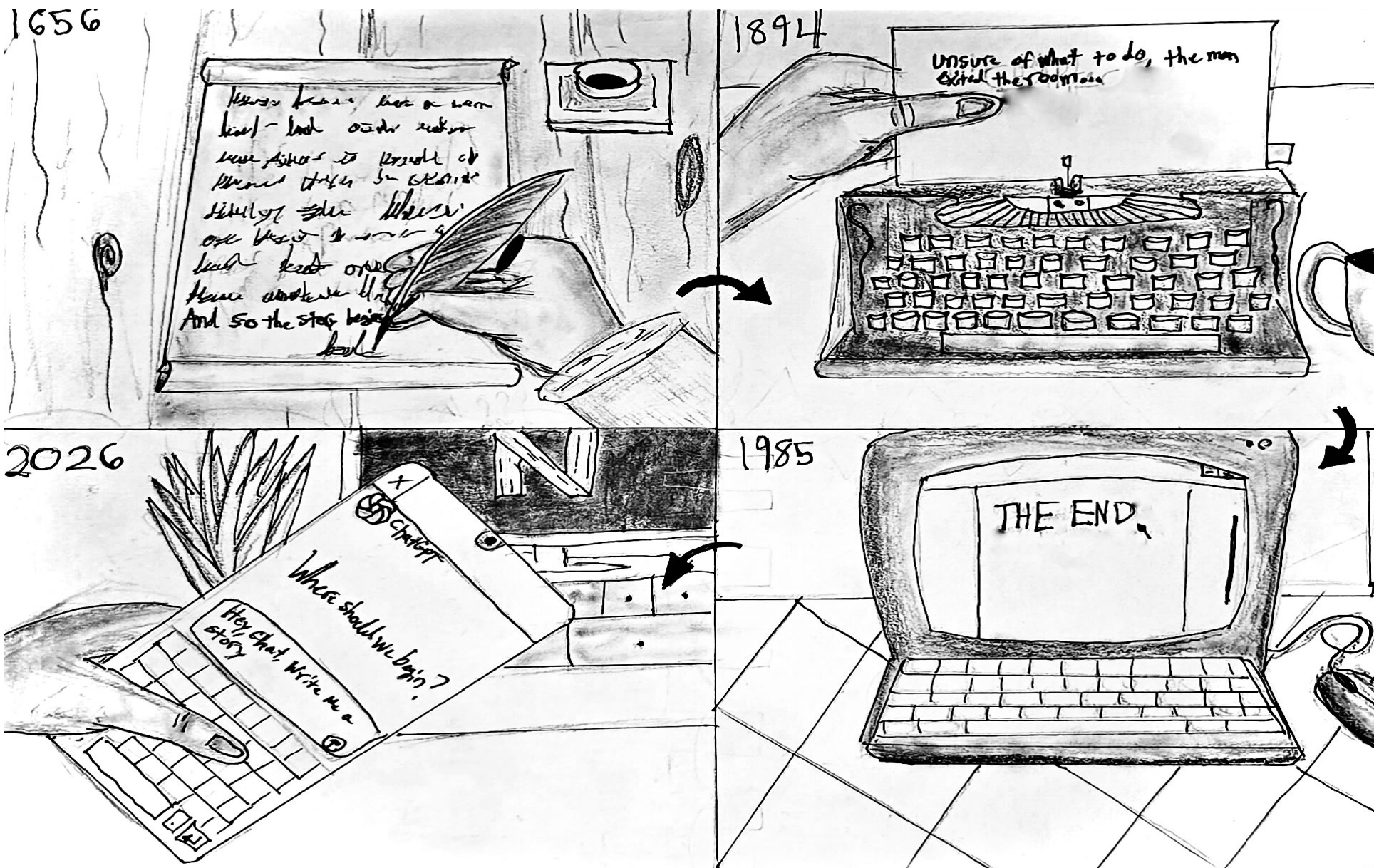


SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

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Writing has evolved for various mediums over time, but with the popularity of AI increasing, language may soon be dead. Drawing courtesy of senior Roslyn Risner.

With the Rise of AI, Cheating Policies are Changing

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR ROSLYN RISNER

With the rise of AI use around the world and at San Luis Obispo High School, teachers, especially in English classrooms are having to implement more policies to reduce students' cheating. The Class of 2026's early English experience and what freshmen are currently experiencing in their classes is very different. This raises the question: where is society headed if students continue to use AI during the most developmental time of their education?

"A lot of people use AI to write their prompts. It's really disappointing since the whole point is about writing your own thing. We're already good writers, so we really just need to use our brains. I think that if we keep using AI this much it's going to get a lot worse," said freshman Analisse Marmolejo.

There have been many noticeable changes when it comes to English classes at SLOHS. Many seniors were expected to type all of their essays, whilst the class of 2029 has been moved back to handwriting them.

"Freshmen's use of AI tends to be pretty sloppy, making it easy to detect. But I've gone analog on essays, which cuts down on AI problems in my classes significantly," said English teacher Scott Nairne.

A few years ago, there was a push to move towards typing essays, with AP exams even becoming hybrid or completely digital. Despite this shift, teachers are becoming more cautious about submitted assignments, especially for younger students.

"Teachers may be becoming more wary of plagiarism, not necessarily harsher. They generally are more suspicious of unique or fanciful language and punctuation because of AI's strangely over-the-top writing style," said senior Emily Lopez.

As upperclassmen write college and scholarship essays, and prepare to enter the real world, the threat of AI in the workplace is more dangerous than ever. In order to combat this, respect for human intelligence and building confidence in students' abilities needs to be implemented.

"I am [more worried about the Class of 2029]. I think a lot of the problem stems from the bad examples of writing that they find on social media, which is sometimes all that they read. But it makes me more excited to teach than ever. It's a new challenge that our department will have to work to overcome," said Nairne.

Underclassmen see AI as a problem too. It's not that they don't want to be learning, rather that they'd rather do things that feel relevant to this ever changing society.

"AI should be used to improve healthcare and progress human technology, not for silly prompts or chatbots. Using AI to write an essay for you is just lazy, taking the time to critically think and create an argument takes much less time than perfecting a prompt on ChatGPT," said Lopez.

AI is a technological shift unlike any other in history, and it's adapting so fast that the high school experience is irrecognizable. Future classes will likely be even further from that of current freshmen.

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Adviser Scott Nairne snairne@slcusd.org	

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Are JellyCats Worth It?



The perfect gift for Valentine's Day. Photo courtesy of Avoca.

REPORTER CATHERINE GOODWIN

Students of San Luis Obispo High School have definitely heard of Jellycats. You see them on backpacks and hear people talking about them in class, but what makes teens love them, and what makes them different from a stuffed animal from Target?

“Jellycats are unique, they’re made with super good quality, they’re made with love, and they’re super cute! They make for a really good present; you can give them to your little cousin,” said freshman Eriana Roberts.

Jellycats are completely different from a regular stuffed animal, which is why people are willing to pay the high price for them. Although, is it actually worth it?

“I think they’re cool, but they’re definitely too expensive for the size. But they’re unique, and definitely a great gift. I just think they’re overpriced. I’ve bought only one JellyCat for my friend. They’re expensive, and there’s a limited quantity of them, so they sell out pretty quickly on their websites. Because of that, you have to go to other places like eBay,” said senior

Jude Biggers.

JellyCats are expensive; they’re often priced over \$40, but they’re still cute and great quality.

“JellyCats are different from a stuffed animal at other stores because JellyCats are a special type of stuffed animal, and I think that’s what makes the prices high, but also one from Amazon is still cute and way cheaper, but because JellyCats are such a well-known brand I guess that’s why it’s expensive, but I also own three JellyCats,” said junior Jaelyn Lapalm.

Why does every teen think the quality outweighs the price?

“Jellycat plushies feel like hugging a cloud—soft, weightless, and impossibly comforting. Once you touch one, every other plush toy feels ordinary. From the velvety ears of Jellycat bunnies to the smooth fur of their mythical unicorns, Jellycat toys redefine the meaning of softness,” wrote Nini and Lori.

Even though JellyCats are expensive, teens love them. With Valentines Day coming up, JellyCats are sure to be a popular gift for a special someone.

The Working Dogs: Therapy Vs Service Dogs

REPORTER SADIE FISCHER

Providing therapy and service dogs at San Luis Obispo would offer meaningful support to the students who need it. As society increasingly depends on canine support, distinguishing between therapy dogs and service dogs is essential to ensure each animal fulfills its role properly and receives the respect it deserves.

“Two big misconceptions with therapy dogs and service dogs are around certification and who they serve. Service dogs are specially task trained to assist only one person with their disability needs. Therapy dogs on the other hand are meant to comfort and serve many different people,” said service dog trainer Kelly Sosa.

Service dogs go through extensive professional training, often beginning at a very young age. These dogs are trained to perform specific tasks for their handler. These tasks include alerting someone with diabetes to blood sugar changes, assisting individuals with mobility challenges, guiding people who are deaf or blind or supporting those with certain mental health conditions. Therapy dogs provide comfort and support to everyone, and the United States requires a certification for them.

“I could see a service dog being fantastic for our kids, or our students with severe disabilities. For motivation for occupational therapy like getting students motivated or to do things in an occupational therapy setting is amazing with a service dog,” said Physics teacher and service dog trainer Marie Pink.

Service dogs would be very beneficial to have for our students with disabilities by providing practical assistance and emotional support. For many students, service dogs would increase their confidence and encourage more participation.

“We know from scientific research that petting an animal, especially a calm dog, lowers human blood pressure and releases brain chemicals that support immune health as well as mood,” said professional dog trainer and veterinarian Stephanie Ruggerone.

Therapy dogs are specifically trained to provide comfort to those who need it. San Luis Obispo High School would really benefit from having more therapy dogs. It would help reduce stress especially on finals week.

“I am on the animal science committee actually, and so we’re actually trying to get more scheduled like therapy dog days for school where we can have therapy dogs in the morning kids can come in and just pet the dogs before school,” said junior Emily Svendsen.

By learning the distinction between therapy dogs and service dogs, students better understand how these animals support people in different ways, whether it is providing assistance to a handler or offering comfort to many. In addition, therapy and service dogs can be especially impactful for students who have disabilities, struggling with their mental health or emotionally.

Foreign Exchange Students at SLOHS Share Their Experiences Adjusting to a New Country

REPORTERS ADIE WALLACE & VENEZIA RAMIREZ

Foreign exchange students Alina Stellmacher, Vittorio Staudacher, and Sofia Ballesteros Lopez came from different countries to spend a year at San Luis Obispo High School. They’re adjusting to new classes, different cultures, and meeting new people, all while learning to navigate a school and community that’s very different from what they’re used to. Even with the challenges, they’ve found a supportive environment that helps them settle in and make the most of their time in San Luis Obispo.

Expressions: What has been the biggest difference between life in your home country and life here in San Luis Obispo?

Sophomore Alina Stellmacher: School is very different because in Germany we only have one classroom that we stay in the whole day with the same people. We also don’t have any sports teams.

Senior Vittorio Staudacher: The biggest difference here is the night life, and everything is very far.

Sophomore Sofia Ballesteros Lopez: They are pretty similar, but one difference is that in Spain we eat a lot later, like fifteen minutes before we go to sleep.

Expressions: What has been the most challenging part of being an exchange student at SLOHS, and how have you grown from it?

Stellmacher: The first few days when I didn’t know anyone, but then once I got to know people it was fine.

Staudacher: The most challenging part of being an exchange student is staying away from my family, and the language.

Ballesteros Lopez: Adapting in general, because it’s a whole different country and you’re on your own. I personally think I adapted pretty well and I’ve tried my best to make friends.

Expressions: What has been your favorite part of your experience so far—whether in school, the community, or daily life?

Stellmacher: I don’t have one specific favorite thing but I’ve enjoyed getting to know new people and experiencing a different culture.

Staudacher: My favorite part of my experience here has been playing on sports teams for the school.

Ballesteros Lopez: Making friends and making plans with those friends.

Expressions: How has your exchange experience influenced the way you see yourself, your culture, or the world?

Stellmacher: In Germany I go to a private school with all the same people. Here, everyone has different and diverse backgrounds. It’s nice to see so many different backgrounds and people.

Staudacher: The experience has helped me see different cultures and perspectives.

Ballesteros Lopez: In San Luis Obispo, the cultures are much more diverse than in my home country.

Expressions: What advice would you give to a future exchange student coming to SLOHS or San Luis Obispo?

Stellmacher: I would say don’t worry too much because everything turns out fine and even if it doesn’t, you will find people you can rely on. It’s a great experience to learn and grow from.

Staudacher: I would say you have to be ready because you’re more isolated here since you’re away from your family. There is also a big difference in the dynamic here.

Ballesteros Lopez: Don’t be shy or scared because everything is going to be fine and you’re going to have so much fun.

Adjusting to a new country can be challenging, but these students have made the most of their time here by building friendships and getting involved on campus. Their stories show how cultural exchange brings new perspectives to SLOHS and reminds students that stepping out of their comfort zone can lead to growth.



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Monarch Butterflies’ Migration to Pismo Dwindles

REPORTER BRINLEE RISNER

Monarch Butterflies’ migration rates have been decreasing for the past few years, and San Luis Obispo High School students must understand the causes and effects. There used to be thousands of butterflies that migrated to Pismo every year. Now it’s in the hundreds, and many find that sad, but don’t understand why. This is because of severe climate change, causing a decline in habitat resources, making it harder for habitats like the Grove in Pismo to hold as many of the Monarchs.

Every year at the grove, the grove workers calculate the population, and though the population decline is not new, the exponentially smaller count this year has brought greater alarm. The Monarch Groves website states that there were only 197 as of late December 2024, which is the lowest number at the Pismo Beach Butterfly Grove. The population of Western monarchs has decreased by more than 95 percent since the 1980’s.

Since this decrease has raised an alarm, it is important to inform students on why and how they can help. *Expressions* interviewed SLOHS students from the Environmental club and others on their thoughts and feelings about it.

“I think it’s very sad. It’s bad for our environment as they are such contributors to the ecosystems as pollinator insects,” said freshman Lilly Rhodes.

Climate change is one of the biggest reasons why the butterflies aren’t migrating as much as their ecosystems are becoming warmer and warmer, causing a decline in the growth of the milkweed plants. The host of monarch butterfly eggs is the food source for both the caterpillars and the adult butterflies. There are many reasons and causes for the decrease, but *Expressions* asked students why they thought they were decreasing.

“I’m guessing it has to be climate change. Because, as we know, the world’s getting warmer, they won’t be able to access all the resources they were previously dependent on,” said senior Skyler Katics.

As the Monarch Grove says, “Spreading awareness of what they do for our ecosystem can motivate the urgency to take swift action to protect them.” It is important that everyone takes part, goes out there, spreads awareness, and does their part to stop climate change.

Source: experiencepismo beach.com



Monarch Butterflies at home in Pismo. Photo courtesy of Pismo Monarch Grove.

SLOHS’ Biggest Nuisance: Parking Pandemonium

REPORTER ISAAC MATHIESEN

Traffic at San Luis Obispo High School is a very common issue and many students are heavily affected by it. Traffic before and after school can take more than thirty minutes just to get out of the stop and go. Junior Oscar Fenton gets trapped in the daily traffic and this is what he thinks about it.

“I think the worst part of the traffic is that it’s a matter of seconds, it really is a sprint. If you’re not one of the first, you’re going to be the last. Especially as someone who’s employed, I’ve got a time I need to be at work, so the fact that some days I can get out in two seconds is fine, but then I had to actually Ray Lewis my way through like, eight kids to get to my car, to not get fired,” said Fenton.

The school is about 130 years old and over the years driving infrastructure has not been updated to accommodate our students.

“The population has overgrown the parking and the roads, we just kind of outgrew our space. The roads have not been expanded to account for how

many kids go to the school,” said Vice Principal Chris Mothorn.

Since 2015, SLOHS has not had much of an increase in students, but in 2020 the school removed part of the parking lot to make space for the new office building. This forces all the students to park in the main lot and some choose to park on the street or the adult school.

“Maybe you have a doctor’s appointment, you show up a little late and there’s not a single spot. When these sophomores start getting their license and filling up the lot, it’s only going to get worse,” said Fenton.

Over the next few months as sophomores start to get their licences the traffic is only going to get worse. There is going to be less and less parking and even more traffic.

“Traffic is definitely an issue. There are a lot of different variables that I think go into it,” said Mothorn.

Students are not the only cause of traffic, there are many factors that cause the amount of traffic in

our area. The school or city doesn’t have any plans to push for or actually improve the traffic.

“There’s nowhere really to expand the parking, and across the street there’s the railroad tracks and they still get used, so I don’t think there’s any big plan on how to fix it,” said Mothorn.

For now students are stuck in traffic or forced to find a way around it, with many students taking alternative modes of transportation to school, such as the bus, bikes, scooters, walking, or carpooling.

“A lot of kids ride bikes, I know there’s kids who live close enough they just ride a bike because it’s quicker than driving,” says Mothorn.

Traffic at SLOHS is a problem; the amount of time students spend stuck in the parking lot is extreme. Students need to work together in the parking lot so everyone can get out in a timely manner, not some students getting out right away and some spending over thirty minutes in the parking lot. Students should consider biking or carpooling to reduce traffic for all Tigers.

What are Students’ Favorite Lunches at SLOHS?

S

???

A



B



C

D

E

F



The chicken sandwich, pulled pork sandwich, and pizza are among the best school lunches, but what is the best of the best? Photo illustration courtesy of freshman Joseph Spargo.

HEALTH & SPORTS EDITOR JOSEPH SPARGO

School districts all across the country require parents of students to put money into an account, where their children can then buy school lunch. However, our amazing San Luis Obispo High School graces us with hot, fresh, delicious, and most importantly, free school lunches. Whether it be BBQ pulled pork sandwiches or spicy chicken sandwiches, everyone has a favorite. What seems to be SLOHS students’ favorites?

“The lunch I like the best is probably the quesadilla tacos. Those are top dollar. Then, after that, it’s probably the pulled pork sandwich. And then the orange chicken is exceptional. I especially like the quality of the food. It’s really healthy,” said freshman Bennett Hufton.

Quesadilla taco day is a day every student looks forward to. It is loaded with meat and cheese, and even comes with pickled jalapenos and onions. Others love the combination of the brisket and mac and cheese.

“My favorites are probably the macaroni and brisket, then the turkey sandwich. I also really like the hamburger and the spicy chicken sandwich. Lastly, I also really like orange chicken day,” said junior Jesus Mata Gaspar.

However, many wonder, why do the meal staff provide food for us? Surely serving grumpy teenagers can’t be something to look forward to, one may think.

“We get the graces of the kids every day. We deal with our own kids, but it seems like here, we get a real ‘thank you’, so that on a daily makes you feel good. It’s good to hear the appreciation, and people tell you positive messages, and it kind of helps your day. And it also makes me feel like this has never been a job where I don’t want to go to work,” said SLOHS meal staff Andrea Hernandez.

SLOHS students love how the school meals are fresh and flavorful, and love the variety of the food served. Let’s give a huge thanks to the amazing people who keep us fed, Tigers!

White House East Wing Demolished for Ballroom



Before and After: The White House’s East Wing gets demolished. Photo courtesies of ABC.

REPORTER HUDSON ZURBACH

Many seniors at San Luis Obispo High School are approaching the voting age. There have been sparks of curiosity and questions around a lot of current political issues, one of which being President Donald Trump’s actions to reconstruct the White House’s East Wing.

Historical buildings should not be altered based on the sitting president’s preferences.

Other students have strong opinions about these current projects.

In July of 2025, Trump, announced plans to build a ninety-thousand square-foot ballroom in the White House. Construction and demolition of the previous standing East Wing started in September and October of that same year.

When asking a student at SLOHS about their initial reaction to hearing about the demolition, this was their response.

“At first, I was definitely surprised. I know it’s been discussed across other presidents before, but hearing that it was being done was shocking. I found it extremely odd that we would put our funding towards building a ballroom than towards things that truly matter,” said senior Charly Elston.

This sets a strange precedent for presidents and

their priorities.

“I don’t believe the president should be able to change historical buildings because of their own preferences. It’s tacky and more importantly, historical buildings should belong to the public not whoever is in office. It’s not just a Trump thing either---I’d be appalled if any president decided to change a historical building because of style and not something substantive,” said Elston.

A president’s personal style shouldn’t affect national historical buildings. This can also be seen as a blind side, a failure of transparency promised by the administration.

“I believe transparency is absolutely crucial when it comes to demolishing or significantly altering buildings, especially in terms of public accountability and overall trust in the government itself. Historical buildings are often public buildings themselves or symbols of national heritage,” said senior Scarlett Buatte

The sitting president is currently facing lawsuits against preservation groups who are trying to stop the project.

Presidents shouldn’t be able to remodel our nation’s greatest landmarks for their personal tastes.

Source: *cnn.com*

SLOHS Needs More School Spirit: Can it Be Done?

REPORTER OSCAR FENTON

School spirit at San Luis Obispo High School has been slightly lacking, especially when it comes to extracurricular gatherings.

SLOHS needs an increase in rallies to promote these gatherings and create excitement would cure this spirit drought.

It’s simple to say SLOHS needs more rallies, but not all students know the process ASB students go through. Rallies are a long enduring process that involves days and days of preparation.

This year SLOHS only has one spirit commissioner which creates a lot of pressure on ASB when preparing rallies.

“It takes a lot... I’m the only spirit commissioner this year. I like to go over with my class, because I need a second opinion from people. Then we have rally prep, it’s not just one day. It’s like a whole week of practice,” spirit commissioner junior Scarlett Ruiz.

Through adversity ASB has delivered two great rallies with many memorable moments. The energy of rallies builds excitement for extra curricular events by simulating the same energy. Many see the benefit rallies may have on extracurriculars, but share similar views on the difficulty.

“Honestly, I feel like [there aren’t many rallies] because it does take a long time to make those rallies, and we only do have one spirit commissioner, and it’s really hard when there’s only one person doing everything,” junior class officer Tina Gonzalez.

Rallies aren’t short and require a lot of the day, on rally days classes are often shortened by around ten minutes which is a detriment to a campus that already struggles with attendance.

“Rallies and whether ASB should have more or less is certainly a hot topic. If it was up to me I would have a rally every month but it’s not that easy. There’s a lot of planning that goes into the designing, planning, and execution of these rallies. Not to mention how teachers have to change their lesson plans for rally days. Rallies are a great and unique way for students to engage with each other, showcase their talents, and get announcements. We as a class do a lot behind the scenes. Rallies are a huge showcase that every student in ASB has a role in. Speaking of rallies we have our winter rally coming up very soon!” said junior Ava Connolly.

SLOHS should have more rallies, but in order to do that SLOHS has to support ASB more. SLOHS needs more spirit commissioners and better resources for those who make rallies happen.



Seniors read newspapers during the Homecoming Rally. Photo courtesy of senior Vyolet Burrus.

Field Trips Can Make Learning More Memorable



The Latin class watches a glass blowing demonstration in Harmony, CA during a field trip. Photo courtesy of junior Thad Hough.

REPORTER JOHNATHON GIES

San Luis Obispo High School students’ most memorable educational experiences are often field trips from elementary or middle school. SLOHS still has some field trips, but they are often rare and limited. There are good reasons SLOHS should hold more field trips and there are plenty of good educational experiences that students can participate in. School field trips are important for student education, and it’s time that SLOHS starts holding more of them.

“Schoolwide field trips sounds like a great idea, while there might be too many people at once it will be a lot of fun and probably lift everyone’s spirit... In particular I think the entire school should go to the beach to jump in the water, play in the sand, and clean up the beach,” said senior Mason Cortez.

School field trips provide more memorable experiences for students, elevating their high school experience and how they approach learning.

“It adds more to the learning experience than just sitting in a classroom,” said freshman Dylan McDonough.

But there are also reasons why school field trips don’t happen often. School field trips often require big funding, chaperones, and willingness to try to get permission slips out to the parents.

“The difficulties of planning field trips include fundraising, planning, paperwork completion, district approval, and more. There are A LOT of moving

pieces.” said Kristen Nusbaum

Field trips are hard to organize because of the fundraising which would need a designated fundraiser or more. Teachers and students would need to fill out paperwork and have the school district approve them. And everyone participating in any way needs to work together to plan all of it.

“Everything that was gonna happen on that day will be pushed back, which is just more pressure,” said junior Alexander Cohen.

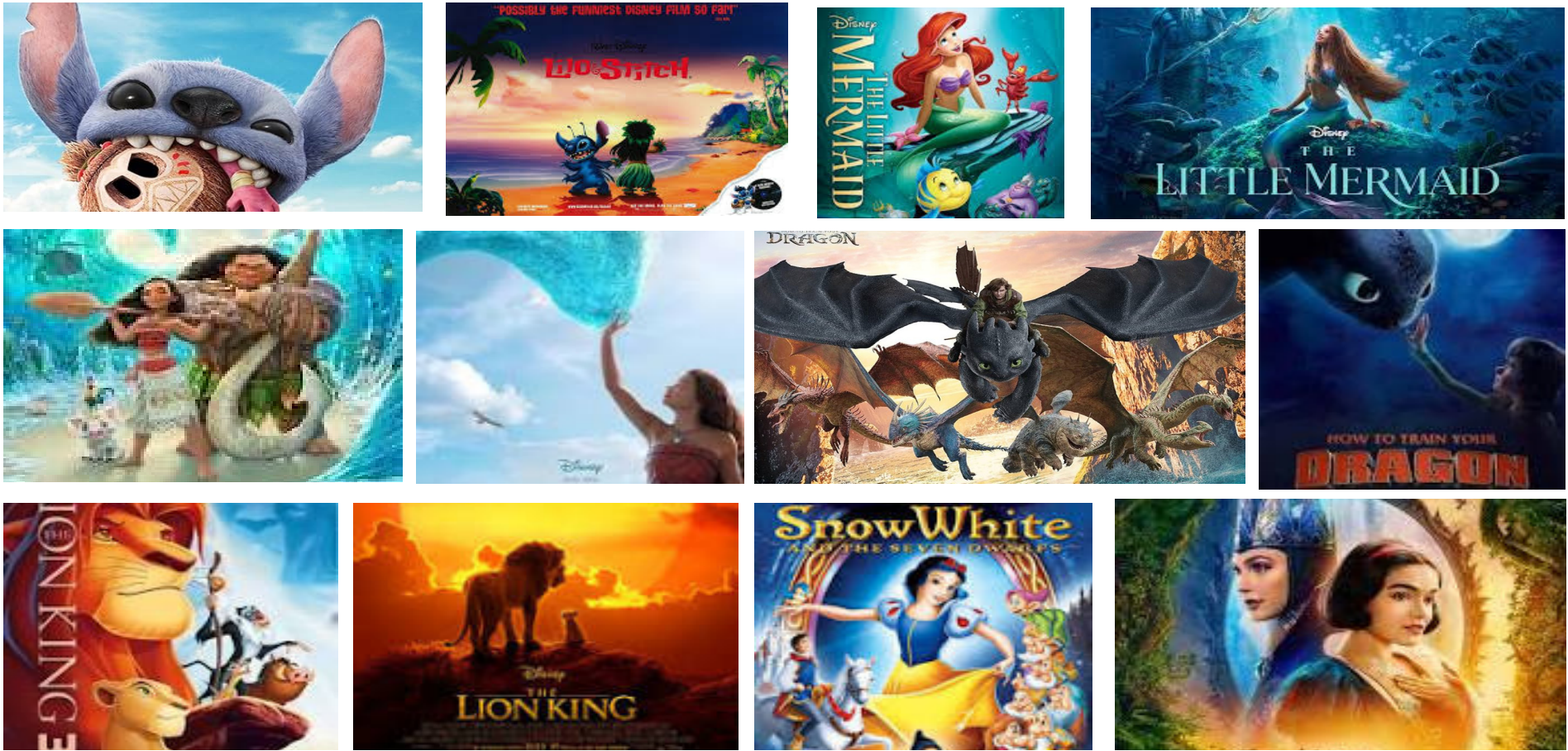
If a field trip occurs students would need to be able to complete the work that was supposed to happen that day. Which would put more pressure on students.

However, research shows that students that participate in field trips end up doing significantly better in high school. In fact, a study by the U.S. Travel Association found that children who take school trips have better grades, higher graduation rates from high school, from college, and greater income in their careers by twelve percent annually.

There are plenty of opportunities that allow students to learn outside of the classroom such as beach clean ups, museums, exploring future careers, and many more. Students can have greater success in school and it gives them a morale boost. It’s about time SLOHS has more field trips.

Source: *muskokawoods.com*

Nobody Asked For This Many Live Action Remakes



Almost every iconic animated movie has a live-action rmake. Graphic courtesy of senior Roslyn Risner.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR ROSLYN RISNER

Every advertisement, announcement, and new movie release spirals us further into the repetitive cycle the movie industry has come to know and love. Every time Disney comes out with yet another live action remake, or uncalled for sequel, students at San Luis Obispo High School lose yet another opportunity for new ideas and methods to be showcased.

“I think the “Moana” live action that’s coming out is so stupid! It’s a frame by frame replay of the original. It’s also just an excuse for the Rock to be in another movie,” said senior Avery Sheffield.

This is not an uncommon phenomenon; in recent years, there have been live-action adaptations of a growing number of popular Disney films, along with a surplus of sequels. Some of these include, “The Lion King,” which was followed by the prequel, “Mufasa,” the live action “Lilo & Stitch,” “Snow White,” “The Little Mermaid,” “Cruella,” and the list goes on.

“To me, at least, pretty much all of the live action remakes are unnecessary. It’s recycling material that was excellent on its own, and changing it. There are a few here and there that are good enough on their own, but in the end the original is better,” said junior Em Thompson.

Disney is far from the only offender, with the whole movie industry suffering from this ‘predictable income’ phenomenon. There is an overwhelming anxiety in this age of mass media and mass production contributing to the fear of producing a ‘flop’ film.

“The vast majority of filmmakers today are not actively producing their own scripted material,” wrote Noam Kroll in “Everyone Has A Movie Idea: Why So Few Film Makers Break Into Features.

Newer releases run rampant with sequels, with the highest-grossing films of the past five years remaining either sequels to well known films, or otherwise built on a previous story, (like video games, “The Minecraft movie,” or “The Super MARIO Bros. Movie.”)

Why is the movie industry so afraid of promoting something new?

“[I really wish there were] new fresh ideas. It’s hard to find material to use that hasn’t been done, but I think it’s important that we keep standards high, producing fewer, better produced and made movies,” said Sheffield.

This is a common opinion, as almost everyone knows someone or personally believes that there are an abundance of stories being squashed by the movie industry’s need to make new films always be big money makers.

“If they make a stand alone film and then make a multitude of reworks of the same movie simply because it was successful, either in the form of sequels, like the Star Wars sequels, or franchises, like Hallmark, that is frustrating,” said Thompson.

It’s likely that if things continue this way, more people will turn away from the mindless remakes that dominate Hollywood and original ideas might retake the screens once again.

So, don’t feel discouraged Tigers, as we approach adulthood more and more of the market power will be held by Gen Z.

The movie industry will be what we make of it, and that should ultimately be a place to share diverse stories and foster new perspectives rather than telling the same stories over and over again.

Sources: [imdb.com](https://www.imdb.com), [noamkroll.com](https://www.noamkroll.com)

Finals and Burnout: May Is the Worst Month by Far!

REPORTER ANNIE RAWLINGS

San Luis Obispo High School students all have that month we dread. Maybe it’s January, where the after-the-holidays gloom only gets worse with the cold weather. Perhaps it’s September, where school work starts getting heavy again after two months free of it. However, the true villain month of the year is May.

The arrival of May is not one I enjoy. The tease of summer is shoved too far down in people’s heads because of all the homework, tests and of course, allergies. The once vibrant blooms of April become tormentors for people prone to pollen allergens.

According to BV Health System, late spring and early summer is one of the worst times of the year for allergies, because of the start of grass pollen. It is also one of the most common allergens, leading to many people feeling these same effects.

“Allergies cause a lot of discomfort to people, and we need to be understanding of that,” says freshman Maggie Cross.

This discomfort is only worsened by high schoolwork in the month of May, which is yet another reason it is the worst month.

“I don’t like May because it is at the end of the year when all the hard stuff is

happening, like tests, quizzes, and state testing,” said freshman Jonathan Gies.

This is an issue for anyone with schoolwork.

“Increased anxiety is developed [because]... finals pressures are at a critical level with papers, exams, and studying,” said the San Diego State University Student Stress Calendar.

This aligns with interviews in the school. The only thing good about May is the end of it, where summer finally feels like something to think about. For AP takers, it’s even worse. At least for some.

“Personally, I had a great environment and Ms. Arata prepared me phenomenally and made sure I was aware of everything I needed to know. It’s stressful if you aren’t prepared by trying all year, but if you try, it will be exciting,” said junior Oscar Fenton.

While many people may not like May because of the tests, some (like Oscar) may find it exciting if you’ve been studying and feel prepared.

May affects students in all different ways, but in general, is the worst month of the year.

Sources: [bvhealthsystem.org](https://www.bvhealthsystem.org)

Disclaimer: Official Student Publications

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The Future is Here: Driverless Cars are Taking Over



Waymo cars navigate streets with ease thanks to their Lidar, radar, and camera systems. Photo courtesy of waymo.com.

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR ZACH WALLACE

By now, most students at San Luis Obispo High School have heard about the driverless cars taking over San Francisco’s streets, with many wishing they were available in SLO. These self-driving cars are constantly improving and expanding, now serving many cities across the country.

“When I was in San Francisco, I saw them everywhere,” said junior Josue Saavedra.

Waymos are available as a driverless taxi service for anyone on the peninsula who downloads the app and requests a car.

“One advantage of these vehicles is that they can be convenient for people who are unable to drive themselves due to intoxication or lack of a license,” said junior Emily Roth.

Aside from Waymo, there are also other driverless cars prowling the streets of San Francisco, such as Zoox and formerly Cruise. However, Waymo is by far the largest and most popular program, operating

over 1500 vehicles.

This driverless taxi phenomenon is rapidly expanding across the country as well, with Waymo vehicles also being available in Phoenix, Austin, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. In addition to this, Waymo has announced twelve more cities in which it will soon offer service. With this rapid expansion, technology of the future is being offered to the masses.

Some people are skeptical of this growth however. Waymo has the potential to put taxi drivers out of work in cities where its services are available, potentially harming the local economy and the families of taxi drivers.

“These people will be out of jobs and left with difficulty achieving an income,” said Roth.

Others are skeptical about the safety of the cars, as they have been involved in many accidents during their time on the road.

With that being said, many of these accidents have been the fault of human drivers in regular cars.

Waymo quotes 91 percent fewer incidents involving injuries than a typical driver who has driven the same distance, a meaningful improvement in road safety.

“I felt safe being driven by the car. It didn’t make any mistakes driving me,” said junior Logan Woods.

The taxi experience itself is safer in a Waymo, as some riders might feel uncomfortable alone in a taxi with a driver. This is not a concern in a driverless car as passengers are the only person in the vehicle.

Self driving cars are becoming increasingly popular and available, meaning many people will experience this futuristic technology soon. As cars are further rolled out across the country, the benefits become clearer and overall safety for the community is improved.

Tigers, don’t be scared about this new technology. Try it out and experience the future today!

Source: *waymo.com*

AI’s All The Rage, So Why do Most Students Hate It?

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AIDAN FIELD

Students and teachers at San Luis Obispo High School are now accustomed to using AI for everything, from help with assignments, to making assignments. Sentiment, however, seems to be changing. Students find AI distasteful.

“I think it’s wrong [to use AI] when you’re just blatantly using it to do work that you should be doing yourself instead of just doing it,” said senior Georgia Keeling.

Students’ first experiences with AI was most likely ChatGPT, a large language model released on November 30, 2022. Many students were early adopters of this service, using it for study help, just for fun, or in some cases for academic dishonesty.

Today it’s still the dominant AI tool used by students. A lot has still changed.

AI usage has grown dramatically beyond these early adopters and almost everyone at SLOHS, students and staff, has used AI more than once. Something, however, differs when it comes to AI usage compared to the roll-out of almost any other technology.

AI usage is the least among people with only a high school education and without a high school education.

AI in professional use is highest among the 30-44 age group. While the 18-29 age group follows this, 18-29 year-olds are also the most likely to say they don’t use AI in their professions.

Young people might be avoiding AI usage, compared to older people with degrees.

According to an Udacity report, it was millennials, not Gen Z, who are embracing AI with the most fervor.

“It was surprising to see that the most optimistic and comfortable with AI in the workplace weren’t necessarily the youngest,” said COO at Udacity Victoria Papalian.

When new technologies are being rolled out, it is usually the youngest generations which embrace them, while older generations are more weary. So what’s going on here?

AI services are now being integrated into almost every aspect of students and staff’s digital existence.

Google has incorporated AI into their search engine, and for the most part it’s still available to use. Popular apps that students use like Instagram now have AI search features and AI chatbots. Even Snapchat has @myai.

“It definitely makes it difficult to do anything online anywhere without ha-

ving to be in contact or come across AI. I feel like it definitely negatively impacts the overall experience for people who don’t want to use AI but are kind of forced into it by social media apps promoting it regardless,” said senior Chloe Elliott.

Some SLOHS teachers have even used AI to make assignments and even grade students work.

“[Teachers using AI] has definitely made me not like AI more,” said Keeling. “I’ve had a few teachers that grade assignments or create assignments with AI, and they’re always slightly off, confusing, and don’t really make sense.”

Students are being force-fed AI by tech firms, and now teachers are using AI too. It can feel like AI is everywhere, and there’s little escape.

Gen Z, being early adopters of AI, might’ve already had negative experiences with AI. Many are familiar with “hallucinations,” where AI makes up facts, cites research papers that don’t exist, and essentially fabricates a reality if it sounds good.

Millennials and older generations might not have had the experiences yet of seeing AI fail miserably and they might not be as exposed to AI being constantly integrated into everyday life without their consent.

Regardless, many studies still show Gen Z as very active users of AI. It seems that only recently have student opinions shifted to distrusting this tool.

“I know a lot of my peers use it for mundane things... but I think a lot of people recognize that it’s sort of regarded as something negative and something that people shouldn’t use, but they kind of just use it anyway since it is so convenient,” said Elliott.

Student opinions on AI appear to be nuanced. Students are approaching AI knowing about its negative tendencies.

“I feel like it can be a good tool for certain students and really help learning, but overall, I think it’s going to have a really bad effect on our generation. They’re not actually learning things for themselves and they’re taking big short-cuts,” said Keeling.

Students are being sold on a future of AI, but many are skeptical and they’re not buying in just yet.

“I think big ideas will remain human,” said senior Madeline Bessems.

AI is taking over students’ lives. They are exposed to AI’s conveniences and also its flaws. The adoption of this technology is no longer being driven by this young generation, instead it is being forced upon them.

Sources: *brookings.edu, ciodive.com*

New iPhone 17 Sparks Controversy, Dividing Fans

REPORTER VENEZIA RAMIREZ

Students at San Luis Obispo High School are sharing a wide range of reactions to the newly released iPhone 17. While some students are impressed by its upgraded features, faster performance, and sleek design, others are critical of its appearance or question whether the changes justify the high price.

From excitement over new technology to skepticism about Apple's approach, the release has sparked lively conversations among students, showing just how divided opinions are on the tech giant's latest model.

Apple's newly released iPhone 17 has quickly become a major topic on campus, drawing both excitement and criticism.

"I think the iPhone 17 is a waste of technology," said freshman Camila Gutierrez. "The 16 works way better, and the 17 feels rushed, like Apple pushed it out early just because Christmas is around the corner."

The phone introduces a new design, a brighter 6.3-inch Super Retina XDR display, and upgraded cameras, including three 48-megapixel rear lenses and an improved 18-megapixel front camera. It also features the A19 chip, longer battery life, and starts at 256GB of storage.

Despite these changes, many students feel the upgrades don't justify the price. To many students, the concerns go beyond just pricing — some feel the new model simply doesn't perform as well as previous versions.

"Honestly, the only positive thing about the iPhone 17 is that the iPhone Air exists... The base model is just the 16, and the Pro Max gets scratched instantly and can even change color due to heat. It is terrible that they would switch to aluminum for the cover," said freshman Diosmar Lopez. "I will not be upgra-

ding from my 16 due to prices, design, and material."

This opinion reflects a growing trend among younger consumers, who are increasingly frustrated with what they see as minor updates being sold at premium prices. Many students also feel Apple is focusing more on yearly redesigns than truly innovative features.

People who own the iPhone 17, offered a different perspective. Many appreciate the device's reliability and how smoothly it connects with her other Apple products, but aren't impressed with the redesign.

"The design of the iPhone 17 isn't my favorite... the result isn't particularly unique...just bulkier," said Spanish teacher Belen Blasquez.

Others also noted that the upgrade isn't worth it for anyone with an iPhone 14 or newer. Many of these views match those of many tech reviewers who have pointed out that while the new camera system is strong, most everyday users won't notice major differences unless they do photography or video work.

Overall, reactions at San Luis Obispo High School show a clear divide. Some see the iPhone 17 as a meaningful upgrade for people with older phones, especially because of the improved camera and battery life. Others feel it's an overpriced redesign with only minor improvements, raising questions about whether Apple is running out of fresh ideas or simply saving bigger innovations for future releases.

As Apple continues releasing yearly models, the conversation grows: how much change is enough to justify another thousand-dollar phone?

Source: apple.com

Are Meta Glasses Actually Helpful for Learning?

REPORTER GEOFFREY BODEMER



To ban or not to ban? Graphic courtesy of freshman Geoffrey Bodemer.

Many San Luis Obispo High School students are using the new Ray-Ban Meta Glasses to study for tests, homework, and to prepare themselves for overall classwork. Are these glasses truly helping students or encouraging them to cheat?

Some students feel like there are more useful tools for studying, and these could just be used as a toy instead of a learning tool.

"I feel like the Meta Glasses felt like cheating when I used them to help me with my schoolwork, and they really didn't help me with my schoolwork that much," said freshman Herschel Joyce.

The majority of students believe that Meta Glasses are just for learning; however, they have many uses other than schoolwork.

One of these uses is AI Meta-Integration, which helps out when students want to know what something is, so they ask the AI inside the glasses, and it helps to explain it.

"I find them really helpful for things other than school, especially the AI integration feature," said freshman Drew Garner.

These glasses can also offer additional tools for more than just learning, such as the hands free music, recording, calling, and messaging. This allows students to perform lots of actions they wouldn't be able to do without them.

"I really feel like these glasses help me out because if I want to listen to music, then I don't have to pull out earbuds, and it makes the experience a lot more enjoyable and convenient," said freshman Halim Fouzi.

However, Meta glasses can also be a distraction and give some students an unfair advantage. They don't help students study or learn without it being considered cheating, although they can be useful for other purposes and add convenience with hands-free use for activities outside the classroom.

Source: techlearning.com

Friend or Foe: Are AI Chatbots Damaging to Users?

REPORTER FINN SELMAN

AI Chatbots are a very recent technological advancement, offering numerous benefits, including companionship and good communication to their users. Students and teachers at San Luis Obispo all have different views on how they affect students and their social skills. However, it does come with drawbacks, including decreased social skills and an increase in isolation.

"I disagree with the use of AI chatbots because I think it's better for kids to learn socialization skills, but I can definitely see the appeal to them for kids who might not have like a lot of social skills," said senior Che Brocco.

One of the most important aspects of human life and development is the connection between humans. This connection fosters vital brain development that creates resilience, reasoning, and helps with memory.

"What we need most now isn't a machine connection. It's human relationships," wrote Brookings journalist Isabella Hau and Rebecca Winthrop.

Even with this in mind, we still do not know if chatbots are bad or good. Many people may rely on AI chatbots to foster connections that they otherwise couldn't have. Someone who is disabled and can't leave their bed or house may find connection in talking to a chatbot.

Someone else owning and being able to change the chatbot is the most harmful part of human chatbot interaction. Due to legal threats, Replika (a popular AI chatbot) changed the algorithms, and people lost best friends and even romantic partners in the flip of a switch. People are lonely, and loneliness can lead to depression and a poor state of mental health.

When it comes to adolescents, AI chatbots can have a significant impact on them. Socially awkward children may find them useful, as they can practice social skills and gain confidence. This comes at a cost, though, as interacting with a chatbot online and interacting with a human in person are two very different things.

"There are people who find comfort, support, and even friendship and love with AI chatbots...If a chatbot is being used instead of human connection then I get a bit concerned, but who am I to judge? If a chatbot is used in the case where human connection is not possible, again, who am I to judge?" said Computer

Science teacher Steven Crow.

When it comes to whether AI chatbots are good or bad for society, it's too early to tell. There are examples of them being beneficial, but there are also examples of them being negative. It is ultimately up to the reader to form their own opinion.

It is important to always have compassion towards people; a lack of compassion and empathy could lead to someone feeling outcast. If you disagree with the use of AI chatbots, then try to socialize with people that you don't know, as it can help them a lot.

Sources: brookings.edu, wonderly.com



Many platforms for AI chatbots have emerged in recent years, allowing users to form personal connections. Collage courtesy of senior Finn Selman.

REPORTER FINN SELMAN

Last year, the Tigers lost to Arroyo Grande in the

league finals, which broke a five-year win streak. The win margin was very close, with the Tigers trailing by just fifteen points. This may seem like a decent amount, but in swimming, fifteen points is the equivalent of having two people place in the top five in any race.

Another factor that put the Tigers at a disadvantage was the fact that they had no seniors on the team. They were going toe to toe with teams that were almost entirely made of seniors.

This year, though, the Tigers have a stacked roster, with many seniors and a fast group of underclassmen.

“I think that we have a really good chance at winning the league. With us placing second last year and not losing any athletes to graduation, we have a lot of talent left on the team, and a lot of potential to

win,” said senior Henry Esola.

When it comes to dual meets, the Tigers have very little to worry about. With the size of the swim program at SLOHS and there being no cuts during tryouts, the Tigers win most dual meets with size alone.

“Our biggest strength is definitely our size. We win most dual meets because of our sheer size compared to other schools because they simply can’t enter as many events as us,” said senior Jack McGhee.

Winning dual meets is the key to going into league as the top spot.

With all of these factors coming into play, it can be inferred that Boys Swim will have a successful season and will be in the top spot for the league title this year.

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AIDAN FIELD

Expressions also found that the highest cost for student athletes was pre-season training. In particular, tournaments in the off-season for sports like wrestling amounted to thousands of dollars in expenses for families.

Source: *SLOHS Expression Varsity Athlete Poll*

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Strong Team Chemistry of Soccer is Key to Success



The freshman soccer team runs towards the ball, looking for a chance to score. Photo courtesey of freshman Joseph Spargo.

REPORTER JACKSON KELLY

The soccer teams for San Luis Obispo High School showcase their many technical skills and styles, but it is far too common that teams do not showcase their chemistry and the strength that they have from working together.

Most of the freshman soccer players for SLOHS enjoy their coach because of the connections that they have with him and the chemistry they have built in previous years. Many players on the SLOHS freshman soccer team played with coach Gio Yanez in previous years on the Laguna Middle School seventh and eighth-grade teams.

“It’s nice to have a coach that I know because I know him more and he knows our playstyles and tactics,” said freshman soccer player Herrick Han.

A solid team doesn’t just rely on the skills of its players, or maybe their physicality and strength. A solid team builds on a base of chemistry and teamwork. The coach is undeniably the glue that holds these teams together and is the reason why the team works together so well.

“Our coach is very social, and we can talk to him about a lot of stuff, so we grow with him very well.” said junior varsity soccer player freshman Rafferty Dunn.

The players on the freshman team are seen to be prodigies with great potential to be an astounding team in the upper grades. Some of the players believe that their team is going to be very successful when they get more used to the season and are excited about their success.

“It’s nice because we know the coach’s tactics and the way that he puts us on the field,” said junior varsity soccer players freshman Rogelio Navarro.

Players enjoy working with their coach because he knows the players and the players know the coach’s tactics like the back of their hand. Check out the soccer teams and watch their games to see how amazing our teams are doing!

Source: *bbc.com*

Students Should Attend SLOHS Basketball Games

REPORTER OSCAR FENTON

San Luis Obispo High School Boys and Girls Basketball are looking the best they have in years, but student attendance is still low.

Players promise a new and improved experience to what may have been lackluster past seasons and hope to bring back the same SLOHS Tiger spirit the school has seen.

“We make a lot of plays that the crowd can cheer about, and the crowd can get really into the games. It’s not going to be boring at all, it’s just gonna be a really good environment to be part of,” said senior Hayden Brandow.

For the first time in recent memory, SLOHS basketball is experiencing the effects of consistency at the coaching level.

Coaches Dave Gomes and Keith Spidel both have worked tirelessly to build culture and continuity throughout a program that has lacked those ingredients.

Tiger Boys Basketball recognizes that students may still have a bad taste in their mouth from past seasons, or that basketball is unfamiliar to many, opposed to football, the highest attended sport. Players promise their play will keep spectators engaged and hope to work with them to create a great environment to watch, play, and enjoy Tiger basketball.

“We’re really good. We’re like one of the best, probably the best in our league except for St Joe’s, and we’re gonna win games, and it’ll be fun. And our teams, we got guys dunking and shooting some crazy shots, so it’s just really a fun team,” said junior Cole Bramer.

It’s not just the boys who are expecting big things this winter, but the Girls Basketball team. Coming off a league win, is looking to do the same and maybe more, as this year they have entered a higher league and are hoping for more competitive, entertaining games.

“SLOHS students should come to our basketball

games because we got moved up to the upper league this year so there’s going to be a lot of good competition and rivalries such as admission AG and St Joes and, I think that it’s going to be really entertaining games to watch, and there’s going to be a lot of good basketball happening” said junior Simone Maulhardt.

Members of the girls team recognize this year’s roster’s exceptional teamwork which is sure to reflect in their exciting fast pace play, and signature lockdown Dan Monroe defense.

“I think that people should come to our basketball games because we bring a lot of energy, and we play as a team, which brings a lot of excitement to the court and we play really good team basketball,” said junior Natalie Peters.

SLOHS basketball is sure to deliver at all levels this year, from high-flying dunks to deep threes there is nothing but energy, excitement, and a good time for Tigers attending basketball games this year.

Diving Deeper Into the Effects of Soda on SLOHS Students’ Health

REPORTER GEOFFREY BODEMER

Today, lots of students here at San Luis Obispo High School drink lots of soda without thinking of the consequences for their overall health. While soda can offer some benefits for learning, the negatives outweigh the positives.

“I think I would drink about five to six cans of soda a week, which doesn’t seem like a lot when I am drinking it, but when I put it in perspective, it really seems like a lot,” said junior James Maxwell.

Students were shocked when they realized how much soda they drink each week. When the realization hit, they were disturbed by how much soda had crept into their lives.

“I think the reason why some healthier alternatives to soda aren’t really drunk as much by students is that they don’t really have that sugary sweet taste that traditional sodas have. For me personally, I just like that sweet taste that regular sodas have,” said freshman Nathan McRoberts.

Many students may not like healthier options because of the bad taste. However, others may just not like how the-

se drinks are advertised, and they just don’t look appealing.

“I may work better before class if I drink a soda because the caffeine and sugar can provide a quick boost of energy and alertness. This temporary increase in focus can help me feel more prepared to participate in or complete early assignments. However, the effect is short-term, meaning soda might help in the moment but isn’t a reliable long-term strategy for academic performance,” said freshman Luca Gerace.

Some students may try to use the caffeine in soda to learn better in class when they are feeling tired. However, this does the opposite by reducing the ability to concentrate and the ability of learning and memory.

Soda is actually affecting lots of students’ learning abilities because of the sugar spikes that occur, which affect memory and brain structure. Alternatively, soda does contain caffeine to help keep you awake, and it is decent at counteracting dehydration, but these benefits are extremely outweighed by the multiple disadvantages soda has for people’s health.

Source: *cbc.ca*



Freshman Cooper Holt drinks a crisp Diet Coke, unaware of the effects. Photo courtesey of freshman Geoffrey Bodemer.

“Wicked: For Good”
Defies Logic Not Gravity

vs

“Wicked: For Good”
Recieves Gratitution

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF VYOLET BURRUS

San Luis Obispo High School students have been looking forward to the conclusion of the “Wicked” series since the first part’s release in 2024, but for many “Wicked: For Good” was a massive disappointment.

“The second part was really visually pleasing, but it was very fast, and I feel like there were a lot of plot holes. As someone who doesn’t know the plot of the musical very well, just seeing it in movie form was a bit confusing,” said senior Bailey Morgan.

The two-part series has been highly anticipated since its announcement in 2022, starring major celebrities like Ariana Grande, Cynthia Erivo, and Jonathon Bailey. With the popularity of the original 1939 movie and the famous cast, the series quickly grew a large following.

However despite the actor’s talents and the intrigue the story offered, the total run time of 297 minutes left many fans annoyed with the film’s pacing.

“I feel like they added a ton of extra stuff that was just not really that important to the plot, there was so much filler. It wasn’t terrible...but I would have preferred it to be just one movie,” said sophomore Cleo Van Gundy.

The movie aimed to expand on the Broadway musical “Wicked” while adding storylines from Frank Baum’s 1900 novel, ultimately elevating the origin story of Glinda (played by Grande) and Elphaba (played by Erivo).

“I know they were trying to pull some things from the book to add into the movie, but I feel like two, three hour movies was a lot. It was fun and I enjoy having more ‘Wicked’ content...but, they added things that I felt had been avoided,” said junior Sadie Badger.

While the movies may have a long run time, that is not why they have been poorly received. Franchises like “Star Wars”, “Dune”, and “Avatar” have all been successful despite long run times. By creating extensive worldbuilding and building complex characters, fans of these series argue the length of the movies are necessary. The same cannot be said for “Wicked”.

“They added so much at the beginning of the movie that was unnecessary and unneeded. It just drags on so much,” said Badger.

The length of the movie would be warranted if plotholes were absent and characters were fully developed, however this is not what happened. The film missed so many opportunities to expand on the character’s backstories and instead stretched out trivial scenes.

“I would have just slowed the pacing down more and had more scenes of explanation. There were a lot of things that just came out of nowhere, and I didn’t really know why a lot of things happened. All the visuals were stunning though, so I would definitely keep that kind of quality,” Morgan.

With awkward pacing and a messy narrative, it left fans feeling underwhelmed. However, fans still found enjoyment in the film, delighting in the fun musical numbers and flamboyant characters. Tigers who love the “Wicked” franchise are sure to love the second film, but for those who don’t, it might be an easy skip.

Sources: *apnews.com*, *newyorker.com*



Changes and adaptations to the “Wicked” series are a coming together to create an unstoppable story. Graphic courtesy of freshman Brinlee Risner.

REPORTER BRINLEE RISNER

San Luis Obispo High School Students rush to theaters to see the new “Wicked” movie, as popularity for the show explodes. The “Wicked” plot was altered from the original Broadway version. The story of Glinda and Elphaba, finding friendship and trying to fight off the true ‘Wicked Wizard.’ Finding themselves and accepting each other for who they are.

“Wicked”, as a franchise, has brought a lot of popularity along with it. Not always good, but in this case, it’s good. Many loved the songs from both parts, but there were some definite favorites in the more recent release of “Wicked: For Good.”

“I really liked ‘No Good Deed’ because of Cynthia’s vocals, and those were incredible,” said sophomore Scout Robles.

Both Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande captured people with their amazing voices. The song “No Good Deed” was one of the top songs in part two, but there was one other

song on people’s minds. This was because of the uplifting mood and amazing vocals.

“My favorite song was ‘I Couldn’t Be Happier.’ It’s just an overall fun song, and I love Ariana’s vocals and the vibe of the song,” said freshman Gwen Markham.

Many loved the first part and enjoyed the second part. They felt like the plot diverged from the Broadway telling of the story. But still agree that if everyone loves the story of “Wicked”, it’s a definite watch for them.

“I just felt like it was more classic and simple, especially for like the ‘Wizard and I’, I just felt like it was more like musical theater Broadway to me than the second movie. There’s something about the first movie that I liked more than the second one,” said junior Sadie Badger.

Students should definitely go to see it if they enjoyed the first one. Bring friends for extra fun, and enjoy the great songs. Be ready for a roller coaster of emotions.

The Fifth Season of “Stranger Things” Is Here At Last



The iconic team, formed a decade ago tackles their final challenges in the fifth and final season. Graphic courtesy of freshman Brinlee Risner.

REPORTER GABBY ARTEAGA

Many students at San Luis Obispo High School have grown up with the show “Stranger Things”, experiencing it as a part of their childhood. For some, it was from third grade all the way to their senior year, and for others it started as early as first grade to now their first year of high school. If any readers have yet to watch the latest season, be cautious for spoilers in later in this article.

After a decade, this show has finally come to an end, leaving behind memories, nostalgia, and stories that many will carry with them after the screen goes dark.

Over the years, this show has become extremely popular, winning twelve Emmy Awards, a Screen Actors Guild award for Out-standing Ensemble, several Saturn awards, along with wins at Critics’ Choice, MTV, and Peabody Awards. This show is now coming to an end, as the very last episode premiered on New Year’s Eve, and students at SLOHS are talking about it.

“I thought the ending was kind of underwhelming because I thought Vecna would be harder to fight especially with all the buildup, and I also thought there would’ve been more conflict with everything but it ended really fast,” said senior Tamiyah Murrieta.

Some students believe that there were too many story lines during the last few episodes of the show. The show started following a lot of characters in different places at once, which made the main story feel scattered and hard to focus on.

“In season four, she could pin down a whole helicopter and now she can barely lift Murray’s truck. The first two seasons were great and I liked how it was actually scary until three seasons after. They should’ve stuck with the 80’s coming of age/ sci-fi horror plot but it was still a good show,” said junior Jessica Garibay.

“Stranger Things” is an American Sci-Fi horror series that first came out nine years ago on July 15, 2016. The series takes place during the 1980’s in the small town of Hawkins, Indiana. It is based on a group of kids that uncover supernatural events linked to a secret government lab that opened a portal to a dark dimension called the Upside Down, leading to monstrous creatures and conspiracies, all while a psychokinetic girl named Eleven joins their fight to save their town and friends.

“If I could change one thing about the show, I would one hundred percent change the writing about what will come out to everyone when it should’ve just been his family and Mike. Also Eleven dying, she honestly did not have to die. She rarely had a life and ninety percent of it was torture for her. And another thing is Eleven being weaker in season five than in season three,” said Garibay.

Viewers say that the show focused too much on Will’s sexuality instead of the plot, claiming it felt “forced”. Will’s coming out arc is emotional and painful, and some fans didn’t like that his story felt lonely compared to others.

“I really enjoyed this show because of how it was so different from normal shows. I really liked the concept of the upside down and how the demogorgon was just the beginning of all the monsters/creatures from the upside down. The ending was not what I expected from what the duffer brothers told us, I really thought a lot more people would die,” said senior Amelia Wood.

“Stranger Things” features diversity, such as racial diversity, LGBTQ+ representation, and thematic importance meaning the show suggests that the strength of all the heroes begins or comes from their diverse background, which is why people believe it’s so different from others.

For these reasons, “Stranger Things” has left an impact on SLOHS students’ lives. There are so many different opinions about the show, which makes it so personal for many. From having fun cosplaying as characters from the to crying during intense scenes, it has now come to an end.

Reading “1984” Is More Important Than Ever Before

REPORTER HUDSON ZURBACH

The majority of San Luis Obispo High School seniors who are currently taking English are reading George Orwell’s “1984,” a dystopian novel in which a totalitarian Party uses surveillance, propaganda, and manipulation to control all aspects of people’s lives.

Throughout the years, “1984” has been challenged and banned in various school districts throughout the nation. Common reasons for the challenges against the novel are that George Orwell often cited mature sexual content and heavy political themes. English teacher Lynnly Sainsbury, who is currently reading “1984” with her class, is shocked with the students’ reaction to the novel.

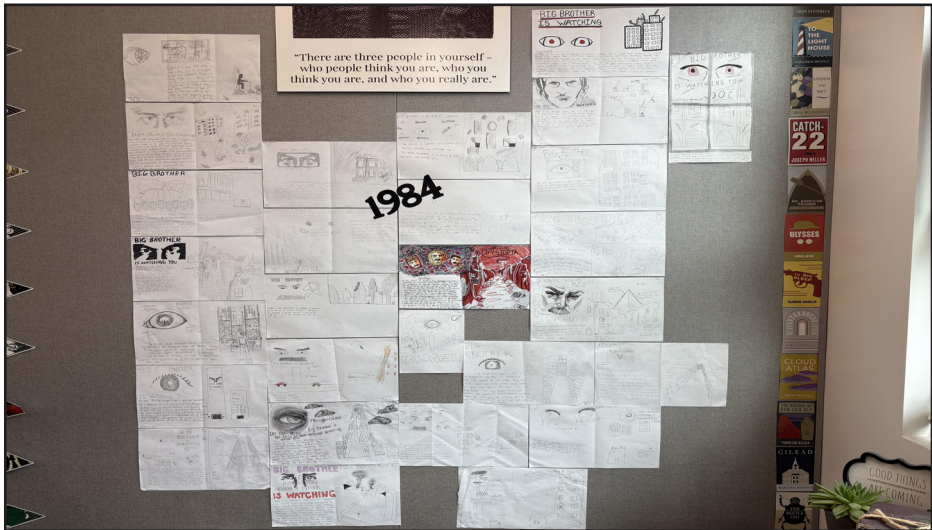
“I’m always surprised that students are so enamored with this book because of the way it talks about totalitarianism and free speech, because I see that as a check that the citizens need to do all the time in government. I really appreciate that the seniors engage in this book and understand that it’s something they need to apply in their society and their life,” said twelfth grade English teacher Lynnly Sainsbury.

While some argue that banning books like “1984” protects students from harmful and controversial content, a few seniors share a different perspective.

“I think it is so beyond valuable for every single student to read something that challenges their beliefs or makes them feel uncomfortable. If you read books that only agree with your views and only enforce what you already know, then sure, you’re not really expanding your worldview or your intellect, and it just undermines students’ potential,” said senior Zoe Fujii.

Another student shared similar views, focusing on how book bans would limit access to a higher academic potential.

“I feel like banning books limits your educational growth, because if we ban certain books, kids are never gonna know the real truth ... you’re gonna be sugar coated with stuff that’s obviously not true,” said senior Alexia Suarez.



The senior class of 2026 artfully displayed their “1984” cartoon analysis assignment. Photo courtesy of senior Hudson Zurbach.

While students heavily emphasize the personal and academic limitations caused by book bans, it explains why books like “1984” often get challenged throughout the country.

“I think this novel [‘1984’] hits close to home with a lot of activity that happens in real governments in the real world, and I think that the concept of challenging your government is not always popular,” said Sainsbury.

Although a number of school districts have attempted to ban “1984,” students and staff at SLOHS believe that it is a vital part of their education.

From Hawkins to Derry, Can “Welcome to Derry” Be the Show to Fill the Void Left By “Stranger Things”?

REPORTER RODRIGO CASIQUE

Students at San Luis Obispo High School that have watched “Stranger Things” have been fans for a while now, but it officially ended with the release of the fifth season. But HBO has released a new horror TV series “It: Welcome to Derry” which is a part of the IT franchise by Stephen King. Will students move on from Stranger Things over to “It: Welcome to Derry”?

The “It” movies that were direct adaptations of the “It” book by Stephen King were very successful, with the first movie bringing in over \$700 million worldwide and the second one bringing in about \$473.1 million worldwide. Now, there is a new TV series brought by HBO which quickly became one of their most successful series with twenty million viewers worldwide.

“Stranger Things” quickly became a cultural phe-

nomenon after its release because of the mix of genres like science fiction, horror and coming-of-age. Very similar to the “It” franchise, it’s about a group of teenagers that are put up against a scary villain with supernatural powers attached to a town, but when it comes to being the better show, which one takes the trophy?

“I think ‘Stranger Things’ is a better show overall honestly just because it has more content, more seasons,” said freshman Jackson Roper.

Another key to “Stranger Things” success was its focus on characters. “Stranger Things” doesn’t rely on monsters and action, the show spends time developing characters and their friendships, family relationships and personal struggles, and with five seasons for viewers to watch the characters grow up and feel like they grew up alongside them. “It Welcome to Derry” on the other hand doesn’t spend too much

time on the character’s storylines, they show viewers most of the character’s fears with the main antagonist, Pennywise transforming into them. This makes it a psychological horror TV series.

“I think that ‘Welcome to Derry’ is a scarier show because Pennywise is actually more scary and intense,” said freshman Nathaniel Fucillo.

Both shows are proven to be good by the reviews on IMDb with “Stranger Things” having a rating of 8.6/10 and “It: Welcome to Derry” having an 8/10, it’s pretty close but “Stranger Things” has been around longer and “It: Welcome to Derry” in its first season has a very good rating.

When it comes to being the best show, “It: Welcome to Derry” takes the crown, it has a variety of different characters and it has great potential for two more seasons and becoming one of the best horror TV series.

2014 App Sensation Vine is Coming Back in 2026!



Vine flies back in with their new logo for their returning app. Graphic courtesy of freshman Jessyka Morris.

REPORTER JESSYKA MORRIS

San Luis Obispo High School students are excited for Vine coming back. The app’s return has sparked up some excitement among students who grew up quoting its most iconic clips. For many teens, Vine coming back feels like a chance to relive internet history, but this time with a new generation ready to make it their own.

Students have different feelings about Vine coming back next year.

Some students are excited about the new and improved version of Vine.

“I love Vine so much, it’s the best social media platform, plus it brings back nostalgia,” said freshman Jolene Snyder.

Vine coming back has a nostalgic feeling because of how long it’s been gone for.

“I think it’s pretty awesome because I watched some of the creators that I still watch now on vine, like Sam and

Colby,” said freshman Ella Sears.

Most content creators started back when Vine was still around, and now most of those creators are big time influencers now, such as; David Dobrik, Brent Rivera, Liza Koshy, and many more.

Students are thrilled about finding out how the new version of Vine is going to operate.

Here are some things that students think should be a part of the app’s redevelopment or how Vine should operate.

“I think people should get paid for the videos they make on Vine. I think creators of the new app have said people will be getting money for the views,” said Snyder.

The original reason Vine shut down was because creators weren’t getting paid for the content they were making unlike other social media apps like Instagram and YouTube, so most popular creators left the platform.

“More intelligent, more reliable, and people will be more aware of the consequences when they post because people didn’t care about that back then because it didn’t matter,” said Sears.

Vine creators back then cared way less about what they posted because

when creators would post on vine there was no “digital footprint” awareness, cancel culture wasn’t really a thing yet at the time, and Vine felt more temporary and unserious.

Students who grew up watching the six second clips on vine have some thoughts on the newer generation of kids getting to experience Vine.

While others are hyped to get to experience their childhood again.

“I think that people will be happy to be on an app with so much history again and I think people will also hope to that the younger generation will come to see it is a very good app as well,” said freshman Ashton Mayfield.

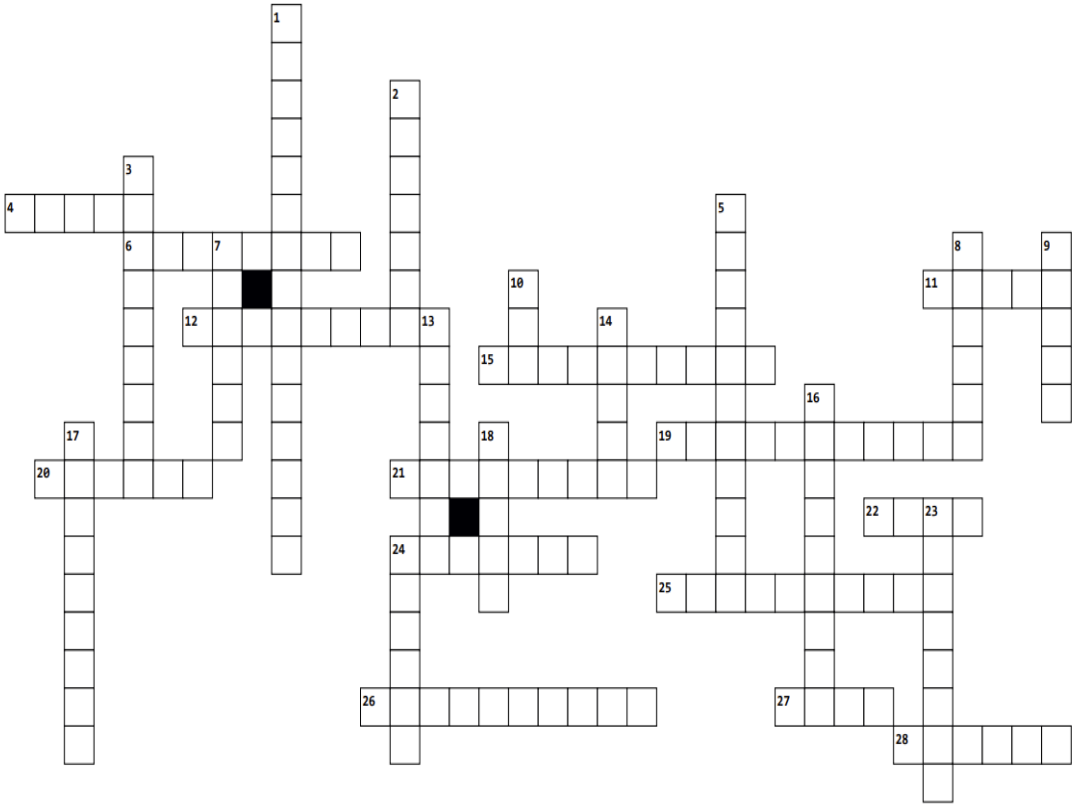
Some might say that the newer generation of kids will be grateful or they hope that the younger generation will see that Vine is a just as good app as any other social media platforms. But some might say otherwise.

“I think Gen Alpha boutta corrupt the for you page with Italian brain rot, we have to hold on hope they won’t do that,” said Snyder.

Most hope our younger generation appreciates the app’s redevelopment just like how everyone else will appreciate their childhood app coming back.

Below are three games relating to the content in this issue. The crossword’s clues correlate with answers found in the issue’s articles. The Cryptogram and the Word Search are AI-related. Answers will be posted at *slohsexpressions.com* once the winners are awarded. To win, you must solve *all three* puzzles . The first three people to turn in a successfully completed back page to Nairne in room 203 will be awarded a sweet surprise. Nairne must recieve the completed puzzles directly for students to be considered for a prize. Good luck, Tigers!

Check Out the Crossword for the Futurism Feature!



CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF VYOLET BURRUS

- Across**
4. Additive in soda that affects learning
6. Trump demolished what part of the White House
11. Foreign exchange student from Germany
12. Popular plushie brand
15. Popular song in “Wicked:For Good” highlighting Cynthia Erivo
19. Essays are being _____ because of AI
20. Company with a surplus of sequels
21. Popular creator that started on Vine
22. Team with 36 league titles
24. Chatbot that faced legal threats
25. Where Monarch Grove is
26. Sport working to improve Tiger spirit at games
27. “Stranger Things” won twelve of these awards
28. Book banned by many schools
- Down**
1. Lunch option that comes with jalapenos and onions
2. This occurs during the worst month
3. Highest cost period for student athletes
5. Age group using AI the most
7. Average time people spend trying to get out of the parking lot
8. Last name of the person who said the Cryptogram quote
9. The driverless cars taking over San Francisco
10. Sit streaming “Welcome to Derry”
13. Type of dogs trained to perform specific tasks
14. Glue that holds together a team
16. Author of the original 1900 “Wicked” novel
17. Good educational experience for students
18. Showcase of school spirit
23. Controversial Device
24. Brand of meta-glasses

Crack this Cryptogram to Decode the Quote!

CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AIDAN FIELD

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

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Solve this AI Word Search!

REPORTER BRINLEE RISNER

Words: REMOVEBG, GRAMMARLY, CHATBOT, LUMA AI, COPILOT, GEMINI, CHATGPT, GAUTH, SUNO, PHOTOMATH, CLAUDE, CANVAS, GOOGLE, META, ADOBE



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