



Listen to The Buzz: The Evolution of Berkeley High Traditions

Tune in to **The Buzz** to hear about how Red & Gold Day and Unity Week are viewed by students and staff within the BHS community.



UNITY WEEK CENTER SPREAD

Go to **PAGES 8 & 9** to see a center spread of BHS students rocking their Unity Week outfits on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

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SINCE 1912

ENTERTAINMENT

BHS predicts 2025 fall fashion trends

BY CECILIA TILES & CLARA TJEN
staff writer & editor-in-chief

ILLUSTRATION BY SAWYER M. B. ERCH

With every passing day or week, it can often feel as if there is a new fashion or style trend on the rise. While this phenomenon may feel particularly accelerated with the rise of social media, internet trends, and marketing campaigns, the world of fashion and style has been globally showcased and advertised for decades. In the 1960s, brands began to market their Go-Go boots on TV; this extended as far back as the 1920s when flapper styles first started gaining popularity through media depictions.

Sometimes, it can almost seem impossible to keep up with the ever evolving trends, whether that applies to the style of one's jeans, the cut of a t-shirt, or which brand of shoe is going to sell out that day. And while there's never any guarantee what will be popular tomorrow, it can certainly be fun to try to predict what is to come.

Many new style trends can be creative and unique, but oftentimes the most successful and memorable trends are the ones that are reflections of the past. As the fall season rolls around, the incredibly popular Ugg boot is sure to make its return. In actuality, it never went away in the first place, and some have welcomed the possibility of a revival of the taller Ugg boots, rather than the mini or ultra mini versions that have dominated the market in recent years.

Beyond the comfortable slipper-like look of Ugg boots, senior Sachin Rozycki-Shah believes a more durable and rugged boot may be spotted around Berkeley High School. "I feel like a lot of people will wear (Timberland boots)," Rozycki-Shah said, "I feel like it just kind of comes back and it goes out so that could come back in fall too." Shoes can often serve as the statement piece of an outfit, or can be purely practical. Timberland boots, or often referred to as "Timbs," are a fashionable spin on work boots and rose to popularity in the 90s as both a streetwear staple and outdoor option. They are the perfect blend between function and fashion.

"I feel like as jorts and shorts in general become more popular, people will want taller shoes to balance them out," BHS sophomore Hannah TerBeek said, "and they were popular like 20 years ago, and fashion does run in cycles."

BHS junior Jaya Baudart-Gehlawat references another aspect of fashion and trends: colors. "Red is going to be the next butter yellow," Baudart-Gehlawat said. A light pastel shade of yellow commonly known as "butter yellow" has been an incredibly popular color seen in many prominent clothing brands in the past few months. During the sunnier months of the year, clothing brands like Garage and Free People all dropped new seasonal items featuring the light pale yellow color. *Read the rest of this article at berkeleyhighjacket.com.*

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Since the beginning of the school year, construction has been underway in building a new bathroom for staff and students, alongside a new entryway. PAGE 2	Kimia Azadpur examines if the recent trend of matcha has resulted in cultural appreciation or neglects the traditional nature of the Japanese tea. PAGE 6	The Academy of Medicine and Public Service (AMPS) hosts a biweekly free food pantry run by AMPS students who work as paid interns to fulfill internship requirements. PAGE 11	Downtown Berkeley's adored old bookstore, Half Price Books, will be shutting down this year, indicative of wider Berkeley issues. PAGE 15	Being a part of more than one sport at Berkeley High School can mean expanded skillsets, though students can struggle with overlapping schedules. PAGE 16

NEWS

NEWS EDITORS: MAIA ASTERA & EVA KATZ

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BHS reacts to Charlie Kirk’s death and graphic video circulation

BY CID FRYDMAN AND
MAIA ASTERA
staff writer & news editor

Charlie Kirk, a well-known political spokesperson and influencer, was shot during his “American Comeback Tour” on Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2025, at Utah Valley University. The news quickly spread online, and many videos of the incident traveled across social media platforms. Many Berkeley High School students were exposed to the video during school hours — some involuntarily — and several described it as difficult to watch.

Kirk was shot around 12:20 p.m., just before BHS’ lunch period ended. As the news was broken for many in the middle of class, it caused a variety of outbursts and reactions. While the video circulated across the internet, it drew a range of emotional responses.

“Literally, my jaw dropped, and it made me feel so disgusted and horrified,” Sofia Lopez Caro, a BHS sophomore, said, “it made me think that these things can happen so randomly, and how in the U.S., gun violence is huge and can affect anyone.”

Many students ended up watching the video involun-

tarily, or only after someone offered to show them. And some students were caught off guard by the graphic nature of the video after being shown the clip. BHS junior Kato Kiggundu’s friend showed him the video during class. “It kind of took me out for a few minutes — it was low-key kind of gruesome,” Kiggundu said.

After hearing about the

Social media added to the quick spread of the news. “I saw the video, it got sent to me on Instagram and I was very taken aback. It was really horrible, and very gruesome,” BHS freshman Lev Brysk said, “I don’t believe anyone should be murdered like that in front of their family.”

Some students did not feel strongly affected by the

incident. “Honestly, it doesn’t really impact my life very much ... but I don’t think anybody deserves to die un-

der any circumstances,” BHS freshman May’a Hawkins said.

Following Kirk’s death, the U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson held a moment of silence honoring Kirk, and on Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025, the Senate issued a national day of remembrance for Kirk on Oct. 14.

Gabriel Miller, a BHS senior, expressed his opinions on the governments responses. “I definitely think it’s too much ... He was a podcaster. He had a lot of influence. He had a big following of people. But,

I mean, I don’t see the U.S. government doing the same stuff for other people,” he said.

President Trump issued a proclamation on Wednesday, Sept. 10, 2025, stating that all US flags were to be flown at half staff in the White House, all military buildings, federal buildings in D.C., and across the U.S. and its territories to honor Kirk.

BHS junior Alexander Chariyasatit shared his thoughts. “It shouldn’t have happened. But at the same time, that same day there was a school shooting and kids also died ... There should be some consistency. If we’re respecting one person’s death, why are we not respecting every person’s?” He also acknowledged the importance of protecting open dialogue and debate. “Being able to speak your mind and being able to get opinions out is part of democracy, and you need to have some kind of opposing views to have a productive dialogue,” he said.

Some people were upset about how the public has been reacting to the assassination.

Lucy Fisch, a junior at BHS, feels upset by the issue but also concerned by how much the public is reacting to it. “Truly, there’s much worse things going on than just one guy. I

mean, not to say that one death is less important than another, but (gun violence) has been going on for so long,” Fisch said, “so many other things are happening every single day ... why now are we fixating on it?”

BHS freshman Ataji Albert feels particularly upset with the situation, especially seeing how much attention it is getting and how Kirk is being honored. “Nobody cares about Black people or when it comes to a Black person getting shot, but everyone cares about a racist white man when it comes to him getting shot. It’s disgusting and just another example of racism and how messed up America is,” Albert said.

“I think at the end of the

day, we should just talk about this stuff,” Parker said. He believes that open conversation about issues like these are beneficial for students, and encourages his students to integrate themselves into different settings, where they might be exposed to a wider range of beliefs.

The death of Charlie Kirk and the circulation of the video has impacted many students at BHS, leaving mixed reactions among many. As for now, the incident has sparked conversations around not only Kirk, but gun violence, government responses, and how social media shapes the ways students experience and receive national news.



Influencer and political spokesperson Charlie Kirk was shot and killed on Sept. 10, 2025. COURTESY OF GAGE SKIDMORE UNDER CCL

Construction on BHS campus will continue through school year

BY CHLOE
PRENDERGAST
staff writer

On the first day of the new school year, there was a notable difference on the Berkeley High School campus: a large area that has been entirely blocked off. This is due to the construction of new

bathrooms. It is taking place in the northwest corner of the BHS campus between the theaters and the H Building. This current construction will be followed by renovations of the BHS theaters. The construction has affected BHS students by requiring everyone to navigate around the fenced off area. Students involved in the performing arts will be

affected once theater construction begins and the theaters close for the upcoming years.

BHS Principal Juan Raygoza explained that the current construction is still focused on building the bathrooms. “The construction currently happening right now, in between the H building and the theaters, is actually to create a brand new, small building

that’s going to provide more bathroom access for students and for staff,” he said, “The plan is for the start of the second semester to open up a building that has an entrance for students and seven individual-stall, all-gender restrooms.” The new building will also be a staff entrance with an additional seven stalls.

Following the end of the construction on the new bathroom building, they’ll start renovating the BHS theaters. Principal Raygoza said, “The (Florence Schwimley) Little Theater is expected to start around that same time, sometime in the spring, and that will actually close both of those theaters, likely for a couple years,” Raygoza said, “During those years, the East end of the A Building will still be accessible. So the lobby of the community theater, all

the A Building, classrooms, all of that will still be accessible, and during those couple years, we’re going to work with our staff to find different theater spaces



in the community,” Raygoza said.

Morgan Baird and Neva Calhoun are juniors in Stagecraft, a BHS program where students learn skills on the technical side of theater. “We have class in the Little Theater, so we’re gonna have to go somewhere else to do class,” Baird said. Calhoun mentioned the current condition of the theater, where an old light fell, almost hitting her.

Baird thinks that the renovation will eventually be worth it, but, “not right now, because we have to find other places to do stuff.” Calhoun explained that most students have not been very informed on the construction process, and she only knows what is going on because of her Stagecraft teacher.

Raygoza urges students to continue providing feedback on how to improve the BHS campus. “One of the commitments of our district and myself as a principal is to provide our students with the facilities that they need to do their best. And so that means meeting the needs of students,” he said. He also expressed his gratitude for the patience students and staff have shown under these potentially inconvenient circumstances.



The construction crew works throughout most school days. LEO OSTROY HARP

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Officials question Flock security cameras

BY SAMYA VAN VALER
staff writer

On the evening of Tuesday, Sept. 9, 2025, the Berkeley City Council held a meeting to discuss the implementation of Flock cameras around town. During this meeting, the city manager pulled the item from the agenda for further consideration. This was in anticipation of receiving more information that will be available to the council in the future. The council has yet to come to a voting consensus on the issue. Originally, every council member voted yes on Flock, except for Councilwoman Cecilia Lunaparra.

Flock Safety is a hardware company that produces security cameras all over the United States. On their website, they write, “At its core, Flock Safety is an American company — founded by American entrepreneurs, manufacturing U.S. products that help Americans stay safe and thrive. We believe that everyone has a right to feel safe in this country.”

The initial four-year implementation of Flock cameras in Berkeley would cost \$310,000. If the contract lasts seven years, the total cost would not exceed \$600,000.

While City councilwoman and Berkeley High School Computer Science Principles teacher Shoshana O’Keefe originally voted yes on the implementation of the new cameras, she later was not sure of where she stood because of newfound information on Flock cameras.

“Flock has an agreement with cities that they wouldn’t share information with federal agencies. They even said that they had no contract with federal agencies, and that was an important factor in my decision,” O’Keefe said. She was presented with this information outside of a council meeting when researching the policies of Flock Safety.

In contradiction to what Flock had promised, the Institute for Justice published an article stating that Flock Safety did not have a federal contract, but they had a pilot program with the Border Patrol that did end up getting data from municipalities that were sanctuary cities. This was a violation of trust for all of the cities that had a contract with Flock. However, with further research conducted, O’Keefe found that this data being collected and the “violation of trust” was likely an error on the part of the municipalities. After O’Keefe spoke with the Berkeley Police Department (BPD) data specialist, Arlo Malmberg, he mentioned that there is a clear setting you can check when using Flock cameras. It

says, “don’t share my data with anyone.” Berkeley intends to use this feature and never share footage taken by the Flock cameras (with the exception of a case in Oakland that relates to Berkeley). The BPD would use Flock cameras to help reduce crime rates, as they are currently understaffed. Through adding surveillance help, in addition to the traffic cameras, not as many officers have to work on a case. One of them can simply review footage at the scene of a crime to come to a faster conclusion.

The current traffic surveillance system, which features cameras throughout Berkeley, is called “automatic license plate readers,” or ALPRs. These were installed last year, and they do not capture video images or any other information. ALPRs produce a very long list of data, similar to a spreadsheet, which includes a time stamp, location, and plate number. This data is easy to share and search across jurisdictions. The City of Berkeley only shares data with particular groups. These groups have signed contracts stating that once they receive the data, they will not share it. Flock cameras record video footage, not just plates. However, the video is non-searchable, unlike ALPRs, and because of this, Berkeley does not plan to share video footage with anyone. At most, it will be reviewed by the BPD, and they will report back to the Oakland Police Department. This is not better than the current system; it is just a different form of surveillance to add for safety measures. These surveillance cameras will be of assistance to the police force instead of simply recording license plates.

Under the new administration, the usage of Flock cameras comes into question on the subject of the safety of undocumented individuals. If footage of an undocumented individual somehow got into the hands of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the city would be jeopardizing people’s lives in the U.S. “I want the police to have surveillance, but we need more time to talk with Flock, see how they respond to this, see if they can earn back our trust, or see if there’s other factors we don’t know about. And also, I wanted to explore, see if there were other vendors that we could work with,” O’Keefe said.

BIO-MEDICAL ENGINEERING: LIVING WITH PROSTHESIS

IVAN LADDISH



When you lose a limb, the shock can be catastrophic. Having a prosthetic requires the person to learn and adjust to it, which can be a major shock of its own because of the physical therapy (PT) involved as well as getting used to having the presence of the limb again.

An important part of living with a new false limb or appendage is to be patient with the process of learning how to use and work with it. Living with a prosthesis takes time to learn, so you need to set small goals and celebrate yourself on your journey.

To adapt to having a prosthesis, you first need to realize that most won’t completely revive all of your senses. For example, when you get a prosthetic arm, there are technologies that have sensors which connect to the user’s nervous system so that you can feel what you touch. A prosthetic that doesn’t have the expensive tech won’t help the user feel, but the brain can fill in some of the gaps.

Most people with prosthetic legs go through something called Gait Training, the process that focuses on improving the walking and running ability of people with prostheses. It is beneficial for people who have injuries that affect their movement. They work on restoring regular gait patterns — the specific way a person walks or moves on foot to promote movement without coordination problems. Gait Training includes strengthening the hip, core, and leg muscles to enhance a person’s mobility. It often includes using a walker or bars for assistance. Once a patient is comfortable with short distances, they move to the treadmill to train with longer distances and faster speeds.

Matt M. from Cochranville, Pennsylvania, was diagnosed with Ewing’s Sarcoma — a cancerous bone tumor — at the age of 14. His diagnosis resulted in a below-the-knee amputation. After his amputation, he was put through chemotherapy to prevent cancer remission. Because of the prosthetics designed and made by Real Life Prosthetics, Matt is able to go on long mountain bike rides on weekends and after work. His prosthesis has made it possible for him to do everyday activities with his wife and two daughters, activities that people without prosthetics may take for granted.

Amy Purdy is a Paralympic snowboarder for team USA. She medaled twice, winning bronze in 2014 and silver in 2018. At 19, Purdy went under surgery for bacterial meningitis, losing both legs below her knees. Purdy has competed on the popular television show “Dancing With The Stars” to prove prosthetics are not a roadblock in the road to success. She showcases the versatility of prosthetics by using specialized prosthesis for different activities — everything from dancing to snowboarding.

So if you get a prosthesis, you will go through varying degrees of PT and training in order to master your prosthetic and be able to do everything the same way as if you didn’t have a false limb or organ. Whether its your legs, arms, teeth, or even your liver that do not function correctly, using a prosthetic requires hard work to master both the movements and the possibilities it offers.

NEWS BRIEF:

Hit-and-run near Emerson Elementary School leaves victims and community shaken

BY MAIA ASTERA
news editor

At 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2025, a hit-and-run and attempted carjacking near Emerson Elementary School left the Emerson Elementary community and neighborhood shaken. Just minutes before the school’s morning drop-off time, a driver struck three Berkeley residents. According to the Berkeley Police Department (BPD), the victims included a 30-year-old man with his dog and a 46-year-old woman on the sidewalk of Belrose Avenue. Just around the block, the driver hit his third victim, 78-year-old bicyclist Robert “Mr. Bob” Clear, a longtime Emerson Elementary traffic monitor. All three were hospitalized but confirmed to be in stable condition by the police.

Witnesses and officials have said that the crashes appeared deliberate. After abandoning his damaged BMW and two failed attempts to carjack separate vehicles, the perpetrator fled the scene on foot. BPD were able to arrest him, and authorities have identified him as a 26-year-old from Vallejo.

Clear has worked at Emerson Elementary directing traffic and greeting parents during school drop-off for over 15 years, beginning when his own children attended the school. The Emerson Elementary community collected cards and well-wishes to bring to Clear in the hospital. There has also been some talk among the community of organizing a meal train and fundraiser for him.

Officials have not released his name, but the suspect is currently jailed on three counts of attempted murder, two counts of attempted

carjacking, resisting/obstructing an officer, DUI causing injury, and vehicle theft.



BART unexpectedly shuts down in the morning, pauses commutes

BY LUCY HOHN
staff writer

On Friday, Sept. 5, 2025, Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) shut down completely. BART trains are run not by the drivers of the train but by a central computer system, signaling the train when to go and when to make its turns. To keep this system in tip-top shape, BART has to do system updates during the off-hours (overnight). These updates are used to improve the public transportation system. However, on Sept. 5, this update resulted in BART not being ready to be used in the morning.

According to BART, this past August, they aided 186,600 commuters every weekday. Due to the shutdown, no one was able to use BART to commute in the morning, from 5:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Berkeley High School students who take BART to school also had to find another way to get to school. Jaya Baudart-Gehlawat, a BHS junior, rides BART to school practically every morning. “I was really distraught when it happened. I was upset, and I had to think of a solution really fast. And it just, you

know, messed up my whole morning,” she said. Georgia Lee, a BHS senior, had already gotten to the BART station when she realized it had shut down. “I was annoyed and frustrated because I had to call my mom. My mom had to come pick me up to take me to school,” she said.

Service ended up resuming much later than the needed time for most riders. At 9:30 a.m., some services resumed, but there were not any trains headed into San Francisco or San Mateo County. At 11:45 a.m., all trains were running again. However, this still came with many delays.

“BART does a really good job of having backup transportation, like bus bridges when the lines are down. So, for example, they do maintenance, and you can’t take the train, they’ll offer a bus service,” Wissem Bouali said. Bouali is a BHS alum who works on the financing and budget side of BART. Overall, BART does try to provide riders with other opportunities to get where they need to go. But according to NBC Bay Area, the buses on Sept. 5 were extremely crowded with passengers trying to get a spot on already full buses.

The complete change in their commute left many riders frustrated and eager to give feedback. “Yes, I mean, you will see it on social media and people send in their complaints to BART directly ... so there’s a lot of backlash,” Bouali said. The backlash doesn’t help with the issues that BART is currently dealing with, such as using emergency funds to run the service, which will expire in 2026. The ridership of BART has declined significantly due to many people working from home and not using the train to commute. Even though people have begun to return to riding trains, many ride less frequently. Less riders means less revenue, which directly impacts BART’s ability to provide quality service, or even service at all. The company has changed many things in the system, including running shorter trains to save money in energy costs, getting more promotion for the system, targeted reductions to all operating departments, and much more. But that is still not enough. They need a long term funding source. Due to this, they have since created a measure to be put on the ballot in 2026. The measure will increase



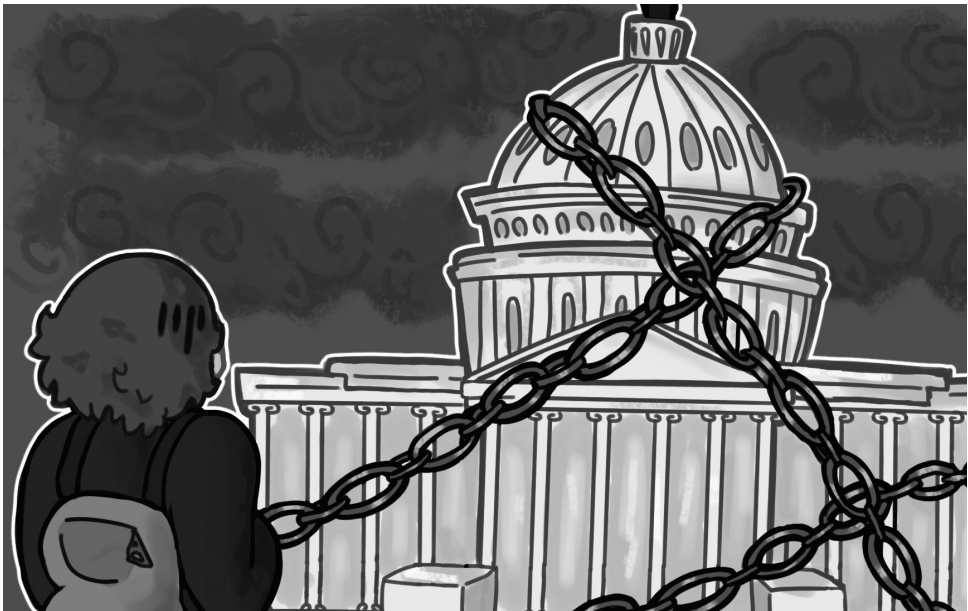
Stilos at the North Berkeley BART station. The Sept. 5 shutdown impacted BHS students who ride BART to school in the mornings. RIANA FALCIONI

sales tax to fund public transit. Senate Bill 63 is directed toward Bay Area voters, giving them the ability to vote on a 0.5 percent increase in sales tax (one percent for San Francisco to help fund Muni). Governor Gavin Newsom has until Oct. 12 to either veto or sign the bill. If he signs it, the decision will go to the voters. A bill like Senate Bill 63 would help BART have fewer shutdowns like the one that happened on Sept. 5. On Thursday, Sept. 11, 2025, BART Board Mem-

bers issued an apology for two recent breakdowns, one being the Sept. 5 breakdown and the other being on Friday, Aug. 29, 2025, when two trains were reported to have smoke and caused delays. The board thoroughly reviewed the two incidents before issuing an apology. For the Aug. 29 incident, BART Director Robert Rabburn said, “I want to issue a public apology. It’s unthinkable to be trapped in the Transbay Tube in a car that’s stopped and filling with smoke.” For Sept. 5, Sylvia

Lamb, the assistant general manager in charge of the upgrades, took full responsibility. “We underestimated risk and impact of this risk. There is no one that feels worse about this than myself and my team,” she said. According to NBC Bay Area, BART will now be doing system upgrades on weekends to avoid days where people commute to work. BART also aims to be better at making sure to have better preventative measures so that this does not happen again.

King Middle School cancels annual trip to Washington, D.C.



JENNIFER WHITE

BY KATHRYN ZARAGOZA-AARON
staff writer

Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Middle School’s annual eighth grade field trip to Washington, D.C., has been canceled for the first time since 2020, when it was canceled due to precautions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. There have been concerns about the current climate of Washington, D.C., and taking students there. Additionally, Shannon Puckett, a main leader of the trip and an eighth grade humanities teacher at King, has been

dealing with personal issues that have inhibited her ability to lead it. “I think with the state of Washington, D.C. right now, with the National Guard, and just a lot of safety questions that we have to take really seriously ... (canceling the trip) is such a complicated choice,” said Sarah McCarthy, a current sixth grade counselor and former eighth grade counselor, “Washington, D.C., is very unpredictable right now.” In early August of 2025, President Donald Trump deployed the National Guard to Washington, D.C. in response to what he called

a “public safety emergency.” The National Guard is a state-based military force that primarily assists with natural disasters and civic unrest. They are under both their state governor and the President’s command. They also act as the federal combat reserve for overseas missions and national defense. The National Guard in Washington, D.C. became authorized to carry firearms only a few weeks after being deployed in Washington, D.C. As of right now, they will be deployed until Sunday, Nov. 30, 2025, but it is unclear if they will return. In recent years, MLK Middle School had begun to

offer an alternative option to the Washington, D.C. trip: a trip to the Pali Institute in the San Bernardino forest, an outdoor education program that offers a variety of activities. This option was formerly offered in place of the Washington, D.C. trip for students who were not interested in the rigorous history and government work that accompanies the Washington, D.C. trip. The Pali alternative, however, has also been cancelled due to logistical issues. MLK Middle School has traditionally strived to offer generous amounts of financial aid in order to allow every single student with interest in participating a chance to go, regardless of their family’s financial situation. King previously did this through the entire grade fundraising throughout the school year leading up to the trips. Fundraising was accomplished through bake sales, car washes, a massive raffle, and a fundraising night at Spats, a bar on Shattuck Avenue. When this year’s eighth graders entered their first week of school, many were

excited to get started on the fundraising for their trip. Juno Khanna, a current eighth grader at MLK Middle School, first heard about the change in plans during a classroom visit from eighth grade Vice Principal Jess Mould, who was introducing herself to Khanna’s class and going over the standard King rules. Khanna said, “Some kid raised their hand at the end and was like, ‘So when are we going to start fundraising for the Washington, D.C. trip?’” Mould responded that this year would be different and that

thy he feels for the current eighth graders. “I’d be pretty saddened, just because I know that trip meant a lot to me, and yeah, that would be unfortunate for that to be taken away from them,” Loeper said. McCarthy also said that the eighth grade team is working hard behind the scenes to create an alternative option. While she herself is not working with the eighth grade class this year, she talked about the work that the team is doing to try to offer an alternative. “I think the eighth grade team is working really, really hard to create a new opportunity ... So the commitment and the hope is to have a different experience available for eighth grade,” McCarthy said. MLK Middle School has yet to release an official statement on what they are going to do instead of the Washington, D.C. and Pali trips. Current eighth graders remain with little information about what will replace the trips. MLK Middle School staff are currently still working to design an alternative experience for students that are interested.

“That trip meant a lot to me ... and that would be unfortunate for that to be taken away from them,”

Charles Loeper
BHS student, former MLK student

students would find out more information at a later school assembly. Former MLK Middle School eighth graders have expressed their shock and sadness at the trips being canceled. Charles Loeper, a sophomore at Berkeley High School and former MLK Middle School student, spoke about the empa-

BERKELEY HIGH JACKET

OPINION

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Mental health days inaccessible, unused

BY REUBEN WOLF
staff writer

On Oct. 8, 2021, Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bills 14 and 224 into law, which allow for K-12 public school students to take five days off of school per year, citing mental health reasons, and have their absence cleared without question.

At face value, this seems like an important step in combating the teen mental health crisis (40 percent of teens report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness). When a student becomes too stressed, tired, or burnt-out to endure a

full day of school, they can simply take the day off to recoup. The issue with this bill, however, is that taking time off from school does not help. In fact, it can exacerbate issues for students, who must make up missed work later.

According to EdSource, nearly half of California students are grappling with mental health challenges serious enough to impact their daily learning. Given such a high percentage, one might expect that a large number of these students would

take time off of school to recover or manage their mental health. However, this is not reflected in attendance data. Only 13.5 percent of students in a 2020 Oregon study missed 11 or more days of school each year, and among students with mental and physical health conditions,

that percentage only increased to 17 percent. This disconnect highlights a troubling reality: many students attend school despite severe mental health issues.

According to Stanford

University, California high school students average 2.5 hours of homework each day. This means that if a student misses a day, homework hours quickly pile up. For many students, missing school is simply not something they can afford to do. At Berkeley High School, it's up to teachers whether students have to make up work or not. Some students have understanding teachers, while others struggle with teachers who value homework completion.

A solution to this problem would be to provide homework passes to students in addition to offering days off. This way, mental health days can truly be opportunities for students to recover. Homework passes are not a way out of projects or tests; they are simply a way to free up time for students that can be used for recovery. In addition, students would be able to attend school in a more relaxed state of mind and dedicate more time and energy to in-class learning and development.

Mental health days are an important step but can't serve their purpose if they increase stress. Schools must rethink how they support students during and after their time off.



INGRID PHILLIPS

Socratic seminars are stale, ripe for reform

BY RIGZIN GYALTSEN
staff writer

Socratic seminars are something all high school students will encounter. They look different in 2025 than they did in 480 BCE, when they were created by Greek philosopher Socrates to encourage critical thinking and the sharing of knowledge through dialogue rather than lectures. Students at Berkeley High School have been noticing possible reforms to Socratic seminars that could increase their effectiveness.

"You have a quota you have to meet. You're thinking ... 'how can I talk, even if I don't have something super helpful to add?'" BHS senior Talia Nishioka said. Nishioka recently participated in a Socratic seminar in her Theory of Knowledge class. Many classes utilize the Socratic method at BHS and they are often practiced as "fishbowls." The fishbowl method consists of two concentric circles of students: one outer circle, which lis-

tens and takes notes, and an inner circle that converses about the given topic. Eventually, the circles switch and the process repeats.

Students are often graded on the number of times they speak rather than the content of their ideas. "The idea behind (speaking quotas) is ... amazing, but I think that it creates an unproductive seminar when you have people who are just talking to talk," BHS junior Delphine Wadlund said. To ensure all students contribute constructively, speaking quotas in these seminars should be removed and replaced with more in-depth research time beforehand. This will help students feel adequately prepared so that they may contribute more substantially.

Nishioka approves of an alternative Socratic method she's seen used in some classes. Students are divided into smaller Socratic groups while their teacher walks around, observing each in turn. "There was less of (the feeling that) everybody is listening to you, and more

of an organic conversation," Nishioka said. She wasn't the only one that felt this way. "When (I) was (in) a smaller group, I felt like I was more comfortable," BHS junior Rubi Silva said. By dividing students, teachers will ensure a comfortable learning environment that encourages speaking skills to flourish.

Size is not the only issue with Socratic seminars at BHS. "Students (at BHS) tend to be (singleminded) when it comes to certain political or social topics," Nishioka said. To many students, the homogeneity of Berkeley politics creates the "Berkeley Bubble," a term used to

describe a perceived left-wing echo chamber, with alternative perspectives neither represented nor encouraged. During Socratic seminars, this echo chamber limits pushback and contradictions. For Socratic seminars to be productive, they must be judgement-free, confidential spaces.

Like all teaching methods, Socratic seminars do not suit all learning styles, but can be improved. By removing speaking quotas, decreasing group size, and facilitating an attentive and conscientious environment, students are sure to provide insightful contributions.



Students engage in Socratic seminars, but speaking quotas can hinder the quality of the conversation.

SYLVA ROUBINIAN

LOCAL LUNCHES: JUNO'S LUNCHBOX

CYPHER DUFFY AND OREE GREMBEK



The second place we went to was Juno's Lunchbox, a casual lunch spot in downtown Berkeley located at 2115 Allston Way. The entrance is quite hidden, but being hard to find makes this a true hidden gem. We chose this as the next spot by the request of readers of our last column, and if you have any recommendations for future columns just let us know where we should go next, and we could use your advice for the next column. It's a little bigger than our last column's spot, but it's still unknown to many people. Juno's has a big patio with outdoor seating and a relaxed, student-friendly vibe, which makes it a nice place to sit down and enjoy lunch. They have really quality pizza hot and ready to serve, making it fast enough to fit a true, filling meal into a lunch period.

For our visit, we kept it simple and went straight for the pizza, their most commonly ordered item on the menu. Juno's sells pizza by the slice, and we tried both the cheese and pepperoni. The cheese slice cost \$4.50 and the pepperoni slice cost \$5.50. We didn't get to try the veggie pizza option on the menu, but that also costs \$5.50. They also conveniently have a student lunch combo, which for eight dollars gives you the choice of a slice of pizza, a drink, and chips of your choice. This is a great deal because the slices are huge, we're talking like the equivalent of two or three normal slices, and they're delicious. This is by far the best value we have seen so far, and it's hard to beat. The pepperoni slice was hot, fresh, with just enough pepperoni, cheese, and sauce. The cheese was melted evenly, the pepperoni had a little crisp around the edges, and the crust held up really well while still soft. It had all you want from a slice of pizza, a chewy inside, a crunchy bottom, gooey cheese, crispy pepperoni, a reasonable crust, and a good ratio of sauce to cheese.

The cheese slice was just as good, with the same crisp crust and a simple, classic flavor of New York style slices. Sometimes cheese can be boring, but this one wasn't — the sauce had a nice little tang, and the portion size seals the deal. This is the most filling lunch I've had, because of the size and chewy crust, with that good pizza taste. Also it wasn't greasy in that way that soaks your plate, but still had that comfort-food feel that you want from pizza. Each bite had the right mix of chew, cheese, and sauce. It wasn't trying to be fancy or gourmet, just good pizza made well, which is enough for lunch.

Overall, Juno's Lunchbox is a great lunch spot for students who want something quick, filling, and tasty. The patio makes it a good hangout spot if you've got time to sit, and the food comes fast. We'd give Juno's a 9.5 out of 10 for its amazing slices, chill atmosphere, and amazing value.

AC Transit Realign inconveniences students, tardies will ensue

BY JOSEPHINE MCKNETT
staff writer

Whether it's commuting to work, school, or anywhere in general, bus and train lines have been a convenient and economical way to get around for Berkeley residents. Alameda-Contra Costa (AC) Transit, a public transportation system based in Alameda County, has been relied on by students at Berkeley High School, especially since there are no school buses commuting students to and from school. Students that don't live within a walkable or bikeable distance, or don't have access to a ride to school, often rely heavily on public transportation.

The frequency and location of buses has been a major factor in students arriving at school on time. The convenience and accessibility of public buses to BHS has been noticeably reduced in the recent 2025-26 school year because of AC Transit's "Realign" plan. This harms

students' academics by restricting the ability to arrive to class on time. Students without access to a car, or not able to get a ride, are already at a disadvantage when trying to get to school. Every student should have the same opportunities to learn and arrive at school on time. AC transit must stop cutting down on lines crucial to students commuting to high school.

The "Realign" plan was first introduced on Sunday, Aug. 10, 2025. Since the plan was enacted, 104 lines have been updated either through being redesigned, created, or cut. The network change was an effort to return to pre-pandemic ride levels. The AC Transit team conducted public outreach as an attempt to optimize efficiency. The goal of the plan was to enhance schedules and reliability, but regardless of the outreach, there's been a disconnect between the lines and needs of riders.

Several reliable routes have been cut due to the "Realign" plan. Lines such as

the 33 and 79, 10, 46, and 72R are a few of the many cut or removed from the map. These lines were seen as a dependable way to get to school, but have now become noticeably unreliable. According to AC Transit's website, transit lines have decreased from 130 to 123 total lines.

Not only do the changed bus lines inconvenience students, but the frequency of some bus lines have decreased. One of the most affected areas in Berkeley when considering the commute to school is North Berkeley and the Berkeley hills. "There's one bus that gets you there 25 minutes early to school, which you don't want to be, and then the other one just gets you there five minutes late," Ines Labiano, a freshman at BHS, said. The decreased frequency — a change due to the realignment — often makes students either unreasonably early to school, or tardy to classes.

Because the buses don't come as often as they used



The AC Transit "Realign" plan has redesigned, created, or cut 104 bus lines. ZIVA AMENDOLA

to, some find they are filled up with students trying to get to school on time. "I've also noticed that if you're trying to get to school at 8:30 a.m. from where I live, the 18 and the 7, which a lot of students take, haven't been running as often," Lucinda MacLane, a BHS junior, said. The bus cuts unfairly affect students' ability to be on time to school. "I've talked to a lot of my other friends who live in a similar area, and the same thing has happened to them," MacLane said. For some BHS students, these bus cuts aren't just minor changes, they are directly affecting learning by making students late to school. Reliable transportation is more than a way to get around; it's ensuring students have the same opportunity to get to school despite their neighborhood and access to another mode of transportation. If AC Transit wants to remain a reliable option for students, it must recognize that some of their most frequent riders are students, and restore the routes and schedules that make commuting to school on time possible.

BY KIMIA AZADPUR
staff writer

It feels like matcha has become a popular demand — from topping lattes, making intricate flavor combinations, and even creating baked goods for the perfect Instagram post. What was once a practice reserved for quiet tea rooms in Japan has transformed into a symbol of wellness culture and cafe aesthetics. Still, somewhere between its centuries-old roots and its social media popularity, the original meaning of matcha seems to be vague.

This isn't to say that enjoying matcha is wrong, but it's worth pausing and asking how one can be both a modern consumer and a respectful participant in a practice that has, for hundreds of years, been about focus and intentionality. Drinking matcha can be a daily habit — yet, it can also be an opportunity to slow down and reconnect with a time-honored tradition that deserves more than a brief scroll.

For some students, that connection is already part of their daily routine. Katherine Howarth, a junior at Berkeley High School, explained her awareness of matcha's traditional roots improves the way she makes it herself. "I know how it's traditionally prepared, and that's helpful, because when I make it myself, I know what to use, how much to use, and how to whisk it," Howarth said.

Timeless and trendy

MATCHA

Still, not everyone is convinced that matcha's popularity will secure its place in Western culture. "In the U.S., (matcha is) taken for granted," Howarth said, explaining that many people order it simply because it is fashionable rather than appreciating its history. She worries that without a deeper understanding of its roots, matcha could become a short-lived craze. "As it keeps growing as a trend, at some point it'll fall off because people don't really appreciate it for what it is," Howarth said.

Others, however, see matcha's trendiness as an opportunity for more people to connect with it. "I think it is a great drink, and it's so cool that so many people are coming to appreciate it now," Chew said. For Chew, the growing popularity doesn't necessarily erase tradition — it can also open the door for new groups to discover it.

Perhaps the lesson isn't to suppress matcha from its growing popularity, but to remind ourselves that tradition and trend can coexist. Cafe chains and popular posts from the media may have pulled matcha into the mainstream, but that doesn't mean consumers can't also slow down and appreciate its history. "Just give matcha a try. Don't stop at Starbucks — look beyond that and appreciate it for more than just a trend. It's not for everyone, but if you're open to it, it can be a really meaningful experience," Chew said.

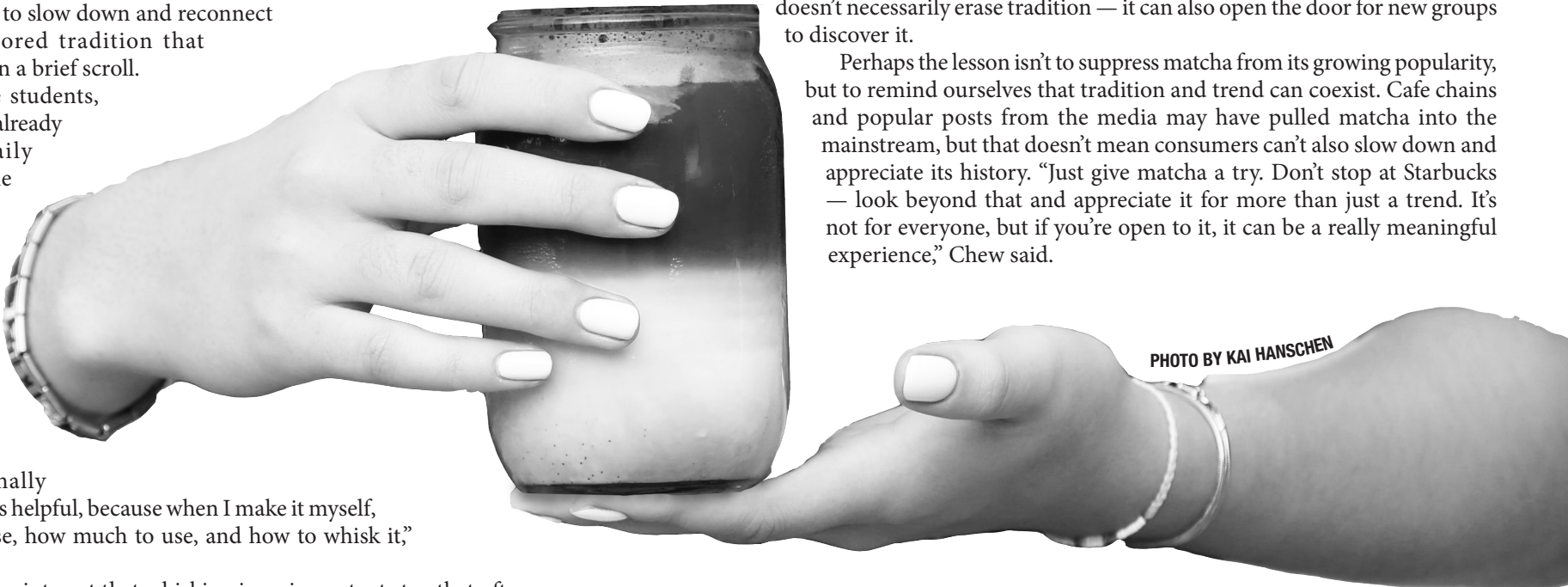


PHOTO BY KAI HANSCHEN

Howarth points out that whisking is an important step that often gets skipped, leaving many people with a watered-down version of the drink — both literally and culturally. "I think whisking is really important, and a lot of people skip that step or don't know how to prepare it well, so they miss out on the full experience of matcha," Kylie Chew, a BHS senior, said.

Chew focuses on the brand of matcha she gets. The type of matcha you buy can make a significant difference in taste. "I've definitely read up about it, but I think I could still learn more," Chew said, "A lot of people don't know the history behind matcha, but I've researched the different grades and how they're used. Certain grades really make a difference in taste, and while I didn't pay attention to that before, I've realized it's an important step." Matcha grades are quality levels that differentiate the flavor, color, and texture of the tea powder.

Chew also highlighted the joy of preparing matcha as part of her daily life. Taking the time to make the drink before the start of the day is a pick-me-up that helps her stay fully engaged. "I try to make it before my labs in the morning or generally going to school. It's a great drink that gives you a little boost of caffeine and energy, but it also tastes great," Chew said.



EDITORIAL

Awareness about on-campus resources is vital

“I would say the first week or two so much of it is about ‘How do I get from one class to the next? How do I navigate the space?’” Hasmig Minassian, Universal Ninth Grade teacher leader and Ethnic Studies and Social Living teacher, said.

Minassian highlighted the daunting issue that Berkeley High School poses to incoming students, whether they are transfers or incoming freshmen: how to walk the hallways alongside 3,200 peers across a three block stretch of buildings. The sheer magnitude that BHS boasts is unique in that it allows for an abundance of on-campus resources; however, amidst the chaos that school days pose, these resources are easily overlooked and can become inaccessible to students.

“I think that there should be some advising, or something like that, like another group to just be around and talk,” Miles Pay said. Pay, a freshman in Hive 7, expressed knowledge of resources such as the Health Center and academic counselors, but hasn’t yet used them himself.

What remained unmentioned was an on campus resource that many underclassmen tend to shy away from: The College and Career Center, or the CCC as it is more commonly known as.

“I think a lot of times underclassmen shy away from the CCC because they think it’s exclusively college oriented,” BHS English teacher and CCC Academic Support Coordinator Matthew Laurel said, “After 3:30, it becomes the Student Learning Center.” Following sixth period, students at the University of California Berkeley come to the CCC to provide tutoring services to all BHS students, regardless of grade. College support from college counselors and various volunteers is also offered to upperclassmen, but it is far from the only assistance that the CCC provides.

In addition to the CCC, which is open at lunch daily and Monday through Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m., students are encouraged to use the **BHS library**. The library is open Monday through Thursday during lunch, before school, and until 4:30 p.m., and offers an expan-

sive selection of research outlets and general support from school librarians Meredith Irby, Allyson Bogie, and Nicole Fitzhugh. The **Health Center, located in H-105**, is another valuable resource for BHS students. Offering services such as first aid, mental health, and reproductive and sexual health support, the Health Center is open daily until 4 p.m., and can be accessed throughout the school day with a pass from a teacher. Similar to the Health Center, the **Wellness Center, located across the hallway in H-106**, offers support to students, though it specifically promotes and guides students towards “wellness.” This includes social-emotional, physical, and intellectual health, according to the “BHS Wellness” website.

As a school, we have a duty to educate one another and ourselves on the resources available, especially to underclassmen during the vital transition period. Further education for new students about these support structures is vital for not only their academic success, but the entire trajectory of their high school and post-graduation endeavors. Efforts such as facilitating introduction of freshmen to the Wellness Center, Health Center, Library and the CCC help acclimate new students to the unfamiliar environment, according to Minassian. Nonetheless, teachers, upperclassmen, and counselors must increase advertisement of BHS resources, academic or not.

BERKELEY HIGH JACKET

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We encourage students, staff, and the community to submit letters to the Editor for publication. All submissions must be signed; anonymous letters may only be printed with a two-thirds vote of the Editorial Board.

Not all submissions will be printed and may be edited to conform to *Jacket* policy or to meet space restrictions.

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Shared facilities would combat crowding, boost mentorship

BY JULIA LIU
staff writer

Sitting less than a mile apart, the opportunity for partnership between the University of California Berkeley and Berkeley High School practically writes itself. Both share community pride, but when it comes down to sharing athletic facilities, they often operate separately. With so many athletes, facilities are often crowded, and late practices become a hassle to maintain. The idea of BHS and UC Berkeley sharing facilities is not new. Many universities and high schools partner together so younger athletes can practice in spaces that meet higher standards, while universities share their role in community partnerships.

“There are multiple teams practicing at the same time, so having more field space at UC Berkeley would help. We had to hurry off the field or we had really late practices,” Cedar Nicholson, a former player on the BHS freshmen soc-

cer team, said. Nicholson's response reflects the reality for many BHS students who often find themselves practicing with crowded facilities, overlapped practices, and late nights, all while still trying to juggle academics. Partnering with UC Berkeley would provide the space that many athletes and coaches express a need for.

For UC Berkeley, this could show their willingness to partner with the local high school, highlighting the university's role in leadership and mentorship. UC Berkeley's facilities are among the best in the state, and opening them to BHS athletes would show commitment to heightened opportunity for athletic success. For BHS, this opportunity could provide athletes an insight of the standards and possibilities of collegiate sports. Practicing in such an environment could improve athletic performance and inspire confidence and determination in students whose goals are to compete at a collegiate level. In addition, this could reduce pressure on coaches.

They would be able to focus more on instructions and team improvement rather than logistics and scheduling conflicts. Overall, it would foster a more positive environment for everyone involved and allow athletes to get the most out of their practices.

UC Berkeley athletes, many of whom can relate to the same challenges, could share advice to those who need it — leading to potential mentorship to instill in younger athletes important values such as teamwork, perseverance, leadership, and resilience. Hearing directly from college athletes about their journey may help younger athletes realize that setbacks are part of progress, and that success comes through consistency and commitment. In turn, mentorships would strengthen the bonds between BHS athletes and UC Berkeley athletes on more than a contractual basis.

A partnership like this would be more than shared space; it would be a shared commitment to the success of Berkeley's athletes.



Left, Elena Flynn, a UC Berkeley Student. Right, Brianna Smyth, a BHS alum and assistant coach for BHS waterpolo.

TESS PETT-RIDGE HENNESSY

Corrections: The article “Laufey’s ‘A Matter of Time’ takes listeners on a journey,” published in the 9/12 issue miscredited Siena Librizzi as the illustrator, when it was in reality drawn by illustrator Sabine Shaffer. Additionally, the bottom-left photo of the varsity football game in the 9/12 issue was taken by Jay Tompkins, not Leo Smock.

UNITY WEEK



Students are more than happy to participate in pajama day. Here Corey Evans (10), Kam Shehabi (10), Sachi Chakko (10), Cecilia Grant (10), Rocco Ruby (10), Ezra Oliver (10), Brooklyn Roberts (10), show off their differently-patterned PJs.

LEO SMOCK



Lola Lelchuk (12) and Carmen Cassidy-Soto (12) look like they could have walked right out of a UC Berkeley frat party.

GEORGIA PAULOS



Neali Aguiar really nails the vibe.

Tuesday



Maya Babij-Ross (12) poses in her biker outfit for the senior theme of bikers v. surfers.

LEO OSTROY HARP

Monday



Yancy Alegre-Pacheco (12) knew the surfer look wouldn't be complete without an important prop. While many came to school in beach-themed attire, none were quite as committed.

LEO OSTROY HARP



Lyla Kahn (10) and E... (10) join the sea of bikers and shorts for Dress Like a Sandler day.



Ranger Conway (10), Sofia Lopez Caro (10), and Kelsey Mariscal Ramos (10) look about ready for bed as they show off their pajamas in class.

LEO SMOCK



Lily Collins (12), Lillie Hammond (12) and Samantha Lopatin (12) stand in surfer outfits after senior spellout. They still look ready for the beach, despite having been up since 6am for senior sunrise.

SYDNEY LEHRER



Shades indoors is a bold choice, one that Sofia Lopez Caro (10) and Marc Cruz (10) definitely pull off.

2025-2026

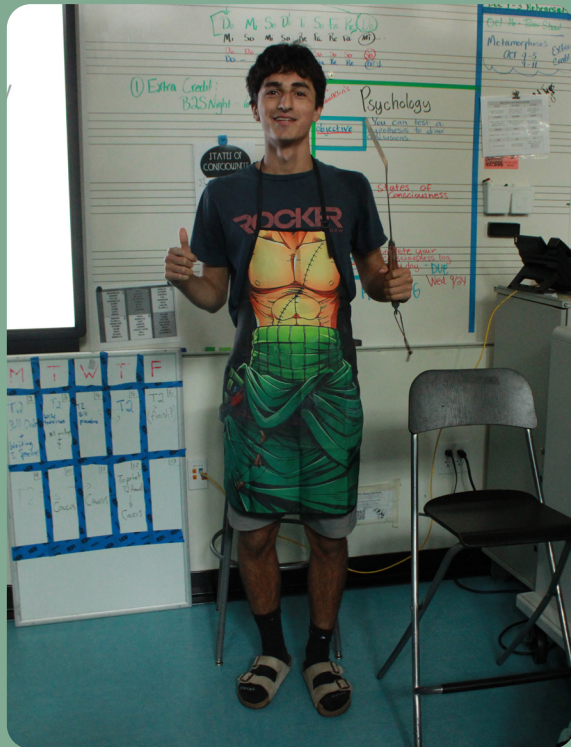


Leo Smock (9) wears a shirt like the Adam Sandler



Michaela Washington (11), Simone Dubois (11), and Kenny Swensen (11) all wear fun shirts in different shades of pink.

IDA MARSHALL-LAPPE



Joaquin Jackson (12) holds a spatula for the BBQ dad v. soccer mom theme.

MADELEINE WILSON



Eva Morris (12) wears a jersey like Adam

KIRAN VERCELLOTTI



While there is some confusion around the senior theme for the day, Sofia Bloom (12) and Kayla Topel (12) both go with frat-themed outfits.

GEORGIA PAULOS



Reuben Maimon (11) and Alexander Kilimnik (11) wear identical pink shirts. Coordinated or coincidence?

IDA MARSHALL-LAPPE



KIRAN VERCELLOTTI



Henry Markus (12) may need to invest in a minivan, while Moira Francisco (12) looks about ready to flip some burgers.

IDA MARSHALL-LAPPE



Freshmen Adell MacGillivray (9) and Rina Pass (9) enjoy their first spirit week and wear pink on Wednesday.

USNEA MCEWEN



Read an article about Unity Week here



WHO WINS:
THE POWER PLATE

CALLIOPE CAMERON



What makes an athlete successful? Is it the new shoes? Is it a fancy watch? The not so secret weapon of all great athletes is the power plate. For young athletes, understanding how to properly fuel your body is more valuable than anything you can buy.

Think of your body as a car. Cars need fuel to operate. Putting low quality fuel into a fancy sports car won't make it win races, and putting low quality food into your body won't make you reach your goals either. Providing both quality and quantity fuel is extremely important for maintaining performance in sports, recovering from hard practices and even optimizing your academic performance. If you are a new athlete, it is important to recognize the changes in the type and amount of food that your body needs. When I started running seriously, I didn't realize how much more food I needed to stay healthy and fueled! Underfueling is not always intentional, which is why it is so important to listen to your body's signals and consciously eat quality meals consistently throughout the day.

According to a study in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, 60 percent of girls, compared to 30 percent of boys, meet criteria for low energy availability. Insufficient nutrition is an issue that disproportionately affects female athletes and endurance athletes due to the high energy expenditure that our bodies undergo, as well as unrealistic body standards that may be present within individual sports.

Carbohydrates, a vital macronutrient, help to replenish long-term energy stores. Our bodies convert carbs into muscle fuel, AKA glycogen. Calcium is a nutrient that is especially important for young female athletes. It helps to promote bone strength and density. Interestingly, calcium also acts as a buffer in the bloodstream, regulating blood pH levels. Blood pH levels can become disrupted for athletes through excessive water loss (sweating). Iron is a mineral that transports oxygen throughout the body. The monthly loss of blood through menstruation can put some female athletes at a risk for iron deficiencies such as anemia, which is why it is vital to eat lots of iron rich foods. For athletes who don't eat meat, iron can be hard to fit into daily meals. Iron supplements are widely available and useful.

Finally, we need to talk about hydration. Water is arguably the most overlooked yet important nutrient. Even slight dehydration can lead to performance dips, headaches and exhaustion. Carry a water bottle and make sure to drink throughout the day! This is not to say that water is the only acceptable beverage, but remember to rehydrate after having highly caffeinated or sugary drinks. By eating and drinking thoughtfully, you will notice the benefits of being adequately fueled. Maximizing muscle growth, recovery aid and replenishing glycogen stores are all factors that allow you to achieve athletic excellence.

Equity through
BIHS letters of rec

BY SOPHIE CRANLEY
staff writer

One of Berkeley High School's signature features is the variety of small learning communities (SLCs). Each SLC has their own class requirements, teachers, and culture. A distinctive feature of Berkeley International High School (BIHS), the second largest SLC, is its letter of recommendation process.

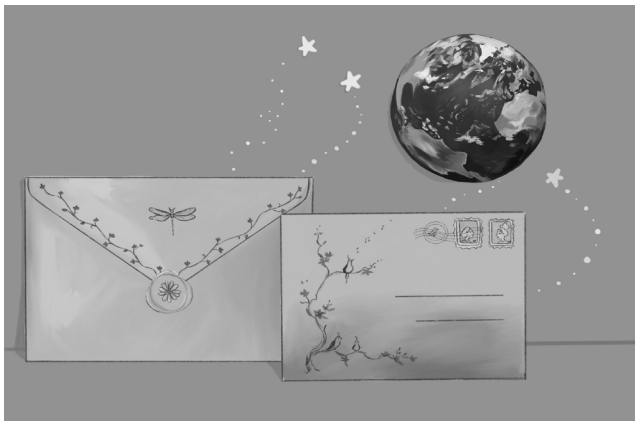
Letters of recommendation are written by faculty or mentors to highlight a student's skills or character. A quality letter of recommendation can set a student apart by conveying their character to admissions committees in a way grades cannot, putting them in high demand.

The conventional way to get a letter of recommendation is to ask a teacher in person. It's at that teacher's discretion whether to provide one. In contrast, BIHS prefers a more structured approach. "You are kinda guided through the whole thing," BIHS senior Maya Gearen said.

As a prerequisite step, all BIHS juniors are instructed to not ask for letters

of recommendation during the end of junior year. Karl Kaku, a former BIHS English teacher for over 10 years, recalls students asking last spring. He said, "In March, students started asking me for letters of rec, so I had to ask them to wait." Instead, the procedure begins in the fall of senior year with an in-class presentation outlining the process's timeline. Students are instructed to list their top two choices of BIHS humanities teachers for a letter, without indicating their first choice. The form allows teachers to know roughly how many students are planning on asking them, and helps them decide how many letters they can write.

Also discussed in the presentation are etiquette guidelines for proper ways to ask a teacher for a letter. "We were supposed to email our top choice of teacher and ask to set up a meeting, we were not supposed to ask for the letter in the email itself," Gearen said. At first, she thought this was odd but later understood the reasoning, saying, "It really is a big time commitment for teachers, and there's this expectation that they have to do it. It's important for



MIA BLATT

students to show that they know that, by asking in the most respectful way possible." Kaku commented that writing a letter of recommendation takes him 45 minutes to over an hour.

Gearen also repeated some etiquette advice for scheduled meetings. "You basically say what you liked about their class and share about what schools you are applying to and then ask for a letter of recommendation," she said. Teachers then agree to write a letter, or decline due to capacity issues. If one's first choice doesn't end up working out, they repeat these steps with their second.

A large motivator for the structure of the process is to help promote equality, an opinion heavily stated by Kaku, Gearen, and Addison Fonseca, a BIHS counselor. Kaku said, "Not all families can afford a private counselor that tells them, 'Hey, you need to ask your teachers for this.'" He described the for-

mal "Letter of Rec Week" as, "evening the playing field." Gearen reiterated this, saying, "BIHS is more equitable because you are basically promised a letter by at least one teacher, even if they're not the ones you put in the form." On the other hand, students are required to wait to ask BIHS humanities teachers, and are expected to ask STEM teachers earlier on. This can create confusion, according to BIHS senior Carmen Cassidy-Soto.

Although the BIHS system is not perfect, it creates a more equitable opportunity for students and helps disperse the work amongst teachers. Cassidy-Soto summed it up best, saying, "Even though parts of the process are confusing, I would still prefer it — BIHS's way as compared to the free for all way."

Note: This article has been shortened for print. Find the full version at our website, berkeleyhighjacket.com

Backpacking Club: Community in nature

BY TEJAL DOPMAN
staff writer

"It helps people learn more about the outdoors, hiking, it's just fun, and it builds connections with others," Indira Stone, a Berkeley High School freshman, said in reference to the importance of the Backpacking Club.

As the club enters its second year at BHS, backpacking leadership focuses on creating experiences in the outdoors that aren't generally available day to day.

The club is a small group of students who love to hike, camp, and be outdoors. Stone was intrigued by the club because of a backpacking trip she went on over the summer with her family.

Cade Vix, a BHS senior who is a co-leader and founder of the Backpacking Club, shared how the idea of the club started with Nikhil Gomez, a BHS junior. "Dude, we both like backpacking, we should go on a trip together," Vix said as he told the story, "And then we said, 'what if, instead of just going on a trip together, we actually went on a trip with a ton of people, and made an actual club about backpacking?'"

BHS junior and Backpacking president Annika Silverstrim said that while most of the planning for the

club is a group effort, they each have their own specific tasks as well. "I manage stuff for the Club Fair, try to get people to recruit," Silverstrim said. Gomez, Vix and Silverstrim all play a big role in keeping the club together and organizing the trip.

"It helps people learn more about the outdoors, hiking, it's just fun, and it builds connections with others,"

Indira Stone
BHS freshman

Vix explained that they try to get help from the Parent Teacher Student Association to support students in getting the gear needed to participate in trips.

With any club there are always going to be challenges that the leaders will have to overcome. "Just organizing a trip is hard. There's a lot of things for a lot of people. Food and equipment, those are not even that bad," Vix said, "But one of the really hard ones is getting people places. You can't really go backpacking in Tilden, you have to go out somewhere cool, and just getting people

three hours away by car is definitely a challenge."

In case of emergencies, Gomez has a device capable of reaching help from any location. "It's called a Garmin Inreach Messenger. It's a device where, no matter where you are, you can send texts and call emergency services," Gomez said.

Silverstrim, Vix and Gomez explained that they always have a basic first aid kit with them on trips. They also

routinely do gear checks to make sure everything is secure and well-fitted.

Unlike other clubs at BHS, students are not at a desk or somewhere in Berkeley. The Backpacking Club gives students the option of doing something different and possibly outside of their comfort zone.

"I think it is important to grow up with nature and to have respect for your environment and for its existence. I really do believe that it's really developmentally important and it's also just calming in general," Silverstrim said.



The BHS Backpacking Club meets in C-115 on Wednesdays during lunch.

USNEA MCEWEN

INTERVIEWS BY SOPHIE CRANLEY
staff writer

WORD ON THE STREET

PHOTOS BY IDA MARSHALL-LAPPE
staff photographer

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY WITH YOUR BEST FRIEND?

Elowen Andrejko, a Berkeley High School junior, holds a special childhood memory of using American Girl Dolls to act out a YouTube movie with her friend Grace. Andrejko stated while laughing, “We were gonna film a little story that we made up with the dolls, and then halfway through, we just dropped the idea and just ran around while filming.” Although she was only six at the time, Andrejko still recalls her favorite American Girl Doll, Blair Wilson.



BHS freshman **Pippa Stanton-Hsiao** treasures a memory of her and one of her closest friends, Ivana, going to a Laufey concert together. Stanton-Hsiao shared that the concert was a major bonding moment between her and Ivana because they both enjoy Laufey’s music and they “still talk about it all the time (because) it was just so fun.” Stanton-Hsiao describes Ivana as “the kindest person I’ve ever met,” and wishes they saw each other more.



BHS sophomore **Cecilia Grant** is grateful for her two friends Franny Bertolini and Sadie Kayatsky. Grant shared memories of the three of them running in the rain and laughing together. Grant’s favorite thing about Bertolini is her humor and Grant’s favorite thing about Kayatsky is her dancing skills. Ultimately, whenever Bertolini, Kayatsky, and Grant get together, they have fun. Grant says her friends energize her and describes them as “filling her cup.”



BHS sophomore **Sophia Faith Bolinger’s** favorite memory was going to Six Flags on a Longfellow Middle School field trip. Faith-Bollinger likes Six Flags for the rides, but that’s not what she remembers about this particular trip. She recalls dropping her Dippin’ Dots and subsequently hugging a mascot, which she thought was a funny chain of events both then and now. Faith-Bollinger remembers her friends comforting her that day, which makes her feel loved and is a testament to how supportive they are.



AMPS food pantry serves community and cultivates skillsets

BY AUBREY CASPER
staff writer

Students happily chatter as they stand at a set of fold out tables, lined with students all on one side and stacked with cardboard boxes of produce and canned goods. In front of them stand a short line of people waiting for free food.

The Academy of Medicine and Public Service (AMPS) has a bi-monthly food pantry that takes place at Berkeley High School’s MLK Gate and provides free food to anyone that shows up, no matter who they are or what zip code they’re from. Juniors and seniors in AMPS leave their sixth period classes early every other Wednesday to unpack a truckload of food, supplied by the Berkeley Food Network, and set it up so they’re ready to serve the community from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

This pantry is run as one of multiple internships that AMPS upperclassmen can choose from. To fulfill the

internship requirement, students attend cooking classes every other Wednesday when they’re not doing the pantry, to learn basic cooking skills and get a food handler certification. The internship is two years, so it’s quite a time investment, but among students it is also seen as particularly valuable given that it’s one of the few internships that’s paid.

“A lot of kids are eager because it’s hard to get a job and this is a paid position. It’s hard to get experience at such a young age and this is a two year job,” said Tasha Jackson, the AMPS co-teacher-leader and teacher of several AMPS classes, including nutrition of wellness, who helps organize the pantry. “I think that is why there’s a high demand. And people just love being out in the community,” Jackson said.

The students say they tend

to get a lot of repeat customers, so they see a lot of familiar faces. Since the food pantry has wide appeal, they also see a diverse mix of people showing up.

The food pantry gets its stock from the Berkeley Food Network, a city-wide organization that distributes food at no cost to community members in need. The network feeds 6,500 community members weekly through pantries and programs around the East Bay.

“I think it’s really amazing. We get a lot of really good produce and stuff like that. And I think it’s really important for, especially low income families, to have access to those resources and healthy foods,” Audrey Alcalá, a senior in AMPS in her second year of the internship, said, “I think that’s a really important part of it, just having that equity for the community.”

It’s been proven that a well-balanced, healthy diet

helps not only in keeping you healthy, but also in cognitive function and academic performance. As food prices rise, it’s important to ensure that everyone has equal access to nutritious foods.

“If you go grocery shopping you can feel the impact of inflation and the rising cost of food. So they get to have a trusted safe space where they’re going to get healthy food, access to food,” Jackson said, “I mean, these are essentials. You’re getting bread, eggs, dairy, vegetables, and they can have that reliability.”

In addition to the reliability and helpfulness of the pantry for the community members receiving food, it also benefits the students distributing it. Students learn valuable lessons and people skills, acquire work experience, and get paid. Some even see something personal in the work.

“I actually wanted to join this internship because when I was walking past it the first time I’d seen it, (and) like, seeing the elderly Chinese ladies lining up for the food, and they kind of struggled to actually communicate to the workers about what they actually wanted,” Lincoln Seid, an AMPS senior in the internship, said, “It reminded me of my own mother and how she struggled to communicate in English. And I, at that moment, kind of realized that I can actually bridge this gap and make a meaningful difference, because I can speak Chinese to them and help translate.”

“It’s really about helping ... create a pathway into future careers and giving students valuable experiences now that will serve them in whatever career they choose,” said Benjamin Goff, the program supervisor for Garden and Cooking in Berkeley Unified

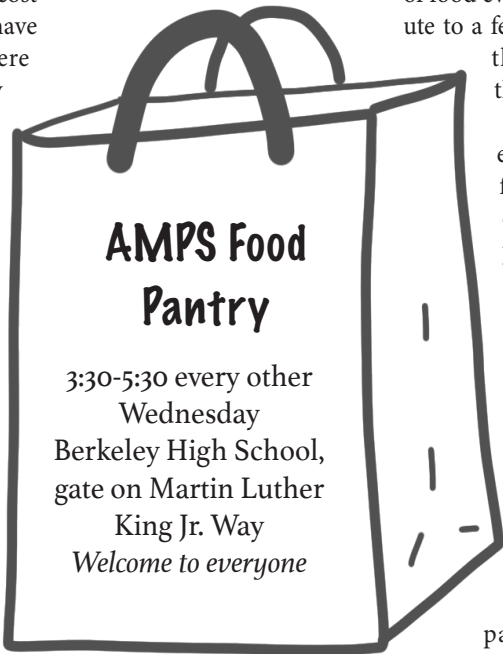
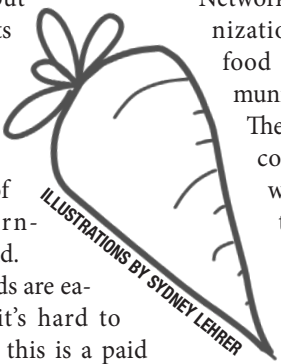
students and families. Although the pantry sees staff and teachers stop by occasionally, it currently has no regular customers that are students. It is working on brainstorming ideas to increase outreach. Last year, for instance, the students interning packed boxes of food every week to distribute to a few specific students that had requested them.

“I would like to encourage as many families at (BHS) to come and participate in the pantry. They’re welcome to do so,” Goff said, “I don’t want anybody to feel like they can’t take advantage of the opportunity for fear of being ridiculed or seen a certain way.”

The AMPS food pantry will continue as a steadfast stand, staffed by determined students, serving the Berkeley community, and benefiting city residents and student interns alike. Serving free produce, canned and dry goods, and meat items at the MLK gate from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. every other Wednesday, the food pantry serves as both a service and a way to bring the community together.

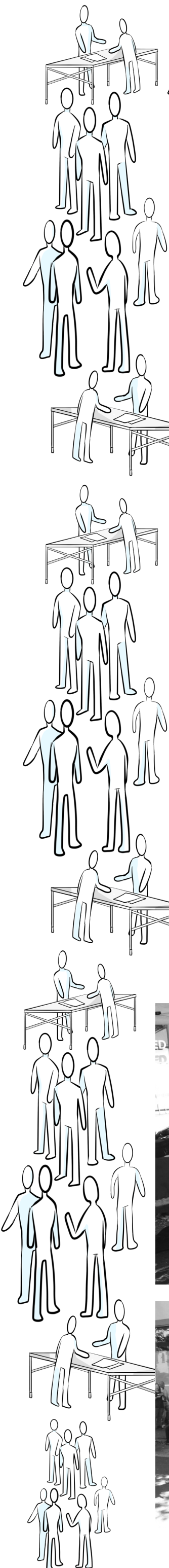
“My personal philosophy (is that) food is the common denominator. Everybody’s got to eat. Food is a great way to bring people together,” Goff said, “It’s an essential.”

Note: This article has been shortened for print. Find the full version at our website, berkeleyhighjacket.com



AMPS senior Audrey Alcalá stands in front of a Berkeley Food Network truck. The Berkeley Food Network provides produce to food pantries around the city.

DANIELA SIERRA ROMERO



Solano Stroll

builds community

BY AMELIE SHEARS
staff writer

From customized oil paintings of your pets, to the University of California Berkeley Police Department, to the beloved snake, Friendly, who has met over 7,000 kids, the Solano Stroll is always full of excitement and family friendly activities. The Solano Stroll is a nonprofit founded in 1974 and is now the largest street festival in the East Bay. It takes place annually in Berkeley and Albany, and this year marks the 49th anniversary of the event. When the Stroll was first organized, the Solano Avenue Association reported only 100 attendees. This year, over 100,000 people were expected to attend the event showcasing vendors, entertainers, and small businesses.

New features this year included a wrestling ring, novel musical performances, and a battery-powered train along with old favorites like Berkeley Humane's booth offering pets for adoption. The Solano Avenue

Association is dedicated to building community through events and enhancements of the street, such as coordinating with Albany and Berkeley police departments to maintain a safe environment, and organizing a volunteer trash clean-up to keep the street pristine.

Many Berkeley High School students attend the Solano Stroll. Kabir Hermon, a BHS junior, said, "I see lots of people from school. It's just really fun and bustling, and (there's) lots of nice, cool things." Students like Lila Dooley, a BHS junior, also run booths. Dooley was stationed at the booth of Brushstrokes, a pottery painting studio in Berkeley. "I think (the Solano Stroll) is a great community, and a great way to bring the community together and learn about small businesses," Dooley said.

Another BHS student who helped operate a booth was BHS senior Eva Levenson, an active member of the League of Women Voters of Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville. The League is dedicated to promoting democracy by encouraging

people to vote. "I feel like a lot of people (at the stroll) are already registered or are immigrants, but we get a few people registered. And I think it's really about bringing awareness and reminding people that we actually do have a ballot this November," Levenson said.

This year's Solano Stroll hosted over 400 vendors, including the popular Golden Gate Stereoscopic Society, which attracted people of all ages to its booth featuring 3D photos. It provided "an opportunity for us to introduce ourselves to people who are interested in (stereoscopic) photography, and hopefully they'll be interested in joining our club," Mat Bergman, the president of the society, said.

"Our goal is to get as many people to view and enjoy our photography as possible, and that's really why we're here," Bergman said. The Golden Gate Stereoscopic Society non-profit has been active since 1934. "It's great for us, because people come and enjoy it, and we just get a lot more exposure than we do at our

regular club meetings," Bergman added.

The well known "Big Bubble People" act was also back this year, streaming huge bubbles into a crowd of frantic kids, as well as the BHS robotics team and the BHS Jazz Ensemble who entertained strollers with performances at their booths. There were also multiple dance performances ranging from interactive folk dancing to Oakland Taiko drumming, while the karaoke booth by Melodee Cocktails booth drew in people to sing their favorite hits. Ralph Zaragoza, the owner, who has been running a booth for 14 years, explained that the Stroll is "a great way to attract new people to the bar."

The Solano Avenue Stroll's history page reads that, "In the year 2000, the Solano Avenue Stroll became an official 'Local Legacy,' installed into the United States Library of Congress with the help of Congresswoman Barbara Lee. The Solano Avenue Stroll celebrates America's rich diverse culture."



PHOTOS BY MAREN MATTHEWS

ILLUSTRATION BY PENELOPE PURCHASE

ENTERTAINMENT

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Catchy TV show tunes make or break series

BY SARAH KHAN-AKSELROD
staff writer

Just in the first few notes, a TV show theme song can transport the viewer from their world into another entirely. Whether it's the iconic "I'll be there for you, when the rain starts to pour," from the sitcom "Friends" or the timeless theme from the TV show "Cheers," theme songs are a memorable part of any show. These tunes are able to impact the audience's perception of the show, which is why it's important that they're done right.

Some students at Berkeley High School believe that the greatest and most beloved theme songs always feature a catchy melody. Skylar Hockenbrock, a BHS sophomore, says that her favorite theme song is from the show "Liv and Maddie" because she likes how catchy the upbeat song is. BHS sophomore Elena Trebbi possesses a contrasting view to Hockenbrock. "My favorite theme song is probably the 'Stranger Things' song. Not only do I really like the 50s vibes the show gives, it's a great beat, and I like the electrical aspect," Trebbi said. The "Stranger Things" theme is in a more eerie, minor key, while the

"Liv and Maddie" theme is in a more upbeat, major key. While these songs may sound vastly different, they are both memorable and iconic in their own rights. They both use repetition to their advantage: creating a song that is memorable and fun to listen to.

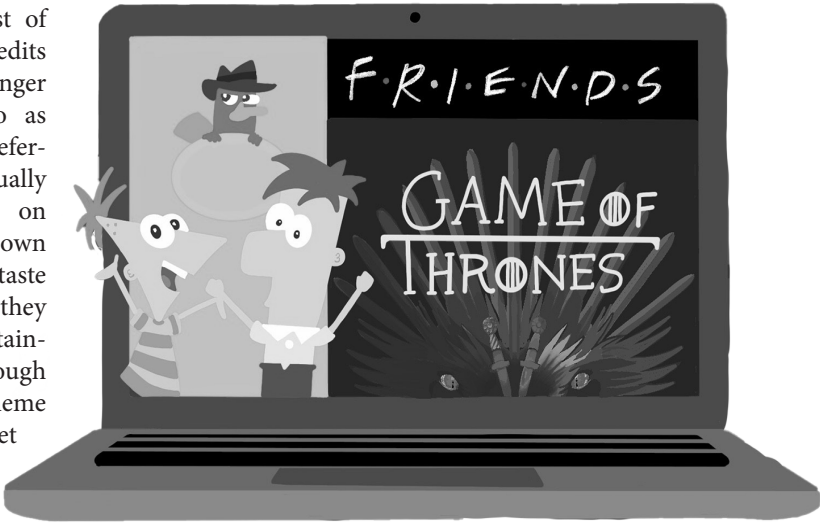
However, despite how catchy a theme song is, it may become annoying to listen to over and over again. "I always skip the intro because it is too much effort to watch," Hockenbrock said. On the contrary, if they're interesting, Trebbi says she might give them a watch, "Usually I will skip it if the intro is irrelevant or boring, but from time to time I will watch through cooler intros like the 'The Last of Us' intro credits or the 'Stranger Things' intro as well." The preference is usually dependent on the person's own musical taste and what they find entertaining. Even though many theme songs get skipped at the be-

ginning, many people tend to still remember the tune due to popularity throughout its time on air. "Like the 'Jessie' song, I haven't even watched the show, but I still catch myself humming it from time to time," Trebbi said.

Hockenbrock believes that theme songs were never particularly needed in shows. "I think that they were never really that useful, and especially now," Hockenbrock said. Trebbi possesses contrasting opinion, "I believe intro songs are still important for enhancing the overall vibe of a show. They can add character to cliches and create a memorable tune to look forward to every night when

watching your favorite series. Even now, with the option to skip intros, theme songs remain a delightful addition to shows on any streaming platform," Trebbi said.

Associating a song with a show can provide comfort, and also a unique experience when watching the theme songs with friends, and everyone being able to sing along. A TV show theme song isn't just a soundtrack for a good show, it's the beginning of embarking on a new journey with new characters, or returning to the comfort of the a familiar universe and storyline. Even after the final credits roll, a song can stay stuck in both your head and heart forever.



CHARLOTTE GRANT

Student beauticians cultivate their crafts



Henry Robinson cuts Caleb Lachs' hair, giving him the opportunity to connect with a peer.

EZRA PAYNE

BY AKHILA NARAYAN
staff writer

"I love doing other people's nails because it can kind of just be an outward show of your inner personality, depending on what you wanna get," Sitara Fan, a Berkeley High School junior and nail artist, said, "It's a really fun creative outlet for me."

Fan was in seventh grade when nail artists on the internet sparked their interest. They bought a starter

nail kit from Amazon. Fan said, "I just kind of sat in my room for hours ... practicing a lot."

Last year, Fan rediscovered their old nail kit and began doing students' nails. They are still refining their skills, practicing by picking designs from Pinterest and recreating them. Right now, Fan is enjoying the trend of detailing 3D lips on nails. They are especially proud of a set of stained-glass nails they recently created using 3D welding.

Asha Bui, who is another

BHS junior and nail artist, also derives her main inspiration from platforms like Pinterest. She has built up her collection of nail-art tools and supplies to match what she has seen in salons. Now, show her any inspiration photo and she can replicate the design. "It's one of the ways that I kind of express my creativity. I like to do art ... it's a fun, personalized way to show that off," Bui said.

For BHS junior Henry Robinson, social media inspired a different passion. After being motivated by haircut videos on his social media feeds, he said, "I got my friend, and I was like, alright, I'm just gonna give it a shot ... I just never turned back." Robinson has now been cutting hair for two years.

Both Robinson and Fan have Instagram pages where they post pictures of their work, and through which prospective clients can reach out to them. Robinson will send the people who reach out to him a list

of times that he has available and they show up at his house. Right now, his most popular style is a low taper fade.

For Fan, doing people's nails has forced them to develop different social skills. They have learned to maintain conversations with students whom they might not have much in common with for sessions that can last hours. "It's definitely brought me confidence to be able to talk to people who I don't know super well," Fan said.

Additionally, for Robinson, cutting hair has given him a better sense of the broad range of students who attend BHS. Those who reach out to him for haircuts span across many different friend groups and backgrounds at BHS, many of whom he might not have had the opportunity to connect with otherwise.

Robinson said, "I've met people of different ages, backgrounds, races and stuff ... Everybody's different, and it's kinda cool."

ALBUMS TO LISTEN TO BEFORE YOU DIE: MCCARTNEY II

MILES FELDMAN



A cocktail of punk, new wave, and disco had intoxicated the youth's mind in 1979. Rock and roll was leaving the icons of the older generation behind in exchange for new approaches to music. Paul McCartney was at the center of this punk band hitlist. His post-Beatles band, Wings, was the definition of mainstream stadium rock. McCartney was always at the forefront of musical innovation but it seemed like rock and roll was progressing without him.

Wings had gone through many different phases over the years, but the core group had been together as a band for eight years at that point, and was soon to break up. Once he got back to his farm in Scotland after Wings' last tour, he was bored with the cycle of album, press, tour, repeat. McCartney rented a tape machine and a synthesizer and began to create. Upon listening, his friends told him to release it as an album. Like his prior album "McCartney" from 1970, he played all the instruments himself, so he kept the naming theme. "McCartney II" was released in May 1980.

The opener "Coming Up" is this new direction distilled into one three minute song. McCartney's voice is put through layers of vocoder and at some points it sounds like he has been sped up. "Temporary Secretary" is based on a three minute synth loop McCartney made, that arpeggiates at a high pitch. Verses that are coated in vocoder float on top of the looping rhythm. After each verse, he sings the hook. But how he sang it was unique for the time. He only recorded singing it one time and splices this throughout the song. Electronic bands into the new millennia have been influenced by this choice. The synth loop has been used in DJ sets and been sampled countless times, and the vocal method has been used by bands like Radiohead and Aphex Twin.

In the middle of the album McCartney experiments with a few instrumentals. "Front Parlour" uses a synth loop, and "Frozen Jap" sounds like the electronic dance music coming out of Japan. As for the final two songs, "Darkroom" uses vocoder to create high-pitched looping vocal lines from McCartney, stretched between unsettling synths and confusing lyrics. "One of These Days" is one of McCartney's most beautiful ballads. For the first time on the album, his voice isn't going through any effects. Its placement at the end of this experimental album is striking.

"McCartney II" sits in an interesting place. It influenced many artists in its years, but barely made an impact outside their circles. It combines wailing synths and vocoder to make an unsettling, avant garde sound, but it still sounds accessible today. McCartney created the first mainstream electronic pop album, and doesn't get enough credit for his influence on the genre.

Scam or glam: Celebrity makeup brands

BY ZOE DILWORTH
staff writer

Consciously or not, everyone knows about celebrity brands. From Sephora shelves to sneakily branded tonic water and investment apps, it seems that famous people are trying to sell products at every turn. While this phenomenon certainly isn't new — Amelia Earhart launched her own clothing line in the 1930s — celebrity brands seem more prevalent than ever. Within this realm, there's the good, the bad, and the bankrupt, when a household name isn't enough to keep a poor product in stores.

"A lot of celebrity brands are really popular, especially, like, Rhode by Hailey. I think because people know the face, you know? So it's like, because they know the face, they want to buy the

product," Berkeley High School freshman Salma Rached said.

The entertainment industry has long been utilized to sell goods to the public, with advertisements, product placements, and celebrity endorsements. For a long time, it was more common to see one-offs, like Britney Spears perfume or One Direction wrapping paper. Nowadays, however, they skip the middle man and go straight into building their own businesses. According to the Los Angeles Times, as of 2023, around 60 percent of celebrity brands had been founded in the last six years, with a hefty percentage of them emerging during or after the pandemic, and these numbers are even higher today.

There is a whole host of products popped out by stars, Cardi B's vodka whipped cream, for exam-

ple. Most of the time, however, it's skincare and makeup. There's a reason why celebrity brands are so often within the beauty industry, and that sponsorships are so big in the sport industry. They bring a message: wear this makeup and you'll look like me, or wear these shoes and you'll perform like me.

An infamous example is Kylie Jenner's 2015 lip kits, which she credited for her lips suddenly getting bigger at the time. She has since rescinded this and become more transparent about the procedures she's had done, but it speaks to just how powerful this kind of marketing is; the lip kits sold out immediately on launch, and just four years later, the brand Kylie Cosmetics was valued at \$1.2 billion. When celebrities sell beauty products, there's a layer of trust at play, and a sense of closeness that should not be

taken advantage of.

However, it's not all bad, and there have been times where celebrities utilized their names to challenge industry standards. Rihanna's Fenty Beauty inclusive foundation shade range was revolutionary at its release in 2017, debuting with 40 shades. Prior to their release, the typical makeup company would only carry a third of that, and people with darker skin tones would typically have to mix multiple different formulas or seek out specialty brands in order to reach the color they needed. It comes as a shock that it took that long for inclusivity to be expected from brands and Rihanna was able to use her influence, money, and star power to make it happen. The impact on the beauty industry was felt so strongly that Fenty Beauty was named one of Time Magazine's Best



SABINE SHAFFER

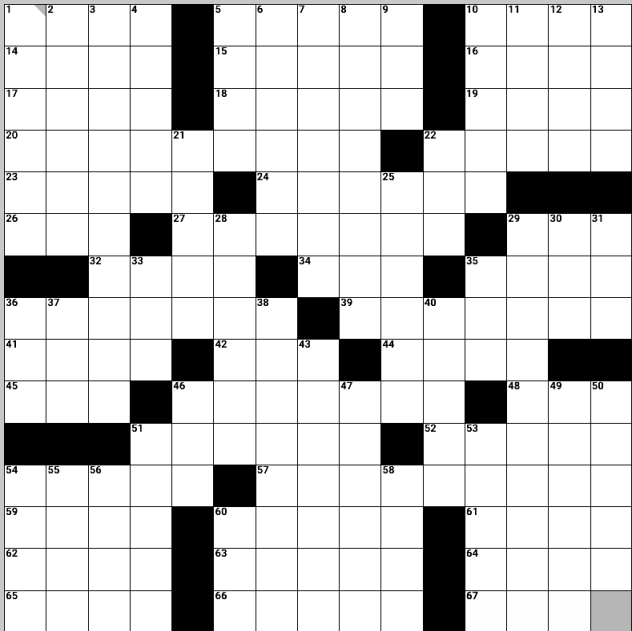
Inventions of 2017.

"I like celebrity brands when they're authentic, or it feels authentic to their perceived brand by the public, but I think that they kind of fall apart if they're not," BHS senior Maddy Kelly said on navigating celebrity brands, "I don't know if celebrities should necessarily be making brands. I don't know if

I'm hyper-supportive of it."

It's clear that the most successful and most positively received celebrity brands seem to be the ones most aligned with that celebrity's beliefs and who they are. In such an online era, what consumers and fans alike really crave is authenticity, not just branded food or products.

THE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. Final golf hit
- 5. Charlie Parker's genre
- 10. Got a perfect score
- 14. "Got it"
- 15. Paris' actress in "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"
- 16. International alliance
- 17. Celeb Natalie
- 18. Renaissance art character
- 19. Gramps' partner
- 20. Gift on Valentine's day
- 22. Most published book of all time
- 23. Amber in "Clueless"
- 24. IDK
- 26. Blog feed letters
- 27. Twice as much
- 29. Eye (or eyes' action)
- 32. "Ugh!"
- 34. Car key
- 35. Subtly includes on an email
- 36. Word before rock or car
- 39. What Justin Bieber gets in Georgia
- 41. Streaming service recently merged with Disney
- 42. Dog with a squashed face
- 44. Gas station with a diamond logo
- 45. Oldest son on "The Middle"
- 46. Mouth
- 48. Tulsa school
- 51. Completely
- 52. Blonde TV personality
- 54. Rhinestones and sparkles
- 57. High-protein breakfast items
- 59. "... _____ we forget"
- 60. Pitch _____ (make cam)
- 61. Data entry acronym
- 62. Nickname for Wharton or Piaf
- 63. Searches for
- 64. Report given in front of the class
- 65. What the Beatles were "back" in
- 66. One easily taken advantage of
- 67. Wintertime toy

DOWN

- 1. Lobster claw
- 2. Things a regular might have
- 3. Bright green orb
- 4. Cares for
- 5. Pelican's purse
- 6. Warm waters in Pacific
- 7. Avoids
- 8. Cheapest option at an ice cream shop, often
- 9. Best bud
- 10. "Goats Head Soup" single
- 11. Atkins avoidance
- 12. List ending
- 13. Finished
- 21. "Bullitt" director
- 22. Not Buddy!
- 25. PNW brand
- 28. Devo hit
- 29. Lolita, for one
- 30. Habitat
- 31. IB science elective
- 33. Baton Rouge college
- 35. Dual enrollment option
- 36. _____-_____-_____ (Cuban dance)
- 37. Latin light
- 38. "Not my _____"
- 40. Made like a rainbow
- 43. D.C. Chinatown thoroughfare
- 46. Short, clean bus fuel?
- 47. Steals, playfully
- 49. Bob Marley's genre
- 50. Still on the market
- 51. ICBM part
- 53. Toys that hurt to step on
- 54. "Sacre _____!"
- 55. Lights that don't get hot
- 56. Egyptian goddess of magic
- 58. Online creators' shop
- 60. Nile reptile

— Violet Kessler

'Him' fails to make anything more than a vague statement

BY ZOE WHITMAN
staff writer

The movie "Him" which came out on Friday, Sept. 19, 2025, is a sports-horror film produced by Jordan Peele — director of "Get Out," "Us," and "Nope," and directed by Justin Tipping — director of "Kicks." The movie centers American football and unlike many uplifting sports movies of our generation, this film attempts to tackle the more sinister aspects of the professional sports world. The movie stars Tyriq Withers playing Cameron Cade, an up-and-coming college quarterback trying to get drafted, and Marlon Wayans playing Isaiah White, the best quarterback of all time.

The film starts with a flashback to Cameron's childhood. The scene depicts Cameron watching football and showcases the fanatic football culture in his family. This flashback scene is a square camera

shot, making the overall scene feel unnerving. In this opening scene, football is depicted like a religion. The family has what seems to be an altar dedicated to their favorite fictional football team, the Savivors.

The film then fast forwards to Cameron getting a chance to make it to the NFL, specifically his favorite team, the Savivors. The film starts to take on some more traditional horror elements and leads to Cameron getting injured and getting sent to a compound to train with his idol, Isaiah. This marks a transition from what was a slightly offputting sports movie to a much more violent film. The film contains violent montages with unique and graphic editing. They don't develop the plot much, but rather the look and feel of the film.

The film also touches on blood lineage and passing on knowledge across generations. While this is an interesting concept, it is severely underdeveloped and

easy to misunderstand as irrelevant to the plot.

"Him" attempts to critique the sports world by talking about how difficult it is to be a Black quarterback, but they all end up being throw away lines. They mention deeper concepts, but often fail to call back to them. The whole film centers toxic masculinity and emotional manipulation, as hinted at in the very first scene with Cameron's father. However, the critiques they are attempting often fall flat and simply leave the viewer feeling confused. The film was generally unclear in its message on toxic masculinity in the sports world, as a result of the lack of clarity when addressing these prominent issues.

The movie centered aesthetic over anything else. It put more emphasis on including artsy elements, abandoning writing and plot development. The acting was decent, but drowned in a plot with too many randomness and stagnant points.



RUBY FITZPATRICK JERVIS

BERKELEY LOSING AN INSTITUTION: HALF PRICE BOOKS CLOSURE

BY OSCAR MCCLURE
staff writer

The shelves of Half Price Books will soon stand empty. Berkeley's beloved bookstore is closing, after twenty years serving students and citizens alike. Sunday, Nov. 30, 2025, marks the final day for a store that has been far more than a business — it's been a refuge where Berkeley High School students could explore interests, find new books, and experience the special sense of

books that much anymore, and I think it's really sad. A lot of bookstores are closing in general just because people aren't reading anymore." Lacey's feelings aren't misplaced: a recent study published in the iScience journal found that the percentage of people reading for pleasure "decreased by three percent per year from 2003 to 2023." In addition to that, global rates of social media usage has doubled from 2017 to 2025, rising to nearly 5.7 bil-

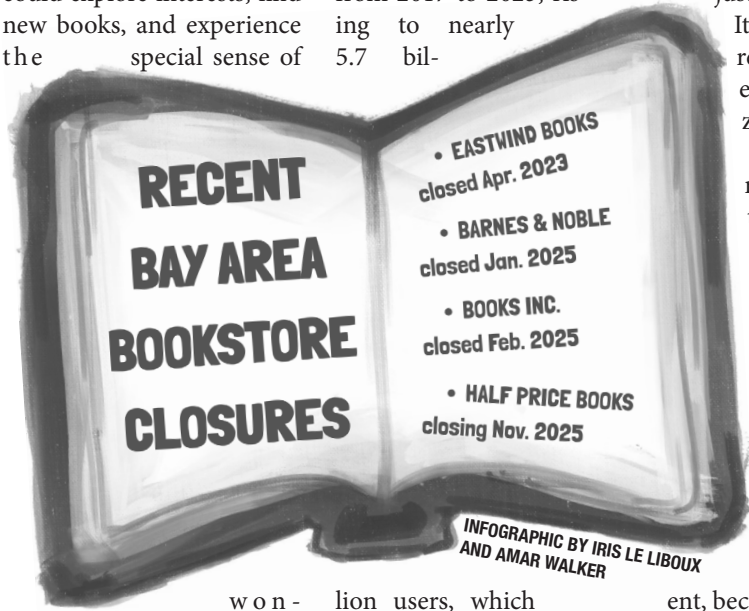
Cream and all the movie theaters, and seeing Half Price Books go down as well is just sad," Vorobyeva said. Although heartbreaking, the closure could inspire consumers to change their habits. Addressing BHS students, Lacey urged, "It may be too late for Half Price Books, but in general, try to read something, engage in culture a bit. Not even for the broader societal 'it's good for the world,' just do it for you. It's good to be well read; it's good to expand your horizons."

Declining reading rates aren't the only challenge. Some students, like BHS senior Jaymul Barot, are avid readers but prefer the technological ease of downloading and reading ebooks rather than checking out physical ones. "I feel a bit indifferent, because I read books on my Kindle. It's more versatile; you can use a Kindle for more things. It's just a better option for the consumer in my opinion," Barot said. Could e-books simply be an inevitable fact of the future, destined to outcompete bookstores as a direct result of our increasingly digital world? Maybe, but bookstores still offer something that online retailers cannot: tangible exploration. Half Price Books excelled at providing a browsing experience where

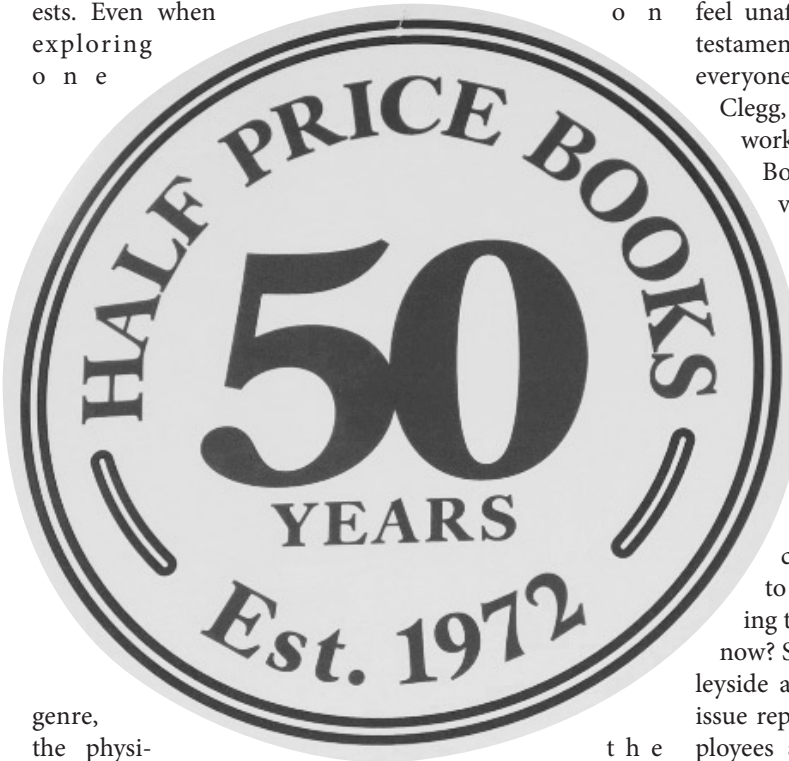
customers could — without knowing exactly what they were looking for — stumble upon interesting books which piqued their interests. Even when exploring one

ing experience. Berkeley is clearly losing a significant piece of culture. BHS Vice Principal Keldon Clegg said on

it's just another space gone," Clegg said. Some BHS community members who rarely passed by Half Price Books might feel unaffected, but Clegg's testament proves that not everyone has that luxury. Clegg, whose partner worked at Half Price Books for seven years, voiced his concerns for the employees, "I often think of the humans that are there. Bookstores are closing all over, so when you lose a job at Half Price Books, there's none that are located really close to us. So are you going to go to San Ramon now? San Jose?" A Berkeley-side article covering the issue reported that the employees are encouraged to apply to other locations and will be given severance if they continue working until the closing date. When asked for interviews, Half Price Books employees cited corporate policy, refusing to comment on anything related to Half Price Books. BHS students are undoubtedly upset about the closure. For many, Half Price Books was a part of their childhood. A place filled with fond memories of hours spent exploring sections curated to the interests they never knew existed. So, before they close, pay them a visit. Whether you're passing by during lunch, walking to the bus after school, or simply have time to spare, drop by, buy a book, and appreciate this gem before it's gone for good.

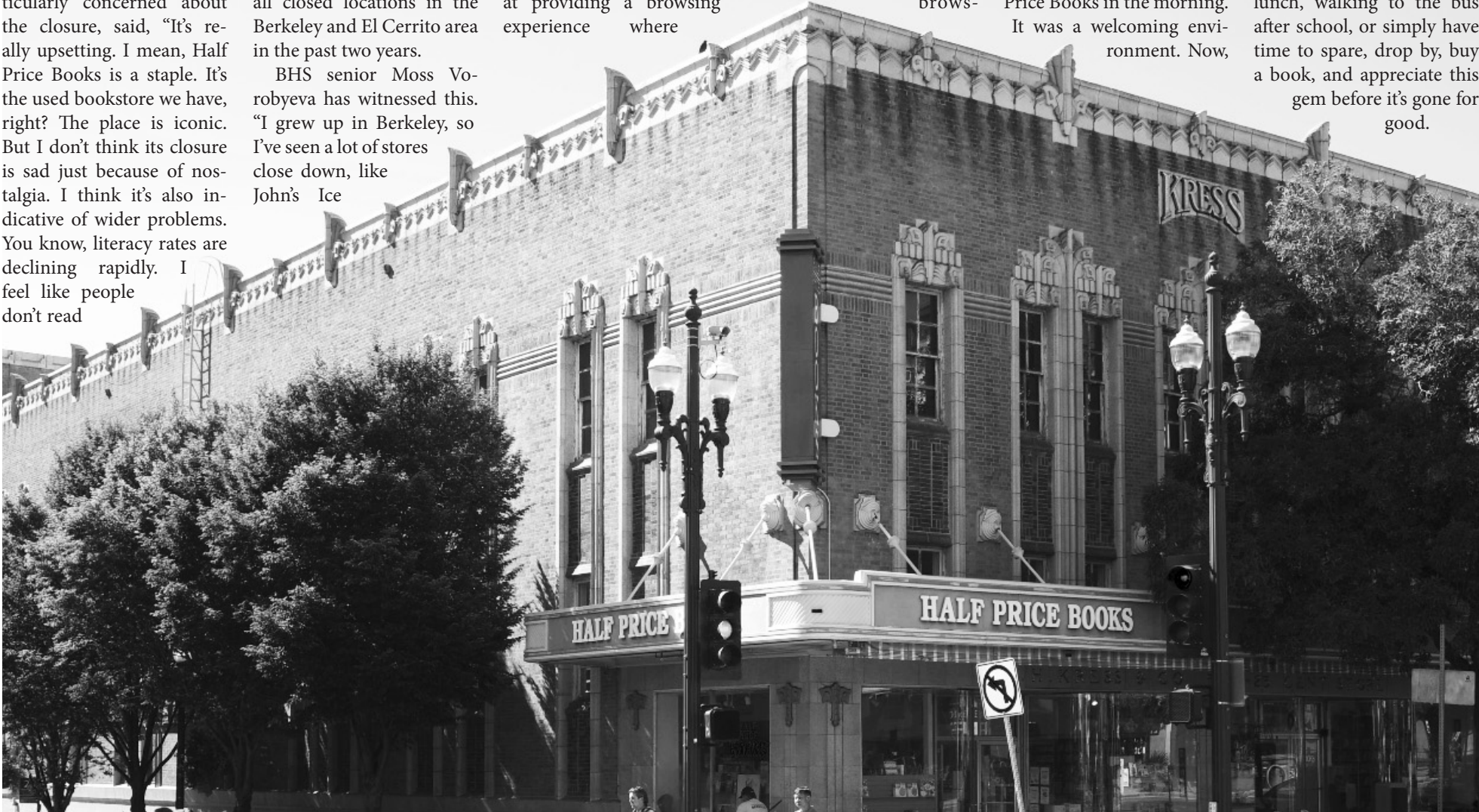


wonder cultivated by a used bookstore. In their official statement, the family-owned Texas-based chain cited a "decline in customer traffic" as the reason they were unable to renew their lease. As news of the closure spreads, BHS students have personal reactions; some are shocked, saddened, or frustrated, while others are simply indifferent. Isaac Lacey, a BHS senior particularly concerned about the closure, said, "It's really upsetting. I mean, Half Price Books is a staple. It's the used bookstore we have, right? The place is iconic. But I don't think its closure is sad just because of nostalgia. I think it's also indicative of wider problems. You know, literacy rates are declining rapidly. I feel like people don't read



genre, the physical proximity of the bookshelves could lead you into discovering another. With the rise of online shopping, however, this element of joyful discovery disappears. Digital platforms prioritize efficiency — you search for what you want, maybe browse a few algorithm-generated recommendations, but that's it, your search ends. Physical bookstores leave a little room for wonder in the way we interact with media. Half Price Books' closing signifies that, as a community, we've begun to value convenience over this brows-

the closing, "The awesome piece that you miss is easy access to a lot of literature, some of it woefully old, some of it right on the money of being new and hip. Also, the culture of being able to sell back your books and buy new ones. I think that's actually something worth upholding." Half Price Books made buying books more affordable by creating a culture that recirculates literature within the community. Clegg also noted how disappearing community spaces will impact BHS. "Our special education program used to take kiddos to Half Price Books in the morning. It was a welcoming environment. Now,



For 20 years, Half Price Books has been Berkeley institution; it fostered a sense of community for many Berkeley locals. It's last day will be on Sunday Nov. 30, 2025. MAREN MATTHEWS

BERKELEY HIGH JACKET

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THE TWO SPORT TIGHTROPE: MANAGING ACADEMICS, ATHLETICS, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

BY MILES WISE
staff writer

Driven by their passion for athletics, several students at Berkeley High School tackle the demanding yet rewarding challenge of playing two different sports for BHS. Unlike most students who decide to stick to playing just one sport, BHS' dual sport athletes are committed to managing the demands of two sports and bringing their several talents to the school's athletic programs.

For some students, another sport can provide a way to challenge themselves and open up different opportunities. Sinjin Amianda-Cook, BHS sophomore, is a junior varsity football wide receiver and part of the BHS baseball program. He decided to pick up football in his freshman year, motivated by the idea of pushing himself past the demands of baseball and implementing a bit of variety into his schedule.

"If you're just doing one thing all

year, every day, it can kind of wear on you and make you feel a little tired. But if you're switching things up, it adds some kind of variety into your life which I think is really good," Amianda-Cook said.

Beyond the court and the field, playing multiple sports can help provide students with several different skills that can translate to other activities and skillsets in life. Having to balance the overlapping schedules of soccer and running for the cross country team has helped BHS sophomore Felix Mathew grow his decision-making ability.

When presented with a scheduling conflict between his sports, Mathew weighs the importance of each event and then makes his decision. "There are some days I have to really decide which one I want to do more and which is more important to me in the moment ... sometimes I'm really bad with decisions, but this two sport thing has taught me doing what you want is really important," Mathew said.

However, managing two sports isn't only about making tough scheduling decisions. Between the demanding schedule of practice, games, and homework, dual sport athletes find the workload of commitments difficult to manage at times.

For Amianda-Cook and Mathew, the overlapping of seasons leads to them sometimes attending two practices in the same day. Yet, it's their love for the game and the friendships that the sports foster that help athletes

balance out their schedules and make it all feel worth it.

While each sport has its own unique skillsets required, many athletes that play two different sports find that playing one sport can complement the other one and support abilities in both of the sports. Football, for example, is able to translate certain athletic skills to baseball which can help elevate an athlete's talents.

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Felix Mathew
BHS student

"Baseball seems a little more rigid and a lot more fundamental. And football is a lot more about reacting which I think has really helped me just react in the moment and become more of an athlete," Amianda-Cook said. Although both sports have vastly different rules and styles, gaining athleticism can always benefit an athlete, regardless of what playing surface they're on.

Similarly, for Mathew, running the long and rigorous courses of cross country corresponds to the stamina and reactive skills required when he plays soccer, "They both have that same full on, always on your toes feel. I feel as though when I'm playing soccer I'm a lot better with my reaction time from running," Mathew said.

IRIS LE LIBOUX

Christopher DeVito

Athlete Profile

"I feel like football is my path," Berkeley High School senior Christopher DeVito said. DeVito is the quarterback for the varsity football team at BHS. His passion first started out in elementary school when he would play during recess and watch the National Football League at home. This love for football carried on into high school as he joined the Jackets and committed to the sport.

After playing the game for many years, DeVito realized he values football for the dedication it demands. "There's no easy path to success, you have to work hard and you get what you put in," DeVito explained. He embraces the responsibilities that come with the position of quarterback. "At the end of the day, everyone's looking at you because you're the quarterback and you have the ball in your hands," DeVito said, "If you play bad, the rest of the team sees that, and it affects them."

For this current season, DeVito hopes to lead his team to a playoffs win, something BHS hasn't done in over a decade. "The season hasn't shaken out how we wanted it so far, but we're going to click, and when we do click, things are going to work out really well," DeVito said.

— Kesi Humphreys



QUINCY HANSEN