

The Continuing Space Race

By Ofek Donio-Gideon '25



Whale Fall

By Grace Ma '24

In 2020, 470 pilot whales were stranded and 380 died. In September 2022, nearly 400 pilot whales died in a mass stranding off the coast of Australia. Only fifty whales were rescued. Navigation errors are the main cause of such deaths. If these whales are lucky enough to be found in time, they may be returned to the sea; otherwise, they will die. When whales die in the ocean and their bodies sink to the bottom, it is known as a *whale fall*.

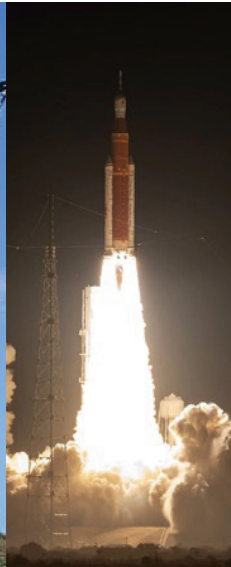
Not all whale deaths are called whale falls; only whale carcasses that sink into the deep ocean or abyssal zones, or at depths greater than 1,000 meters, are referred to in this way. An important watershed on the sea floor is at 200 meters: above 200 meters, there is plenty of sunlight and a wide variety of organisms, the densest living area for marine life, while below 200 meters, where the sunlight does not reach, there is a gradual decrease in the number of organisms. Whale fall can provide food to creatures living below 200 meters and thus support a significant ecosystem.

Researchers have found that there are four stages in a whale fall ecosystem. The first stage is when the whale's carcass reaches the sea floor, where scavengers such as blind eels, sleeping sharks, and deep-sea crabs quickly discover it. They remove more than 90% of

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SpaceX
Starship rocket



NASA
SLS rocket



China
Tiangong space station (illustration)

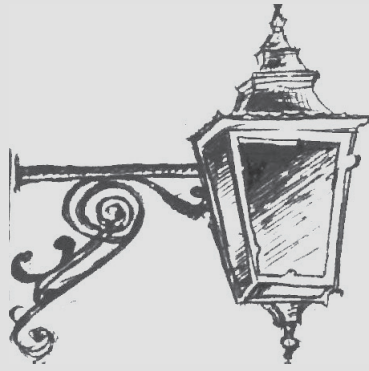
We all know about the space race, the Soviets sent a man to space, and we landed a man on the moon, you get the idea. But unbeknownst to most people, there is a space race going on right now, in 2022. Why? Who's in it? I'll try to answer all of these in this article.

The interest in space has mostly died down after the Apollo missions, with the last mission to the moon being Apollo 17 in 1972. After the Apollo missions, space travel has mostly been reduced to NASA's Space Shuttle, flying from 1981 to 2011, and the Russian Soyuz spacecraft mostly used to get humans to and from a few space stations NASA and Russia built. But why did we stop going to the moon if we already had the technology to do so? Why not go even further, like Mars? One man who asked this question was Elon Musk, a millionaire (at the time) who made his riches by creating things like X.com and PayPal. Elon wanted to build a city on Mars so that if something were to wipe out life on one planet, humanity could continue on the other. Even though there hadn't been a single

private company that had ever reached orbit, Elon's company SpaceX, founded in 2002, has now made a revolutionary rocket and managed to land the first stage of an orbital rocket using its engines. Unlike the Space Shuttle, whose re-use only ever made it more expensive, SpaceX has perfected landing and re-using its Falcon 9 rocket, driving down the costs of spaceflight like never before, and pretty much out-pricing all of the competition. Now, SpaceX is developing a rocket called Starship that will be capable of taking humans to Mars, and instead of just landing the first stage, the entire rocket can be reused, something that is several orders of magnitude harder. If we want to make spaceflight something common and affordable, Musk proposes we have the vehicle fully and rapidly re-usable after every flight, just like airplanes.

Even though SpaceX already has a full-scale 394-foot tall Starship on the launchpad ready for its first orbital flight, other private companies are not far behind. Several other

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15 EAST

The Steiner Seasonal

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Thoughts of Shivers

By Maya Landau '26

Shivering in my skin

The cold creep in

Crying

Laughing

Dying

Forgotten words and miracles

Forgotten things we loved

Together reunited

But forever torn apart

The darkness that surrounds us

Is not always full of hate

The light we hold so dear

Can bring forth the things we fear

Silence is not the problem

Silence is our right

Forget the bones

And the things we've grown

And find the ones we've lost

The people we beat

The people we cheat

The ones we lead astray

Will never come back

Will forever lack

The love we took away

Astrology

By Briana Besanceney '24

When we talk about astrology, we almost always talk about our sun sign. We know this by our birthdays (day and month). For example, I was born on July 14th, and I am a Cancer. The time of Cancer spans from June 22nd to July 22nd, which is when the sun is in the sign of Cancer in the sky. Well, what does a sun sign mean anyway? It is considered to inform you who you are at the core; your personality and identity. However, your sun sign is only a small part of your whole birth/natal chart and who you are in an astrological sense. Your birth chart is made up of all the planets of the solar system (minus Earth, of course), Pluto, the moon, and a rising or ascendant sign.

Before we get into the planets of the solar system, we will start with the placements that make up the “big three.” But what is a “big three”? Many of our characteristics are determined by your sun sign, your moon sign, where the moon was in which zodiac at the time of your birth, and your rising/ascendant sign, the constellation that was ascending on the eastern horizon at the time of your birth. In this issue of *15 East's Astrology Column*, I will detail what the placements of the “big three” entail as well as what all the planets of the solar system mean in your natal chart.

MOON

The second part of the “big three,” your moon sign represents your emotions. Representing your feelings, moods, and deeper self, you may find yourself relating more to this sign. Your moon has a lot to do with introspection, as it has to do with the emotions of your inner world while your sun shines out external emotions.

ASCENDANT/RISING

Your ascendant, a.k.a. your rising sign, determines how you present yourself—essentially what sign others perceive you to be like in terms of your surface-level characteristics, a first impression. For example, someone could be an Aries sun but a Cancer rising, having the disposition of a pensive, emotional Cancer,

but still truly having the fiery resolution of an Aries.

MERCURY

The planet of communication is Mercury. Moreover, known as “the mind’s planet,” Mercury determines how you learn and process information, perceive and reason with people and situations, and what your intelligence traits are.

VENUS

You guessed it! Venus is the planet of love. How you show affection and appreciate beauty in your life is influenced by whatever sign is in your Venus placement. Also, your Venus sign shows what characteristics others may find interesting. Of course, with astrological compatibility tests, your Venus sign plays a very important role.

MARS

Named after the god of war, the planet of aggression indicates your self-assertiveness, and what ways you take action. It also shows how you are when you are angry and in what ways you are ambitious.

JUPITER

As one of the social planets, your Jupiter sign dictates how you are in terms of optimism and idealism, what your philosophical standpoints are, and how you expand into the world. It also represents good fortune and in what ways you are generous and joyous.

SATURN

Your sign in Saturn—the second social planet—displays your limitations, boundaries responsibilities, and apprehensions, how you discipline and restrict yourself in the world. For example, Leo is known as a very free-spirited and boisterous sign, and having Leo in Saturn, a free sign in a restrictive planet can cause some disharmony. However, this may mean you are more assertive in your boundaries and knowledgeable of your limitations.

URANUS

Uranus is the first of the planets that remains fixed in the same sign for a certain amount of time. For Uranus, that time span is 7 years, so, it says more about the group of

people born in that time than an individual. Innovation, change, and authenticity are what Uranus embodies. You and your age group’s style of self-expression are influenced by this sign.

NEPTUNE

Fixed in the same sign for 14 years, Neptune governs a wide age group’s imagination, even dreams and subconscious states. Since it influences the subconscious, it influences intuition and other mysterious, elusive traits as well.

PLUTO

Fixed for up to 30 years, Pluto is the ruler of a generation. The planet of power, control, and rebirth puzzles astrologers still, especially with its odd timing with changing signs. For those born between 1996-2007 (and some alternating parts of 2008) like me, Pluto is in Sagittarius, providing those born then positive, confident, independent, curious, mind-sets.

You may be wondering: “Well how do I find all my planet placements?” I recommend *The Only Astrology Book You'll Ever Need* by Joanna Martine Woolfolk which has astrological tables spanning 1900–2100. It also has information on numerous other things that your zodiac may entail for you and those in your life. If you do not have the access, time, or patience to seek out and read this book and other ones like it, any website should do (I use Costar and astro.cafeastrology.com)! It is important to remember that analyzing one’s horoscope does not substitute seeking life advice or important help from your family, friends, or from professionals, nor is it an explanation for everything.

In the next issue of the *Astrology Column*, you will find discussions on compatibility with friends and crushes! If you are curious about whether you may be compatible with someone astrologically, send me an email at bbesanceney@steiner.edu or slip a note into my mailbox or locker. I will be keeping all submissions and questions anonymous.

Current on Climate Change

By Allistair Schnieders '25 &
Zora Djordjevic '25

As a modern-day society, we often hear about the effects of climate change around the world such as extreme flooding, higher temperatures, increased greenhouse gasses, and recurring droughts and wildfires. As we pass life by, not thinking of the repercussions of what we're doing or what's happening around us, it is easy to believe that we are not being affected by global warming, but that is far from the truth. The world is forever changing as we stand still. Due to human intervention, the world is now changing at a faster pace than ever, the climate is getting warmer, communities are flooding, and devastating storms are becoming more frequent. Our home is being increasingly affected by the impacts of climate change and millions of New Yorkers are entirely oblivious to the damage that is being done.

Throughout history, we've seen a rise in temperatures, but since the industrial revolution at the end of the 1700s, we have also significantly increased pollution. Climate change is the result of greenhouse gasses which are produced by cars, factories, and other sources of fossil fuels that get trapped within our atmosphere. As heat enters our atmosphere, it's trapped by greenhouse gasses causing the earth's temperatures to rise.

New York City has been at the frontier for human development and industrialization as it acts as one of the major trade ports due to its proximity to the sea as well as its major economic influence. According to New York's Department of Environmental Conservation, since 1970 New York City has experienced a rise in temperatures by 2.4 percent and temperatures are expected to increase five degrees by 2100. While this may not sound alarming, the UN and world leaders in the 2015 Paris Agreement committed to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius by the end of this century to avert a climate disaster. One of the results of the heavy rains and rising temperatures is the rising sea level, which has risen more than a foot since 1900, affecting the lives of millions.

One example of New York's vulnerability has been the increase in damaging storms over

the past 10 years. One of New York's most devastating storms was hurricane Sandy which hit the city with severe floods in October 2012. Hurricane Sandy affected millions of people many of whom saw their houses wrecked, and climate scientists have said that this will be the first of many such storms. During the hurricane, 14 foot waves swept onto the shores of New York causing blackouts and severe flooding; to this day, we still see the effects of this hurricane. This illustrates what will come in the future as global warming increases. Ten years later, we see devastating storms and hurricanes such as Hurricane Ian which rampaged through Florida and the southern United States.

With the increase in temperatures and impending dangers, people's health has become one of the major problems. With hotter climates and dryer weather, water scarcity is starting to become a reality and with that more dangers are starting to arise. People have begun to develop heat strokes and other heat-related illnesses. Pollution in big cities such as New York has also become a significant issue due to the effects it has on those with breathing illnesses such as asthma. People's health has become a major concern and with the continuation of climate change, it may get worse.

Public health has continued to deteriorate also due to the effects of climate change on agriculture. Many ecosystems within New York contribute to the function of the world, but as heat rises and the air is polluted, more and more species are migrating or becoming extinct. Plants are also having a hard time adjusting and every year harvests are coming up short in parts of New York. With the varying climates, these ecosystems are beginning to fail and with that food shortages are beginning to develop. Agriculture in New York and throughout the US is a significant part of the economy. As foods become more scarce, the economy shrinks which slowly impacts the way we live and the necessities of life, like food.

As already noted, Hurricane Sandy devastated the coastline of New York City causing extreme damage. To avoid another super-storm destroying people's lives, a \$52 billion project has been proposed to build moveable sea barriers across Jamaica Bay to regulate increased sea levels and severe flooding. This is

a large project that requires a lot of time and effort to address the rising sea levels. Since the rise in sea levels threatens waterfront cities such as New York, this plan is important for the safety of the city. The state is attempting to have the project approved by Congress which would cover 65% percent of the cost. This plan was originally presented to Donald Trump who dismissed it since the cost of the project would have been \$119 billion. If the project works, New York will save about \$6.2 billion in flood damage per year.

There are two approaches to the plan: either build a completely new engineering system or adapt existing coastline properties to defend themselves from the climate. The conclusion has been to divide the project into both approaches, with the main focus to be on the engineering system. Concerns about whether this project will put coastal ecosystems at risk and if the structures would worsen the flooding and draining systems are further delaying the plan. The construction is expected to last from 2030 to 2044, but hopefully, it will protect our city.

New York City and New York state have also begun the development of various other projects to fight back against climate change and its effects. In a recent statement, New York Governor Kathy Hochul spoke out about climate change and the goals she has for New York. In her proclamation, according to the NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association), the hottest years in history were from 2013 to 2021, with 2021 being the sixth warmest year on record. To fight back against this changing climate, New York developed *The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA)* in 2019. New York State has begun a mass ramp-up in the development of clean energy which includes a \$35 billion investment in 120 large-scale renewable and transmission projects across the state, as well as a \$6.8 billion plan to reduce building emissions. A \$1.8 billion investment was implemented to scale up the production of solar energy and more than \$1 billion is being distributed in the development of clean transportation initiatives. Finally, \$1.6 billion is being put into NY Green Bank commitments to help communities in need. In their development of new energy production plants, New York has promised the creation of more

than 120 solar panels as well as more land-based wind, and offshore wind projects. According to the state, these new plants will be capable of providing over 66% percent of New York's energy.

An additional advantage of the increased use of renewable energy bills is the creation of over 8,300 jobs. These bills contribute to eliminating 49 million tons of CO₂ in the state and collection of 7.5 million megawatt hours of renewable energy per year. All of these renewable energy sources are located in New York State which supports lowering energy costs while lifting the economy. With a commitment to remove the most polluting of vehicles from the roads, the CLCPA has stated its goal of an 85 percent reduction in statewide greenhouse gasses by 2085. They've also stated that they wish to be at a zero percent emission rate by 2040 and a 70 percent reduction by 2030.

Along with the development of several new energy projects and protections against rising sea levels, New York is beginning the development of green spaces throughout the city. With an average of 30,000 new residential units being constructed every year, the development of green spaces has also been expedited. New York has 1,700 parks across the five boroughs and the development of green spaces contributes to that. Green spaces and parks make up only 14% percent of New York, but each year new ones are built. Amongst many historical and new buildings, people have begun to implement green spaces and parks. Green spaces are essential to fighting back against climate change as they can act as natural air coolants and help remove CO₂ from the air. We need more green spaces in our life as it is essential to our livelihood and the control of the environment even in concrete jungles like New York.

New York continues to act as a frontier for human development as it battles climate change through its different projects, but it requires more support and awareness. Even the most finite changes in your lifestyle such as using public transportation can improve our environment. Climate change affects all of us and saving ourselves from a climate disaster it requires all of our participation.



Nuclear Waste in Japan

By Isabel Liu '24

Japan announced in spring of 2021 that they will be releasing waste from their Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the ocean over the course of the next two years. In 2011, the plant suffered damage from an earthquake and tsunami water causing molten fuel to affect the wrecked containment vessels. This wastewater is now held in over 1000 steel tanks on the premises of the Fukushima plant. Japan's Nuclear Regulation Authority wishes to empty this waste in the form of treated water; Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga claiming "We will do our utmost to keep the water far above safety standards." Multiple neighboring countries, environmental groups and fisheries have expressed great concern and condemned this decision. Wang Wenbin, spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry said, "It is extremely irresponsible for Japan to ignore the concerns of various parties in releasing the contaminated water, which China is opposed to."

Radiation is extremely harmful to marine life. Killing animals immediately, creating mutations in their offspring or passing harmful radioactive substances up the food chain are only a few of the effects.

This decision does not only affect the water local to Japan and its neighboring countries but could potentially have an effect on global waters and marine life as a whole.

For now, the best thing we can do is to bring awareness to the issue.

the whale's soft tissues, a feast that typically lasts 4 to 12 months. This first stage is known as the *mobile-scavenger* stage. After the large scavengers leave contentedly, other small organisms adapt to the debris environment for a brief period of time and reproduce rapidly, relying on food scraps to sustain them for two to three years. These smaller organisms take advantage of their opportunities as part of what is called the *enrichment-opportunist* stage. After these two stages, only the skeleton of a whale remains. This is the *self-filling* stage. Whale bones are rich in lipids. When large numbers of anaerobic bacteria enter the bones to break down the lipids, hydrogen sulfide is produced. It provides power for other microorganisms. As the world's largest mammal, whales break down lipids slowly, so this stage can last 50 to 100 years. The final stage is the *reef* stage. When the last organic material in the whale is consumed, the remains will become a coral reef that serves as a colony for many marine organisms and provides a home for wandering deep-sea creatures.

Many people might be wondering why whale falls are so important. 1977 was the year when the first whale falls were discovered. They found the carcass of a gray whale on the bottom of the sea at a depth of more than 1000 meters. Whales are a keystone species in the ocean, so it affects the survival of many species. They provide valuable nutrients to the plankton that grow in shallow waters. Plankton is at the base of the food chain in the marine ecosystem and therefore provide food for other organisms. In this way, the chain continues. Whales are an unbreakable link in the balance of the marine ecosystem.

When a whale passes away in the ocean, its carcass can feed a decomposer-based recycling system for up to 100 years. The ocean is so vast that finding a whale colony is like finding a needle in a haystack. To date, fewer than 50 whale colonies have been found in the world.

Environmental Impacts of the Cattle Industry

By Noah Miller '25

Cattle and dairy farming have inflamed the current global climate crisis with greenhouse gas emissions. Harmful greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide are released through cow burps and manure. Particularly in developed nations, beef and dairy are the most consumed animal products aside from chicken and eggs. But as the global climate crisis worsens, many people's diets will have to change dramatically.

The statistics highlight the urgency of shifting from beef to a protein source. Livestock produces 14.5% of all greenhouse gas emissions globally, of which cattle create nearly 62%. The cattle industry in the United States alone was responsible for 136.5 million metric tons of methane gas in 2020. Methane is one of the most potent greenhouse gases, and surplus amounts pose a severe threat to the stability of the global climate. On average, beef production creates 295 grams of carbon dioxide per gram of protein in the meat, while alternative protein sources such as pork and chicken produce 55 and 35 grams, respectively.

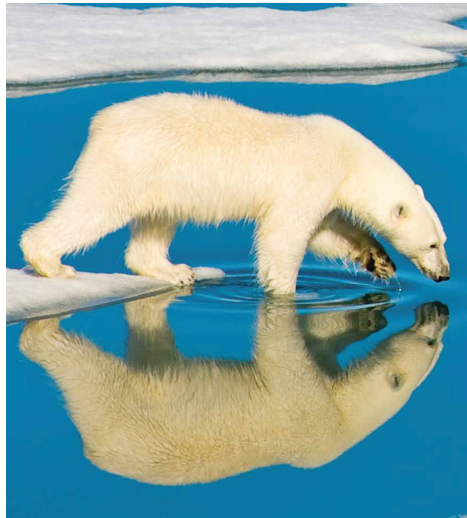
Most of the emissions produced by cattle and dairy farming are methane gas. While methane is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, it breaks down relatively quickly in the atmosphere. The nature of methane means that lowering emissions of it is one of the most immediate ways to combat climate change and its effects. "Cutting methane is the biggest opportunity to slow warming between now and 2040," Durwood Zaelke, a lead reviewer for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, said in August of 2021.

A shift off cattle-based animal products is a necessary step in the fight against climate change. While other forms of livestock are significantly better for the environment than cattle, other forms of livestock suffer from the same issues that cattle do. These animals' emissions are still relatively high, and raising this livestock uses a tremendous and unsustainable amount of water.

Livestock is responsible for over 30% of all freshwater consumption globally, with cattle needing to drink over 15,000 liters of water per kilogram of meat produced. While other conventional protein sources require much less

water (~6000 L/Kg for pork, ~4300 L/Kg for chicken), this level of water consumption will become unsustainable as the quality and quantity of freshwater decreases due to climate change.

Many experts suggest the introduction of insects to the western diet as an alternative protein source. Edible insects contain high-quality protein for human consumption. In addition, they require several times less food and water to produce the same calories and protein as all livestock. Many people are squeamish about this idea, but the ends justify the means on a larger scale



Climate Change

By Daliah Gressel '25

The recent floods in Pakistan caused destruction on an unprecedented scale. A third of the country is underwater. The areas underwater are larger than Britain. Thirty-three million people have been displaced. Cattle are dead or starving and there are puppies in rushing waters. The country's healthcare, education, and agriculture infrastructure have been devastated. Its losses are estimated to be around thirty million dollars. The country is calling for reparations.

According to a recent UN report, countries around the world are failing to live up to their commitments to fight climate change. This points earth toward a more intense future marked by more intense flooding, wildfires, drought, heat waves, and species extinction. The world's top polluters are China and the United States. Without drastic reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, the planet is on track to warm by an average of 2.1 to 2.9

degrees Celsius, compared with preindustrial levels, by 2100. This is far higher than the goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius set by the landmark Paris agreement in 2015, crossing the threshold beyond which the likelihood of catastrophic climate impacts significantly increases, according to scientists. With each fraction of a degree of warming, tens of millions more people worldwide could be exposed to life-threatening heat waves, food and water scarcity, and coastal flooding while millions more mammals, insects, birds, and plants would disappear.

The annual UN climate conference is from November sixth to November eighteenth in Sharm El Seikh, Egypt. It is known as COP27. World leaders and climate activists will gather in Egypt for two weeks of negotiations. Ahead of the conference, only 26 of 193 countries that agreed last year to step up their climate actions have followed through with more ambitious plans. The protection of vulnerable countries is important. This year, the conference will focus on Pakistan, small island nations, and vulnerable nations in Asia and Africa.

The war in Ukraine will affect the talks. The International Energy Agency said the war could speed up the change to clean energy. The COP27 will be one place where we will see if leaders are as serious about climate change as they are about their energy needs. However, the West denies the scale of destruction. Pakistan generates less than one percent of the world's carbon emissions, and the global warming affecting Pakistan is overwhelmingly caused by rich people thousands of miles away, mostly in the West. The West prefers to blame the victim of this disaster. John Kerry, the U.S. climate envoy, said of climate reparations at the U.N. General Assembly last week, "You tell me the government in the world that has trillions of dollars, 'cause that's what it costs." Western governments do have trillions of dollars, and they have had more than a decade to think through how climate reparations should work.

A global climate movement has made people aware of their carbon footprint, the impact of their eating habits, and the evils of fossil fuel companies, but it has yet to convince people that they and their government can and should pay for what they helped to destroy. Those who became rich from fossil fuels should pay for the destruction they cause.

Womxly

By Rubikelly ZhaoHuang '23

"Which roses don't have the thorns?" These are the lyrics of the song "Womxnly." The song is about a 15-year-old boy named Yongzhi Ye, who was discriminated against and bullied to death by his classmates because of his preference for boys. Was his preference wrong? There is no wrong; the wrong is the world's prejudice. Womxnly, also called The Roses, a romantic name, is about the dignity of a boy who was once abused, and a boy's lost life. Although in today's society, many things have progressed by leaps and bounds, there is a need for progress in breaking the stereotypes of gender and sexual orientation.

Unfortunately, prejudice is deeply rooted in the fabric of our society. There has always been a lot of fear, rejection, and even hatred of homosexuality or minority groups, and to this day, many still struggle against the phenomenon. Some people take this prejudice to the more extreme act of bullying. Just this year, on September 10, another Rose fell in Shandong, China. His name is Yan Gao and he was a 19-year-old, talented student at the Academy of Arts. He had won dance awards and participated in the CMG Spring Festival Gala. If his train of life had continued to run smoothly in this direction, his future would have been glittering. But reality is always cruel. This teenager, who was supposed to shine on the stage, was oppressed and unfairly treated by his teacher Dalu Zhang for a long time because of his sexual orientation. He chose to end his life at the Mid-Autumn Festival, the festival where his family should be reunited.

What makes art great is tolerance, in not being defined. But this art school teacher was prejudiced against his student because of his sexual orientation and assigned Yan Gao, who was originally a brilliant student, to a less advantaged class. Unable to accept the teacher's decision, Yan Gao approached Dalu Zhang privately, but all he got was a perfunctory response and continued suppression. He didn't know where the teacher's unprovoked dislike came from, and he didn't know why he was using his power to treat him so unfairly. Maybe he was cornered or had lost hope for the future, but Yan Gao finally chose to commit suicide. People give sexual minorities beautiful aliases: rainbows and roses, both of which are beautiful to the naked eye. But the cruel thing

is that the rainbow must endure the storm, and the rose will quickly fade. The beauty that is not recognized by the world is always fickle. Yan Gao did not wait for the blooming of his thorns but left the world that kissed him with pain, with regret.

In this world of equality, the call for "equal treatment of homosexuals" is constantly being made. China is no exception, and more and more people are beginning to accept and respect this idea. The LGBT community has been vigorously defending its rights. But for China, with its focus on conventional concepts, it is a huge shock and challenge to achieve full acceptance. This is because it is a conflict between the conventional and the freedom of sexual orientation.

In most people's minds in China, marrying a person of the opposite sex at the right age and then having children and raising them is essential to a person's life. Therefore, most elders will not be able to understand homosexuality. Although we cannot make everyone accept and change their views, the attitude we should have should be of respect, tolerance, and understanding. Respect each distinct individual; respect their innate talents and efforts because we are the true masters of our own destinies.

Gender should not override one's will. Sexual orientation is not a reason for others to bully and abuse. There was nothing wrong with Yan Gao, but what is wrong is when anyone in a society looks at others with prejudice and delivers harsh judgment. We should reject all forms of violence. Do not add labels onto another; each person is unique, not to be defined and given a chance to live a wonderful life. We can't force others to change their thinking and to understand the world in all its forms, but we can manage ourselves so that the voice of reason can emit even a faint light and hope that all roses can bloom brilliantly!

Space Race

Continued from Page 1

private companies like Rocket Lab successfully launched a rocket into orbit, and most of them agree with SpaceX that re-usability is the future when it comes to rockets.

Although it looks like private companies have a monopoly when it comes to space travel, it is far from true. Government space agencies are also hard at work making great advancements in science, with the International Space Station still operating after 24 years of service, continually inhabited for the last 22 years. China also has a space agency, but they are not a part of the International Space Station because the United States banned China from joining after they caught them stealing data from NASA, but that didn't stop the Chinese from advancing a space program on their own. The Chinese have launched two small space stations with humans on them, each one spending a few years in orbit. Now the Chinese are building a giant space station called the Tiangong Space Station, which is much bigger than the previous ones they had. The Chinese have already launched nine astronauts of their own to the Tiangong Station in the year and a half that it has been in space, and most of the modules have already been launched. In the future, the Chinese are also planning to make a base on the south pole of the moon together with the Russians. NASA has also built a giant 321 ft tall rocket called SLS with plans to carry humans once again to the moon. Although the program has been delayed multiple times and has gone billions of dollars over its initial budget, NASA successfully launched Artemis I in mid-November 2022, the first unmanned test flight of SLS. A crewed Artemis II launch is planned for 2024, and SpaceX was tasked to build a (separately launched) lunar lander for the Artemis III mission, planned to launch in 2025.

With all of these things happening, it's safe to assume that space travel is entering a renaissance, with several planned lunar missions, plans to land humans on Mars, and private companies leading the way in new rocket development. The collaboration in space is far from over, as seen by NASA teaming up with many private companies, but with the war in Ukraine sending the International Space Station down an uncertain path and tensions growing between the United States and China, it's safe to assume that space will become a very competitive place much faster than most people think.

A second space race is surely coming, we just don't know yet what the goal is.

Current Events

Why do Ukrainians Boycott Russian Culture?

By Anastasia Gerarshchenko '23

Currently, Ukrainians air demanding the world to rethink the image of Russian culture as a whole, taking into account a wide political context: how a culture representative's actions or passivity relate to the geopolitical situation in Russia and the state's actions on the international level. Many western activists and artists express the opinion that Russian culture is not itself guilty, and that the fault lies exclusively on the one who invaded Ukraine, Putin, and not Pushkin. It seems like the people who comment do not fully understand the meaning of the Ukrainian's call for action, and it's worth explaining what Ukrainians want and what we don't.

Ukrainians do not want Russian voices to speak on the international cultural scene instead of ours. Exactly that is what has happened for decades if not centuries: international cultural representation always was and still is mostly directed in the way of the Russian imperial narrative. Russian academic figures, artists, and intellectuals have always gotten the space to comment on Ukraine-Russian matters. It has built a wrong-headed hierarchy: the Russian voice is considered automatically as one having more authority and strength because of its long-time presence and experience of public speaking.

Somehow the rhetoric of the Russians portrays murders, eviction, and persecution of Ukrainians in the context of the genocidal politics of Russia today compared to the everyday domestic discomfort, economic challenges, or potential political pressure on the Russians. It's possible only in the case of colonial logic when the value of the colonizer group is radically higher than the value of the marginalized group, so the discomfort of the first one can seem comparable to the death of the other one. Ukrainians reject this hierarchy.

Today, everyone has seen the danger in that Russian propaganda that speculates on the achievements of culture. Very often cultural figures and cultural achievements of the past become hostages in the hands of propagandists who, relying on their achievements, try to justify their modern crimes. The cultural influence will grow thanks to the art that conveys the positive values of the influencer state. The culture of the Russian Empire justified

the imperial policy aimed at the colonization of occupied, captured territories, in particular, Ukraine.

To unify large-scale territories, throughout its history, Russia invented many myths and "spiritual scraps" that would help assimilate the colonized peoples, justify the aggressive policy, make the imperial narrative natural, and at the same time create an inferiority complex among other peoples of the empire and strengthening their desire to be "Russian".

Russia appropriated the historical name of Rus, the name of the state with its center in Kyiv that existed even before the Mongol invasion. Moscovyva officially began to call itself Russia in the 18th century. Therefore, the Moscovite tsar began to call himself the "Emperor of Russia", and the Moscovite Kingdom became the Russian Empire. Thus, Russia has appropriated both the name Rus and its history, creating a myth about its originality, through which it tries to gain authority among other Slavic peoples.

The practice of lobbying those writers and poets who promote only the imperial narrative, neglecting the true history of the colonial territories, has become quite normal for the Moscow state. Literature began to defend power with interpretations that elevated the center over the periphery of the empire. For the most part, imperial literature is full of tales of victorious heroes, successful commanders, considerable cultural development, and political power. Theses about the superiority of Russians, woven into popular culture, formed the feeling that Russia does everything better than others. Poets and writers are known all of us since childhood and contributed to the promotion of the "Russian world".

Heroes of Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Pushkin, Lermontov, Turgenyev, Chekhov, and others have always been part of the Russian colonial discourse. All of them emphasized the common human experience, avoided the topic of colonialism and imperial policy, or, on the contrary, highlighted it as completely natural.

Since childhood, the common Russian reader lives in a comfortable linguistic environment full of myths that glorify his country. Resentment against conquered peoples, together with confidence in the supremacy of everything Russian, runs through many artists' works. The creative intelligentsia of Ukrainian origin often migrated to the "great land", to the center, where they finally con-

verged and became the imperial representatives.

The rhetoric regarding the reunification of the three Slavic peoples appeared at the end of the 17th century. In the end, Moscovyva absorbed both Ukraine and Belarus. Since that time, Moscovyva pursued an active policy of Russification to assimilate "brotherly" peoples as soon as possible.

The loss of Russian influence on Ukrainian culture began with the declaration of Ukraine's independence, although throughout the 1990s, Russian mass culture flooded the Ukrainian book, pop, and film markets. But the fall of the pro-Russian regime of President Viktor Yanukovich, the annexation of Crimea, and armed aggression in Donbas reversed this process. Russia's war against Ukraine is not only a war for territories, but a war to destroy Ukrainian identity. We always saw and felt how the Russian Federation established obstacles to the restoration of our national memory so that we did not know our past, our culture. At the same time, it always maintained the imperial superiority of Russian culture that had been imposed on Ukraine. The reliance on the Russian language as a conduit of Russian influence did not work everywhere. But Russia, as before, remains in the cultural space of Ukraine. Russian-speaking authors and readers, performers, and listeners have freedom of choice in Ukraine.

Ukrainians want honest introspection from Russian cultural figures, representatives of the academic community, and other public figures. How did it happen that Russia is waging war against civilians in Ukraine? Who allowed the authoritarian rule of Putin for more than twenty years and his genocidal fantasies? Who and what fed them and who wrote Putin's paranoid texts? What are the power structures between the international cultural community - Russia - Ukraine? Why are Western cultural institutions so much more familiar with Russian culture than with Ukrainian culture? What are the intellectual positions of Russia regarding Ukraine? What exactly has Ukraine contributed to Russian culture and why? What is the role of people of intellectual work in the existing perception of Russians about themselves and the international community about Russia? What are the responses of the Russians to everything stated above?

Cafeteria

Interview with Chef Alexander

By Amelia Beltran '24

For the past few years, the position of chef in our school has been equivalent to the coveted Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher from the acclaimed fictional series, *Harry Potter*. Yet, this year I believe we have broken this cycle with our new chef.

With weekends spent in Connecticut in a cabin in the woods, Chef Alexander enjoys his free time renovating and trying to simplify his life. Always with a cheery smile spread across his face while serving lunch to both the Lower and Upper Schools, Chef Alexander tries to create a cozy, familial environment through the halls of the cafeteria. He believes that making food connects us. Though, with the virile toxicity of the culinary world, this was not always the case with our chefs.

thing you read is true... including the misogyny." Chef Alexander believes that food is a personal experience, "that connects people in a sort of intimate way," which can make the industry a bit twisted in his eyes. This is why it is essential for him to create a positive experience for both the team and the consumer (us!) when we step into the cafeteria.

Interestingly, Chef Alexander first found out about Steiner through one of his jobs at a restaurant. Learning more about biodynamic farming led him to the teachings of Rudolf Steiner. Then when the position of chef opened up, he applied and never looked back.

When with his family, Chef Alexander's favorite dish to cook is an obscure and uniquely Swiss dish called *Brod Rösti*. Eaten in most German-speaking countries, rösti is a potato pancake like a latke, made by grating potatoes and frying them in a pan. However, brod rösti is a little different. Not wishing to waste food,

this dish was created in earlier times by taking two- or three-day-old old bread, soaking it in milk, and then frying it in a pan with eggs. It is then eaten with apple sauce. The recipe that he uses is a family one passed down from his grandmother on his father's side and now is used to bring joy to his family. Hopefully, he will one day share his recipe with us!

When asked where he sees himself in 10 years, Chef Alexander said he would love to keep working at Steiner and hopefully finish the restoration of his family's cabin in the woods. One personal goal he has set for himself is to simplify life and get rid of even more belongings.

Holding this interview with Chef Alexander and learning of both the experiences he faced as a chef in New York City, and the culture behind it, was truly eye-opening. As he said, I too hope for a more inclusive environment in the culinary industry.



Coming from Switzerland and due to the schooling system in Switzerland, Chef Alexander decided at the age of 15 that he would apprentice to become a chef. Getting inspiration from watching and eating his father's cooking, he decided to apprentice for four days, learning the trade and gaining a good work ethic and discipline and one day of school for three years. Then at age 22, with a desire to experience a new dynamic, he left Switzerland traveled, then settled into the bustling city of New York in 1995.

Experiencing a multitude of jobs and even opening his own restaurant bar all while experiencing extreme work hours and in an industry brimming with misogyny and toxic work environment. Chef Alexander hopes that due to these habits coming into the public eye by exposés on this culture, he "hopes that it will make things come around" and that "every-

Food Review

By Reedus Writus

By no means am I a chef. Some would also argue my ramen and 60-minute dinner-heavy diet doesn't constitute a refined palate. However, I am not writing an argumentative essay on why Chef Boyardee is a valid chef, I am here to only give a strict and empirical evaluation of the school lunch.

Succulent salmon and butter melting in your mouth, releasing a climax of indescribable transcendental affinity that shakes your innermost being to the core. The smell of sautéed garlic and mushrooms piercing your nasal cavity, and that trembling feeling your hands experience upon the stainless steel when you bring that piece of luscious tofu to your mouth. Though perhaps exaggerated a tad, this sensory imagery is painted in the Ru-

dolf Steiner cafeteria, where Chef Alex and the other kitchen staff are making dang near miracles.

Every day at 1:00PM EST, I look forward to walking into that heavenly aromatic space and stuffing my throat with the kitchen's delicacies. Though we all probably don't share this same point of view, it would be erroneous to ignore the fact the quality of the school's food palate has skyrocketed. Bringing forth together a diverse group of students from different grades and backgrounds into the cafeteria where we can all bond and nourish our innermost beings with good food.

PS Chef Alex if you are reading this, I personally love the rice and beans dish, it would be great if we can see it more on the menu.

Japanese Tonkotsu Ramen in NYC

By Jesslyn Ma '23

Ichiran originated in Fukuoka, Kyushu, Japan, and it has been nearly 60 years since it was founded in 1960. It started as a small ramen shop and later established a central kitchen, noodle factory, and “the World’s First Tonkotsu Ramen Research.” Ichiran is the ramen shop that many people must visit when they visit Japan. In the past two years, Ichiran has aggressively expanded overseas, opening its first US store near Penn Station in 2018. Located in the heart of Manhattan, both students and office workers can conveniently go to dinner here.

The seating pattern in Ichiran is unique, and it will make first-time diners sit up and take notice. Unlike ordinary seats in other restaurants, each seat is separated by a board, which looks like a library study room seat. On each table there is a button to press if the diner needs service. When the food is ready, the servers open the curtain in front of the seat and deliver the food from inside. It is said that the design is to let diners forget all their worries and just concentrate on eating and enjoying the delicious noodles.

After entering the restaurant, diners buy a voucher and are required to fill out an “ordering paper.” Different from the extensive menu of other restaurants, Ichiran only offers one or two types of noodles. But diners can customize their tonkotsu ramen according to their own tastes, including flavor intensity, oil intensity, amount of garlic and scallion, whether to add char siew, the amount of red secret sauce, the hardness of the noodles, and other specific options according to their preferences. The middle of the table also provides the option to “add noodles.” There are also black fungus, nori, runny egg, and other toppings available. After diners finish choosing, the wait is only about 5 to 10 minutes, and the server serves the tonkotsu ramen in less than 15 seconds.

The freshly served tonkotsu ramen is like a distinct river of green onions on one side, char siew on the other, and ramen topped with hot sauce in the middle. Even before eating, the smell of tonkotsu soup makes diners salivate. The soup boils to white and is not greasy. Diners taste the rich pork bone broth before tucking into the noodles, and the fat of the pork

bones slightly adheres to the ramen. Touch the soup between the tip of the tongue, and then feel the elastic ramen between the teeth. When the mouth is not yet finished chewing, it is filled with a mouthful of barbecued pork. The fat and moistening of the pork instantly stimulate the brain nerves, giving diners unique enjoyment. Finally, take the bowl and drink every last drop of soup.

Now, if diners have room in their stomach, they can try the limited dessert. In New York City, matcha pudding is topped with a fresh, slightly bitter matcha sauce, followed by a sweet, full-bodied creme brûlée. With a small spoon, the different layers of flavor of the pudding spread across the taste buds.

Ichiran, for those who haven’t visited Japan but love ramen. It is a great choice to have ramen in New York City.

In Brooklyn—374 Johnson Avenue

In Manhattan—132 West 31st Street



Book Review Seven Years in Tibet

By Chace Collins '26

Seven Years in Tibet is an incredible first-person story of one man’s journey from life as a German POW in India to exploring the unknown land of Tibet. The story focuses on the experiences of Heinrich Heiner during World War Two. This story begins right before Communist China invaded Tibet and destroyed their culture and religion.

Heiner’s book is a world-renowned best-seller and is one of the last personal memoirs written about Tibet before its culture was wiped out. Heinrich was German and was on an expedition in India (which was occupied by Britain at that time). When Britain declared war on Germany because the Nazi regime had invaded France, Heinrich was then tak-

en as a POW. Heinrich informed his captors that he was just an explorer and had no connection to the Nazis.

Surprisingly, Heinrich managed to escape twice and get into Tibet. Both he and his friend Aufsfinaiter were also able to get permits to travel deeper into Tibetan territory. Their goal was to go to Lhasa, the forbidden and secret holy city. Lhasa was the (then) capital of Tibet. Heinrich and Aufsfinaiter made a 21-month journey and were able to stay in the country for many years. Tibet, throughout this story, showed great hospitality to the two travelers.

These 21 months to say the least was a great adventure. They endured cold winters and explored largely unknown and previously unseen territory. This book provides fascinating details about Tibetan society, how their communities work and the rankings of the nobles and common folk. Heinrich was able to make friends with high-ranking officials— and even with the soon-to-be king, the Dalai Lama.

Tibet’s rich culture is also highlighted in the rich descriptions about how holidays are celebrated and people’s beliefs surrounding death. For example, Tibetan culture strongly believes in reincarnation (the belief that life does not end when we pass away, we can come back to earth again and live a new life). Those who are believed to be the reincarnation of someone important receive special treatment and privileges. Most Tibetans are Buddhist and are against killing animals and insects. Many believe that things like flies or cows can be reincarnations of loved ones and thus refuse to kill them. In one part of the book, Heinrich and a friend were at a restaurant when they saw a duck about to be killed. His Tibetan friend bought the duck and brought it home with him.

In conclusion, I highly recommend this book. It is a compelling and powerful story. This book teaches the reader about life in Tibet before their culture and lifestyle were decimated by Communist China. It provides vivid details of Heinrich’s fascinating adventures and a window into a lost world. It truly is a once-in-a-lifetime story.

Reviews

Movie Review Top Gun–Maverick

By Alexander Beltran '25

The summer of 2022 had many great films to offer, one of them being the airplane thriller, “Top Gun Maverick”, directed by Joseph Kosinski. Top Gun Maverick is the long-awaited sequel to the first Top Gun movie released in 1986, where after 30 years of being a naval aviator Pete “Maverick” Mitchell, played by Tom Cruise, must train a class of naval aviator graduates for a daring assignment. Throughout the movie Pete must confront traumas from the first movie through his students, all while preparing them for a mission that would require ultimate sacrifice.

Before I saw this movie over the summer, I prepared myself by watching the first Top Gun movie. After watching the first movie, I did not have high expectations for the sequel, nor did I think the movie would be all that good. I later realized I could not have been more wrong. Right at the beginning of the movie they managed to grasp my attention with the cinematography in correlation to the test plane being flown by the ever-humorous Tom Cruise, making the audience laugh within the first five minutes. As the story progressed, I began to realize that this movie might far surpass the first one, sure enough I was right.

What I enjoyed most about this movie was how most shots have a warm white balance setting to them, giving the scene a warm summery feel to them. Though seemingly random, the white balance setting throughout the film was quite brilliantly thought out due to the time of the movie’s release during the hot summer, leaving a strong impression on me that I can vividly recall the day I saw it for the first time. Another fact about this movie that is absolutely mind boggling is the astonishingly low usage of CGI. Surprisingly, all the flight scenes in this movie were done using real F-35 fighter planes (even in the dog fighting scenes). It was said that the actors had to go through extensive training, which was not even the hard part. Miles Teller, a fellow actor, said in an interview that the difficult part was getting the right take in the air that the director liked. He added that he once made a mistake while shooting which resulted in him almost slipping out of his seatbelt, which ended up in the movie due to how funny and realistic it looked.

The way all the characters interacted with each other was admirable, especially Tom Cruise’s character Maverick and Miles Teller’s Rooster due to their history from the previous movie. Rooster despised Maverick at the start of the film that felt very real up until the end when they made up which was also acted out so well.

A major part of the film is the final mission where the fleet of planes invade an unknown country in order to destroy its nuclear enrichment facility. When the fleet takes off from the carrier and enters the snowy mountains, the mood of the movie shifts, making the stakes at hand present. During this part of the movie all sense of conflict within the group dissipates because everyone is working together to stop a greater evil bringing the movie together and putting rivalries to rest. When the planes touched down on the carrier and all the people on board celebrated, I felt like I was going to celebrate with them for the completion of the mission. Overall, I loved this movie so much I had to watch it a second time in a theater. Everything about it was outstanding all around and if I had to be honest about its grade that I would give it an A+.



Movie Review Black Adam

By Alexander Beltran '25

Directed by Jaume Collet-Serra, Black Adam is a 2022 DCEU fall blockbuster based on the DC comic Black Adam written by Otto Binder and C. C. Beck. The film star, Dwayne (the rock) Johnson, plays Teth-Adam, also known as Black Adam, a 5,000-year-old slave from Kahndaq who has been given god-like powers by the same gods who gave Shazam his abilities. In the film Black Adam is summoned to the contemporary world where he is greeted with hostility; Teth Adam doesn’t shy away from a fight, using magical, lethal force. This flies onto the radar of the Justice Society of America or the J. L. A. This arrangement of the JLA includes Hawkman played by Al-

dis Hodge, Dr. Fate played by Pierce Brosnan, Cyclone played by Quintessa Swindell, and my personal favorite, Atom Smasher portrayed by Noah Centineo. Their mission is to detain Black Adam without any lethal force and prevent him from killing more people. Yet, while clashing with the ancient god, Dr. Fate receives a premonition from his magical helmet, called The Helm of Fate, of the demise of one of his teammates. Later on in the movie, the JLA team up with Black Adam and the citizens of Kahndaq to stop an even greater threat.

This film was brought to DC by none other than Dwayne Johnson 15 years ago. DC didn’t want to make it happen due to its recent declining public reputation until finally, they gave in to the proposal. However, this movie feels like it was written years ago before Hollywood superhero movies had any wisdom to them, unlike the golden age of hero movies that we are in. The entire film is riddled with clunky exposition, which is a shame because the movie and character had so much potential.

The movie shows how outdated, brutal forms of justice do not stand up to the modern heroes and their evolved morals. Nonetheless, this message and the argument against it becomes diluted and lost, giving an ineffective and extremely flawed motive for the movie. Dwayne Johnson gives a good performance as a cold, stoic killing machine with little to no humor, and the movie tries to poke fun at this character trait repeatedly. Yet instead of this being humorous it depicts Black Adam as a doltish character throughout the film. The only real comic relief in the movie was Noah Centineo’s Atom Smasher who is relatively new to the hero’s life and is still trying to get the hang of his abilities, all while trying to flirt with the girl he likes.

The costume choices in this movie were innovative, creating a new comic-accurate style of wardrobe for our heroes, which I personally appreciated. On top of the fantastical costume designs the CGI is extraordinary; for example, every scene with Pierce Brosnan’s Dr. Fate was deliciously unworldly from his spell casting down to his golden costume.

Altogether the storyline was slightly stiff, and the pacing was slow starting off, but in the end, the visuals and cinematography were outstanding, and the casting was accurate. Overall, the movie gets a B by my standard.

Reviews

Pokémon's Brand New Game

By Ofek Donio-Gideon '24

On November 19th, 2022, a brand new Pokémon game was released called *Pokémon Scarlet & Violet*, with a whopping 403 Pokémon in the game, 107 of them being brand new. But the latest Pokémon games that have been released have received mixed reviews from critics and gamers alike, so Game Freak (The developer of the Pokémon franchise) was expected to make a pretty strong effort this time to redeem themselves from this streak of bad games. So did Game Freak make such a Pokémon game? Well, I bought the game on the day that it was released and have played it enough that I feel like I can review it. So let me guide you through all the pros and cons of this game, and if you should buy it.

First, what makes this Pokémon game different from the rest? Well, other than the new story that the game has (which I will talk about later), this game released many new Pokémon, which the Pokémon community calls a new "generation", as a new generation does not come with every new Pokémon game, this game is only the 9th generation since the series debut in 1999. Each new generation also comes with its own "region", a vast world where the player can explore and encounter the Pokémon and the story of the game. Each region is usually loosely based on a certain region of the world, with recent examples being Britain, Hawaii, NYC, and Tokyo. This game's region is based on Spain, and it gives the game a very nice Mediterranean aesthetic that surprisingly fits the Pokémon world quite well. The "Starter Pokémon", the 3 Pokémon of which you choose one to have as your first Pokémon, have very good designs that have been praised by the game's (often quite critical) community. The Pokémon's names are Sprigatito (left), Fuecoco (middle), and Quaxly (right), and on top of having great designs, the Pokémon and characters in this game had their graphical models greatly improved over past games (even though they still have some flaws).

The story in this game also took an unexpected turn. Usually, Pokémon games' stories are structured very linearly, with the main character going on a "great adventure" to become the best Pokémon trainer. In this game,

however, you instead are a student in an academy where children and Pokémon learn together, and you are free to go almost anywhere you want in the game's map, something that isn't very common among Pokémon games. The game is really fun and it has a phenomenal soundtrack, something that Pokémon games are renowned for, and it's a solid entry in the Pokémon series.

But the game (at least in the condition it was released in) is not perfect, and I want to look at those things too. The game was almost certainly rushed to meet a deadline for the holidays, and this has left it incomplete in more ways than one. Several glitches litter the game as of the time of writing this, and this has been a trend with recent Pokémon games, released in a buggy state to then be fixed in updates a few weeks after the game is released. While this doesn't completely ruin the game, it certainly breaks the immersion that the game has; the glitches are very noticeable even on a casual play-through of the game.

Yet even after you account for all of the glitches and imperfections, this game is still very enjoyable, and I had a really fun time while playing it. And besides, by the time you are reading this, there is a good chance most of the glitches have already been fixed. The fun gameplay and story mean that (at least for me) the glitches can be overlooked, even if they are still annoying from time to time. The \$60 price tag may be too expensive for some, but seeing how most other major Nintendo games are also \$60, and Xbox's / Playstation's big games are \$70, the price seems a little more reasonable. So if you like Pokémon and you have a Nintendo Switch, I'd highly recommend getting this game.

Sports

By Lili Chelidze '26

The **Varsity Soccer** team made it to finals this season, losing a thrilling double overtime game against Irei in a sudden death shootout. The team lost 1-0. Stars from this season include: Inigo Llosa and Lancelot Marcano in the 12th Grade, and Aren Andrews in 9th Grade. Rounding off the season with 5 wins to 3 losses, let's congratulate the varsity soccer team for their amazing feats this year, most notably a 10-1 win against the Garden School.

Varsity Volleyball reached higher levels this season. Led by 12th Graders Cereese Qusba and Suzanne Santiago, the team clinched their first playoff game in over 11 years. The Dragons ended the season with 5 wins to 3 losses as well, defeating both Mary McDowell and Churchill with 3 sets to 0.

Cross Country had one of the biggest teams in years led by 12th Graders Fiona Ricciardi and Lancelot Marcano. The team beat their prior running times each meet, with James Reed, 11th Grade, and Fiona Ricciardi placing for medals in the isal championships. Four runners, Lancelot, Fiona, James, and Alistair, went to States on November 7.

Our **Middle School Soccer** team went fully undefeated this season, with their final 9-0 result. Their most astounding win? The game against BWL, which they won 13-0.

The **Middle School Volleyball** team ended the season with 2 wins to 7 losses. They beat the previously undefeated Garden School 2-0 and Churchill 2-1.

This fall season was an absolutely astounding one! A small reminder that the spring season is around the corner, so if you haven't joined, get to the game and support our Dragons!



100 Years of Halloween

By Rhea Thapar '25

The holiday, Halloween, has its origins in the Celtic holiday of the *Samhain* when people would wear costumes and light bonfires to ward ghosts away. In the eighth century, the pope declared November 1st as a day to celebrate the lives of the saints, thus, popularizing Samhain by incorporating some of these earlier traditions. The night before All Saints' Day, November 1st, was coined All Hallows Eve which later was changed to Halloween. Over time Halloween went from a holiday warding off ghosts to what it is now—trick or treating, carving pumpkins, eating treats, and what I will be discussing: wearing costumes.

Halloween gained recognition during the early 1900's as the holiday when you would dress up. The costumes that were typical amongst Edwardian women were masks made of paper mâché; these masks often depicted fairies, clowns, and witches. The masks were worn with everyday Edwardian clothing which consisted of long skirts, high necklines, and well-fitted sleeves. The silhouette accentuated an hourglass figure that gave off the appearance of rounder hips and a fuller lower chest.



During the *Roaring '20s* Halloween gained more popularity, and a reputation as a night of mischief. Teenagers would smash windows and cause a ruckus. It also soon became a Holiday to take your children out at night to get trick or treat candy. Although it gained popularity amongst adolescents, it was still popular among adults who celebrated by dressing up. Witch costumes were favorites amongst flappers, wearing pointed hats, painted masks, and the typical drop waist shift dress that was fashionable during the time.

The 1930s started the trend of dressing up as characters from the media. Walt Disney films were loved by many in this era, inspir-

ing many women to dress up as Snow White and Minnie Mouse, while Mickey Mouse costumes were popular amongst men. While people still made their costumes, the first costume store opened in the 30s encouraging the idea of buying costumes instead of making them.

In the 1940s pin-up girls became popular as iconic models for costumes, and women were inspired by them to dress up. Wearing flamboyant clothing and heavy makeup, the costumes of the '40s can best be described as camp and over the top amongst women. Television gained more popularity in the 50s and became a staple in many homes. Because of this, Halloween costumes became more centered around TV characters. Some popular costumes were from the wild west, Miss Kitty of *Guns Smoke* was a real favorite during this era among women.



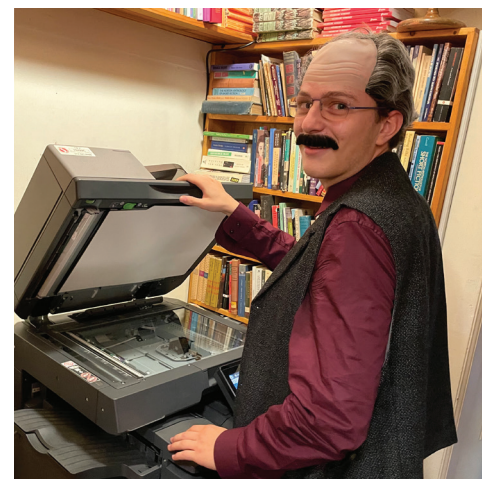
Halloween costumes during the '60s and '70s was influenced by comic books like Marvel and DC. During the '60s, Julie Newmar's Catwoman suit was a common costume that inspired many women to dress up as her. Though, Wonder Woman was the most popular costume of the decade.



The '80s are known for many iconic movies including the queen of Halloween herself, Elvira! Hers was the most loved costume of her time, and to this day it is still one of the most popular costumes for people to dress up in. The '90s were known for many things including *Clueless* and Britney Spears's "Hit Me Baby One More Time," and these two legendary pieces of media influenced many to make DIY schoolgirl costumes.

The new millennium set the current trends with Halloween revelers dressing up as actors and famous people. Fewer people dressed as characters from films although the film *Mean Girls* changed things somewhat. To this day people dress up as characters from this influential movie. The 2010s slipped back into the theme of dressing up as characters with the 2016 release of *Suicide Squad*. The villain Harley Quinn was the most popular costume of this decade. Almost seven years later, she remains popular. *Star Wars* and *Harry Potter* must here be mentioned of course.

Halloween is one of the most influential holidays in modern times and has changed throughout the decades, growing into what we know it as today. It also helps set trends and reflects how times have changed over the decades with the rapid changes in costumes.



A Brief Evolution of Music or Why I Hate Reggaeton

By Nico Diez '25

Let's start by defining music, shall we? It's not an easy task... Where does the word music come from? The Greek word *mousa*, means muse (those goddesses that inspired the artists). The art of the muses was *mousikē*, and the French after a while decided to name the music we know and love *musique*, which later became known as music in middle English. Could you say that music is the art of the muses? Perhaps. It's up to you, but I'd define music as the art that seeks to invoke feelings by using sound. Some might also add that music seeks to create beauty or simply to sound good, but hear pieces like the Threnody for the victims of Hiroshima and you will see how it isn't always about beauty. Depends on your taste, but for me, reggaeton certainly doesn't sound beautiful nor does it invoke any feelings.

Before we get spicy, the basics: in prehistoric times, humans already had music. Even the Neanderthals, our earlier neighbors, had their flutes. And that was the first instrument, the flute (no, smashing bones onto other bones shouldn't count as an instrument). The oldest flute we've found was Neanderthal, actually, dating back to at least 50000 years ago.

Let's move forward just a couple of years, to the times of ancient Greece, where we find the oldest complete musical composition that's been preserved. A song for a dead loved one. The Seikilos epitaph, most likely from around 200 BC, was found engraved on a tombstone. The song features instruments like a lyre and a flute, and it even had some pretty sick lyrics: "While you live, shine, have no grief at all, life exists only for a short while and Time demands his due."

It is a good example of how music, even since ancient times, has tried to make us feel something, to make us think... I love roasting reggaeton for some reason.

In the Middle Ages, music expanded in many ways, but in a nutshell, there is secular and sacred music. Sacred Catholic music at first would be with no instruments, just voices, or a capella for the nerds. Secular music, the

music of the people, is where it gets interesting. There are minstrels and troubadours (troubadours are essentially wealthy minstrels) who love to write and perform songs. They use instruments like the lute, the psaltery, the *vielle*, the bagpipe, and everyone's favorite: the hurdy-gurdy!! A pretty strange instrument, check it out. These minstrels go around from town to town trying to make a living out of starting parties with their upbeat songs.

Enough boring Dark Ages... The Renaissance begins, a time of rebirth of the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, a time to stop focusing on God, a time to be a naked man with four arms... Better days. The church has decided to innovate a bit and now you can find much more sacred music styles like the motet. The music in the Renaissance is like the period itself, much more complex than the Middle Ages music and full of new, wonderful concepts like polyphony (each instrument has its independent melody).

Moving on to the overwhelming Baroque, we find intense, dramatic music with lots of contrasts, continuous bases, the use of the counterpoint technique, and especially, we find the harpsichord. That "piano" that sounds like it was played at medieval courts was definitely not played there. In the Baroque Period, it was more fashionable than the autotune. Baroque marks the beginning of the operas and styles as the fugue. Of course, the most important Baroque composer is our beloved Johann Sebastian Bach, but some other pretty cool dudes were Vivaldi (4 seasons guy), Handel (Messiah guy), and Jean-Baptiste Lully (Italian who somehow completely changed French music guy).

Guess what time it is... It's Mozart time! He lived in the Classical Period when wigs were the new black and music was very sophisticated and structured. Nobody likes the harpsichord anymore, because now we finally have the piano. Sonatas and symphonies flourished. Enough Mozart, though, Beethoven's here to bring Romanticism.

Even as deaf as he was, Beethoven brought amazing innovations to music. He was tired of how organized the music was at the time, so he composed songs with an explosion of

emotions and thus began the age of Romanticism in music. No more rules, let's express ourselves! The piano got even more popular in these times with nocturnes and *études*. This period is full of amazing composers like my personal favorite, Chopin, along with Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Strauss, and many more.

You pretty much know what happened in the 20th century. There was rhythm and blues and there was country and mixed they formed rock. Chuck Berry, Elvis, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin... Then funky disco music starts becoming popular, and after many Saturday nights we somehow reach the 80s (won't even try to talk about the 80s). In the 90s, there's grunge and edgy kids, and oh no! Commercial pop! How could this possibly happen?! Even worse! It is the 2000s and reggaeton is everywhere!

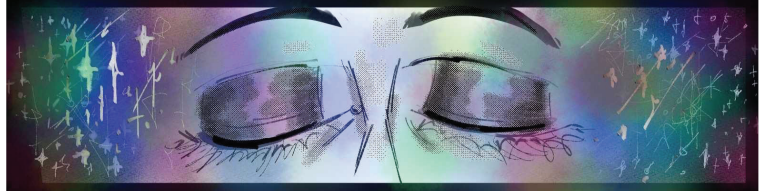
Insensible music had been slowly taking over a big chunk of the popular scene, getting (generally) simpler and simpler. You can like it, of course, I like some of those kinds of songs as well. It's not about what we like or not, it's about how suddenly a considerable part of the music that we listen to completely neglects what music means, or what it used to mean. Music is changing very fast these days and reggaeton is just an example of that. If you think about it, just 250 years ago Mozart was sixteen years old. It took less than 250 years to go from Mozart to reggaeton.

Even though nowadays there is some senseless music, there are also lots of amazing songs... Don't despair and don't be scared of listening to music you don't know once in a while!

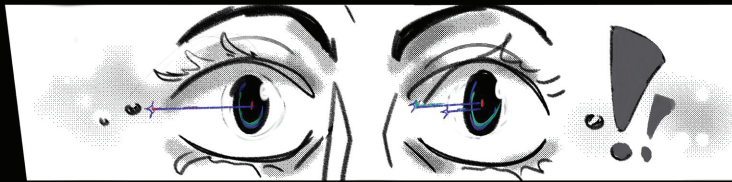
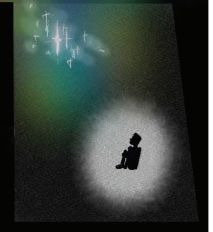
A Schlimy State of Mind

Art by Nicole Chien '25
Script by Cassius Reed '25

I had always found it funny that when we speak of sleep, we say one has fallen asleep. Righteously so, when one finds themselves in that dark place, one is usually accompanied by a sensation similar to that of having just fallen. Not as if one has fallen from somewhere high above, but as if you stepped out of the elevator on the ground floor and slipped into a deep, dark place inhabited by strange, unknown articles or contrivances that one has never even conceived of.



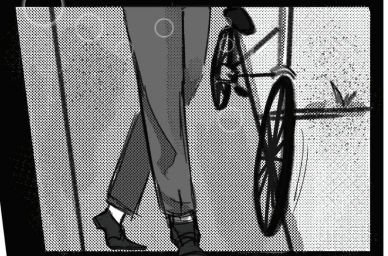
That deep dark place is exactly where I found myself on what seemed to be just another slow Saturday morning. The alarm went off. Down on the street outside my window, I could hear dull clangs as workmen move canisters of some unknown gas in and out of the welding shop, replenishing the old ones and placing the empty ones inside a truck. I heard metal and metal collide, the tailgate closed. Then, the truck drove away. I rolled out of bed.



I knew I had a meeting today. I couldn't remember who with, all I could remember is that it was at the fancy French restaurant on the other side of town. When I was a kid, we used to go there for family brunches, at least when we lived closer. One quick shower later I managed to scarf down some toast remembering how expensive the restaurant was and not wanting to bankrupt myself before the new year



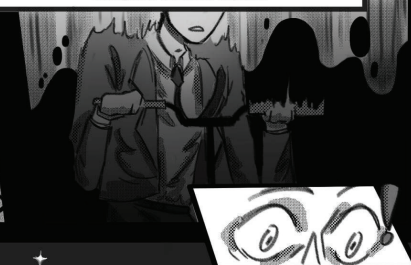
I wheeled my bike out the door and carried it down the six flights of stairs. Outside there was a brisk wind, the kind that reminds you it's no longer summer.



The bike lane was empty, they were resurfacing the avenue and the fresh asphalt still had a silver sheen to it in the early morning sun. It was the first time I had seen the avenue empty for at least 5 years. The light was red but seeing there were no cars I gave my bike 2 solid cranks and coasted towards the asphalt.



As soon as my front tire touched the black mass which no longer seemed to be asphalt, it seemed as if the whole world flew up around me disappearing to someplace high above me, leaving just me and that strange black mass which seconds earlier I had thought to be fresh asphalt.



When I woke up, I was lying on the floor of a square room, all the walls were sickeningly white. There was nothing in the room except a fisherman sitting on a three-legged stool jiggling a lure up and down in a small hole in the floor that seemed to lead to the depths of some icy cold lake. The fisherman was old, his scraggly beard was almost completely white and a linen shirt hung loose on his hunched back. His callused and wrinkled hands lightly gripped the cork handle of his fishing rod.



His blue eyes looked me over and after what seemed to me almost an hour he spoke: "Hello" he said in a voice that had once been full and warm but now crackled and wheezed. Surprised, I replied, "Hello" I said trying to sound polite despite feeling flustered and rather confused. "Who are you? Where are we?" I said, giving up and dropping my facade. He responded only with silence.



THEN IT ALL WENT BLACK

SC

The Last Page

Sweet Pretzel Chocolate Chip Cookies

By Anna Villanueva '25

Ingredients

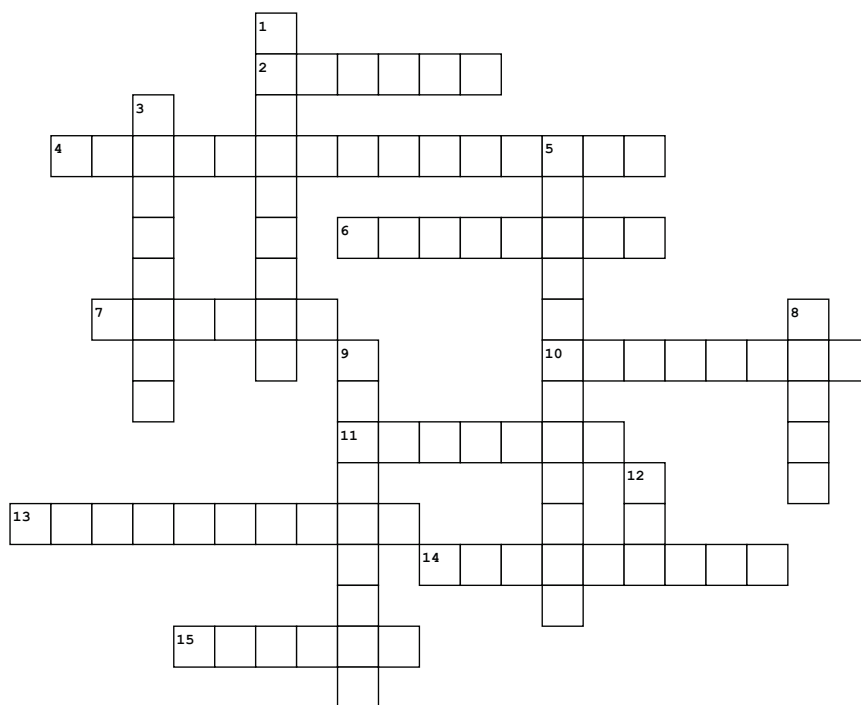
- ½ cup granulated sugar
 - ¾ cup brown sugar, packed
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - ½ cup unsalted butter, melted
 - 1 egg
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1¼ cups all-purpose flour
 - ½ teaspoon baking soda
 - 4 oz semi-sweet chocolate chips
 - 4 oz dark chocolate chips, *optional* (add more semi-sweet chips if you are not a fan of dark chocolate; the cookies will be sweeter)
- An equal amount of sweet pretzels to your chocolate chips.

Instructions

- 1 Preheat the oven to 350°F/180°C and prepare a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2 Crush sweet pretzels in a zip-lock bag until you are satisfied with the size.
- 3 Whisk together the sugars, salt, and butter in a large bowl until smooth with no lumps.
- 4 Whisk in the egg and vanilla, beating until light ribbons form from the whisk.
- 5 Sift in the flour and baking soda, then fold the mixture with a spatula (be careful not to overmix)
- 6 Add the chocolate chips and pretzels, alternating to make sure they are well incorporated.
- 7 Scoop the dough with an ice-cream scoop onto the prepared baking sheet, leaving space between the cookies because they will expand.
- 8 Bake for 15 minutes or until the edges look crispy.
- 9 When still hot, add salt on top of each cookie.
- 10 Let them cool, or eat them right away if you would like.
- 11 And last of all, please enjoy with friends and family!

Fall Crossword

By Amelia Beltran '24



Across

2. another word for fall
4. a day to celebrate the dead
6. American sport with brown oval ball
7. world wide game played with a round ball
10. often found inside a turkey
11. orange fruit found everywhere in fall
13. drink made from apples
14. sauce served with turkey
15. another word for spiderweb

Down

1. holiday that is either a trick or a treat
3. flower used for Mexican celebration of day of dead
5. a holiday of giving
8. small mythical creature with pointed hat
9. ninth month of the year when fall starts
12. desert often found on Thanksgiving