

SLOHS

EXPRESSIONS

October Issue 2018

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“Of the Highest Caliber”

*Illustration Courtesy of
Molly Foster*

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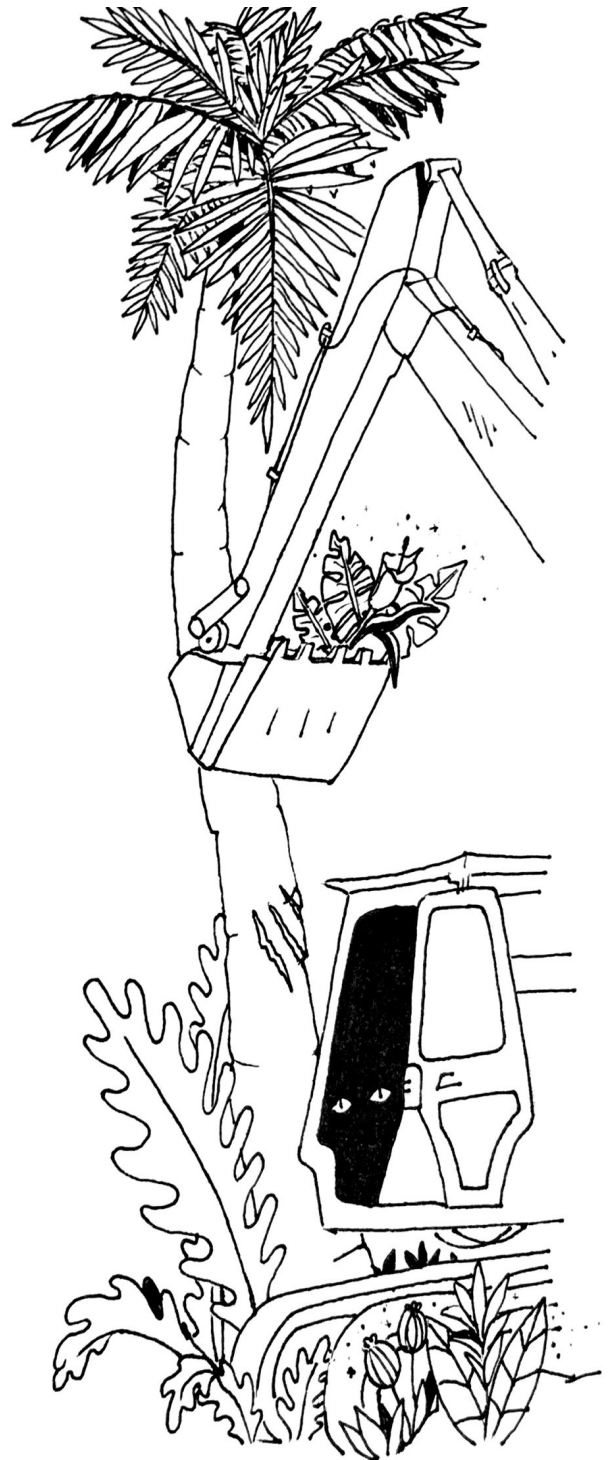


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Hello, Sweater Weather

By Alessandra Rizzo

San Luis Obispo High School is readying itself for the end of summer weather, and making way for cool breezes, misty mornings, relaxing rainy days, and their respective chilly weather fashion trends.

While taupe, beige, and all shades of red and orange are a typical choice for the season, we need not march around as a monochromatic mass of the populace. This year comes with a very interesting array of options in terms of pattern and texture for our cooling climate. Animal print, tartan, hounds tooth, denim, faux fur, wool/cashmere, and knits are fantastic choices to add a bit of personal flair to any look.

"I like that the animal prints are continuing. Taking the graphics from nature is always good. I also like that there is more tailoring and layering. Tweed and textures are in, and I think that is always a classic look," said fashion and interior design teacher Lisa Washmuth.

Clothing this season should be well suited to one's body type. Include a statement garment, and display clean lines with a lighter garment to soften them and pull the look together.

"With regards to RTW (ready-to-wear) this season, it seems leopard is the print to be had; splashed across coats, tops and everything in-between. We saw this season, a plethora of colors walk down the catwalks in London, New York, and Paris, with the all-encompassing, autumnal creations at Chanel, neutral tones mixed in with pops of red at Dior and heavy tweed layering in shades of burnt orange and grey at Balenciaga," said senior Shaan Carlson.

Any outfit should feature a patterned piece, a solid garment that pulls a color from the pattern, a solid statement coat or simple cardigan, and some sort of scarf that ties the color scheme of the ensemble together. It's best to have one or two bolder pieces so that they receive the majority of the attention and stand out from the neutral pieces.

Most importantly; while it is easy enough to mirror a look, nothing will make one feel more comfortable in a style than a bit of personalization. Anything someone wears should prepare them to face the day with confidence, grace, and tact. Make sure that anything you wear this fall has your personal style written all over it.



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Is There a Culture of Racism at SLOHS?

By Olivia Dong

Racism has remained one of society's largest issues. Injustices and acts of discrimination are abundant, and as a result, everyone is pointing fingers at each other. With such a prevalent issue at hand, it is no surprise that racism makes its way into schools and becomes a tool for bullies. Fifty-nine percent of San Luis Obispo High School students are Caucasian, while 28 percent are Hispanic/Latino, 6 percent are Asian, 1 percent are African American, and less than one percent are American Indian or Native Hawaiian. With limited representation of minorities, the question arises: Is there a culture of racism at SLOHS?

Expressions: Do you think that racism is a prevalent issue at SLOHS?

African American Junior Kasden Bunn: I don't think racism is prevalent on campus because it is not an issue at all, and I have

never come across a case of racism in full seriousness on campus, and only one case off of campus, which wasn't a big deal.

Latina Junior Ashley Gaspar: I definitely think there is racism at school, but the school is trying to welcome different types of people and more cultures.

Expressions: Have you ever witnessed racial generalization or stereotyping?

Vietnamese Junior Hanh Chu: Yes, a lot of stereotypes. People expect me to be good at math because I'm Asian.

Gaspar: Personally, I don't think so, but I've definitely seen it. Stereotyping is the big one. For example, me, being a Latina, I've heard other people say, "Latinas aren't that smart, they won't do anything," and stuff like that.

Expressions: Why do you think that SLOHS and/or society has allowed racism to accumulate?

Chu: I think it's really just ignorance.

Gaspar: I think it's because people misuse the freedom of speech. And so, people are always like, "Oh, I can say this and that because I have the right."

Expressions: What do you think can be done to combat racism?

Chu: We need to educate people more and be more open-minded.

Caucasian Senior Lily Hasley: I think SLOHS and society in general can recognize when stereotypes and social stigma become present in our society more quickly, making a point to stop this behavior before it becomes too big of an issue.

By Phoebe Browning

NUESTRA CULTURA LATINA

Desde la televisión hasta el congreso, la población latina en los Estados Unidos constantemente no recibe la representación que merece. A pesar de eso, latinos en San Luis Obispo High School continúan influyendo nuestra comunidad en maneras grandes. El personal de Expressions se reunió con freshman Sabrina García, para recibir sus opiniones sobre la representación latino en SLOHS.

Expressions: ¿Cómo celebras tu cultura viviendo en los Estados Unidos?

Freshman Sabrina García: Mi familia y yo somos de Chile, un país en Sudamérica. Hay muchas cosas que hacemos para celebrar nuestra cultura. Por ejemplo, yo conozco el baile nacional de Chile y durante el día de independencia de Chile lo bailamos. Cocinamos comida Chilena

como empanadas y sopaipilla. También podemos conocer a otras familias de países latinos y celebramos sus culturas, que son similares a nuestros.

Expressions: ¿Qué es una problema que has enfrentado o visto en SLOHS siendo un miembro de la comunidad latina?

García: Una cosa que yo veo cada día en SLOHS es la cantidad pequeña de estudiantes que son de países latinos en clases avanzadas. Usualmente yo y algunas veces una otra persona somos las únicas personas de minorías que están en clases de matemáticas o ciencias avanzadas. Esto normalmente no es porque estudiantes de Latinoamérica no saben la materia; es porque no se sienten muy cómodos en participar en conversaciones en clase. Yo creo que poco a poco esto está cambiando,

pero todavía podemos aumentar la cantidad de minorías en clases más avanzadas.

Expressions: ¿Cuál influencia ha tenido tu etnia en quien eres hoy en día?

García: Mi etnia me ha influido mucho. Una manera que mi etnia me ha ayudado es que yo hablo muchos idiomas. En Chile, estudiantes en la escuela aprenden más de tres lenguajes y mis padres creían que aprendiendo otras idiomas, especialmente uno tan popular como español, me ayudaría mucho. Otra manera en que mi etnia me ha influido es los amigos que tengo. Mi grupo de amigas y amigos es muy diversa y a mí me encanta porque puedo conocer a personas de todo el mundo y aprender sobre sus culturas.

SCHOOLS WITH TOOLS: SHOULD SCHOOLS HAVE CONCEALED CARRY ON CAMPUS?

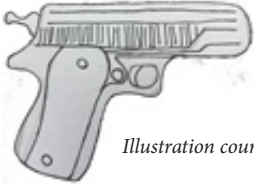


Illustration courtesy of Molly Foster



By Benjamin Handy

San Luis Obispo High School is like every other school in America: a gun free zone. This means that no unauthorized individual can bring a firearm into the designated location. This includes legally owned firearms and people who have a concealed carry permit, unless authorized by the district to carry on campus. These laws are meant to protect students and faculty on campus, but do these laws prevent mass shootings?

“They inherently take away the most harmful component of a shooting, the gun itself. But as for its ability to prevent shootings, I think the tragic events in these recent school shootings beg to differ,” said senior Thomas Prater.

One of the recent events Prater speaks of is the Parkland shooting, which happened at Stoneman Douglas High School, a gun free zone with a police officer meant for the school, yet 17 people died. The reasons why this shooting was so deadly is up for debate, but the fact that students and staff can’t do anything in the event a shooter is on campus is frightening. Even more so when our safety procedure at SLOHS and other schools is to hide and hope that the shooter doesn’t come for us, leaving students defenseless and crammed in classrooms. Combining this measure with the fact that schools, such as SLOHS, no longer having a school resource officer and long police response times means there is little resistance for a shooter to commit mass harm.

So what would be to the solution? To allow teachers to conceal carry on school campus. Conceal carry means to carry a firearm or weapon in a concealed manner. This would not mean handing out firearms to teachers but having teachers who are willing and can pass the concealed carry

laws of the county they are located in. In San Luis Obispo County this would mean getting a certain amount of training hours, passing a psychological test, being of good moral character, having a reason to carry a firearm, and the ability to purchase firearms legally. [For more information on the subject go to the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Office website and search for concealed carry permits]. Concealed carry permits only apply for handguns, which have enough firepower to stop a shooting while being compact enough to be concealed.

“Drawing and brandishing a weapon is to end the situation, end the violence. So if just pulling and having it ends the violence then you’re done. The only reason you’d ever shoot is as a very last resort and if it were a deadly situation,” said SLOHS criminal justice teacher Curtis Bartlett.

A concealed carry firearm should never be used to stop an annoying student or get the class to pay attention. It’s goal is to end violence. Allowing teachers to conceal carry on campus is safe because students would not know who has one. This leaves the possibility that no teacher possesses one, or that all of the teachers do. This would stop a few people from doing harm at a school campus because most shooters are looking for an easy target with little resistance.

“The problem arises when a teacher accidentally misfires the weapon, which happened last May in Monterey County, or when a student gets ahold of it and does something that is not in their best interests,” said Prater.

The Monterey incident happened when a teacher, teaching a safety lesson, accidentally fired his handgun into the ceiling, giving minor injuries to three students.

This event would be less likely to happen if teachers handled the weapons properly. The gun is meant to be concealed and with its safety on. A safety is a switch on the firearm that prevents it from firing when put on safe. There are new safety regulations in states like California where a firearm needs to take a drop test and have mechanisms that are up to par with the new standards so that they do not have a misfire. This makes it difficult to have a misfire unless the trigger is pulled with the intention to fire, which is what happened in Monterey County when the instructor thought he did not have a round in the firearm. An occasion where students find the fireram would be unlikely since the teacher would always carry it in a concealed manner, unless a situation requires them to use it.

Arming teachers would cost less than having to hire a full time school resource officer, which would mean another fully paid staff member. Teacher training hours and legal fees for the permit would be paid for by the school. Staff members who are willing could potentially provide their own weapons, unless schools want to purchase the firearms.

The idea of allowing teachers to conceal carry firearms on campus may seem crazy but with recent events it is a viable option. A school resource officer would be preferable, but with the expenses it would seem unlikely to get one at SLOHS. Having defense against a shooting is better than none at all. This is why properly trained teachers and staff should be allowed to protect students from harm. A concealed handgun in the right hands could save many lives.

Teachers should be allowed to carry as soon as they are trained and ready, the longer we wait, the longer we stay defenseless.

The Destructive Culture of Toxic Masculinity

By Alyssa Block

Throughout the country, including the San Luis Obispo High School campus, boys suffer from the expectations associated with stereotypical male behavior.

Toxic masculinity can be seen as the performance of men to fit a certain stigma; it is the act of mimicking qualities associated with masculinity rather than exhibiting natural characteristics.

Therefore, toxic masculinity is harming men, especially at the high school level. By feeling pressure to conform to an image of strength generally associated with the male sex, men strive to appear physically and emotionally untouchable. Society repeatedly insists on men fitting this image of superiority, allowing for the presentation of strength to supersede in importance to actual demonstrations of strength.

“I find that boys are often pressured by society to conform to a certain standard of masculinity, and in turn feel like they can’t show emotion or express how they feel,” said senior Clea Wendt.

The effect is an “unhealthy method of coping” characterized “by not expressing any sort of emotion or putting up a wall, and not opening up,” said Wendt.

It is unquestionable that qualities such as emotional vulnerability and empathy are more acceptable to be possessed by females. As a consequence of this, men feel the need, based off of generalized gender roles, to stifle their emotions and

‘man up’ in certain situations. Hypermasculinity, or the exaggeration of male stereotypical behavior, therefore becomes a byproduct of men conforming to these societal expectations.

However, others view these demands of strength as positive rather than negative.

“There will come times where every person will have to ‘suck it up,’ dust themselves off from controversy, and face their adversity. So yes, I do believe that boys should learn to ‘man up’ and learn how to stand strong in the face of adversity, and have a certain extent of mental and physical fortitude, but like all things, there is a limit. Expecting too much strength out of any individual is unjust and should not be promoted,” said senior John Krill.

Despite the possible positives of society’s call for strength in boys, it can be seen that this ultimatum of acceptance causes substantial harm as well.

To deny men the ability to feel, to outwardly express their emotions, is to deprive an entire gender of being authentic human beings. If it is human nature to feel, why is it so looked down upon in men? What really holds men back is not the expression of emotion, but the set of standards society confines them to.



Illustration Courtesy of Molly Foster

Cut the Cord?: Should Seniors be Allowed to Wear Cords?

By Alyssa Block

The current push for a greater standard of equity in schools has left San Luis Obispo High School's administration and the district debating whether or not seniors should be able to wear adornments on their gowns at graduation. These would include cords that seniors have earned by taking part in the California Scholarship Federation, participating in the FFA, enrolling in the military, taking a certain amount of Career Technical Education (CTE) classes, or being involved in AVID.

It is essential to understand that equity and equality exist as two separate principles: Equity is providing the sufficient means for everyone to be able to obtain success while equality can be defined as equal treatment between individuals.

It is the belief of the SLOHS administration, along with other individuals, that cords conflict with both of these principles. All students may not have equal opportunity to earn cords due to their circumstances, and seniors could be considered unequal at graduation with only some students being able to wear cords.

"The notion that cords counteract equality between graduates is perhaps valid, but entirely irrelevant. We may enter this school as equals, as principal Leslie O'Connor says, but we certainly don't leave as equals. Some of us work harder than others, and there is no reason why one person can achieve the honor of wearing a cord and another cannot. We offer many cords at SLOHS, and help is offered all around campus if a student desires to earn one of their interest. The argument that 'underprivileged and disadvantaged' students, as administration deems them, can't achieve them [cords] is invalid- there are plenty of hardworking students in AVID who will no longer be able to walk with the cords they worked so hard to achieve. Why substitute diversity for equality?" said senior William Hastings.

It is the belief of a large margin of seniors that to possibly take away the adornment of cords earned through their due diligence is inherently unjust.

"I find it [cords being taken away] quite upsetting. O'Connor made the argument that it would make people feel as though they were unimportant or feel bad about not accomplishing something. But I still think it's a cruel thing to do, to pull that on people who have dedicated their time at this school to a certain pathway. Whether it be academics and you want to wear a cord for academic achievements, from participating in FFA, or for someone like me that did CTE, people should be able to display their achievements. I want to be able to show at graduation that I'm proud with what I did in my time here; it's not to try to put anyone else down, it's to be proud of myself. I want to represent that to the rest of the school," said senior Cormac Jenkins.

Others view the matter through a separate lens; some espouse the view that students should enter and exit high school as equals, devoid of any distinction between individuals.

"I totally understand and support the discussion around not wearing them [cords] at graduation... I believe there is a time and a place for recognition of student achievements, including our Senior Recognition Assembly... In my opinion, graduation night should be a celebration of graduating high school. We have so many other

opportunities to call out and recognize students for their achievements above and beyond graduation, but for some students, just graduating is their biggest accomplishment, and that shouldn't be downplayed due to the lack of a cord," said vice principal Jessica Miller.

"Individuals try to stand out (or fit in for that matter)" by having their own cord.

"As of right now, cords are being phased out across the district (SLOHS and Morro Bay High School). I don't have details on what exactly that will look like come graduation, but I am excited to be part of our recognition assembly this year and be on the front-end of thinking about how to recognize our students for their accomplishments," said Miller about the status of cords.

"We, as a district, are moving away from having lots of different ceremonial garb at graduation. There's two days in high school that you're all equal: the day you arrive and the day you leave. Every day in between, we sift and sort you, we put you in grades and classes, we give you a rank and a score, and we give you a number... Maybe those two days you could just allow to be completely uniform. Is that fair enough?" said principal Leslie O'Connor.

While students may not be gaining recognition from cords at graduation, it can be seen that different avenues are being considered to acknowledge their many achievements.

"Why substitute diversity for equality?" - senior William Hastings

Are We All Just a Number?

By Sophia Silacci

San Luis Obispo High School students are given a class numerical ranking based purely on their GPA. Although ranking creates a clear cut system in deciding upon things such as valedictorian, it is debatable if each student is given the same opportunities to reach the top of the charts.

“I don’t really tell my peers about my GPA or class rank unless they ask because I don’t feel the need to share that information with others. I don’t think they [teachers and administration] really care, they just want to help you succeed in the class you are currently in,” said senior Ari King, who is one of the top ten academic

achievement students.

While these students work hard for their high GPAs, it may seem unfair to recognize them while others put the same amount of effort towards family or extra-curriculars. Students may feel that they are penalized for caring more about other aspects of their lives.

“The ranking system is not entirely reflective as how hard one works. If you play a sport, or participate in an elective like band or choir, that takes up a spot in your schedule where someone else could potentially be taking an AP class,” said King.

Without even looking at grades, many students believe that they are not all seen as academic equals in general.

“Personally I don’t think we’re seen as

equals when we walk into school, academically. If you’re at a higher academic level you’ll be taking AP classes and getting a higher grade point average. Someone who’s taking regular classes can’t get the extra GPA, so they’ll have to work harder to compete with AP students,” said senior Isabella Humes.

A student who earns a B in one trimester while taking all college preparatory classes has no chance at a 4.0 GPA, while an AP student can easily keep a 4.0 GPA or greater without earning straight A’s.

It is hard to say whether it is right for students to be placed at the top of their class because they are able to take more difficult classes, while others work just as hard in regular classes or other aspects of life.

Illustration Courtesy of Alyssa Block

A Reflection on the Essence of AP and College Prep Culture at SLOHS

By Kaylee Beardsley

San Luis Obispo High School is known for its high academic caliber. However, the overall atmosphere at SLOHS has created a divide between its students. There are currently 17 AP classes offered on campus and many students are enrolled in them.

“It’s always the same people. It gets to a pretty consistent group where there’s always the exact same people taking the exact same classes,” said senior Nadia Schwartz-Bolef.

Since the same students are usually enrolled in these classes, it can begin to feel daunting if a student hadn’t begun taking honors level classes their freshman year.

This creates a very tight-knit community of students that often is an almost impossible competition for college-prep students.

“A college-prep class, I think typically does engage you if you let it and if you try to apply yourself. However, there’s always going to be classes where you’re like ‘I don’t have to try that hard’ and there are points where I find myself really not challenging myself that much. I’m just going through the motions and I’m surrounded by people who aren’t challenging me,” said senior Janae Huber.

Students that choose to not take higher level classes are often seen through a different lens than that of AP students. This is mostly due to the difference in difficulty between the two types of classes that can lead to the way each type of student is looked at.

“It’s not to say that college prep isn’t academically challenging, but AP is certainly more academically challenging because that’s how it should be,” said AP English Language teacher Jane Hawley.

Overall, there is a divide between AP and honors students that is ever growing, especially due to the increasing importance for students to excel to be able to get into college.

“It’s not the test that matters, it’s the thinking,” said Hawley.

There is definitely a divide between AP and college-prep, but one group is certainly not more intelligent than the other. Students at SLOHS all make choices to better their own educational experience, whether that includes college or not. So in the end, do we really all graduate equally?

eSports Are on the Rise

By Michael Smith

Many students at San Luis Obispo High School play video games, but few enjoy eSports, which have been growing at an alarming rate. eSports are currently valued at 1.5 billion, yet many people still don't know what they are. eSports is a competitive sport where competitors play video games to climb to the top.

"eSports and video games are a great way of practicing strategic thinking and teamwork while also being extremely fun," said senior Alyssa Foley

One of the biggest changes in the competitive gaming world is how video games are being developed. Before eSports existed, there was no thought

of how competition would work for the game. Now many games are designed with the goal of being an eSport. Notable games are "Call of Duty", "Overwatch", "Super Smash Bros Melee", "Tekken," "Counter-strike Global Offensive," and "DOTA 2".

"eSports have lot of potential for growth, but will not appeal to large audiences for quite some time. The industry pushing eSports forward is expanding at a rapid pace as the popularity for the sport grows. However, I do not believe eSports will ever eclipse physical sports." said sophomore Jadon Kasselmann.

2018 marks one of the biggest years

for competitive gaming with the "Overwatch League" taking place over the summer. "Overwatch" has changed how eSports are being played. Like traditional sports, a team is selected by the league and then an owner backs that team. Right now there are 12 teams and next year there will be 18 teams spanning the globe.

Now that colleges are giving scholarships for video games, there is a likelihood of having a SLOHS eSports team. High schools are already starting to have teams that compete against other schools, so a new sport could be on the horizon for SLOHS.

The Football Team Turns It Around

By Scott Andree

The San Luis Obispo High School Varsity Football Team has recently earned an astonishing early season record of 4 -1- 0, which is the first time since 2010.

"We really believe in each other, and we are a lot more focused than the past years," said co-captain and quarterback senior Emilio Corona.

The team has given every game their all, which has helped them achieve their winning record. All the hard work starting last year and going throughout the summer has started to pay off for the team.

"All the new leaders of the team know how to connect with all the other teammates and really bring everyone



together as one. Everybody does not only like each other, they love each other," said center and outside linebacker senior Carson Silacci. He also adds that there is a different feel this year than last

year.

However, it is not only the players making a difference, but the coaches too. The playbook and attitude of the coaches has changed.

"The biggest change stems

from senior leadership wanting to lead SLOHS as those responsible for bringing the football program back to prominence. This team has the opportunity to set precedent for what our program is capable of for the years to come," said coach Vatsal Bhatt. Making these changes has drastically changed the football program and turned it around.

Between a great coaching staff that prepares each player for the game, and great team chemistry, it all adds up to early season wins. This year a new feel has been set on the SLOHS football field, and the hard working competitive players are eager for more wins.

Are Some Sports Too Boring To Watch?

By Sophia Salacci



Photo Courtesy of SLOHS Yearbook

San Luis Obispo High School has nearly twenty varsity sports teams that compete each year. From football to swim and dive, SLOHS has a variety of opportunities for students to be active and compete. However, some sports receive much greater recognition and higher attendance than others.

Why is that?

Expressions asked students who play sports with minimal attendance to shed some light on why they don't receive as much support from the crowds.

"We aren't thiq enough," said junior cross country runner Alexi Steinmaus.

"Nobody's chasing them, why do they run?" said senior cross country runner Emma Manderino.

"Our spandex aren't tight enough," said sophomore cross country runner Shaylee Grim.

Whatever the reasons may be, our very successful cross country team

only receives support from their parents, which is understandable. Not many high school students would enjoy watching their peers pant, sweat, and slowly grow a ring of perspiration under their arms.

"How can we even keep track of them in the first place? They keep running away over hills and stuff and then we can't see them anymore," said senior runner Chloe Carlson, speaking for cross country spectators.

Girls golf has also received minimal support this season, counting English teacher Jeff Leebrick as the one and only spectator to attend any matches in the past eight the team has played so far this season.

Nobody, besides Leebrick of course, comes to watch the highly successful girls golf team compete.

"Our skirts just aren't short enough," said senior golfer Angelina Nash.

Outside the realm of excessive running and sports with balls, SLOHS

also offers wrestling as a sport for both boys and girls. While there was only one match held at home for SLOHS in their season last year, it is easy to see why high attendance was not a regular occurrence for our wrestlers, but they still seem to be overlooked.

"When I look at the stands, I see a bunch of strangers yelling 'squeeze' at my opponent and I even though not one of them has a clue as to why they say it or what it even means. Wrestling receives little student support because not many 'cool kids' are on the team. It's not as much that people don't like wrestling, it's more they have simply never seen a match so they don't know how exciting it can be," said junior Ty Evans.

Go out and support the sweaty, long-skirt-wearing, real-sport-playing athletes in the sports that, ironically, are some of the most successful yet unattended teams at SLOHS.

Why Golden Age Films Should Be Appreciated More

By Phoebe Browning

The days of black and white films are long gone. Today, movies are a sensational overdose of action, color, and graphics. Tech-free movies from the Golden Age of Hollywood may seem obsolete, especially to teens at San Luis Obispo High School. But in this age of cinematic bells and whistles, everyone should take a step back and appreciate the iconic films of the past.

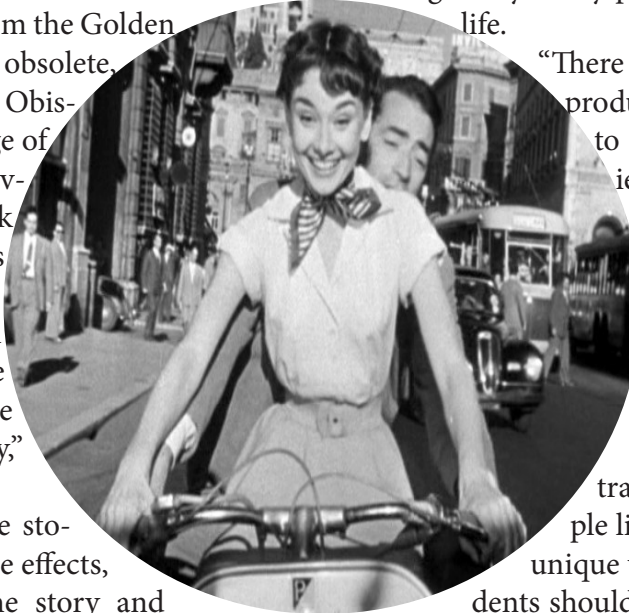
“People probably don’t watch old movies anymore because they’re not as exciting, since they had different technology,” said freshman Kai Matson.

Classic movies focus on the storyline of the film instead of the effects, drawing the viewers into the story and making them reflect upon their own lives.

Old movies also give the viewers a peek into the past, although they rarely paint an accurate picture of daily life.

“There were many aspects of life that production companies were not free to explore,” said SLOHS film studies teacher Craig Stewart. “Movies, like any good literature, are best when they expose life for what it is, and open up new opportunities for people to understand experiences different from their own.”

Nonetheless, classic movies portray the values and fantasies of people living during that time, offering a unique viewing experience. SLOHS students should consider watching Golden Age



films. Photo Courtesy of Phoebe Browning & Roman Holiday.

Virtual Reality is Taking Over

By Rakhi Lucchesi

Students at San Luis Obispo High School are always interested in new technology. This year, the particular craze amongst the student population is the advanced technology of virtual reality. Virtual reality is a notable product of the future, and is now a consumer product that is accessible to the students of SLOHS.

Virtual reality is defined as a three-dimensional, computer generated environment that a person can interact with. It can simulate the real world or create an unrealistic, fantasy experience. Virtual

reality is used for many purposes such as space exploration, health care, and even education. However, its most common role is entertainment in the form of video games. Many companies such as Samsung are creating virtual reality headsets that people can use to play games. But, these devices can be pricey, costing upwards of several hundred dollars.

Senior Kavi Freyaldenhoven owns a virtual reality headset. Freyalden-

hoven claims that he rarely uses it since he can only play the games by himself, but he still thinks the concept is very interesting.

“It needs to be cheaper and more accessible if they want to make it big,” said Freyaldenhoven.

While virtual reality may not be easily accessible to students, it is a very intriguing technological advancement that is continuing to develop. This technology of the future is finally making a scene in the market, and will become increasingly common as time goes on.

Enrique Ajanel: The Man Behind the Ink

By Nina Ramezani

Sophomore Enrique “Quique” Ajanel is an artist here at San Luis Obispo High School. His art is known by nearly 500 people on Instagram (@quique.art). All of his creations are unique and exhibit incredibly fine details. Ajanel displays a medley of different art styles for each drawing including his own cartoonish style.

Expressions: What is your favorite aspect of art?

Ajanel: Interpretation. When I start working on a piece, I don’t try to make a perfect recreation of what I see; I try to recreate how the things I see makes me feel. If I see something that speaks to me in a big way, I’ll try to associate it with other, smaller things to try to create a fuller image. I have running lists of quotes, phrases, themes, songs, photos, and other things that are all waiting in the wings. But even more than my own interpretation of the world, I enjoy what other people interpret when they see my art. Lots of times people will string together little details in my work and find deeper meanings that I hadn’t even thought of, much less intended. It’s great.

Expressions: What materials do you use for your art?

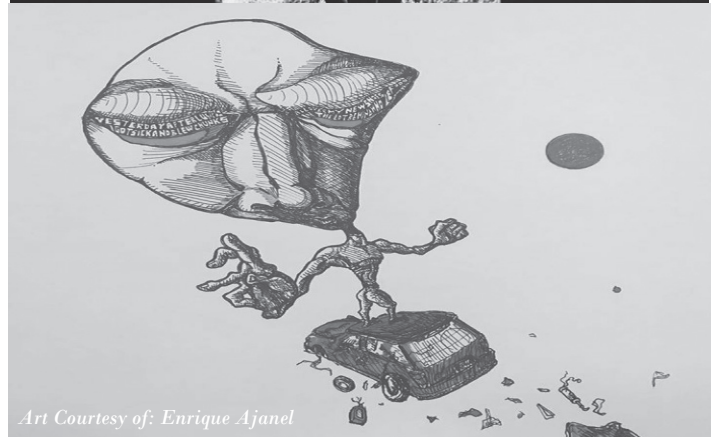
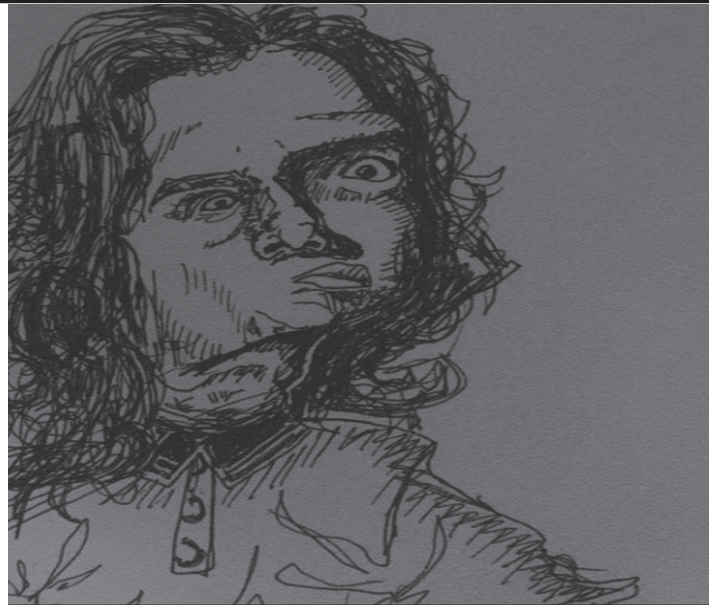
Ajanel: Typically, I just use black pen on white paper, or, at least, I start that way; recently I’ve been experimenting with adding color to my work. Color theory is something that has always interested me, but it’s only recently that I’ve been able to incorporate it into my drawings without messing up the image. To color, I use a variety of Prismacolors, pastel pencils, sharpies, highlighters, etc.

Expressions: Tell us about your Instagram account.

Ajanel: While it’s sort of like a journal for me, I mainly just want to see and be seen by other artists; to influence and be influenced. It’s great to feel recognized by artists I look up to, and I think that that’s a desire most people can relate to.

Expressions: What’s your favorite piece of artwork you have made? Can you describe it?

Ajanel: My favorite is unnamed, and it’s a little bit difficult to describe, but I’ll try my best. Essentially, it’s a really messed-up portrait. It depicts a person who, in a struggle to find a distinct identity, has been deformed by the world. Within the face there are other faces, as well as body parts, some objects, and a few animals. It’s messy, gross, and altogether very personal. Because there are so many unnatural aspects to the person, it’s impossible to tell what it would look like without the world’s influence; is this person even really a person? In many ways, it represents how I see myself. I know it might sound conceited to say that my favorite piece I’ve created is a self portrait, but that’s mostly what it is.



Art Courtesy of: Enrique Ajanel

Meet SLOHS's Executive Council

By Rakhi Lucchesi

Each year, four seniors are elected by the students of San Luis Obispo High School to the Executive Council of ASB. The Executive Council consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. This school year, seniors Prachi Shinglot, Thomas Prater, Olivia Ortiz, and Taylor Young are on the Executive Council.



Prachi Shinglot has been interested in student leadership since middle school, having been a part of the eighth grade leadership class. As President, Shinglot is the main representative of the student body at SLOHS. She attends board meetings every other week to report what is happening at the school and her plans to improve it. With the motto of “Year of Betterment,” Shinglot plans to change up a lot this year, such as school spirit, rallies, lunchtime activities, and dances, for the better.



Vice President Thomas Prater runs all Student Congress meetings. Prater’s ultimate goal this year is to “create real, positive, and effective change on our campus.” He wants to use his position on the Executive Council to ensure that all students feel included. Prater decided to join ASB because he wants to leave this campus better off than he found it.



Olivia Ortiz’s job as Treasurer is to be in charge and involved with ASB’s finances. Ortiz’s goals on the Executive Council are “inclusivity” and recognition. She hopes to recognize groups on campus that aren’t as well known and to make sure everyone feels included.



Taylor Young is the Secretary of the Executive Council. Her job consists of taking “meeting minutes” at ASB meetings and managing a team of eight students on ASB that all have various jobs. Young hopes to leave a positive impact on the school by creating an accepting atmosphere.

Photos Courtesy of Rakhi Lucchesi

All four members on the Executive Council said their favorite part of ASB is the people that they get to work with every day to improve the school, describing them as a second family. The Executive Council has big plans this school year.

SLOHS Welcomes Foreign Exchange Students

By Eline Kielland

New foreign exchange students attend San Luis Obispo High School every year. They come from countries all over the world in order to attend an American high school. *Expressions* talked to three of the students about their high school experience so far this year.

Expressions: Which country are you from?

Senior Lara Bergamini: Italy.

Sophomore Sofia Cardieri: Brazil.

Junior Katinka Hecter: Denmark.

Expressions: Why are you taking an exchange year in the United States?

Bergamini: To live an unforgettable experience, and widen my knowledge. I had never been to the US before, so I wanted to experience a new culture and learn the language.

Cardieri: To improve my English and have a unique experience. I also wanted to have the 'American high school experience.'

Hecter: I thought it would be an amazing experience, and I wanted to try a totally different kind of school.

Expressions: How do you like SLOHS so far?

Bergamini: I feel good, I like the environment, the school, the teachers, and the people.

Cardieri: I love everything! It's so different from Brazil and I am

enjoying all of it!

Hecter: I love it! People are so welcoming and easy to talk to.

Expressions: What is something different from your home country?

Bergamini: The major differences are that [in Italy] we don't change classes every period, and we can't choose our classes.

Cardieri: In Brazil the teacher is the one who moves around, and you stay in the same class the whole year.

Hecter: You have to move classrooms.

Expressions: Would you recommend studying abroad?

Bergamini: Yes, I think this is an amazing experience so far.

Cardieri: I do recommend studying abroad because, besides learning a new language, you meet people from different cultures and have an awesome experience in which you grow so much.

Hecter: Yes I would recommend it to everyone! But you need to be a person who can be away from home for a long time!

Introducing The New SLOHS Improv Team

By Cathryn Newlon

All students at San Luis Obispo High School have a bit of spontaneous creativity within themselves. There are some who are driven to capture this spontaneity and mold it into what we call entertainment: improv.

For those who don't know what this is, improv is the art of constantly thinking on your feet in order to entertain an audience. Games include one where each improviser is assigned a character by the crowd seconds before the guesser comes in and they have to act the part. Essentially, it is theatre without the scripts.

Expressions: What is the plan for this year?

Senior Jack Martin: Our main plan is to bond as a team and to do well, as we always do.

Senior Hannah Peterson: I really want to focus on bonding because even though there are a lot of seniors this year, I want the team to be a unifying experience. Also, I want us to focus on projecting and to stop caring what other people think, rather than becoming shy and stressed out onstage. Improv is about being on a team and having fun.

Junior Kathryn ZagRodney: We're trying to just work on everyone's strengths.

Expressions: Are there any new SLOHS Improvisors?

Martin: Yes. There's a whole new group of people, since last year's

team was made up of mostly seniors. We have about four out of the original twelve left, so there's a lot of newcomers.

Peterson: So far we have five new people. They have big shoes to fill, but I know that they'll do great this year.

ZagRodney: Yeah. We have five new people.

Expressions: What is the SLOHS Improv experience like?

Martin: Absolutely fantastic. You know that feeling of chaotic good? Imagine that but just on a team scale. It's a fun time, and you get to flex your comedic muscles.

Peterson: It's a fun experience and a place where you can forget about all your stresses in school. It's a lot of making up scenes on the spot and becoming a different person, so, in essence, you can kind of forget yourself.

ZagRodney: It gives you an adrenaline rush because you're nervous, but then you just have to send it.

Expressions: What's the difference between theatre and improv?

Martin: Improv is just thrown at you, where in theatre you can prepare what you're saying. I definitely prefer improv.

Peterson: Theatre gives you so much time to prepare, while improv just throws something at you and you have to do it whether or not you completely understand.

ZagRodney: In improv you have to build the scene versus theater where they are given to you and you just have to bring it to life.

"OF THE HIGHEST CALIBER"
A CREATIVE WRITING STORY

By Kaylee Beardsley

Josh had been friends with Adam for eight years, and in those years never had he ever been more proud. Adam had managed to chug two gallons of chocolate milk in a matter of minutes.

Behind the local convenience store, with liquid dripping from the corners of his mouth, Adam grinned at his partner in crime.

"Alright, the deed is done," Adam said to Josh, dropping the plastic jug by his feet, like a finished carcass. Josh put his hands on his hips and took in a deep breath before reaching into his pocket to retrieve his wallet. He was conflicted between the feelings of a proud father, and that of being tricked.

"Ten it is."

Josh handed the bill to Adam, who eagerly accepted it and stuffed it into his back pocket.

"What's next?" he asked.

"What do you mean what's next? I only had ten dollars on me; you cleaned me out," Josh replied, raising his hands in the air defensively.

"Well you could always return the favor," Adam stated coyly.

"What the hell is that supposed to mean?"

Josh started to get aggravated, realizing that now he didn't have any spare change to spend on his ever-expanding collection of visors.

Without even beginning to explain what he meant with his comment, Adam rushed inside of the convenience store, leaving Josh bewildered. He sniffled and crossed his arms. He started to wonder about the logistics behind chugging that much milk. How had Adam succeeded so effortlessly? Was his stomach twice the average size of the average man's?

A few minutes passed before Adam came barreling out of the store, a gallon of chocolate milk in each hand. There was that same coy grin across Adam's face, and at once he threw one of the gallons at Josh. Caught off guard, Josh stumbled and let the jug fall onto the asphalt.

Josh looked down to see that his feet were encompassed by a lake of brown milk. His eyes traveled to Adam's face, which was full of disappointment.

"Man, are you kidding me? That was all my cash."

"Guess neither of us won."

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