

# SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

FEBURARY 2024 | ROMANCE FEATURE | SAN LUIS OBISPO HIGH SCHOOL



*Hearts in the air and partners that don't care. Or maybe they do, though you don't have a clue. Graphic courtesy of Canva AI.*

## What To Get Your Situationship For Valentine's Day

FEATURE CO-EDITOR ALMA TINOCO

The season of cheaply made pink bears and terrible pick up lines is approaching the lives of students at San Luis Obispo High School. While the common couple races to come up with a meaningful gift to surprise their loved one with this February 14, a dilemma pops up for those whose relationship status is more questionable than the expiration date of the Valentine's candy on the shelves. Modern romance often takes form in the shape of a "situationship", a relationship that's not really official but not completely off the books—so how do those in these situations commit to a gift for Valentine's Day when they can't even commit to a partner?

Here's some ideas more solid than that label status.

"I would give my situationship love and respect. Probably some attention, might take a lot of time out of my day though," said sophomore Carlos Vargas.

Connection is an essential part of human nature, so it would surely be appropriate to give some this coming holiday. Not only would it make your partner feel cared for and touched, but it's also an inexpensive option. If spending was an objective, maybe you would pay more attention to that special someone in your life. It could also work the other way around, if price really mattered then your situationship would spend more on something called quality time and affection.

Love is priceless.

If common courtesy is too much to put on this romantic dinner platter, there's a quick alternative—physical affection. Always sweet, always meaningful?

"I would give my situationship hugs and kisses, I'm giving a lot there but

I think they would appreciate that. The final thing—really sticking my head out for this—would be ending it," said Vargas.

Sometimes personality alone can't carry a relationship out of the trenches, so that's when you should pull out the big bucks. The very spirit of Valentine's Day centers around one thing and one thing only: materialism.

"This Valentine's day I would get a diamond ring. I would also get down on one knee with said diamond ring. For me, flower stems would be great," said junior Talia Ramezani.

What shows more devotion than commitment and stability in a relationship? Physical symbols of that said devotion. Especially symbols more present than that lame excuse of a romantic bond.

Go big or make that present seem big after the bar is set so low.

"It's okay, you don't really have to get me flowers. I'll be happy with the stems—I can totally accept the bare minimum," said Ramezani.

If time, affection, and material possessions don't fit the criteria of decent gifts this Valentine's Day, at least there's still the idea of a relationship.

"I think I'd like to keep it going, I love being in a situationship," said Vargas.

What matters the most this Valentine's Day is the company of those you love. There is no greater present than yourself, nothing can top that—not even a defined relationship.

"I just love my situationship—I love the lack of commitment," said Ramezani.

When asking yourself what to give your special situationship this coming holiday, look no further than the basic standard. Save that sweet effort for your next situationship and the many more to come.

Love might be in the air, Tigers!

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# Who Is Behind the Production of TNN?

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CO-EDITOR VIOLET BURRUS

San Luis Obispo High School has many electives to satisfy its students, but one class works exceptionally hard to produce content for the school. SLOHS' Tiger News Network, more commonly known as TNN, brings daily announcements full of both informative and entertaining content, and while this may seem like an easy job, it is very difficult.

To get insight into the production of TNN and how the students run the class, Expressions interviewed the advisor and a few key students.

**Expressions:** What is your role in the production of TNN?

**TNN advisor Jason Heimerdinger:** I'm the teacher for the class, but I also function as an executive producer of sorts. Once I'm done training all of the new students who have entered the program, then I oversee the writers, directors, talent, and crew to make sure they efficiently and reliably produce a show that we can deliver to our audience and that supports the needs of our advertisers.

**Senior Camilo Baltodano:** I do a lot of behind-the-scenes stuff so I'll write some scripts, I'll do audio engineering, and then I like to serve as tech director and go out and film special projects.

**Sophomore Canyon Davis:** TNN is divided into two groups: the blue team and the orange team. We split off jobs each week so one week the orange team will be producing the show while the blue team will be producing other special projects. I'm the orange team lead so half the class works with me and I give them jobs they need to do.

**Sophomore Michelle Murray:** We switch roles all the time, but as a recurring member of

TNN, I'm bouncing around everywhere, helping new people figure out how to use Adobe Premiere, and filming a lot of stuff for people.

**Expressions:** What is your favorite part about TNN?

**Heimerdinger:** I love to see the teamwork that goes into the production each day. It takes at least 11 students to produce each show. They all have specific jobs and have to communicate well with each other to make sure all of the pieces are ready to go at the correct time. Our show is recorded live, so whenever anyone messes up, it might be left in the show. With this pressure, a lot of students rise to the occasion and learn to deal with the pressure.

**Baltodano:** Definitely when I get to go out by myself and work on special projects and interview my friends before then editing in Adobe.

**Davis:** I enjoy working with the people in the class. I have a lot of friends in the class so we all work together. We have fun working with all the tech in the studio and producing shows because we get to go out and film people, interview people, find stuff that's interesting on campus, and then put it into TNN. It makes me feel like I've accomplished something.

**Murray:** It's fun, you get to kind of be silly and everyone gets to see you while you get to film cool stuff.

**Expressions:** Why should students join TNN?

**Heimerdinger:** As a TNN student, you will learn a wide range of technical skills on all of the equipment in our very professional studio space. It's also a great opportunity to be part of a team and learn how to lead and follow successfully. When you finish a difficult show there is a sense of joy and accomplishment that I see on student's faces. Also, this is a great place to work out any aspirations you might have to be a

media personality.

**Baltodano:** It's a great way to learn more about your school and to meet a bunch of fun kids.

**Davis:** We really need more people, and the more people that we have, the better that our actual production is. A lot of people complain about TNN not being good but really, the only reason why TNN sometimes is weird is because we don't have enough people who are there to help support us.

**Murray:** The experience is good because you get to learn how to use cameras, and you can also get used to talking in front of a lot of people.

**Expressions:** What would you say to students who think TNN doesn't work hard?

**Heimerdinger:** They should be cautious of making judgments about things they haven't actually experienced. If they spent some time watching what takes place each day as students write, rehearse, produce, and record the show every day, then they would see that it's a real challenge and that the students who pull it off each day are hard-working and talented.

**Baltodano:** People think in TNN we just slack off which is not entirely true. A lot of us work hard and it's a team environment. We work together, it's very much team-based but we actually do get stuff done for the most part.

**Davis:** They should come watch us on some of the days that we produce shows.

**Murray:** Come try taking the class, because every single mess-up that you see on the screen is a real person who's trying to fix it and figure it out. It's not as easy as it seems either because we don't edit anything.

If students are looking for a good time and a chance to learn about video production, TNN is the perfect place for them!

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# Seniors, the FAFSA Plays a Vital Role In College Affordability

REPORTER ROMAN ENGELMEIER

The FAFSA application has been open since January 1 and doesn't close for a few more months, but that doesn't mean that students can wait on it.

For San Luis Obispo High School students who plan on attending post-grad education, it is crucial that their FAFSA applications get completed and turned in as soon as possible.

For the majority of students who have no clue what the FAFSA is or stands for, it is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It opens annually and is an application to determine the amount of financial assistance students will receive for college.

"It's a student aid for college. It's free money, you know? College is expensive, you need to have money," said senior Tory Warracker.

Although it is free money, students must be eligible for it. The amount of actual financial aid given to you is based on several factors: the student's family's taxed and untaxed income, benefits, assets, and unemployment or social security.

Why is FAFSA important? Well, it helps students and their families by covering higher education expenses such as tuition and fees. For SLOHS students planning on going to higher education after high school, completing the FAFSA is mandatory.

"I haven't done the FAFSA yet,

but I know it's about financial aid for college students," said senior Amani Avina.

Although most students know what the FAFSA is, it isn't typical that they get it done quickly. The FAFSA form covers one year of school, meaning each year you have to resubmit the form in order to declare eligibility for aid.

"All students who want to attend Cuesta College for free, must complete the FAFSA. Students won't know if they qualify for grants or loans until they submit a FAFSA," said college and career educator Colleen Martin.

This is incredibly important. For every SLOHS student planning on attending Cuesta this next school year, if you don't have a completed FAFSA form, you can't get the Cuesta promise. Finishing the form isn't that challenging either, Nor is it time consuming. To finish it you will need to budget around an hour of your time.

"I recommend waiting until after Feb 1 to apply so the Student Aid Commission has time to repair all their glitches," said Martin.

If you have not yet done it, that's okay, there are still a couple months left until its deadline. If anything, it is smart to wait until February, as we started using a new FAFSA form, which is still somewhat foreign, and may have some difficulties in its earlier stages.

With that said, make sure you get your FAFSA done by April 2!

# The Capeless Heroes Keeping Campus Clean: Custodians

REPORTER KAI LIWANAG

Our custodians at San Luis Obispo High School put in so much work from behind the scenes... it's about time they got recognized!

They are so much more than simple janitors; let's meet some of our custodial staff!

**Expressions:** What do you enjoy about being a custodian?

**Custodian Josh Musgrave:** I really like helping people and seeing them grow.

**Custodian Edgar Ramirez:** Providing a clean environment for the kids to learn in.

**Custodian Mark Davis:** Seeing our cleaning maintained throughout the school year.

**Custodian Harrison Gorden:** I enjoy interacting with the students and faculty, and also behind-the-scenes setting up for sports.

**Custodian Oscar Schwab:** It's got wonderful benefits and the hours are also good. If you work the night shift swing, you have the morning to get stuff done while preparing for your evening work shift. If you work days then you get off earlier at 3:30, that's a great schedule as well. We all work as a team even when short-staffed, which happens more often than not. We learn to be able to pivot into different roles when needed. We have great leadership that can delegate each night's duties, and trust that we will get the jobs done.

**Expressions:** What is your least favorite part about being a custodian?

**Musgrave:** Cleaning up graffiti.  
**Ramirez:** It can get repetitive doing the same job over and over again, but our management does a good job moving us around so we don't get bored.

**Davis:** Cleaning the bathrooms. Students eat and hang out there, it's gross.

**Gorden:** The worst part for me is cleaning up vandalism at the school.

**Schwab:** Cleaning restrooms, they are beyond nasty.

**Expressions:** What do you do as a custodian that you feel many people overlook?

**Musgrave:** All of the behind-the-scenes setups and breakdowns. For every event that goes on on campus, there is a custodian helping with cleaning, getting the right equipment, or putting everything away.

**Ramirez:** Moving classrooms from one place to another.

**Davis:** Set-ups and breakdowns for all school events: assembly, testing, sports, graduation, etc.

**Gorden:** Give the custodians a week off and everyone will see all the things custodians do and overlook.

**Schwab:** Security and safety for both staff and students, from the doors to the equipment being used. We're constantly checking things behind the scenes.

**Expressions:** Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Musgrave:** I really appreciate my crew, they work really hard to make SLOHS safe and clean for all students.

**Davis:** Be considerate and take care of campus!

**Gorden:** Be nice to the custodians. They do a lot for the school and you never know when you'll need their help.

**Schwab:** Something for the students to consider: when a student causes property damage, it affects everyone. Please be respectful to the school; after all, it's your school as well. Take pride.

Mind your actions, Tigers! Help keep our campus clean and be sure to thank our custodians.

# SLOHS Says Goodbye to Beloved Assistant Principal Julie Mamo



**SLOHS will greatly miss Assistant Principal Julie Mamo. Photo courtesy of the SLOHS website.**

REPORTER HOLLIS DICKINSON

Assistant principal Julie Mamo has been working for the district for thirty-five years and at San Luis Obispo High School for thirteen years. In this time, she has contributed greatly to the school, the district, and our students.

**Expressions** reached out to her for one last interview.

**Expressions:** Could you give us a recap of your career?

**Assistant Principal Julie Mamo:** I've been an educator in San Luis Obispo Unified School District for thirty-five years. I was at Laguna Middle School from 1989 to 1999 as a special educator. Then I transferred to SLOHS in 1999 and I was a special educator until 2006. I then became dean of students here at SLOHS for two years and then I was an assistant principal at Los Osos Middle School for another two years. And then I came back and I've been an assistant principal here at SLOHS ever since.

**Expressions:** What is your favorite part of your job?

**Mamo:** The students. Hands down the students. They give me so much energy and so much joy. I love wat-

ching the students grow and become successful.

**Expressions:** As a former educator and admin member, what advice do you have for students?

**Mamo:** Get involved in sports, clubs, or anything like that. Just get involved with something here at school. Also, be conscious of your grades because when your grades start going down then doors close for your future. When your grades stay up the doors stay open, but when they start going down to D's and F's your future gets harder for you.

**Expressions:** What are you planning to do post-SLOHS?

**Mamo:** I have a degree in music and I was a flutist for many years before I was a teacher. I would definitely get back into my music and join an ensemble, some band, or something so I can start playing my flute again. And I want to kayak, and walk the beach, and hike, and bike, and get back into all the outdoor things I used to do. I also just want to be with my friends and all the teachers who I was so close to that have already retired.

**Expressions:** What have you learned working at SLOHS?

**Mamo:** What I have learned is definitely patience. I have learned that some students who are struggling can really turn it around and do great jobs. You can never, ever, give up on them as a person. I learned to always continue to support them, no matter what.

**Expressions:** Do you have a closing statement for SLOHS?

**Mamo:** There will be a big hole in my life not coming here every day. I'm really going to miss the students and the staff and the everyday socialization. I wish everyone well and I'm looking forward to the next stage of my life.

We will miss Mamo here at SLOHS and we wish her good luck in the future.

# Beyond the Barns: FFA Stays Busy!

WEB EDITOR SAGE LAMACCHIA MEEKS

There's a common misconception that many San Luis Obispo High School students have about our agriculture classes: all they do is raise animals. But that just isn't true. Agriculture has a lot of other classes covering a variety of topics, some of which have nothing to do with stereotypical agriculture.

"I'm taking AG Systems Management and it's like an all-encompassing class that talks about different things. Then you have AG Bio and AG Chem, which are more hands-on classes, as well as all the animal science classes. There are veterinary classes and Miss Evans has floral which deals with how to do arrangements or how to plant different plants together to make it pleasing and then there's AG leadership," said senior Kendra Madonna.

Most students also see the agriculture classes and National Future Farmers of America Organization (FFA) as the same thing, using each interchangeably, but this isn't the case. Even though all agriculture students do have to sign up for FFA, they aren't one in the same.

"AG covers the learning and enrollment side of it while FFA lets you do speaking competitions, showing your animals, and running fundraisers and events," said Madonna.

FFA is a great addition to college resumes because it shows colleges the kinds of commitment that students are willing to make. Classes like AG leadership can help in a variety of fields outside of agriculture, like public speaking and learning Robert's Rules of Order.

If you haven't already, you should give the agriculture classes a try and join FFA!

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# Ignite Curiosity With the World of Physics Class



**Physics students running a lab to simulate the transfer of energy. Photo courtesy of junior Sage Meeks.**

WEB CO-EDITOR SAGE LAMACCHIA-MEEKS

Here at San Luis Obispo High School, students only need to take two science classes: Biology in freshman year and Chemistry in sophomore year.

After that, students can choose not to take any science classes, or move on to AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, Anatomy, Marine Biology, Astronomy, or Physics.

Of the science classes for juniors and seniors, Physics is obviously the best.

Physics is the only class where students are taught real world applications for the math they learn, finally answering the question of ‘when will I use this after high school?’

“Physics has that satisfying quality that most math classes have. It’s really awesome when you start to understand something and feel really smart, especially in the first trimester. Though even when you fully understand everything and all the concepts it’s still a lot of work and you don’t go super in-depth, instead covering a range of topics,” said junior Justin Fry.

In Physics, students aren’t learning hard material or rocket science. They’re learning how the world and objects move using math from freshman year and real-world experiments.

“I loved those scenarios with spinning objects. Although I’m bad at angular momentum, acceleration, and velocity. I find that really fun because you spin the little disks and hopefully energy will also be fun,” said junior Alex Adames.

Some of the experiments done include learning about inertia by pulling a tablecloth from under objects, or why ice skaters spin faster after pulling their arms and legs in close.

“That’s where the real fun is, learning how things are different from mainstream knowledge and what a layman may know or say about topics we think we understand. It’s also one of the only classes where you learn the real world application before the math unlike something like calc which is just straight numbers,” said Fry.

The argument that Physics is a difficult subject is totally wrong. In both CP and AP Physics, students only need to memorize three equations the entire first trimester, which all use basic Algebra.

In the first trimester, students go over the basics of how pushing and pulling objects work and how to calculate falling objects without friction or air resistance.

Topics are easy to understand and apply to the real world, which is an essential part of education.

Tigers, give Physics class a try, or go to Physics club!

## What’s a Background Check? SLOHS Hires Anyone!

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CO-EDITOR ASIA JADE HAGANS

San Luis Obispo High School has ways to protect students from outside invaders but is finding it hard to protect them from those on the inside.

Students are questioning the hiring decisions made by administrators after the situation with former U.S. History teacher and soccer coach Jeff Brandow, who is currently being sued by a former student for manipulation, intimidation, and unwanted physical contact.

“Being in Brandow’s class made me feel uncomfortable because I heard stuff and didn’t know if it was true or not. It was an awkward position as a student. He was responsible for people’s children and he made a choice,” said senior Dilpinder Thandi.

Amongst the uproar from this disheartening situation, another educator was accused of improper behavior with multiple students and has since been put on paid leave.

“I feel like there was an energy that [the teacher] brought to the classroom that was very unsettling so I’m not surprised. I don’t know who’s in charge of reviewing who’s able to work here but I feel like it’s pretty slim pickings for who they can get to work here,” said an anonymous student.

Teacher after teacher in the SLOHS staff circle are being called out for overstepping the clear line between teacher and student which leaves everyone with the question, what is being done to ensure student safety?

To keep it short, not much.

New hires only get one background check when they are given the position and the vetting process does not take into consideration whether, let’s

say, someone has a restraining order on them for harassment and stalking.

“It makes me feel concerned that the teachers aren’t qualified for the position when they only get one background check. [Admin] is schooling so many students that they need to make sure they’re in a safe environment,” said junior Lina Arnold.

Not only are educators not checked regularly, but former staff members are still allowed on campus even if they were fired for predatory behavior.

“That shouldn’t be allowed because that teacher did something to other students and they shouldn’t be on campus with students. It’s still dangerous,” said sophomore Camila Amador.

Apparently, if there is no restraining order on said person, they have permission to come on campus.

That is ludicrous.

Giving someone who’s been predatory towards minors access to minors is like giving them an open catalog where they can pick who they want next.

“Brandow was at the basketball game on January 16. I was very surprised because my friend said he was there to say congratulations to his son and one of the parents or teachers started yelling at him to get away from the kids. I don’t think he should even be on campus. He should have to follow the same rules that any other person who’s preying on young students, girls or boys,” said sophomore Ruby Robertson.

The administration needs better judgment when choosing potential candidates; they need to be not a good match, but perfect. Students should not be playing Guess Who when it comes to which teacher will prey on them next.

# Unleash Your Inner Adventurer With a Bike Ride

REPORTER ERIC BASILIO

At San Luis Obispo High School, biking is super underrated. Sometimes there's hardly any bikes on the bike rack. Biking has so many benefits to one's health and the world today as a whole. Also, biking can save people much more time if they don't have transportation available, and it's cheaper!

First and foremost, biking is a fantastic way to stay active and get some exercise. It's a low impact activity that gets someone's heart pumping and helps improve cardiovascular health. Plus, it's a lot of fun and doesn't feel like a chore!

Not only is biking great for improving physical health, but it also has numerous mental and emotional benefits. Riding a bike allows someone to enjoy the outdoors, soak up some vitamin D, and take in the beautiful scenery. It's a great way to reduce stress and boost your mood.

"Biking comes with a lot of benefits. You're outside getting some air, you're being healthy doing the cardio, and also you can feel more free. You can go on beautiful trails or ride with your friends," said freshman Juan Pablo Castro.

Biking is also an eco-friendly mode of transportation. By choosing to ride a bike instead of driving a car, people reduce their carbon footprint and

contribute to a cleaner environment. It's a small change that can make a big difference in the long run.

Another reason to hop on a bike is the sense of freedom of exploration it offers. You can go whenever you want, discover new places, and take scenic routes that you wouldn't experience while driving. It's a wonderful way to connect with your surroundings and appreciate the world around you.

Lastly, biking can be a social activity. People can join group rides, participate in cycling events, or simply go for a bike ride with friends or family. It's a great opportunity to bond, have conversations, and create lasting memories with loved ones.

"I ride to school everyday, it gets my heart pumping, the wind blows on my face, and I get to enjoy the beautiful sunshine. I also enjoy riding my bike with friends through the park or downtown, it's always so fun," said freshman Jackson Gillett.

So, whether it's for your health, the environment, or the sheer joy of it, riding a bike is definitely worth considering. It's a versatile and enjoyable activity that brings numerous benefits to your life. Give it a try and embrace the wonderful world of biking!

Source: *momentummag.com*

# SLOHS is Watching With a New Surveillance System



**Cameras are around just about every corner. Photo Courtesy of reporter Roman Engelmeier.**

REPORTER ROMAN ENGELMEIER

This school year, San Luis Obispo High School implemented a top-of-the-line camera system, but is it too much? Safety is the school's number one priority, and with the completion of the new buildings, security cameras seem to have popped up around every corner of the school.

"I appreciate the security. The cameras aren't there to stalk us; they're there to keep us safe. I don't have a problem with them," said junior Luca Garritano.

The cameras, as many as there are, aren't implemented to constantly stalk or watch over students.

Could this be different for other schools? Sure. However, not many bad things occur at SLOHS, and when they do, the school's camera system can help resolve the issue(s). For the majority of the students here, having cameras doesn't really bother them.

"I don't pay attention to them, really, I mean it's not like I'm doing anything bad," said junior Dashiel Ellsworth.

He's right! No need to worry about being recorded, unless of course, you are doing something you know you shouldn't be doing in the first place.

As beneficial as the security system is, it can be weird to know that you don't have a say as to whether or not you want to be recorded. For some, it isn't about doing bad things, it is also an odd feeling for some students, because for some it feels invasive.

"I don't like it at all, it just makes me feel like I'm being watched all the time," said sophomore Colbin Garrison.

Students' right to privacy is important, and when it feels like one's privacy is being pirated, it can be disconcerting for them.

At SLOHS, students do have their privacy on campus, and although the camera system is a bit over the top, it is just our school doing their best to keep us protected and to keep the standards of our school high.

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# The Problems with Senior-Freshman Relationships



Turn away from relationships between students of different ages. Photo courtesy of Canva AI.

REPORTER JULIAN JOHNSON

Students at San Luis Obispo High School often date each other without much debate. However, there is one type of connection that is treated as taboo by many students: relationships between upperclassmen and underclassmen.

“The maturity level between the two age groups [seniors and freshmen] are massively different. There can be strong manipulation and also difficult consequences,” said an anonymous sophomore.

There are often bad undertones to a relationship like this. If a senior is dating a freshman, what could have made them so unappealing that nobody their own age is willing to date them?

“The thought of being romantically involved with someone that much older than me feels wrong,” said freshman Hayla Ackerman.

Just a year earlier, one of these students was attending middle school while the other was already at an age where they could drive. That difference seems more fit for a babysitting job than a relationship.

Most students know adults in relationships who are four or more years apart from each other. While there can certainly be success like this, it is often seen as predatory to initiate a relationship with this age gap as high schoolers. Students are at a developmental age where maturity differs between the beginning and end of their time attending high school.

“I like the saying my friends taught me: If your grades don’t touch, you don’t touch,” said Ackerman.

In a group where there are friends of multiple grades, why would it be wrong for people a grade or two apart to couple up?

“If you’re on the younger side of being a junior and the older side of being a freshman, that’s the farthest you should be,” said an anonymous sophomore.

When older and younger high schoolers date, it never seems to last. This might be because there is little to connect such a large gap, or because there’s hardly time to date before one member graduates.

“I would never date a freshman but I don’t think we should judge if other people choose to,” said an anonymous senior.

The way that each person views these connections is different. It’s hard to know the full story, but it should always be a priority to make sure good decisions are being made because there is a lot of risk to dating in these situations.

Dating is not the only purpose to living, so before looking three grades away for a partner, students should reconsider if being in such a relationship is necessary at all.

# Clear Your Calendar and Do Something Special for a Loved One This Valentine’s Day

REPORTER GABE LIMON

It’s the time of year again where students at San Luis Obispo High School get to show how strong their love is for one another. There are many students at SLOHS who are currently in relationships and are preparing things to do on Valentine’s Day.

“I might go on a hot date to the restaurant that I work at. [I’ll get her a] teddy bear, succulents, and gasoline [from Costco],” said an anonymous senior.

There are many ways to show your love for someone else. For example, getting chocolates and flowers, or going all out and getting a full tank of gas for them.

“Flowers are a go to, chocolates, and if you’re feeling special, a teddy bear or jewelry,” said another anonymous senior.

There are also many things to do with platonic friends. You could have

a chocolate party since chocolate is the primary ingredient for a good Valentine’s day. You could have a game night with your friends and compete to see who is the best. Stick with the classics and have a movie marathon with a giant bowl of popcorn and junk food.

“It’s a very corporatized holiday and while that’s unfortunate, it’s a pretty good holiday. It’s a holiday to spend with loved ones, so it’s good for the world, I would say,” anonymous senior.

Many companies are capitalizing on feelings people have for each other and while that’s sad, it doesn’t mean you don’t have to participate. Take some time and make something special for that one person because it will mean much more to them than some generic flowers and chocolates.

No matter how you celebrate Valentine’s day, make sure to show those around you that you appreciate them and get them something to celebrate.

Source: [HomelandFlorist.com](http://HomelandFlorist.com)

# Understanding the Bromances at SLOHS



A display of bromantic affection. Photo courtesy of junior Addi Woods.

REPORTER PORTER HALES

Bromances are close friendships between men that don’t involve anything romantic, and they are something that some guys at San Luis Obispo High School are familiar with. They have become more popular recently, especially because of social media and changes in how people view what it means to be a man.

*Expressions* interviewed some students to ask them about how bromances can help men feel better and why it can be hard for people to accept that men can be close friends without being romantic.

***Expressions*:** What is a bromance?

**Senior Roman Engelmeier:** I feel every guy has a bromance with at least one of their friends, whether it’s slapping their butt after a sports game, or you know, giving them a hug after a breakup. A bromance is hard to explain, but it’s a guy thing.

**Freshman Josue Saavedra:** It is when two heterosexual men are not gay for each other, but they love each other. In a bro way. Like a strong friendship.

**Freshman Russel Ramadan:** It’s your bro who you love so much that you guys have a romantic relationship.

***Expressions*:** Are you in a bromance?

**Engelmeier:** I probably have several bromances— not actually dating, but another word for a bromance is also like a strong connection.

**Saavedra:** I probably am in a couple.

**Ramadan:** Probably with at least like seven different guys. You know, that’s good.

***Expressions*:** Do you know anyone in a bromance?

**Engelmeier:** I got a lot of friends in a bromance, I won’t necessarily call them out though.

**Saavedra:** I said I was in some, so there’s some people I know that are.

**Ramadan:** Evan Aquino. Evan Aquino is in one.

***Expressions*:** Is a bromance relationship better than a regular relationship?

**Engelmeier:** I think it is because you can have a deeper connection, you can talk to them about important things, and sort of like, you have more trust in them, and like a really good bond.

**Saavedra:** They are a lot more stable and a lot more trustworthy than a normal relationship. You gain more trust from [a bromance] too.

**Ramadan:** Oh yeah, absolutely. Gay means happy, there you have it.

***Expressions*:** Are there any pros and cons of a bromance?

**Engelmeier:** Sometimes it can be weird. I remember when I was a freshman and I had just finished a football game, I got my butt slapped in front of a bunch of cheerleaders— which is a little weird. But it’s not that weird, and there’s a lot of good things I already talked about.

**Saavedra:** The pros is if you’re getting beat up by some people then your bro can be there to help you and stand up for you no cons.

**Ramadan:** All pros. Absolutely zero cons. A hundred percent pros.

Next time you see two bros hanging out, don’t judge - they might just be in the midst of a beautiful bromance. Who knows, maybe you’ll even want to join in on the fun and find your own bromantic partner in crime!

# Romantic Love Explained: The Science Behind It



**Love makes you crazy. Graphic courtesy of sophomore Emily Lopez.**

REPORTER EMILY LOPEZ

Many students at San Luis Obispo High School have heard some variation of the phrase “love makes you crazy.” While this expression may seem cliché and exaggerated, it has some truth to it.

“[Love] is almost like having an obsession, but different,” said sophomore Maria Fidopiastis.

So why do people act a little crazy when in love?  
The short answer: dopamine.

Dopamine is a hormone that is produced by our brain when we do something that feels good. Eating sweets or being with loved ones are examples of things that produce dopamine.

When someone sees the person they’re attracted to, the levels of dopamine and related hormones skyrocket, making them feel giddy and energized.

“You admire some trait about them or their personality and sometimes [it makes you] a little giddy,” said sophomore Olivia Martinez.

According to brain scans of those who are in love, the reward centers of one’s brain “fire like crazy” when they see a photo of someone they are very attracted to.

Love can also raise the levels of a stress hormone called cortisol, causing one’s heart rate to pick up around the person they find attractive.

“[Love is a] totally overwhelming feeling. It’s scary,” said Fidopiastis.

Attraction is obviously a major factor to being in love with someone, but there are other contributing aspects to love such as lust and attachment.

Lust originates from the need to reproduce and increase the population, something that all living things have in common.

Lust, along with attraction, can actually shut off the prefrontal cortex in the brain, which regulates decision making and rational thinking. This can explain why people can act a little erratically when in love.

Attachment is necessary in any relationship, platonic or romantic. Unlike lust and attraction, attachment isn’t just limited to romantic relationships, but it is still a vital part of being in love. A hormone associated with attachment is oxytocin, or the “cuddle hormone,” which is often released when hugging or kissing.

Much like other scientific affairs, love can seem fantastical and confusing. Knowing the science behind it is only the tip of the iceberg.

Sources: [news.harvard.edu](http://news.harvard.edu), [sitn.hms.harvard.edu](http://sitn.hms.harvard.edu), [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

## Your Favorite Parents of SLOHS: Get to Know the Aratas



**The Aratas posing for a photo. Photo courtesy of Kelsey Arata.**

BACKPAGE EDITOR CATE TUCKER

Aside from being the favorite teachers of many San Luis Obispo High School students, the Aratas are also a married couple.

*Expressions* went out and interviewed this duo to find out more about their relationship as married teachers!

**Expressions:** How did you meet?

**Math teacher and department head Steven Arata:** I was at an Italian restaurant and this young lady and her parents came in and sat at a

table not too far from me. I looked up and she was smiling at me. I went back to eating and then I’d catch a glance, and she’d look up and see that I was looking at her and she’d look away. And that happened probably, what, ten times throughout the meal?

**Social Science department head and History teacher Kelsey Arata:** Yeah, maybe more. I was having a hard time eating, because I was a little distracted.

**S. Arata:** As I was leaving the restaurant my buddies nudged me in the arm, saying I should give her my number as we left the restaurant. I got the courage to go back inside and said, ‘I wanted to give you my number and hope you take this as a compliment.’ She called me the next day.

**Expressions:** How did you guys end up at SLOHS? Did you always want to work together?

**K. Arata:** He became a teacher first while I was working on my master’s program at Cal Poly. I became a teacher the year after. We ended up working at the same school in our first position, which was up in Oregon at Sobrato High School, and then we moved down here. The goal was to work at the same school together.

**S. Arata:** [Yes.] It’s convenient, because if you work with different districts, there’s different breaks. One or two times. She’d have a break, and I didn’t.

**Expressions:** How do your schedules work together to fit everything in?

**K. Arata:** Staying up till 2:00 a.m.

**S. Arata:** It wouldn’t be possible without the help of [Kelsey’s] mom, or childcare.

**K. Arata:** Taking breaks during the weekend from work keeps us from losing our minds a bit. Our schedules are cramped a lot of the time, but we carve out time outside of school to make sure we’re doing what we need to, occasionally bringing work home. We try to keep our time for our daughters.

**S. Arata:** Anytime I have a break in classroom stuff, my students are working on a quiz or a benchmark or something like that, or they’re watching TNN, I’m grading because that’s 10 minutes I like to spend with my kids. So trying to prioritize that. Early in my career I don’t think I was good about it, but now I try not to take anything home.

**Expressions:** Do you want your kids to come to SLOHS?

**S. Arata:** It’d be really cool to have our kids come here. [Though] not in my own classroom.

**K. Arata:** We differ on that.

**S. Arata:** I think it’d be cool to see our kids learning from me, but I already get to see them on a regular basis. They’ll be great no matter what, but I just could see me giving [them] a bad grade causing strife.

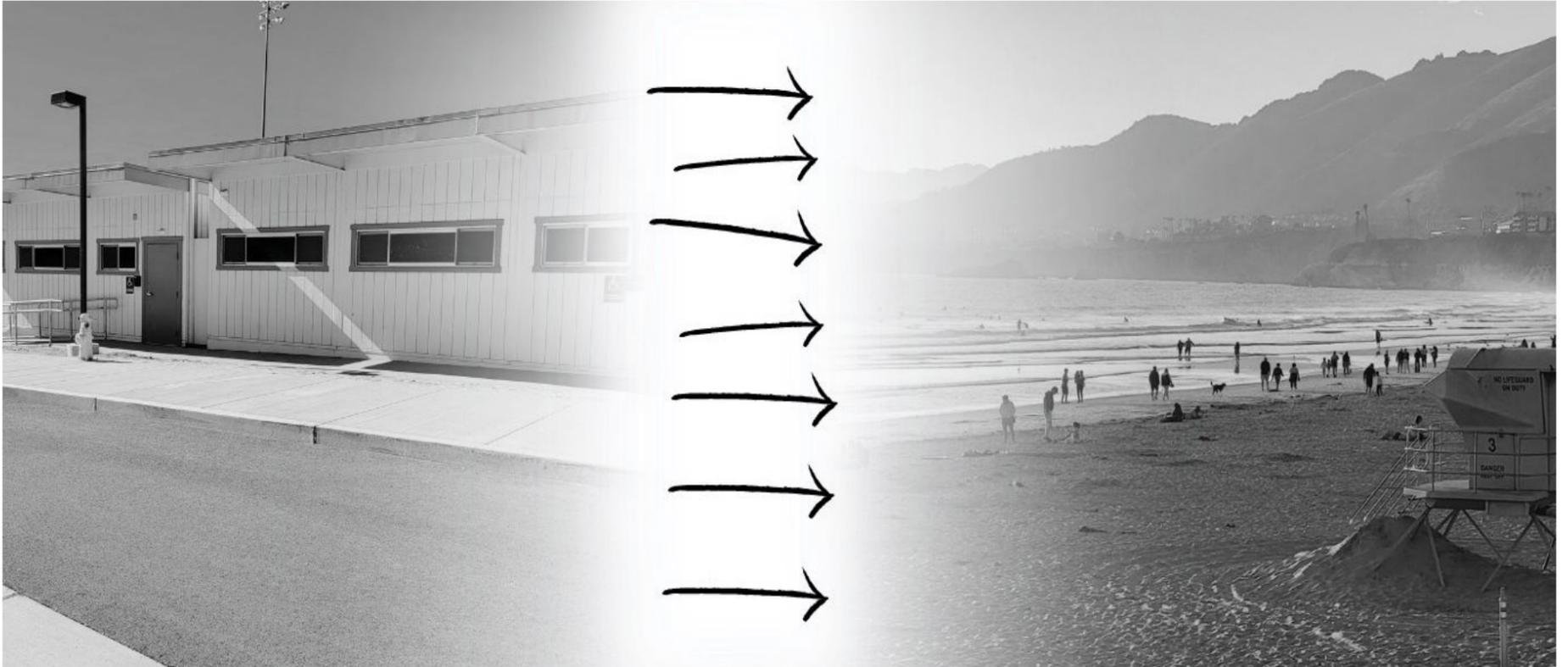
**K. Arata:** I would definitely like our girls to come here to go to high school. I wouldn’t mind having them in my classroom whatsoever. Being a home base for them to come hang out or to leave their backpacks or if they have a headache, come see me and I can be helpful.

**Expressions:** What are your plans for the future?

**K. Arata:** I think long term we want to stay here. I think this is where we see ourselves outside of something world shaking happening. We’ll probably stay throughout our careers.

Tigers, if you ever see either of the Aratas while on campus, be sure to say hi!

# They're Finally Going; New Beach Volleyball Courts Might Replace the Decrepit Portables



*From musty classes to a sandy oasis, the portables are on their way out. Photo graphic courtesy of sophomore Aidan Field.*

REPORTER GABE LIMON

Last year was filled with construction at San Luis Obispo High School. This year is starting off strong with the removal of the portables. SLOHS will most likely be replacing them with beach volleyball courts, something that our school has lacked for a long time.

"The ones in the center will go first, the ones by the small gym will stick around for longer and that won't be where the volleyball is," said assistant principal Bernardo Salcido.

The removal of the portables have long been overdue and students are celebrating their removal. For many seniors, the portables have been there since the beginning of freshman year and the removal of them signifies a new beginning for future students.

"The construction of the courts will probably take a couple months, but we still have the Wellness Center in portable ten. So we have to get

the wellness center out of there first ... Another factor why the portables can't come out yet is the construction on San Luis Drive," said Salcido.

SLOHS needs to accomplish many tasks in order to begin construction.

First, classrooms being removed need to be emptied of their contents. Second, SLOHS needs to wait for the construction on San Luis Drive to finish in order for trucks to come in and take the portables away.

"There'll be a lot of prep work to get it ready, but yes, pick it up when they say, 'that portable is ready'. [They'll] literally be here one day and then gone the next," said Salcido.

Removing the portables is the easy part but it takes time. The hardest part is building the courts, which is estimated to take a few months. So it will most likely be done next school year.

"To my understanding, volleyball is now being required by CIF and so we have to have

a place for them to play. So that's why we went immediately to beach volleyball," said Salcido.

Before students get mad about choosing volleyball courts, they should take into consideration that there are currently no beach volleyball courts on campus and the closest ones are at Meadow Park.

"It'll be great because then after school or during fifth period, students won't have to make the trek over to Meadow Park every day," said senior Nina Moutafov.

As stated before, volleyball courts are now required by CIF and therefore went to the top list.

"I'm pretty excited for the future generations of volleyball players to get these courts [because] I know they won't be in for quite a while," said Moutafov.

The campus is looking bright with all the completed projects. Future tiger athletes will be able to train and compete much better with these new additions to SLOHS.

# Nutrition Break or Nutrition Fake: Are our School Meals Actually Healthy for Students?



REPORTER KAI LIWANAG

Cafeteria food is eaten by many San Luis Obispo High School students. The free food is an easy, quick school meal instead of leaving campus, but how healthy is the school food? Are the health risks worth the price (or the lack thereof)?

"I like where there's a good balance of food. I know everyone likes the pizza, but I like when there's a good amount [of comfort foods] and... healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables," said freshman Brendan Forester.

The pizzas are, without a doubt, the most favored food offered by SLOHS. However, these delicious foods are packed with sodium, from 732 - 1002 mg. Keep in mind that the recommended amount of sodium is about 3400 mg, so it is about a third of the recommended daily intake. If eaten with that in mind, it is not an unhealthy choice.

Next on the menu is the low-fat milk... it is relatively low in sodium and sugar, yet it is also low in proteins and other beneficial nutrients.

Is it really that beneficial to remove the fat from our milk, or is the fattier, higher-calorie alternative worse?

Students can check out [schools.mealviewer.com](http://schools.mealviewer.com) to learn more about their food's nutritional value, and so they can make nutrition conscious decisions when they choose their meals.

With our wide variety of food, how do SLOHS

students feel about the meals and cafeteria experience?

"There are a lot of healthy options. I, myself, am a vegetarian, and I've noticed sometimes when I get to lunch there will be - well, this isn't much of a problem any more - but it used to be where I would go in and the only vegetarian option would be gone," said Forester.

All of this food is prepared by a group of people at SLOHS: our cafeteria staff.

SLOHS's cafeteria food was high quality and healthy, cafeteria staff members Andrea Hernandez and Larry Puder agreed.

Puder continued, stating that the food was "prepared very thoughtfully."

Despite healthy options being available to students, do students actually choose these options?

"Kids are more aware of good nutrition, more so than in the past," said Puder.

SLOHS students should all work together and keep this trend going. Students should choose the healthiest options so we can all live our healthiest lives.

Many know the saying "you are what you eat," and because of that the path to success and a healthy body starts with choosing healthy food.

Be mindful of what you eat, Tigers.

Source: [schools.mealviewer.com](http://schools.mealviewer.com)

*A meal at SLOHS. Photo courtesy of sophomore Aidan Field.*

# Say Goodbye to Sports and Hello to Video Games



These games are getting more and more popular, can they compete w/ sports? Illustration courtesy of sophomore Aidan Field.

REPORTER LEVI WOFFIDEN

Sports have been an important part of San Luis Obispo High School for the longest time, but a popular and seldom talked about form of competition has been on the rise: video games. So how do e-sports compare to regular physical sports?

Recently, a major breakthrough has occurred in the video game world. One of the oldest games, "Tetris," was recently beaten for the first time by a teenager who goes by "Blue Scuti" online.

Scuti spent hundreds of hours learning the ins and outs of "Tetris" to get the record. Through playing the game and going to tournaments, Scuti has made over three thousand dollars and established himself as a true contender in the "Tetris" world at only thirteen years old.

However, this use of one's time has not been respected in our society. Gamers have been told to "go outside" and "touch grass" because people think gaming is a waste of time.

Gamers such as Scuti have been put on stage in competitions for fans to watch. These competitions resemble the style of many sports leagues, with players putting in hours that rival

those of professional athletes.

Competitions showcasing these peoples' skills make a lot of money for each industry. So how much do athletes and gamers make?

"I feel like athletes make an astronomical amount for playing sports," said junior Moss Mounts.

In California, the average athlete makes ninety thousand dollars per year, thirty thousand more than the average e-sports player.

"League of Legends" is a typical example of competitive e-sports, with top level athletes earning on average over four hundred thousand dollars. On the other hand, top athletes make multiple millions of dollars per year.

"They deserve salaries based on how much of an audience they bring," said senior Caden Gough.

The disparities between salaries might just be evident of how much people actually care about esports.

Some say there's more novelty in watching sports because it is easy to see that athletes are on a level that the majority of people will never reach.

"There's something in [sports] where you

can't do what the athletes do, it's more interesting, but [with e-sports], I could be playing 'Fortnite' as opposed to watching professional 'Fortnite'," said senior Leo Knudsen.

While e-sports players and professional athletes may put in similar hours, athletes arguably do much more to take care of their bodies to be in peak physical condition. This can make sports more interesting to watch.

Also, sports already have an established culture and audience surrounding them.

"I would enjoy watching [sports] more because then I can converse with others about it, and actually have a topic that's widely loved," said Mounts.

Playing sports often requires lots of people, and time to organize. Video games, on the other hand, can be played alone or with friends almost anywhere.

Playing sports or playing video games both have their pros and cons, different things are for different people. No matter what, one's hobbies should be dependent on what they want to do.

Sources: [nytimes.com](http://nytimes.com), [esportsinsider.com](http://esportsinsider.com), [bls.gov](http://bls.gov), [leftronic.com](http://leftronic.com)

# Tiger Athletes Work Hard to Balance Academics

REPORTER ERIC OZUNA BASILIO

At San Luis Obispo High School, student athletes have a lot on their plates. They not only have to excel in their chosen sport, but also keep up with their studies.

It's all about finding the right balance, so how do our student athletes do it?

In California, around forty percent of high school students participate in school sports. This means that a large percentage of high school students have to deal with the stress of school work, and their extracurricular activities.

Some Tiger athletes have later practices for a specific type of sports, getting home at 6:00 or 6:30 pm depending on how long it is.

Then on top of that, they come home to homework and tests to study for.

Athletes have to cut out tasks or activities that could potentially distract them from completing their homework or study time.

One important aspect is time management. Student athletes need to prioritize their commitments and create a schedule that allows them to have enough time for both academics and athletics.

"[I manage my time] by cutting out extra activities such as video games or stuff like that, and [focusing] on my schoolwork, I also eat while I'm at it so I'm just multitasking," said freshman Beau Crew.

Student athletes struggling with high amounts of school work should consider using tools like timers or productivity apps to stay focused during your study sessions.

Also, note that it is super important to communicate with your teachers ahead of time if one has any sporting events. This is to ensure students and teachers are prepared for any tests, quizzes, projects, or labs one might miss.

"I check in with my teachers a week ahead of time and let them know about my games and what we do on that specific day. Or I do my homework on the way to the game or on the way back from the games or just a day earlier," said freshman Amar'e Bolivar.

Additionally, SLOHS' athletics period relieves the stress for some, alleviating one period's worth of school work during the competitive season, and allowing practices to start and end earlier.

While some students immerse themselves in sports at SLOHS during their school years, others may focus their energy on different activities or areas, but no matter what, different students deal with different issues, in school, at home, and in their sports.

However, when our students celebrate a big win it's important to acknowledge that student athletes who work hard on the field, court, or track also have to work hard in the classroom to get where they are.

Source: [cifstate.org](http://cifstate.org)



# Queen is One of the Greatest Bands of All Time



The music of rock band Queen is still loved by many today. Photo collage courtesy of sophomore Violet Burrus.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT CO-EDITOR VIOLET BURRUS

San Luis Obispo High School students listen to a variety of music, but some students are drawn to classic rock bands, one of the most notable being the band Queen. After fifty years, the band's music has strongly impacted not only SLOHS, but the world.

"Queen is a very good band; [they

have] made a very good impression on some of the newer bands nowadays. They have a mix up of different types of genres and music styles that can inspire others," said sophomore Divanna Anderson.

This British rock band was formed in 1971, by frontman and lead vocal singer Freddie Mercury, guitarist Brian May, bassist John Deacon, and drummer Roger Taylor. In 1973, the band released their first

album, "Queen," which quickly became a chart topper both in the U.K. and the U.S., allowing them to rise to fame quickly.

"My favorite thing about Queen is their lyrics because depending on the song, they're funny which makes them fun to listen to. [Their music is] a fast rock and keeps your attention," said sophomore Hayley Nicoletti.

Despite having many amazing songs, Queen has become most famous for their "Bohemian Rhapsody" single, a five minute and 55 second song that when originally released in 1975, every radio station refused to play because they believed it would be a flop. Ironically, this very song later stayed at the top of the U.K. charts for two months and they sold a million copies.

"It's one of those songs which has such a fantasy feel about it. I think people should just listen to it, think about it, and then make up their own minds as to what it says to them," said Mercury when discussing the meaning of "Bohemian Rhapsody."

Aside from "Bohemian Rhapsody," Queen is also famous for songs such as "Killer Queen," "Don't Stop Me Now," "We Are the Champions," and of course, "Another One Bites the Dust."

"My favorite song by Queen would have to be 'Don't Stop Me Now' because it's fast-paced and it's very catchy," said Nicoletti.

What makes the band unique from other bands in that era, is that Queen worked in many genres, not wanting to be limited to

just one category, and yet still they maintained their distinct identity.

The band also loved experimenting with their sound in order to create original music. By layering guitar riffs and overdubbing vocals they were able to create fusions of opera, heavy metal, and hard rock.

"[I love] their mash up of different genres and how it all forms together," said Anderson.

Sadly, the band's music career ended abruptly due to Mercury dying from HIV in 1991, and while May and Taylor continue to tour with musician Adam Lambert, the exuberant band from the 1980s is not the same as it is today.

That being said, Queen is still one of the most famous bands of all time, garnering \$185 million dollars in total sales and having a fanbase of millions. Their music has inspired many, including other famous musicians such as Lady Gaga, David Bowie, and Nirvana frontman Kurt Cobain.

Even fifty years later, Queen's music is well known throughout the world and their powerful songs are able to resonate with many, including the students at SLOHS.

"[Queen's music has impacted me] especially with their happy upbeat songs. It gives that energetic feel or that emotion of happiness and joy," said Anderson.

Everyone can find something to enjoy when it comes to Queen, so give the band a listen, Tigers!

Sources: [thetimelinegeek.com](http://thetimelinegeek.com), [rock95.com](http://rock95.com), [storyofsong.com](http://storyofsong.com)

## Here at SLOHS We Have Many Aspiring Authors

REPORTER HOLLIS DICKINSON

San Luis Obispo High School is lucky to have an amazing Creative Writing club. A testament to its greatness is the fact that multiple members are currently in the process of writing a book themselves.

In order to find out more, *Expressions* reached out to a few authors.

**Expressions:** What inspired you to start writing?

**Creative Writing Club Advisor and English Teacher Lynnly Sainsbury:** I have always wanted to write a long piece and as I started playing around with ideas, I found a Masters in Fine Arts: Creative Writing at the University of Hull, England. As part of this program, novel writing is a module where I work with a tutor in my genre of focus. This spring, I will be writing the last bits of my novel.

**Sophomore Roslyn Risner:** During COVID, I got really into reading, and it inspired me to write because I realized I wanted to become an author, basically because it seemed really awesome to my 12 year-old self.

**Expressions:** What is your book about?

**Sainsbury:** The novel focuses on three teens who get away with murder. The plot begins with meeting each of them as highly successful adults with this deep secret. A stranger knows about their murderous past and one-by-one they begin telling their significant others as a means of pressuring them to out themselves.

**Risner:** My current book is a sort of sci-fi/drama/dystopian, and it takes place in a future with a monarchy over the whole world and is told through point-of-views in both the royal family and a major rebellion group.

**Expressions:** What is the writing process like for you?

**Sainsbury:** As a full time teacher, I have to carve out specific dates for certain pieces to be completed. I have character sketches, four plots that I must weave, chapter outlines, sequence of events, setting maps and more. [However,] my favorite part of the novel was the research. I interviewed doctors, fire fighters, lawyers, and others to build a strong, viable plot!

**Risner:** Kind of chaotic, I often get sudden bursts of inspiration in the middle of math class. I also tend to want to write scenes from much later in the book rather than going in a linear direction. I have restarted my novel many times, and I have so many ideas swirling around it is difficult for me to just sit down and write. Previously I have always been a 'go with the flow' writer, but because of my history of getting frustrated and starting over, my New Year's resolution is to make a proper plot.

**Expressions:** Is it hard to write with school?

**Sainsbury:** Yes! I spend hours grading, so late nights are the best writing time for me currently!

**Risner:** Absolutely. It's hard to find time, even just with homework and school, and that doesn't even consider extracurriculars. Often, for me,

when I do have time, it's difficult to find motivation, because, even though I really enjoy it, it does use a lot more focus and brain power than just reading, watching TV, or other more relaxing activities. When free time is hard to come by, choosing to use it writing can be exhausting, no matter how much you want to do it.

**Expressions:** Do you have any advice for other people who are trying to write a book?

**Sainsbury:** Write what you love! Listen to strangers' conversations. Read the news. Build off the real world and novels that you love to influence your writing. Lean in to the skills of the books you read to mine them for ideas and writing craft!

**Risner:** Just do it. Write anything you can, whenever you have both the time and motivation, even if you don't think something you want to write will ever become part of your main project, practice is practice, and it should be enjoyable. Write what you want, when you can. If you really want to be an author, you are going to have a lot of unpublished work, so just make sure it is fun to create!

The creativity and hard work of SLOHS' staff and students never ceases to be amazing. Keep writing, Tigers!



# These RomComs will Spice Up Your Valentine's Day This Year!

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR ADDI WOODS

Many San Luis Obispo High School students can recognize Valentine's season as the best time to enjoy a heartwarming romantic comedy.

"There's nothing that a good rom-com can't fix, especially during Valentine's season. There's so many options to either put you in your feels or make you overwhelmingly happy," said senior Finley Mallon.

Both modern and classic rom-coms keep love alive.

Here are a few highly praised classics that everyone should watch:

"Notting Hill," is about a bookstore owner, played by Hugh Grant, who falls in love with a famous actress, played by Julia Roberts, leading to their journey through the neighborhood of Notting Hill in London.

"Clueless," is about Cher Horowitz, played by Alicia Silverstone, a popular high school student, who takes it upon herself to play matchmaker and improve the lives of those around her, all while finding herself and finding love. "Can't Buy Me Love," follows the story of Ronald Miller, played by Patrick Dempsey, a high school student who pays the popular cheerleader Cindy Mancini, played by Amanda Peterson, to pose as his girlfriend.

"There's something extra special about a good, classic rom-com. They made them so special

back then," said junior Liza Flushman.

There have also been some great modern rom-coms recently:

"How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days" should be watched by everyone. It is about a journalist, played by Kate Hudson, who attempts to drive away a man, played by Matthew McConaughey, by using her various dating mistakes for her article, but their relationship takes unexpected turns.

"Crazy, Stupid, Love," is about a middle-aged man named Cal Weaver, played by Steve Carell, who, after his marriage falls apart, seeks the help of a bachelor, played by Ryan Gosling, to renavigate love and relationships.

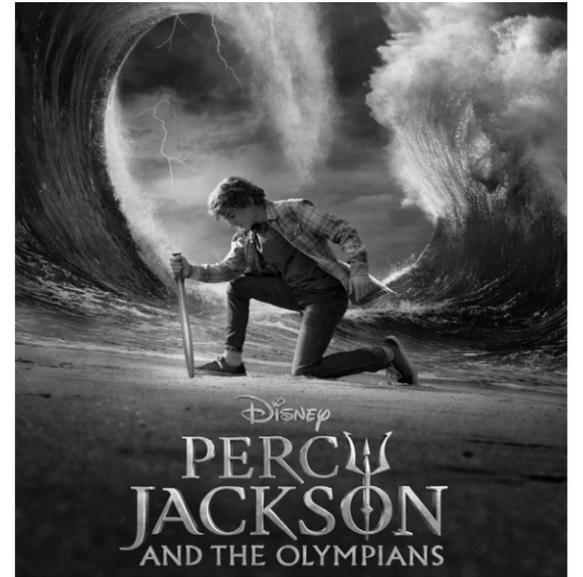
"Valentine's Day," is a very timely option to choose to watch on February 14. It is about a group of interconnected people in Los Angeles as they experience love, heartbreak, and surprises on Valentine's Day.

"La La Land," follows the romantic journey of an aspiring actress, Mia, played by Emma Stone, and a jazz musician, Sebastian, played by Ryan Gosling, as they pursue their dreams in Los Angeles while facing the challenges of their dreams and their relationship.

"La La Land" is one of my favorite comfort movies ever. It is so sad but so sweet and I think everyone should watch it," said Mallon.

Be sure to cozy up with a good rom-com during this Valentine's season to warm your heart.

# The New Percy Jackson Show Has Arrived!



The new Percy Jackson show. Photo courtesy of junior Julian Johnson.

REPORTER JULIAN JOHNSON

The television show "Percy Jackson and the Olympians," an adaptation of the book series, has recently been released. Many San Luis Obispo High School students have anticipated the show as a more faithful adaptation than the movies.

"Getting introduced to Percy Jackson books at a young age and getting to grow up with the characters is really special," said sophomore Charly Elston.

The first novel in the series was released in 2005, which has allowed students to read this story from childhood, making it a nostalgic experience for many. The fantasy storytelling with references to Greek mythology kept engagement and brought interest in stories from ancient Greek origins.

The general structure followed by all three versions is that there is a boy who discovers he is a demigod, so he shows up at Camp Half-Blood where there are a bunch of kids like him. He trains on how to defend himself in this magical world and he goes on quests to bring balance to the world of the gods and monsters.

The movies were an adaptation including the same characters, but fans were upset due to the plot, character appearance, and age changes that compromised the original stories.

"I don't think the movies get to count as an adaptation because they took the names and changed [the story] in a way that wasn't necessary," said Elston.

The new show has received praise for actors that are more accurate to the character's ages, and it has followed the plot of the original books more closely. There has been some backlash over the actors appearances being changed, but the quality of acting and script tends to overshadow this.

The show also has changed from the books due to a change of media, which is to be expected. It is hard to make everybody happy, but generally it seems more positive to have the series than not.

Two lesser-known adaptations are the graphic novels and the musical. The graphic novels provide another way to read the stories while aided by visuals.

"The first editions of the graphic novels were pretty bad, the drawings were just not good and can't live up to the original books," said sophomore Eve Greenwood.

An option that most wouldn't look to is the musical, however, it is worth looking at as an alternate that could be really enjoyable.

"I adore the musical, it's probably the most faithful adaptation I've actually seen of the books. It feels like you're watching the books come to life in musical form," said Elston.

Percy Jackson has plentiful media to look into whether students are lifelong fans, or just looking for a new piece of content for entertainment.

# How Are "The Little Mermaid" Rehearsals Going For the Cast?



Performing Arts students are rehearsing for "The Little Mermaid" and practice is in full swing! Photo courtesy of sophomore Amelia Wood.

REPORTER ALEX LOWE

This year the SLOHS theater program is putting on the show "The Little Mermaid" for their spring musical. *Expressions* was curious about what was going on in the program, and how the production of the show was going so we interviewed students in the production of "The Little Mermaid," and this is what they had to say about rehearsals.

**Expressions:** What is the hardest thing about rehearsals?

**Sophomore Amelia Wood:** The hardest thing is the hours we are putting into it because we are there till 6:30 p.m. [every day].

**Senior Flannery Clausen:** The hardest thing for me is that my character is very eccentric, so I have to go into a completely different persona. In general the hours [are hard] because it's straight after school, [and] you're putting in a lot of effort.

**Senior XC Clements:** Probably the hours, you end up getting home and you're just exhausted.

**Expressions:** What's your favorite thing about the musical?

**Wood:** There are some good songs in the musical, I also like the people.

**Clausen:** Working with everybody in the musical, it's a really great cast.

**Clements:** Even though there is a lead role, everyone can star in the show.

**Expressions:** What does rehearsal look like currently?

**Clausen:** Right now we're choreographing all of our dances. We are just going piece by piece in the show.

**Clements:** We're mostly [choreographing] all the major ensemble pieces and then focusing on getting the motions down.

**Expressions:** Do you think the pace of rehearsal is working?

**Wood:** We should have started a little earlier, because we have two months until the musical and that's not enough time.

**Clausen:** We started a lot earlier than we started "Mamma Mia" last year, and I think it's working really well.

**Clements:** It's always kinda like this. [At the beginning] it feels like there is an infinite amount of time, so we take it slow, mostly chill, then about mid February we kind of realize how little time we actually have and then it goes into panic, but it always ends up working out.

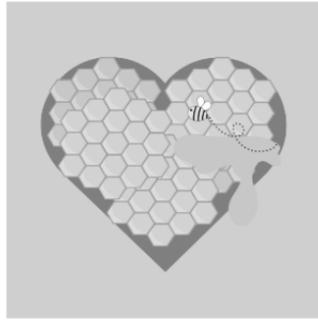
It looks like it's going to be a great production this year! We can't wait to see the show, don't forget to buy your tickets, Tigers!

# Play UnJumble!

BACK PAGE EDITOR CATE TUCKER

Unscramble these words below. Take the underlined letters from the answers and unscramble that to find the answer of the pun to the right. Answers on SlohsExpressions.com!

NVETE	TERGE
ONWSK	ERBAK
SISAL	



I \_\_\_\_\_ with you!

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# Try out Some Fun New Sudoku

REPORTER BUG MARIN

7	5						1	
1	8			4			6	9
9	6	2		5		4	3	7
4		6		8	2	1		
	7			1			4	
	1		4	7		9		5
8					1			
			8	2	4	7	9	
6		7		3	5	2	8	

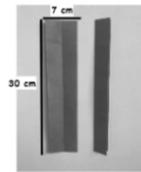
# Do This Fun Valentine's Day Craft

REPORTER EMILY LOPEZ

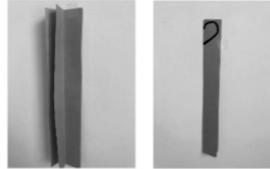
## How to Make a Paper Heart Flower for Valentine's Day

**Materials Needed:**  
 red/pink and green colored paper  
 scissors  
 glue stick and/or tape  
 ruler  
 pencil

1 With the red/pink paper, cut out two 30x7 cm rectangles and fold both in half.



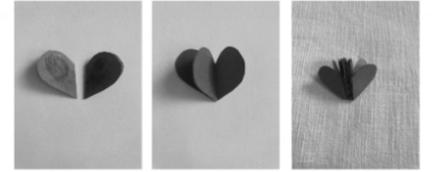
2 Put one paper inside the other and draw one half of a heart.



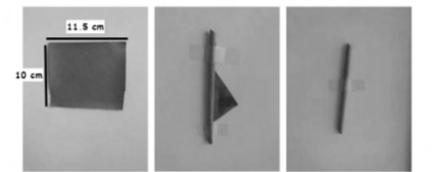
3 Cut out the heart. Now you can use one of the two hearts as a stencil for 7 more hearts. You should have 16 hearts once you are done.



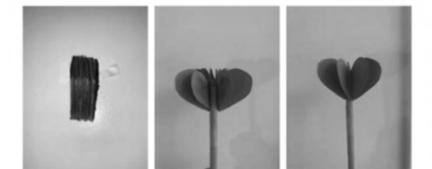
4 Now glue together the hearts as shown. Do not glue the last two petals together yet.



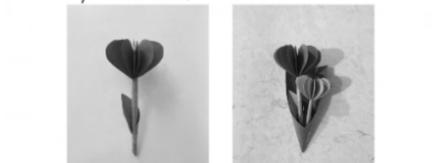
5 Take your green paper and cut out a 11.5x10 cm rectangle. Start rolling it from one corner to the other. Once you get to the other corner put some glue in that corner and glue it together.



6 Put glue on the folds of the hearts and glue it around the top of the stem.



7 Adjust the petals as needed. If you want to add a leaf, just cut out a rectangle, glue the bottom to the stem and cut it into the shape of a leaf. Now you can make a bouquet to give to your valentine!



# Make a Heart Treat!

BACK PAGE EDITOR CATE TUCKER

## Cherry Thumbprint Cookie



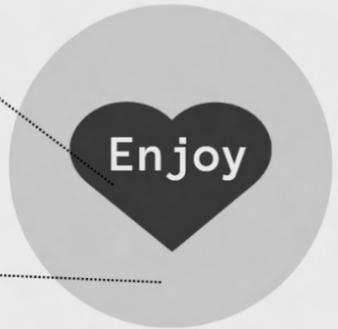
**CHERRY JAM**  
 150g Whole cherries, approx. 1 cup  
 50g (1/4 cup) Sugar  
 1 tsp Lemon juice

**COOKIE**  
 115g (1/2 cup) Unsalted butter, room temperature  
 60g (1/2 cup) Icing/powdered sugar  
 1 Egg yolk  
 1/2 tsp Vanilla extract  
 140g (3/4 cup 2 tbsp) Plain flour  
 15g (2 tbsp) Cornstarch

Author: Catherine Zhang  
 Prep Time: 20  
 Cook Time: 12  
 Total Time: 32 minutes  
 Yield: 12 1x  
 Category: Cookie  
 Method: Easy  
 Cuisine: American

**CHERRY JAM**  
 Finely chop cherries  
 Combine cherries, sugar and lemon juice in a small saucepan  
 Heat over medium heat for 8-10 minutes until thickened  
 Cool

**COOKIE**  
 Preheat the oven to 175C/350F  
 Cream butter and icing sugar until light and fluffy  
 Add egg yolk and vanilla extract, beat until well combined  
 Mix in flour and cornstarch, stir until just combined  
 Roll into 12 balls and create a heart shape in the centre of each ball using two thumbprints joined at the bottom  
 Fill the thumbprint with cooled cherry jam  
 Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until lightly golden brown



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