as tensions are still high. If you go between the two areas, one of the main differences are the flags that are being flown outside of people's homes. In the Catholic neighborhood, you will see Irish flags and flags supporting a united Ireland, but in the Protestant neighborhood, there are a large number of British flags being flown.

Overall, this is barely a taste of the sad history of Ireland. Sorry! But I will say, the people of Dublin really know how to celebrate. Every year there are a number of St. Patrick's Day parades, as they take it very seriously, and it really was a wonderful experience to be there for two weeks. For the most part, things are looking up for the entire island. The tour guide in Belfast said that the current generation who didn't live through the Troubles is building bridges and people are healing. So don't get too depressed!

THE UNTOLD IRISH HISTORY

BY: NORA HORSTMANN-ALLEN

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Current Events



CLOSING THE GAP: GENERATIONAL CHANGE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

BY: JOSLYN HO

Currently, the United States' average retirement age is approximately 62 to 64 years old. Yet, the Boomer generation—the demographic cohort born between 1946 and 1964—occupies a considerable portion of today's Congress. The median age of voting members in the House of Representatives, the lower chamber of Congress, is currently 57.5 years, while the median age of the Senate is 64.7 years. However, individuals aged 70 or older take up around 20% of the House's seats, and 33% of the Senate's. While this percentage is a minority, it does raise significant constituent concerns- some of which include a natural decline of cognitive or physical health, and a disconnect from modern issues.

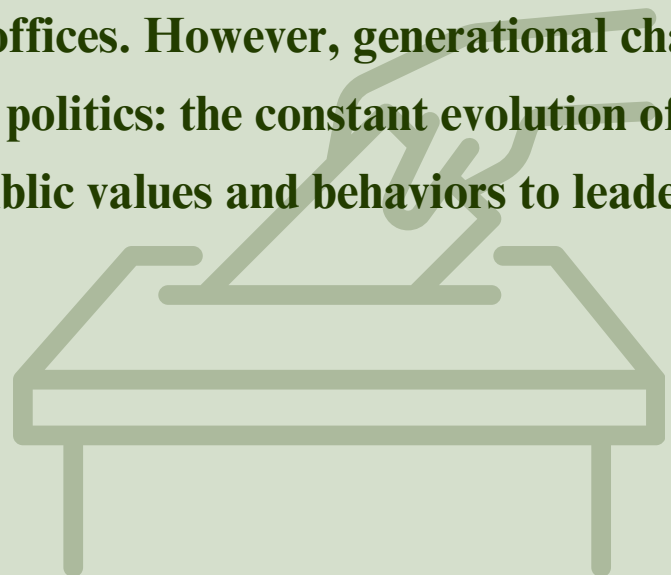
However, this percentage isn't unchallenged, especially as the Democratic party prepares for state primaries and runoffs in the coming months. Primary and runoff elections are used to determine which candidates will run for the 2026 midterm elections in November, which decide the composition of Congress. In multiple cases, Democratic incumbents—the current holder of a political position—face competitive primaries from younger Democratic challengers.

CLOSING THE GAP: GENERATIONAL CHANGE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

BY: JOSLYN HO

Texas Representative Al Green, 78, must run against Christian Menefee, 37. North Carolina Representative Valerie Foushee, 69, is rematching against progressive Nida Allam, 32. Tennessee Representative Steve Cohen, 76, must compete with his former 31-year-old intern Justin Pearson. Georgia Representative David Scott, 80, fronts multiple younger challengers.

Though many of these elections' results have not been formally announced yet, the fact that numerous incumbents must handle serious competition in previously sweeping primaries indicates the Democrat party's beginning of generational change. Not only are younger candidates gaining growing support, but they also express a desire to break from long-established political elites and the ability to approach modern issues from a refreshing perspective that constituents may not have experienced from incumbent offices. However, generational change can signify something greater than politics: the constant evolution of numerous societal aspects, from public values and behaviors to leadership roles.



CLOSING THE GAP: GENERATIONAL CHANGE IN AMERICAN POLITICS

BY: JOSLYN HO

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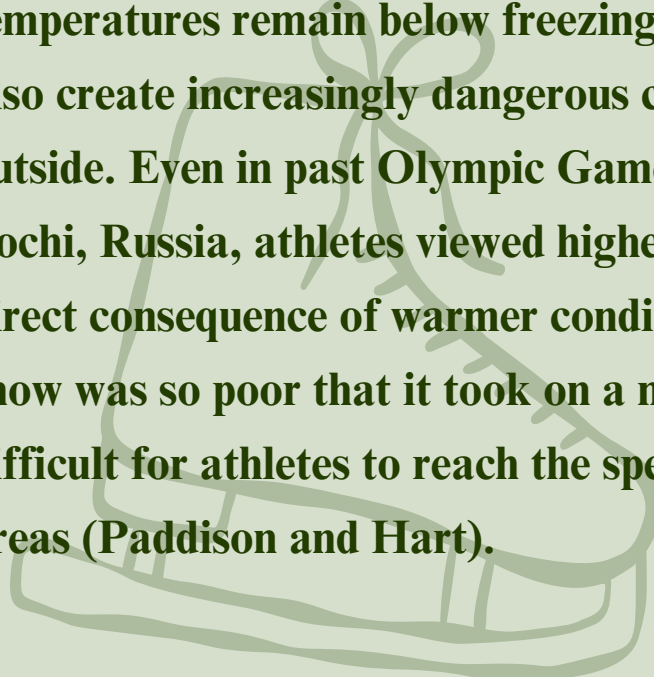
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CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE WINTER OLYMPICS

BY: KATIE MARSHALL

In recent years, climate change has begun to cause increased complications, many of which may not be generally seen as consequences of shifting weather patterns. With the recent Winter Olympics, the effects of large-scale warming have begun to shine through more clearly than they have in the past. The Winter Olympics, hosted in the Italian Alps this year, have shown significant changes in weather conditions and the number of events that are hosted outside, even in the seventy years since the games were hosted in the same location (Paddison and Hart). Events like ice skating, hockey, curling, and many more have shifted to indoor, climate-controlled locations, where in the past temperatures were consistent enough for these events to be held outside. Temperatures have risen roughly 6.4 degrees Fahrenheit on average within the town itself, resulting in around forty-one less days where temperatures remain below freezing (Paddison and Hart). These conditions also create increasingly dangerous conditions for events that are still held outside. Even in past Olympic Games, like the 2014 Winter Olympics held in Sochi, Russia, athletes viewed higher injury and crash rates within events as a direct consequence of warmer conditions, some stating that the quality of snow was so poor that it took on a more slush-like consistency and made it difficult for athletes to reach the speeds they anticipated and reach landing areas (Paddison and Hart).



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Along with this, the pool for locations for the Winter Olympics has shrunk enormously, especially because of the continuation of the games with the Paralympics. Turning to past and potential hosts of the games, researchers in 2024 looked into the conditions of ninety-three locations to see whether or not their weather patterns would hold up to the conditions required to host the Winter Olympics. Research found that only fifty-two of these locations would be suitable to host the games twenty-five years down the line, regardless of whether or not they make changes to alleviate the climate crisis (Paddison and Hart). This raises several concerns, not only for athletes, but for those of us who simply enjoy watching the games and taking pride in the things that said athletes have accomplished. Additionally, the possibilities for hosts for the Paralympics look even more dire, with only twenty-two possible locations holding up later into the year, and, if conditions continue to worsen, the pool lessens to four (Paddison and Hart). In order to supplement this decrease in snow pack, human technology has been able to replicate conditions to a degree. This year, the Olympic organizers produced 2.4 cubic meters of snow, using roughly 250 million gallons of water, to make up for a decrease in snow (Paddison and Hart). However, these machines still require cold temperatures and dry air to function, and, at times, it was so warm that the machines only worked at night. While some claim that the machines remain within the natural water cycle, others see the amount of water and energy required, possibly furthering the climate crisis (Paddison and Hart). Regardless, it has become increasingly obvious that the Winter Olympics will not be able to continue to be hosted the same way in the future.

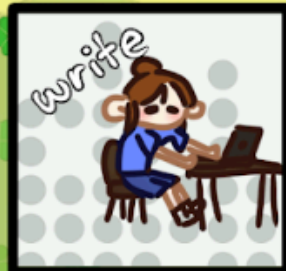
CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE WINTER OLYMPICS

BY: KATIE MARSHALL

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Comics By: Jane Rix



In My Regency Era



*May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be
always at your back, may the sun shine warm
upon your face, the rains fall soft upon your fields,
and until we meet again, may God hold you in the
palm of His hand"*
—An Irish Blessing

**Happy
St. Patrick's
Day**