

SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

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Every year on the Fifth of November, British citizens would burn effigies of Guy Fawkes as a celebration of the foiled plot. Graphic courtesy of junior Kai Liwanag.

Remember, Remember, the Fifth Of November

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR BOB MEYERS

Remember, Remember, the Fifth of November, the gunpowder treason and plot. I see no reason the gunpowder treason should ever be forgot. This old nursery rhyme commemorates Guy Fawkes Day, a holiday celebrated in Britain every November 5. But here at San Luis Obispo High School, no one seems to remember the Fifth of November. And why should they? The holiday has nothing to do with Americans. But maybe within the British celebration lies a deeper idea that should be explored further.

“I remember at least one celebration of Guy Fawkes Day. We were on the field where we have recess and stuff. They built a giant bonfire, or at least it seemed giant to me, and it had a hay man on it,” said senior and former English denizen Jack McGhee.

Guy Fawkes Day commemorates a group of terrorists, including Guy Fawkes, who tried to blow up the British Parliament on the night of November 5, 1605 due to their outrage at the King’s unwillingness to be tolerant towards Catholicism. The plot was foiled, and Guy Fawkes was executed with his conspirators. The holiday was made into law the next year to celebrate the thwarting of the nefarious scheme.

However, over the years, the holiday has become a more festive one. British children would build wooden effigies of Fawkes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, going around on the streets asking for a “penny for the Guy” (which, strangely enough, was how the modern term for a “guy” came to exist). Bonfires would be erected to burn these effigies at night, and big parades marched through the streets.

While this all still occurs in Britain, here in the USA, no one knows about it, as it

has no connection to our country. “I don’t think there’s [a similar American holiday]. I think Guy Fawkes Day is a very different, very British holiday,” said junior and London-born student Maya Kirby.

On the other hand, the idea behind the holiday goes deeper than the events surrounding it.

From an initial glance, the holiday seems rather patriotic, causing some people to relate it to the Fourth of July here in the States. However, the subject of celebration regarding the holiday seems to have shifted from its original purpose.

“There’s some skepticism about the representation system in London, and for the average person, it’s a celebration of ‘you still serve us’,” said digital design teacher Zach Roper, who lived and taught in England for two years.

While the holiday celebrates the failure of the plot, it was also created by the government, meaning its goal would be to celebrate the government. The holiday’s evolution, however, comes to reflect the will of the people a bit more.

“It’s kind of an interesting day because it’s about a terrorist event. They’re celebrating their independent spirit and their belief in holding their politicians accountable,” said Roper.

So why should we at San Luis Obispo High School remember the Fifth of November? While students might not need to burn wooden figures or put on Vaudeville masks, the importance of free spirit against a repressive and intolerant government should be thought of.

So remember, Tigers. *Remember, remember, the Fifth of November.*

Source: *britannica.com*

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Why are Teens Waiting So Long to Get Their Drivers Licenses?



The DMV is lonely without you, Tigers! Photo courtesy of junior Sam Carlson.

REPORTER SAM CARLSON

As the school year is coming to a third of the year being done, licenses are being handed out left and right. Well, that’s what you would think, but in reality, not many people have been getting their license. Something that used to be such an exciting day to many, is now some teens are dreading to get done. Is it too challenging or are San Luis Obispo students just getting lazy?

“I want my license because my parents have to drive me everywhere and I want the freedom to go where I want when I want and to drive myself to practices and events and things like that,” said junior John Goodman.

Another student at SLOHS who doesn’t have his license has different reasons for wanting to get his license.

“I want my license so I can drive my friends around because they always drive me around and I feel like a loser, but also I live in the middle of nowhere so it gets boring pretty easily, so getting my license really gives me a sense of freedom,” said junior Silas Carpenter.

SLOHS students all want to get

their license for different reasons, but in the end they all lead to the sense of freedom you gain from it.

“I didn’t get my license right when I turned sixteen because I was too lazy with the online drivers ed and once all of my friends got their licenses around me I started to realize how good it would be, so the sense of laziness kind of set me back from getting it, but I am on track now with getting my license,” said junior Chuck Jacobs.

According to NGPF, about twenty-five percent of teenagers get their license at age sixteen, while about forty five percent get their license at age seventeen.

With this statistic, it is obvious that lots of teenagers may not see the freedom that they could get until they get a little older and people around them start getting their license.

Getting a license is a big part of a teenager’s life, and SLOHS students are starting to realize the freedom you can achieve from getting your license, which other students are set on getting their license right when they can.

Source: ngpf.org

The Welding Program Gives Students Unique Career Opportunities



Welding requires intense focus. Photo courtesy of junior Jackson Sullivan.

REPORTER JACKSON SULLIVAN

While some San Luis Obispo Highschool students are preparing for college exams and writing applications, others at SLOHS are taking advantage of the welding program to explore careers in the trade.

For these students, welding puts them on a hands-on track for a career that doesn’t require a traditional four-year college degree.

“I was never really interested in going to a four-year college, and welding has opened many doors for me. After learning how to weld from Mr. Fay and the careers that I could have without needing college, I wanted to explore welding school,” said junior Porter Hales.

Having a field-experienced teacher who interacts constantly with the students gives a greater understanding of honest work to the students taking Fay’s class.

“It is satisfying to see something you make come together into a really cool project. Fay has taught me the importance of precision, which can be applied to everyday life,” said senior Nolan Weller.

Weller expresses not only the joy of creating a project on your own, but also how the lessons learned in welding class can be applied outside of the shop.

“It’s different from any other class I’ve taken because I’m able to use the skills I learn outside of class to make money,” said senior Owen Meadows.

According to a new report by Oxford Economics, unemployment among college graduates, aged 22 to 27, is at an alarming six percent, compared to the national unemployment rate of over four percent.

While students who take the college route might struggle, there is always a demand for trades in the job market.

The welding program at SLOHS continues to provide students with the opportunity and confidence to succeed beyond high school.

The program demonstrates to students that success can result from hard work and dedication, whatever path they choose.

Source: oxfordeconomics.com

From The Whitehouse To The Classroom: History Teacher Seamus Perry’s Journey Through Time

REPORTER BEAR PLEMONS

Although all of the fantastic teachers at San Luis Obispo High School have carved out careers as teachers, one teacher in particular has had a job working for the top.

Seamus Perry, who teaches CP economics and AP US History here at SLOHS, formerly spent his time working under former President Barack Obama.

“I was the trip manager for President Obama and the Associate Director of Advance. So what that meant was I helped the planning of President Obama’s travel, and when the trip rolled around, I would go with him and make sure it went well,” said Perry.

This meant that Perry had plenty of time to get to know the president. Because a huge majority of the people working in the white house never get to interact with the president, Perry’s position was all the more remarkable.

“When he’s in California, sometimes there will be opportunities to meet up, and I even brought my kids to meet him last year,” said Perry.

After working for someone for eight years, it’s only natural to develop some sort of close relationship. The fact that Perry still gets to meet up with Obama and meet and talk to him clearly shows that.

“I think Perry is fair to all sides, and doesn’t take favorites when it comes to teaching his classes,” said junior Russel Ramadan.

Russel, just like many students at SLOHS, appreciates Perry’s fair teaching style and all of the stories he tells. Remember to listen to your teacher’s stories, Tigers, you never know when teachers might tell you something fascinating, take Perry’s stories for example.



Perry’s mornings were spent informing the president about his daily agenda. Photo courtesy of Seamus Perry.

Expressions Welcomes Tyler Warmerdam to the History Department!



New SLOHS History teacher Tyler Warmerdam loves spending time at SLO's local beaches. Photo courtesy of senior Vyolet Burrus.

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF VYOLET BURRUS

With the trimester wrapping up, new staff members have become familiar with San Luis Obispo High School. *Expressions* reached out to new history teacher Tyler Warmerdam to learn more about how he got to SLOHS and what he hopes to accomplish this year.

Expressions: What is your role at SLOHS?
History teacher Tyler Warmerdam: I teach U.S. History and AP U.S. History. My goal is to help students think critically about the past, make connections to the present, and develop strong writing and analytical skills.

Expressions: Where are you coming from? How did you originally get into teaching?

Warmerdam: I began my teaching career after earning my degree in history and realizing how much I enjoyed helping others understand complex topics. Before coming to SLOHS, I taught at Enochs High School in Modesto, California, and Hamilton High School in Chandler, Arizona. Both experiences helped shape my teaching style and deepened my passion for engaging students in meaningful discussions about the past.

Expressions: Why did you decide to work at SLOHS?
Warmerdam: SLOHS has a great reputation for its strong academic culture and supportive community. I was excited by the opportunity to join a team of educators who value curiosity, creativity, and student growth.

Expressions: What's the best part of your job and working at SLOHS?
Warmerdam: The best part is definitely the students—their curiosity, humor, and insights make every day different. I also appreciate the collaboration among staff and the positive energy that fills the campus.

Expressions: Outside of work, what do you do in your free time?
Warmerdam: Outside of school, I enjoy spending time outdoors, traveling, and exploring new places around the Central Coast. I'm a fan of history documentaries, good podcasts, and a wide range of music—from classic rock to modern indie.

Expressions: What are you looking forward to this year?
Warmerdam: I'm looking forward to seeing my students grow throughout the year—especially as they gain confidence in writing and historical thinking. I'm also excited for the projects and discussions that bring history to life in the classroom.

Welcome to SLOHS, Warmerdam! It's sure to be a great year!

The Days Are Counting Down: How do Students Plan to Ace Their Finals?

HEALTH & SPORTS CO-EDITOR ADDY HOPPLE

The dreaded day is here: San Luis Obispo High School finals begin today, November 5. Many students plan their study routine days or even weeks before finals start, but some procrastinators are last-minute and wait until the night before to get their studying done. Does this affect how they perform, or do they ace their exams just the same?

"I usually start studying for finals a couple of weeks before, but I keep my notes for the whole trimester to study along the way. To make studying easier, I try to have good time management, but I'm usually cramming the night before the final. It's hard because finals can seem stressful, but they're not as bad as I always predict. It's usually just a long test or sometimes even a fun project. Having electives makes finals a lot easier because it's less to study for, too," said sophomore Ellery Devitt.

For many, finals are the most stressful time of the school year, as many students take a lot of time studying and prioritizing memorizing information instead of their physical and mental health. Taking the time to study can be draining, and working endlessly to try to prepare doesn't always end the best, as not taking the time to take care of yourself can result in a lack of sleep, making it hard to perform well on these big exams. To make sure you are physically prepared, students should eat well, stay active, and most importantly, get a good night's rest before each exam.

"I think finals are stressful, but I feel like it usually ends up working out fine, but like before, you're always like," What am I gonna get? Am I gonna fail this?" Like, there's so much information I have to remember from the whole trimester," said sophomore Ciera Bloom.

Students in AP or honors classes often prioritize studying for these courses first due to the extensive material covered each trimester. Many feel it's important to thoroughly prepare for these courses' finals, as these classes are usually more demanding. Often, this dedication can reflect a student's commitment to achieving academic success, and it shows in their final test scores.

"To get prepared for my AP class and my honors classes, I usually just go over notes, doing practice problems, and doing the provided DBQ, SAQ, stuff in the textbooks already. And I have to start studying earlier, there's also to remember, but it's just hard to summarize everything in the trimester into like, one big study guide, basically," said sophomore Lily Kienow

As you prepare for your exams, remember to also prioritize your well-being. Being overworked and drained is not the best way to walk into a final, so remember to balance your study time with self-care to perform your best. You've got this, Tigers!

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What Do Students Want For Christmas This Year?



Nine year-old Beau Crew had a great Christmas! Photo courtesy of Crew.

REPORTER BEAU CREW

Christmas is coming up and San Luis Obispo High School students are already raving about it, despite it only being November. Although Christmas is about joy and family time it can also mean unwrapping some unexpected gifts. While wishlists are filled with dream items, the reality doesn’t always match the plan.

This year, *Expressions* asked SLOHS students what’s on their wishlist, and what unexpected gifts they’ve gotten in the past. Here’s what they said.

“I want a BMW for Christmas so I can have one ready for when I get my license,” said sophomore Jaco Paul.

Many new drivers to the road are hoping for cars this Christmas whether it’s new or used, it is a big ticket gift this Christmas. Adding onto that another big gift SLOHS students are hoping for is an adventure trip with their family to take time off and

go on vacation.

“I would love to get an experience like a vacation for example and go somewhere fun,” said junior Rio Petri.

While some students are reaching for the stars and asking for big gifts, some students have their eyes on simpler gifts like clothing or video games.

“I want new Blundstone shoes because my old ones are worn down and a new pair would be nice,” junior Ava Katen.

Although everybody loves presents, every year some students are surprised with random or unwanted gifts leading to a mix of emotions.

“The bad thing about getting gifts sometimes is when you don’t get an amazing gift and you really have to put on a show acting like you like it,” said Petri.

Regardless of the gifts students get, Christmas is a wonderful time to spend with family and friends, cherishing time spent with loved ones.

The Holidays are Just Around the Corner Tigers!

HEALTH & SPORTS CO-EDITOR ADDY HOPPLE

It’s no school November, Tigers, which means many San Luis Obispo High School students are ready for the joyful holiday activities. Many students have traditions throughout the winter holidays, such as decorating a Christmas tree or going on long-awaited winter trips. No matter the holiday students celebrate, the traditions will be piling up, but which are the most awaited?

Expressions decided to interview SLOHS students to find out what their favorite holiday traditions are that make the holiday breaks festive and fun!

Expressions: What is your favorite holiday tradition that makes the season more festive?

Sophomore Brittney Clark: My favorite tradition that my family does every year on Thanksgiving is ornament trading, where we buy silly ornaments and raffle them out to each other, and we have to put them on our tree every year. Then the next day, all the cousins help decorate our grandparents’ house for Christmas.

Senior Michiah Garduno: Usually, during the holiday, I watch a bunch of Christmas movies like Jim Carrey’s “The Grinch” with my family. I eat that movie down every single year, and I always listen to “Last Christmas” by Wham. I listen to it year-round. I will be playing it in the summer, in the spring, and in the fall. It just always puts me in a Christmas mood.

Sophomore Kassia Voerman: My favorite holiday tradition is going to my grandparents’ house on Christmas with my whole family and lots of friends. I love to eat. Usually, my grandma’s noodles are called bami goreng, my grandpa’s potato dish is called stampot, and my grandma’s is called bami goreng. And then, after, I like playing games with my family.

Senior Sofia Rodriguez Pierson: My favorite holiday tradition is going to Texas to visit my family and celebrate with them. We pray on Christmas Eve, and then have a fake Santa for the younger children, and then play White Elephant. Then on Christmas morning, we open presents and go to church together.

Freshman Jack Haring: At the start of December, I always like decorating the Christmas tree and getting out all our ornaments that we have from years passed as a family with Christmas music and eggnog. It’s a great way to start off the Christmas season.

Senior Taryn Weller: My favorite holiday tradition is getting Christmas pajamas every Christmas Eve. I love looking forward to this every year and seeing what my family will get.

There you have it, Tigers: as the holiday season approaches, many SLOHS students embrace unique traditions to celebrate in their own special ways.

Whether it’s decorating a tree, baking festive treats, or spending quality time with loved ones, each student brings their own personal tradition to the festivities, making this one of the best times of the year for many.

Twelve Days of Christmas: Start This Winter Season Off Right by Watching These Holiday Movies!

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF VYOLET BURRUS

It’s November, Tigers, so you know what that means: it’s time to ignore Thanksgiving and start preparing for Christmas! There are many ways that San Luis Obispo High School students celebrate the winter holidays, and a great way to do that is by watching Christmas movies. Here is a Top 12 list of holiday movies students should watch.

“How the Grinch Stole Christmas!” (1966) is the original film installment of the “Grinch” in which the Grinch is played by Boris Karloff. While there is a live action starring Jim Carrey and another animated film produced in 2018, the original movie is a timeless Christmas classic. Being less than thirty minutes in length, this is a great option to watch with family during the holiday season.

“This was my favorite Christmas movie when I was little, and it’s still one of my favorites today. I always loved how similar the animation was to the original Dr. Seuss book, and I love the music in it,” said freshman Lilly Rhodes.

“A Christmas Story” (1983) is a beloved Christmas classic in which nine year-old Ralphie spends the holiday season dreaming of a Red Ryder BB gun and fleeing with his friends from their bully, Scott Farkus. Every year, the SLO Rep puts on its own play following the same witty plotline and featuring many SLOHS students.

“Die Hard” (1988) is the most debated Christmas movie of all time. Taking place on Christmas Eve, NYPD cop John McClane (played by Bruce Willis) must save his wife and her coworkers from terrorists taking over the annual Christmas party.

“Ernest Saves Christmas” (1988) is an underrated film contributing to a larger “Ernest” franchise. When Santa gets into trouble while looking for a successor, it is up to hapless taxi driver Ernest and teen girl, Harmony, to save the spirit of Christmas.

“Scrooged” (1988) is a comedic retelling of “A Christmas Carol” following an arrogant TV executive Frank Cross (played by Bill Murray). Over the course of the film, Cross is visited by the three ghosts of Christmas, each of them teaching him valuable lessons about the spirit of Christmas. This is the perfect holiday movie for those who enjoy cynical humor and eccentric characters.

“National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation” (1989) follows Clark Griswold as he attempts to create the perfect Christmas for his extended family. With so many colorful characters, their holiday season becomes increasingly disastrous as Christmas gets closer.

“Home Alone” (1990) is one of the most well-known Christmas movies where eight year-old Kevin McCallister is left home alone by his family during the holidays. Throughout the movie, McCallister inflicts mass violence on two lowly burglars, Harry and Marv, via Christmas decorations as he tries to thwart their break-in.

“Home Alone’ is the ultimate Christmas classic, it is a really fun heist movie that happens to be set at Christmas--but it’s really about Kevin learning to be independent while also coming to appreciate the love of his family. It’s a movie that aged really well since the themes feel kind of timeless--plus I am a sucker for 90s nostalgia,” said Film Studies teacher Meg Higdon.

“Miracle on 34th Street” (1994) is a remake of the original 1947 movie, starring Mara Wilson as six year-old Susan. Originally skeptical of Santa Claus, she grows to appreciate the magic of Christmas when she meets a mall Santa claiming to be the real Kris Kringle.

“Jingle All the Way” (1996) features Arnold Schwarzenegger as a workaholic father trying to find his son a Turbo-Man doll, the hottest toy of the season sold out in every store. The film satirizes holiday

commercialism, showing the lengths people will go to in order to obtain the perfect holiday gift.

“Elf” (2003) is arguably one of the best and most loved Christmas movies of all time. Having grown up in the North Pole as a human amongst other elves, Buddy the Elf (played by Will Ferrell) travels to the bustling city of New York in order to find his real dad. This movie is perfect for spreading Christmas cheer.

“Elf’ is the perfect mix of humor and festivity, and it’s a movie I watch every year with my family. My favorite parts of ‘Elf’ are when Buddy decorates the department store overnight, and when he tries to hug the raccoon,” said Rhodes.

“Christmas with the Kranks” (2004) is a really funny Christmas film, starring many notable actors including: Tim Allen, Jamie Lee Curtis, and Dan Aykroyd. The characters played by Allen and Curtis decide to skip out on celebrating Christmas and instead go on a cruise because their daughter is off at college, however things go awry.

“It’s a great holiday movie because it’s honestly just so funny. The family tries to skip Christmas, then ends up trying to throw it all together in a rush and it makes for some great laughs,” said junior Hayla Ackerman.

“The Polar Express” (2004) is beautifully animated and a well-loved film that acknowledges the loss of children’s belief in this magic. With the Polar Express, the children travel to Santa’s headquarters on Christmas Eve to learn an invaluable lesson about the spirit of Christmas.

Other honorable mentions include: “It’s a Wonderful Life”, “Family Man”, “Nightmare Before Christmas”, and “Gremlins”. These are just a few of the many wonderful holiday movies out there, but make sure to check them out this festive season!

Source: [imdb.com](https://www.imdb.com)

It's That Time of the Year: Mariah Carey is Defrosting

REPORTER JOSEPH SPARGO

Around this time of year, a strange natural phenomenon occurs at San Luis Obispo High School. American singer Mariah Carey comes back to life to spread Christmas cheer among people. Her hit song, “All I Want For Christmas Is You,” always seems to make a return around the end of October.

“I enjoy Christmas music because it gives me a feeling of nostalgia, and it just makes me happy. I like Mariah Carey’s songs, especially during Christmas time, but I don’t really listen to her outside of that. I think her defrosting is a fun Christmas tradition,” said sophomore Clara Walters.

Students love her music for the sentimental feeling it evokes, reminding them of the smell of gingerbread, the twinkle of the Christmas tree, and the unique sense of coziness in the house around this time. Others view this event as more of a significant moment for all of society. It represents how much music affects us as a whole and the impact it has on our lives, no matter how silly it is.

“This moment is really important for pop culture, and I believe that it’s really telling as a society why we value things such as this so much. It’s incre-

dible that society can be so infatuated with a Christmas song,” said freshman Lucas Reinhart.

However, her defrosting is not new to SLOHS students, as she has been freezing and thawing every single year since her song, “All I Want for Christmas is You”, was released in 1994.

“Revenue estimates by Billboard suggest she made perhaps \$2.7 million to \$3.3 million in 2022, for example, from song downloads and on-demand streaming. It excludes other potentially lucrative revenue streams like Christmas TV specials. Over its thirty year existence, the song has made about \$103 million in earnings, the [Manatt, Phelps and Phillips] estimates,” said NBC finance reporter Greg Iacurci.

In essence, since its release, Carey could have bought a million Christmas trees, 33 million bottles of eggnog, or 20 million ugly Christmas sweaters, just from the song’s revenue. This excludes royalties, live performances, merchandise, etcetera.

Carey’s “All I Want for Christmas Is You” induces holiday cheer within SLOHS students and represents the effect music has on our lives. Let’s get into the Christmas spirit, Tigers!

Source: *cnn.com*



Mariah Carey is back for the holidays! Graphic courtesy of freshman Lucas Reinhart.

Black Friday: Everything That is Wrong With America

REPORTER LUCAS REINHART

Black Friday has increased consumer tolerance towards unethical production, including for San Luis Obispo High School students. Students continue to ignore the creatives and artisans that dedicate their lives towards their respective crafts. Instead, they order off of fast fashion websites that prioritize money over all else.

“I think Black Friday represents the absolute worst aspects of American society. Think about it, pretty much every other holiday has succumbed to American corporate interests in that we have to purchase goods or services to prove that we love someone...Thanksgiving is my favorite because it is the one day where we are supposed to be thankful for what we have...American society literally cannot wait one single day to prove that we have no gratitude at all. That we don’t have enough. That we just want more. It is proof that we are a very materialistic nation that is trying to fill and satiate our inherent loneliness and sadness with relentless consumer spending on things in the hope that they will fill the void. Black Friday is the embodiment of all that is wrong in America,” said Economics teacher Greg Ross.

Ethics have become increasingly easier to ignore

with the rise of online shopping and fast fashion. These companies need to be held accountable when they are using unethical means of production.

“I think that Black Friday is dead partially because of online shopping. I know that a lot of fast fashion sites (like SHEIN) have low prices already, and Black Friday deals don’t have much of a difference compared. Another reason could be because of Cyber Monday, which has become more popular as well,” said freshman Natalie Rice.

Stopping all consumption wouldn’t be possible, however, it’s necessary to understand where products are made. Modern day slavery in the form of sweatshops and forced labor in unsafe working conditions are the driving factors as to why these fast fashion giants get away with setting their prices so low.

It’s not like these practices don’t pay, either. In 2024, SHEIN revenue came close to \$10 billion before taxes.

“One of my favorite quotes is from a movie called ‘Fight Club’, ‘We buy things we don’t need with money, we don’t have to impress people we don’t like,’” said Ross.

There is no fully agreed upon answer other than the one that involves all of us cutting back on

these mass purchases; and to be conscious of how we consume. Even without the ethics of production in the discussion. It is still damaging to make these unnecessary purchases on such a regular basis. It may have been better to have a designated holiday for this type of shopping. Especially as the holiday season approaches.

“I believe that Black Friday has changed significantly over the years. While in-store foot traffic has decreased, online sales have continued and will continue to grow. The marketing for Black Friday has created a frenzy amongst shoppers. There is a perception that people are getting a fantastic deal, and I’m not sure that is always the case. There is so much hype leading up to Black Friday that I think people spend money on things they wouldn’t normally buy. In summary, I think Black Friday is an example of consumerism and marketing at its finest,” said freshman Dublin Marten.

It is evident to society that the prices that these platforms offer are indisputable. So we don’t dispute. The lack of deals is a telling reflection of the path consuming is going down, no answer until we hold ourselves accountable.

Sources: *bbc.com*, *bloomberg.com*

Thanksgiving Has Become an Insignificant Holiday

REPORTER SANTIAGO AMAYA

With Thanksgiving break just around the corner, everybody is excited for a week off from school. But it seems as though no one is appreciating why that is. Students at San Luis Obispo High School make posts on social media about who they’re grateful for, but that isn’t enough.

Once Halloween ends, people go straight to Christmas songs, decorations, trees, etcetera, but everybody skips over Thanksgiving. This year alone, there is more anticipation for “Stranger Things” season five than for one of the most important holidays ever. Some families don’t even celebrate the holiday.

“I always eat gravy with my cousin, but other than that, nothing else interesting goes on,” said junior Jack Tanous.

The idea of Thanksgiving is sweet, but having it as a holiday just seems counterintuitive. Every major holiday has some source of entertainment worth noting: presents, trick or treating, easter eggs, and fireworks. But Thanksgiving only has a meal on a table with family you may despise.

“I feel like people take Thanksgiving break for granted, because personally, I only know it is Thanksgiving because of what the break is called. The ‘holiday’ + break combo seems irrelevant,” said senior Emmanuel Jorgenson.

Fortunately for the English colonists in 1621, some appreciation can still be found around the world.

“I enjoy Thanksgiving, and the environment I’m lucky enough to have. Having a day dedicated to giving thanks to those I love most is amazing,” said junior Sienna Worden.

Thanksgiving day has grown increasingly irrelevant for most people in America, and the true reason as to why will likely never be found. Instead of just one day, Tigers should find appreciation in something every day.



Dinner is the only good part of Thanksgiving. Photo courtesy of senior Vyolet Burrus.

Betting on Sports: a New SLOHS Student Obsession?

REPORTER SANTIAGO AMAYA

Interest in live sports has grown tremendously over the past few decades, with new fans rolling in by the minute, including San Luis Obispo High School students. Unfortunately, the true enjoyment of sports at the college and professional level has died down, and people have resorted to online gambling.

Sports betting has also continued to grow alongside the increasing interest in live sports, but is that really a good thing? Some say it ruins the authentic love of the game, while others argue that it adds another aspect of fun.

“It’s fun, but you can lose a lot of money, and it doesn’t always go your way. I’ve lost hundreds, but I’ve gained hundreds too,” said anonymous junior.

The rush of a successful parley is a unique feeling, but in the end, is it worth it?

“I think the enjoyment of sports has honestly improved because it gets more people involved with the games, giving them a team or player to root for,” said an anonymous junior.

In 2024, the app Fanduel alone made almost six billion dollars with over 12 million registered users. Other apps like Prizepicks and Draftkings have accumulated another \$4.9 billion in revenue, with the apps growing at an average of 47 percent year-to-year.

Gambling on sports in 2025 has become illegal in eleven states: Alabama, Alaska, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Minnesota, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah. Alongside it being banned in California, the legal age, depen-

ding on location, is between 18-21.

“I’ve used my Dad’s information and ID and it’s worked flawlessly. Also, being restricted to any state besides California doesn’t even matter, because being able to bypass it is more than easy,” said the anonymous junior.

The growing passion for a little sense of dopamine and satisfaction of a successful parlay is taking over the sports scene.

Other minor acts of sports gambling like fantasy sports, and betting between friends is another aspect of gambling to be concerned about, but after all, it’s your money to win or lose.

Sources: *businessofapps.com*, *prizepicks.com*, *macrotrends.net*

Popularity of Boys Volleyball is Spiking Nationally

REPORTER JOSEPH SPARGO

Volleyball has always been a popular sport, but it has recently experienced a significant increase in male participation. The San Luis Obispo High School volleyball season will soon begin. What is going on in the world of volleyball?

“SLOHS Boys Volleyball should be very successful. There are several outstanding players. Brady Theule has committed to Master’s College. There are at least two JV players from last season who will make significant contributions. So, they will have depth, too. It will come down to whether they will stay together,” said former SLOHS volleyball coach Peter Schleppenbach.

However, the success of the SLOHS Boys Volleyball team would be nowhere near where it is without off-season training. Some athletes share how they keep sharp during the off-season.

“Over the off-season, I’ve been working and doing extra practices and getting extra reps with players above my own skill level,” said freshman Joseph Dossa.

Getting extra repetitions along with challenging themselves by playing against those who are better than them prepares the player for the tough season ahead. Others find that practicing rigorously is the path to success.

“The only way to get better is to practice a ton. This way, you don’t go into the season cold, and you hit the ground running. Missing off-season training could definitely set you back going into the season,” said freshman Finn Wolthers.

However, in the past, Boys Volleyball was not as popular as it is today.

“Boys high school volleyball continues to grow faster than any other high school boys team sport. For the 2024-25 academic year, the NFHS reports 95,972 total Boys Volleyball players participated in high school volleyball. This amount is up 10,717 from last year for a 12.57 percent growth. In terms of participation over the past six years, no other boys’ sport has grown as much as boys volleyball, which is up 51 percent in that span, making it one of only two sports to increase by more than 15 percent,” wrote the American Volleyball Coaches Association.

The SLOHS Boys Volleyball team looks very promising this year, as athletes are already preparing in the off-season. Will Boys Volleyball be the next most popular sport?

Sources: *avca.org*

Boys Water Polo Thrives Despite Recent Coaching Dilemma



Boys Water Polo is the toughest team around. Photo courtesy of @slohsboyswaterpolo on Instagram.

REPORTER BEAR PLEMONS

Many sports teams at San Luis Obispo High School have not had to deal with many issues. Boys Water Polo, on the other hand, has had to deal with the resignation of their head coaches. What was once a dominant team is now facing issues that many others couldn’t imagine, especially mid-season.

“We’ve been trying to win league, and we’re working really hard to accomplish that goal,” said junior Jackson Gillett.

This is the goal of the entire Water Polo team, and they’ve been putting in the time and effort between the pool and the weight room to get there. Recently, they’ve come to face a huge challenge.

“We’ve been a little less successful because it’s been hard without a coach. You need someone there to guide and lead the team, but thankfully one of our teammates’ dads has stepped up to fill that role,” said junior Russel Issa.

The loss of a coach, especially mid-season can completely derail most teams, but boys water polo hasn’t let that stop them.

“I think it’s different having my dad as the coach. He’s doing a good job keeping the team together and keeping us going, so I don’t think he’s doing a bad job. He isn’t at the same caliber of knowledge of the game as our old coach, but he gets the job done [despite being] someone who is not as knowledgeable of the sport,” said junior Logan Woods.

According to MaxPreps, Boys Water Polo currently has a winning record, which means they’re on track to make it to CIF.

Even though they’ve faced some challenges, it seems that the team is doing quite well considering the circumstances at hand. But the question is, will they be able to finish strong and win league under these pressing circumstances?

Source: *maxpreps.com*

The YMCA Brings SLOHS Students Together

REPORTER JACKSON SULLIVAN

Only a small group of San Luis Obispo High School students have the energy to work out at the YMCA after a long day of classes. Yet for those who do, the gym has become more than just a place to lift weights. The YMCA has established itself as a gym for high schoolers to decompress and connect with other self-motivated people.

Whether it is cross-training for sports or focusing on fitness goals, these students are finding community and motivation at the YMCA.

“I have been going to the YMCA for about three years now, and I can confidently say that the people here are what separates it from other gyms. I feel supported by the community no matter what,” said junior Sean Cowan.

Cowan’s experience is one of many who have been going to the YMCA for a long time. The group of people who go is one of the main reasons why members don’t switch gyms.

Some SLOHS students simply would rather be at the YMCA than other gyms even when they’re forgoing other gyms that have more equipment and better facilities.

“I mean, the YMCA doesn’t have as many free weights or machines as Kennedy or Planet Fitness, but I would much rather be around people who are at the YMCA,” said junior James Maxwell.

There are over 2,400 YMCAs in the world compared to Planet Fitness’s 2,700 locations. As a non-profit organization, the YMCA is community-focused and works to bring people together.

“The community that has been built there is probably my favorite part. The people all want you to succeed, and it is a nice mix of high school kids and adults,” said junior Jack Goodman.

The YMCA has become more than just a gym for SLOHS students; it has become a place where students can find balance, build confidence, and find connection beyond the classroom.

Source: *census.gov*

Gambling Just Got Even Crazier With “CS:2”



The iconic “Blue Gem Karambit” is a digital knife cosmetic that’s somehow worth an astonishing \$1.5 million. Photo courtesy of skinsmonkey.com.

REPORTER ZACH NORTH

San Luis Obispo High School students have for the longest time spent enormous amounts of money on video games, but one in particular found its way into many teens’ lives: “Counter-Strike 2”. People spend crazy amounts of money on gambling for “CS:2” knives, a virtual cosmetic item with no real-world utility, to make money or even invest for further returns over large amounts of time.

“I think ‘CS:2’ skins are stable. The prices of knives and guns usually stay the same, or they go up. So if I were to start gambling more in ‘Counter-Strike,’ I would feel safe knowing that all the prices of the items are going to stay relatively the same. I think it can be a bad habit if you let it get out of control. It’s definitely just a fun thing to go and do every once in a while, ‘cause you get that high or adrenaline from gambling. I mean, I’m not old enough, obviously, to go into a casino and put it all on red or black. It’s definitely fun, but not a good thing to do,” said an anonymous sophomore.

Gambling on “CS:2” is likely a bad habit unless you have amazing self-control. If you get addicted, it’s hard to come back.

“It is rare to get a skin that is actually profitable. Also, it’s not a good habit to gamble often because it’s really rare to get a profitable skin. I think people spend too much money thinking they will get a skin worth something,” said sophomore Eli Engelskirger.

The odds of winning a slot machine jackpot are anywhere from one in 5 thousand to one in 34 million, but in “CS:2”, the odds of a gold are one in 385. However, the odds of obtaining something incredibly profitable, such as the blue gem karambit, worth a whopping \$1.5 million, are incredibly low. Although the odds seem to be amazing, the odds of winning big are similar to a slot machine, which we all know are scams.

Whether it’s your first “CS:2” case or your hundredth, it is important to be careful with the media we consume online. It is always a good idea to move with caution on the internet when talking about real-world money.

Source: [investopedia.com](https://www.investopedia.com)

Rocky Horror: a Movie Full of Fishnets & Fun

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR LUCIA MCCARTHY-ZIRION

“The Rocky Horror Picture Show” is a cultural phenomenon and cult classic that has influenced countless artists and productions. “Rocky Horror” is not a film that most San Luis Obispo High School students care very much about. And that’s okay.

Based on the Broadway musical, “The Rocky Horror Picture Show” is often thought of as a relic, obscured in the shadows of Gen X’s fondest late night memories. But it is, even as the movie celebrates its fiftieth year on our forever-impressioned planet (Janet), still on the dome for a grand plethora of those lucky enough to be held captive by its enticing charms.

“The first time I watched “Rocky Horror” I didn’t really know what to expect. I feel like it purposefully throws you for a loop because it acts pretty conventional at the very beginning of the movie, with the wedding scene and all, until they come across the mansion or castle...the mastle...and I think it’s cool how the whole thing gets progressively crazier. Great respect,” said senior Joey Bernardo.

“Rocky Horror’s” influence has found comforting reflection in many many artists throughout the years. It is one of the staples of contemporary media. Its kitchy energy and badass songs lure audiences like flies to wine, and its liberating themes leave viewers feeling refreshed and ready to see the world from a new light. Although it has faced some kickback, from its especially prudent viewers, “Rocky Horror” is a known outlet for the illicit.

“I feel like it gave people an outlet to express things that were taboo. Going to ‘Rocky Horror’, you could dress however you wanted. It gave you permission to behave the way that YOU wanted,”

said English teacher Meg Higdon.

The fan base is so active that the official fanbase website, “rockyhorror.com” provides valuable resources about showings, prop lists, and a complete “Virgin’s Guide” for those new to the live showings, a spectacle that’s been around since the ancient 70s.

“‘Rocky Horror’ is the first and only true audience partici-(SAY IT!)-pation movie. People yell back lines at the screen during the extended pauses between dialogue, dress up in costume and act out the film, and throw props various times during the film,” said James Norman, on the official “Rocky Horror” website. Wow!

This audience-engaging film was first performed in 1975, and has only grown more popular since its initial release and pushback from viewers, who were unsuspecting of the awe-inspiring glory they were about to witness in their local theatres.

“I know there’s some revisionist history about the movie maybe not being the best representation of trans people, but at the time, it was something kind of aspirational. Like, you could be that. You could dress that way. You could express your gender the way you wanted. And I think that was empowering for a lot of people,” said Higdon.

“Rocky Horror”, although one-of-a-kind, has sparked a passionate lust for the arts in so many that its influence spans all across contemporary media today. Even Sabrina Carpenter suckled from “Rocky Horror’s” influence in her music video, Tears. Who knows what the arts would look like today if not for “Rocky Horror”.

Source: [rockyhorror.com](https://www.rockyhorror.com)



“The Rocky Horror Picture Show” is an underrated cult classic. Photo courtesy of corset-story.co.uk

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If You Wouldn't Ask A Teacher To Do It, Don't Ask AI



There's an AI response for everything, and the school will never block them all. Graphic courtesy of senior Roslyn Risner.

OPINION EDITOR ROSLYN RISNER

AI is ubiquitous around the world including at San Luis Obispo High School. This year, many students may have noticed a new feeling about AI in their classrooms. Teachers are using it, and many have worked appropriate uses of AI into their syllabi and policies. However, this is where discrepancy begins, between students and teachers’ uses of these tools.

Over the summer, staff at SLOHS attended an AI webinar, where vague directions seem to have been delivered. Since then, it’s no longer about avoiding the use of tools like Grammarly, ChatGPT, or Gemini, but about ‘using AI productively and appropriately.’ Despite what many say, using AI for large aspects of teaching, and learning, is a very slippery slope, and the guidelines are still quite vague.

“If a student uses AI to write their work, they get an automatic zero. Repeat offenses warrant parent or guardian contact and a referral to admin,” said English department head Brian Moss.

While this is still generally the consensus, teachers are acknowledging that it is a fact of the future, and therefore can be used under certain circumstances. Notably, nearly all teachers interviewed used the exact phrase “if you wouldn’t ask a teacher to do it, don’t ask AI to do it,” which, while coming from a meaningful place, needs to be taken with a grain of salt.

Despite major improvements, AI is still a very new technology, and trusting it with integral parts of our education, as one would expect from a teacher could cause a multitude of problems.

“AI is a great study tool. It can help you make flashcards, come up with an outline of important topics, come up with practice quiz questions, vocab lists, analogies. It can act as a great tutor when you’d like something explained. It isn’t just a black or white, good or bad, it is a very complicated tool. Really, there are a lot of nuances. I have found it only semi-reliable as a research assistant because I have seen it make errors,” said chemistry teacher Ryan Ritchie.

This year, the mood shifted, but not because AI has reached a point where it’s consistent or trustworthy. Simply, students and teachers shouldn’t be relying on AI for anything of importance, yet. Though ChatGPT specifically has been in and out of trial phases, overall, it’s far from as accurate as it’s going to get. Even then, doesn’t using it suck the originality not only out of student work, but out of teachers’ teaching?

“I’ve used AI to design some slide decks and prompts. Having it construct lesson plans feels immoral and soulless, but maybe I’ll change my tune down the line,” said Moss.

Students shouldn’t take some teachers using AI as an excuse to use it themselves, why take classes if it’s just AI grading AI? The closer we get to that reality the more daunting putting real effort into things seems, AI isn’t just increasing efficiency, it’s wrecking attention spans, and destroying creative learning.

“AI isn’t going to take your AP test for you, and if you use it to write for you now, when the time comes you will be wholly unprepared,” said English teacher Meg Higdon.

The guidelines are not clear, and at the moment any use of AI by teachers runs the risk of being hypocritical. Until both sides, students and teachers, can agree on appropriate uses of AI, it’s not worth the risk of losing valuable educational opportunities.

“Non-creative uses I think are excusable to some extent. Using AI to write an entire English paper makes me sick, but I feel as though using it to check your grammar on said paper is fine,” said sophomore Irelynn Zurbach.

On top of sabotaging the future version of yourself, during possible AP tests, knowing how to write is key to understanding how to read. Understanding will never be replaced by AI, only poorly imitated, no matter how distinguished the words may sound.

AI isn’t going away, but it’s still in early stages, and should be used cautiously. While understandable that the school district wants to jump into the use of such a powerful innovation. Everyone needs to remain vigilant , the environmental effects and wide range of AI created errors could just be the beginning if not approached with the utmost concern.

They Know We're Seniors, They Don't Need Our IDs

REPORTER TARYN WELLER

San Luis Obispo High School needs to stop monitoring the gate. Seniors at SLOHS who the staff have known for years are being denied access off-campus due to not having a school-issued ID. This is absurd.

If these students try to show any other form of identification, it is not valid. SLOHS, this needs to stop. They need to be let off.

“One time I showed them I was a junior last year, like if I were a junior this year, I would be able to go off. I think it’s unfair and really disrespectful,” said senior Maggie Grosshart.

Being denied the right to go off-campus after deliberately proving the ability to go off-campus last year is crazy. Staff at SLOHS have known the seniors for four years now, so they should be aware of who can go off and who can’t.

“I don’t always remember my student ID. It’s annoying to have to remember it every time, especially when Aeries can show what grade you’re in,” said senior Justin Toews.

This frustration from students is completely understandable. It’s upsetting when students get denied off-cam-

pus after waiting the whole day to go eat what they want.

“Some people have their lunch in their cars, and when you tell them they can’t go eat, that’s not okay,” said Grosshart.

Not everyone wants to or can eat the food provided by the school cafeteria; some people have allergies, and others have been waiting for their lunch in their car for hours, so let seniors off!

“One hundred percent this affects students’ lunch plans,” said Toews.

This needs to be changed; all seniors should be able to go off, even with no ID. Some students may not have been at picture day; therefore, they did not have an ID until very recently. In this situation, their previous years’ IDs should still work. Most upperclassmen can drive, and that alone should allow them to go off campus since they are almost adults; this is a privilege upperclassmen should have, because it’s a learning lesson for older teenagers and their time management for getting back to class, while still having the experience of going off and doing their own thing.

“I think it’s a good way of proving you’re an upper-classman, but I wish



Fed-up SLOHS seniors Taryn Weller and Bob Meyers want to banish the need for an ID to leave campus at lunch. Photo courtesy of senior Taryn Weller.

they allowed other ways to prove that as well,” said senior Ruby Latta.

Refusing to allow freshmen and sophomores to go off campus is valid, but at least let us prove we are able to go off campus through Aeries!

“In my opinion, if you have any identification that you’re a junior or senior, you should be able to go off campus,” said Grosshart.

SLOHS seniors and juniors have had enough of having to eat the school lunch, not being able to go out to their car, and being treated like they are an underclassman if they forgot their ID.

They are sick of Aeries not being a valid identification, even though it’s more legit than the student ID so ban needing a student ID to leave campus, ALLOW AERIES.

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