

VOLUME 105 ISSUE 5

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The pros and cons of required service hours

Does school-mandated community service instill positive values in students?

Mission Statement

The Ballard Talisman is an open public forum for student expression, and exists to give a student perspective on issues relating to the Ballard student body and community. Please send signed letters with author's name, class or position (e.g. parent, student, teacher, etc.) to the editor.

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Land

Acknowledgement

The Ballard Talisman acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Coast Salish people. We respect Indigenous sovereignty and honor their right to self-determination. In our coverage, we commit to uplifting Native voices and the experiences of the Indigenous community.

Cover image:

President of PSA, Kasa Finau-Patu (12). (Emma Steinburg)

With summer break on the horizon, students are often met with realizations of dreaded end-of-year-requirements. For seniors in particular, graduation requirements must finally be faced, without much time left for putting off PE waivers and Naviance activities.

Among these tasks is the service hour requirement for all students. Though the district-wide requirement was briefly waived due to COVID-19, all students must once again meet the 60 hour threshold to receive their diploma in June.

The final push to record service hours and tie up loose ends is also unsurprisingly accompanied by grumblings about the hours, forms, or system as a whole. Some argue the requirement should be abandoned for good, frustrated that they are in a class that escaped the mandated service. Though service hours differ from other school assignments, ultimately, they are another box to check along the path towards graduation.

So, as students rushed to check this box, we considered its purpose. In an ideal world, service hour requirements push students into new environments, encourage them to help their communities grow and thrive, and maybe even add a boost to resumes and college applications.

But in practice, do these requirements truly instill positive values among students, or do they make us equate community service with-box checking and school work?

To begin, some of the key players in the service hour system are clubs and student unions. Club advisers are always well aware of the requirements, as they are regularly bombarded with requests to sign forms and record student involvement. Even if the system may not function flawlessly, it is hard to deny that these service hour requirements encourage students to participate in a variety of activities in school and out.

For instance, many student club leaders are familiar with the most effective recruiting strategy: reminding students that they can get service hours for participating in club activities. Though it may seem superficial on some level, this is often the basis for club involvement. Without the quest for service hours, students may not have joined clubs in the first place, and the fundraisers, educational projects and activism that is found throughout the school may not have happened. Recently, students received service hours for running the Sunrise Club bakesale and organizing Multiculturalism Week, along with other club activities that each add to an active student body.

After all, not everything has to be wholly internally motivated to make a positive

difference, as mandated community service often demonstrates.

By definition, service hour requirements ensure that over 20,000 hours of service are completed by each graduating class at Ballard. Outside of school, local organizations rely on volunteers, many of which are high school students. As promoted on the school website, The Ballard Food Bank, Phinney Neighborhood Association and Ballard NW Senior Center are in regular need of this participation, just to name a few.

Another upside of the service hour requirement is that it is one of the few graduation requirements that can be truly tailored to personal interests. Students can coach youth sports teams, volunteer through their church, help out at the local theater or participate in an endless range of other activities. Allowing students to make these decisions for themselves may be a key feature for a system that seeks to encourage authentic care and commitment.

However, this flexibility also means that not all service hours are created equal. Hours can be easily overreported, and everyone from teachers, to organization leaders, to family friends can sign the records of service. Everyone has their own definition of impactful service, but it is hard to argue convincingly that, say, keeping score for a school sports team, is the most meaningful way to spend the entirety of your community service time.

Service hours can also become a different burden for students with more extracurricular responsibilities. What happens when a student who works 20+ hours a week to support their families cannot spare time for volunteering? Over the past decade, SPS has decided that 60 hours is a reasonable threshold for all students, though it's difficult to settle on a single requirement that works for everyone.

Beyond BHS, there has been debate over the constitutionality of public school service hour requirements. For instance, in two 1996 cases, district courts and the US Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on this issue. Both came to the conclusion that the service



Izzy Kim (12) gets her blood drawn at NHS blood drive. Students received service hours for organizing this event. (Emma Steinburg)

requirements were not unconstitutional, as they aligned with US educational goals.

Additionally, there has been some research into the efficacy of service hour requirements. Though some studies suggest that service hour requirements lower volunteering participation overall, or simply change the timing of service, as described by an article in the journal Economics of Education Review, others have found a positive correlation between volunteering as a student and volunteering later in life.

We will never be completely sure if students would volunteer as much without the requirements, or if their values would shift, but ultimately service hour requirements can still be seen as a positive force. Amidst other educational hoops to jump through that can feel restrictive, arbitrary and tedious, service requirements are a thoughtful exception that might convince us to care a little more, now and throughout life. Even if we grumble about the paperwork, the service itself is a beneficial part of our time at Ballard.

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Choir went to the Museum of Natural History, shopped on Fifth Avenue and saw the show 'Hadestown' on Broadway. (Courtesy of Andrew Payne)

Choir performs in New York City

The Advanced Chorale and Concert Choir travel over Spring Break for performances at Queens College and Carnegie Hall

Marley Helfer Copy Editor

After a year of planning and preparation, two of the school's choirs traveled to New York City [NYC] to perform in the Choirs of America Festival at Queens College from April 12-16.

The program's Concert Choir and Advanced Chorale sang at Queens College and Carnegie Hall for world-class composers and collaborated with Harvard University's choir along with a middle school program from Kentucky.

"Carnegie Hall is really the pinnacle of any musician's dream," Courtney Rowley, choir director and music department head, said. "It's really a once in a lifetime opportunity for our students to perform there and [to] collaborate with these amazing choirs and amazing conductors."

This rings true for many students in the school's program who have been working towards this kind of performance for years.

"[There's] a little joke I always heard growing up where people would say, 'Hey, how do you get to Carnegie Hall? You practice practice practice' ... And now, we practice practice practice and now we're going to Carnegie Hall," Miriam Mathan, sophomore and choir member, said.

Ballard's choir collaborated with choirs from Harvard University and a Kentucky middle school to perform the world premier of "To Repair" by Black American Composer Tesfa Wondemagegnehu. "To Repair" is a four movement piece, addressing the racial inequity and disparities that exist within the country.

"It's a pretty powerful work, we've been working on it for a few months," Rowley said. "We're just really excited to get to collaborate with the composer and with Harvard, and give the ... [world] premier of this work."

In addition to

performances, the program also went to the Museum of Natural History, shopped on Fifth Avenue and saw the show 'Hadestown' on Broadway.

The choir program was initially supposed to travel to NYC in April of 2020, but due to COVID-19, the trip was postponed. After three years of travel restrictions, the program was finally able to take the trip this spring.

"There were a lot of students that have now graduated that were supposed to go on this trip but never got to, so now that it's finally happening it should be super exciting," Casey Middleton, senior and choir member, said before the trip.

Before the pandemic, each music program would take a trip out of state every couple of years. In the past, Rowley has taken the program to New York City, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

"On the off years when we're not flying, we might go to Portland or Vancouver or somewhere more local," Rowley said. "[But] it's been a while since any of our groups have gotten to take a big trip."

This long-awaited trip required a year of organization, from fundraising to working out travel and meal logistics. In addition to Rowley, the program's accompanist Serena Chin along with eight volunteer parent chaperones traveled with the choir.

"It's a lot of work," Rowley said. "But it's worth it to be able to provide this incredible experience for my students."



After three years of COVID-related travel restrictions, Choir was finally able to go to New York this spring. (Courtesy of Sally Rampersad)

Senior Assassin 2023: behind the scenes

Anonymous organizer discusses the inner workings of this year's highly anticipated game

Matea Hart Staff Reporter



Participants will stand outside of houses, cars or workplaces, waiting for their targets. (Emma Steinburg)

Each year a senior assassin game is hosted for the senior class and is unaffiliated with the school. An anonymous organizer behind the game was interviewed to talk about the event this year, which started on April 3.

The anonymous source went over the process in organizing the game, which included matching seniors with their targets over the week leading up to the start of senior assassin.

"First, I created a Venmo so people could enter and had people follow the Instagram account," the organizer said. "Once people signed up, I added them to an excel sheet and made sure to follow them and DM them confirmation so it's easier to contact them farther into the game. Then I made a deadline for sign ups and at that time I shuffled the excel sheet and gave everyone their target."

When asked what they liked about the traditions of the game, the organizer mentioned creating connections between the senior class, a fun way to end the last year of high school.

"I think it's a fun time to connect many seniors," they said. "By the time you're a senior you know most people but not [everyone], so once you get a target you don't know you get the chance to get to know them. That might include creepily stalking their house but still you get to get to know more people in your grade."

The organizer went on to agree that the game should continue to be hosted for seniors in future years.

"Yes, I love the game," they said. "It's something to look forward to in your senior year and high school experience and in the spring it's a good time to get out and get to know others."

Connecting past to present: Holocaust speaker makes an impact

Arik Cohen aims to educate students on the humanity of Holocaust survivors and prevention of persecution in today's world

Tansy Velush Staff Reporter

The Holocaust ended almost 80 years ago. Survivors of the Holocaust pass down stories of their lives, their escape and the horrors they faced.

The Holocaust was a mass genocide of Jewish people and other persecuted groups in Nazi Germany during World War II. Six million Jewish people were killed, around two thirds of Europe's Jewish population.

The grandchild of four Holocaust survivors, Arik Cohen, tells these stories of endurance as a way to never forget the tragedy of the Holocaust. He spent time with BHS students in March after being invited by history teacher Robin Dowdy.

Cohen's maternal grandparents were born in Lithuania and met in the Siauliai ghetto, escaping and hiding in the woods for eight months before Lithuania was liberated by the Soviet Army.

Cohen's paternal grandparents were both from Romania, meeting in Oradea when the ghetto was formed. They were then separated to different concentration camps after being deported to Auschwitz, only being reunited after Stutthof and Buchenwald were liberated by the Soviet Army.

Cohen now lives in Bellevue, works at Microsoft and is an active speaker for the Seattle Holocaust Center for Humanity.

Cohen shares his grandparents' stories at high schools, colleges and to adult audiences. Something Cohen has noticed is that many people don't know how to process the importance of learning about the Holocaust.

"This is almost my hundredth time giving this

talk," Cohen said.

"When you look at atrocities on the scale of millions of people dying, it is very difficult to connect," Cohen said.

However, Cohen trusts that the key to learning from the horrors of the Holocaust is within that connection.

"I think the thing that helps people ground themselves is to tie it to individuals," Cohen said. "If you do that, then you have a little bit more empathy there. And if you have a little bit more empathy, maybe you think before you do the next thing. That's my hope."

Although Cohen's work is focused on history, he aims to teach how and why to prevent things like the Holocaust from happening again.

"It's not always pleasant to look at moments of history that are dark," he said. "But I think you all are capable of looking at it and understanding how not to lead us into the darkness in the future."

Dowdy invited Cohen to have him share his insight, but inviting Cohen is not the first time she's interacted with the Holocaust Center for Humanity.

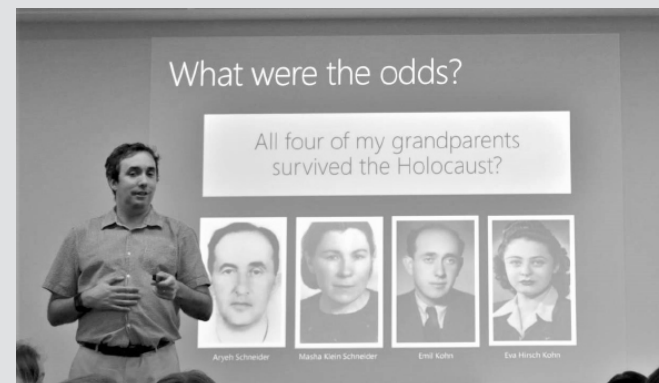
"Four or five years ago I attended a training [at the Holocaust Center for Humanity] and it was a multi-day training," Dowdy said. "We were also able to explore the museum. That is how I first got connected with the museum."

Dowdy believes that it's helpful to learn from firsthand accounts of history and individual experiences.

"Studying history, it's really hard to connect with the fact that these are actual human beings who are going through whatever we're reading about," Dowdy said. "The Holocaust is such a horrific experience, yet the people who survived it have been so bold in sharing their experiences. It's a way for students to really see, 'this is an actual person, who had to figure out how to survive.'"

Both Dowdy and Cohen believe in the importance of learning and taking action. History is a crucial element for ordinary people in society to end cycles of antisemitism and all other forms of hatred and violence.

"If, out of everybody I talked to, one person stands up for somebody once and stops something that could lead to this, it'll be more impactful than anything else I've done in my life," Cohen said.



The grandchild of four Holocaust survivors, Arik Cohen, tells stories of endurance to never forget the tragedy of the Holocaust. (Courtesy of Arik Cohen)

Saving lives by acknowledging teen opioid use

Seattle public schools works to combat the epidemic through means of an accessible reversal to overdose

Hazel Engstrom Copy Editor

Trigger warning: Mentions of drug use and overdose



The Teen Health center has free test strips and Narcan for any student who requests it. (Arden Rathkopf)

In 2022, the King County Health Department recorded 1,002 deaths related to drug and alcohol use, 784 of which were the result of opioids. That means on average the county experienced around three overdose deaths per day last year, an approximate 41.3% increase from 2021.

For Karen Boudour, ARNP and Ballard Teen Health Center provider, these numbers have faces.

"There have been two fentanyl deaths in SPS this school year, so it always feels like to me the potential for a death or a really bad outcome is close to us,"

Boudour said. "I mean, obviously, we are constantly worried about school shootings and other acts of violence, but I also feel like it is very likely we can, and we have, lost students to overdosing and that just isn't talked about."

Kristen Wilson-Weiberg, a public health nurse at King County explained that despite the severity of the epidemic, there is an accessible method of reversal.

"Naloxone (Narcan) works in an overdose by reversing serious or deadly central nervous system (CNS) depression due to opioids (narcotics), including depressed breathing, extreme drowsiness and loss of consciousness," Wilson-Weiberg said. "This effect usually occurs in minutes."

The Teen Health center has free test strips and Narcan for any student who requests it, one instance of a trend that both Wilson-Weiberg and Boudour have observed in their field.

"I think public health and the school district are really working hard in particular this year," Boudour said. "I've seen a real uptake, uptick and outreach around opioid death prevention."

Wilson-Weiberg shared that sentiment, detailing how specifically in downtown Seattle where she is located, many frequently walk in to pick up Naloxone.

"However, there are still far too many places where it is not accessible," Wilson-Weiberg said.

While Naloxone and Narcan are key towards preventing the immediate effects of an opioid overdose, alone they can't always guarantee survival.

"I think the important thing to know is that it's short term. It's working with those opioid receptors for a short time but anytime you use Narcan you need to call 911," Boudour said. "Depending on how much you've taken and how far into its [your] system it is, you can just overdose all over again."

While Boudour understands that some may be apprehensive to involve the authorities, she wants people to know that legal protections apply by the Good Samaritan law.

"Regardless of how old you are, if you report that someone is overdosing, the paramedics can come and get them, without interviewing any of you or calling the police," Boudour said. "There is a lot out there that protects people that report overdoses, it doesn't matter how old you are or even if you yourself have been using."

Beyond understanding the legal protections and administrative steps of anti-overdose drugs like Narcan and Naloxone, Boudour emphasizes the importance of having them on hand.

"That doesn't mean that you personally are using it," Boudour said. "It's like knowing CPR. It's incredibly helpful if many people in the community know how to do this. Why not have it available and save someone's life?"

Band takes on Disneyland

For the first time since COVID, the band marched in the Disneyland parade

Jill Sousley Staff Reporter



Band marches through Disneyland for the first time in four years. (Courtesy of Kate Macneale)

The band's trip to Disneyland has been a long standing tradition, but when COVID-19 hit, the trip seemed to have come to an end. This year, however, was different. The band made the trip to Disneyland and got to have fun while showcasing their talents in a parade.

Juniors Rose Kibelstis, Sadie Kibelstis and senior Stella Nilson shared their thoughts on the trip and experiences with the band.

Rose Kibelstis has been in the band since her freshman year and has been playing the trombone since fourth grade.

"I have had a series of really awesome teachers [like Mr. Gillespie] and have enjoyed getting to know and becoming part of the community, which is very welcoming," Rose Kibelstis said.

Kibelstis was excited for the trip, as it wasn't initially expected that one would be planned. The schedule for the trip was packed, but the students had lots of freedom once actually in the theme park.

"As long as we were in groups, us students [and adult chaperones] got to go off on our own and

do rides or whatever we wanted for about 13 hours," Rose Kibelstis said.

There were three main events for the band on this trip. For the marching band, they marched through the park performing songs such as "Locked Out of Heaven" by Bruno Mars, the whole group went to America's Got Talent and there was also a specialized recording session backstage at Disney.

Rose Kibelstis said her favorite part of the trip was going to see America's Got Talent.

"It was nothing like you see on TV — it was so much cooler with the judges and the performances up close," Rose Kibelstis said.

Junior Sadie Kibelstis has also been playing in the band since her freshman year, but has been playing the trumpet since fourth grade.

"It's definitely become a bigger commitment as I've gotten older. I'm in jazz band, wind ensemble and marching band," Sadie Kibelstis said. "But it's so worth it."

Sadie Kibelstis said her favorite part of the trip was getting to spend so much time with her friends, and it made waiting in the long lines more fun.

When they went to America's Got Talent, Sadie Kibelstis said they were met with something very special.

"I also really enjoyed going to watch America's Got Talent on the first day, as I ended up really close to the front, and even got a high five from Simon Cowell."

The last morning of the trip was the day the group went to the backstage recording session.

One of Sadie Kibelstis' favorite parts of the trip was playing music from Disney movies and putting their recording over the original scene, so it was like the band was the soundtrack for that part of the movie.

Senior Stella Nilson describes the trip as eye-opening and special. Nilson has played the flute since 6th grade, and has played for the band for all her years at Ballard.

Nilson said she initially heard about the trip her freshman year, and she was super excited to participate, however COVID hit and unfortunately caused the trip to be canceled for the following three years.

"When we first heard the news we were very grateful that we were able to pull this trip off [in] our last year of high school," Nilson said.

Nilson expressed that her recent experience at Disneyland was different compared to past trips because of the environment and getting to experience it with friends.

As far as her experience with the band overall, Nilson explains that it takes work, but it is worth it because it makes you a better player and supports the band.

"My experience has been pretty enjoyable, everyone is good spirited and supportive," Nilson said.



Sadie Kibelstis (11) (right) and Q Adamson (12) (left) march through Disneyland. (Courtesy of Kate Macneale)

The Running of the Beavers

The annual fundraising 5K returns in March after a two-year COVID delay

Piper Sorenson Staff Reporter



Participants of the race take off for the 5K through Golden Gardens. (Emma Steinburg)

After a two-year delay due to COVID-19, the Running of the Beavers is back. As the fourth annual 5k of its kind, the goal was to raise money for the Ballard High School Foundation.

The route was scenic through Golden Gardens

along the waterfront. The participants enjoyed views of the Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains, eventually ending at the fitting Beaver Pond.

All proceeds are going towards benefitting the school's community, such as helping enrich programs and activities. Since the creation of the foundation, it has helped raise seven million dollars for the school.

For this year's event, the beneficiaries will be cheer, dance, band and team sports. With the help of many sponsors and supporters, not to mention the people showing up to participate, these activities

have received more funding.

"I like to help my team out," cross-country runner Emme Rousseau said. "So we can do more invitationals, pay for snacks, pay for new jerseys, stuff like that."

Rousseau ended up winning in the women's race, running the 5k in 19:05. She received a 100 dollar gift card to seafood restaurant Dukes, while also contributing to her track team. And as for the school spirit, she appreciated the contributions from other students.

"It was really fun to have the band there, that was a great experience," Rousseau said. "It was a great race."

And it wasn't just the band. Cheerleaders arrived about an hour and a half early to help set up and raise school spirit.

"People were in high spirits, which was really nice," cheerleader and senior Mena Aliabadi said. "It was really cold though."

But as people began to show up, the day got warmer. There were students, teachers and even parents coming out to support the school.

"There were a lot of parents who were doing it," Aliabadi said. "They were very supportive and they loved that we were there."

From a high school reporter to digital editor

BHS graduate Jaya Flanary makes it big in the journalistic realm

Semai Hagos Features Editor

Ballard graduate Jaya Flanary paid the Talisman staff a visit to talk about her experiences in the realm of journalism, just before students were let out for spring break.

Flanary has several talents and hobbies — from writing and designing pages, to bowling and making film documentaries — and there were multiple careers in which she would have prevailed.

She became features editor during her junior



BHS graduate Jaya Flanary pursues her passion for journalism and designing pages. (Courtesy of Jaya Flanary)

year, as she enjoyed writing, editing and designing pages.

“I really liked the newsroom,” Flanary said. “[The] high stress environment and [teamwork made it] a lot easier to [create] a product once a month.”

In addition, Flanary has a passion for filming and narrating documentaries on her own.

After taking a gap year to work, she found herself attending Western Washington University, which provides various journalistic pathways. Flanary dove into the Visual Journalism track.

“It allows you to do documentary filmmaking,” she said. “It allows you to do design work, photojournalism, and then you also get to report and write so it’s the best of both worlds for somebody like me.”

After graduating WWU, she pursued her journalistic passion further, becoming a digital designer and editor for Cascadia Daily News, Washington’s newest daily independent publication in Bellingham.

I primarily design the whole thing on just Mondays and Tuesdays by myself,” Flanary said.

She describes the newsroom as a fun space, without any rules, giving Flanary free range



Flanary is a digital editor for the Cascadia Daily News, A Bellingham publication. (Courtesy of Jaya Flanary)

regarding page designing.

She described a project she will be working on in the upcoming months.

“I’m doing a three part series in the summer on [bowling] league culture,” Flanary said. “The second part is going to be about women in bowling and the third part is going to be about bowling centers closing and the epidemic of that.”

Sunrise Club fundraises for local environmental organization 350 Seattle

Presidents discuss political activism and ways for students to support the environment

Zoe Isett Editor-In-Chief

In recent years, with the impacts of climate change becoming increasingly devastating, environmental activism among Generation Z is more prominent than ever. High schoolers in Seattle are no exception, with environmental clubs being some of the most popular organizations on campus.

BHS’s Sunrise Club is a hub of the wider Sunrise Movement: a coalition of young people working to stop the climate crisis and win a Green New Deal. Co-president and senior Aria Seavecki described the organization in simple terms.

“[Sunrise] is a nationally recognized climate advocacy program,” Seavecki said. “We do a lot of work concerning environmental policies.”

On March 24, the club held a bake sale outside the main office to raise money for local environmental group 350 Seattle.

“[350 Seattle] is an organization ... that fights for climate justice and works on the political aspects of [environmentalism],” Co-president and senior Sonja Miller said.

Sunrise and 350 Seattle share many goals, including resisting fossil fuel expansion and achieving climate justice.

“We thought [350 Seattle] resonated with Sunrise Ballard because we’ve done similar things to them,” Miller said.

For example, in previous years, both the Sunrise Club and 350 Seattle have participated in Earth Day strikes and fossil fuel expansion protests.

An aspect of Sunrise Club that differentiates it from other environmental clubs is its focus on political activism.

“Although I do think local and school environmental efforts are really important as well, ...

we want to be able to make a broader difference,” Seavecki said.

This means Sunrise Club often pushes for legislative change through lobbying. This has included methods such as writing letters to Congress and protesting.

“For us, legislation efforts resonate really well with the club because it’s a way to make an actual impact,” Seavecki said.

Beyond the club’s work in local politics, Seavecki and Miller encourage all students to support and advocate for the environment.

“You can also just become involved with the things that we do as a club,” Seavecki said. “Whether that’s bake sales or protests ... these are great things you can try and do to make a difference.”



Treats were priced between \$1 to \$2, with the club raising approximately \$200 by the end of the sale. (Courtesy of Aria Seavecki)



Meghan Watt (9), Camila Yoo (9), Katie Davis (9), Ruby Landvoigt (9), Sonya Miller (12), Aria Seavecki (12), Alina Zahn (11) and Lindon Fatland (11) sell baked goods to raise money for 350 Seattle. (Courtesy of Aria Seavecki)

Annual Naramore student art museum show

Four students reflect on their pieces featured at the Seattle Art Museum this year

Matea Hart Staff Reporter



Lily Beckerman's (11) piece "265,180". (Courtesy of Matthew Harkleroad)

The Naramore Art show hosted this year at the Seattle Art Museum will feature over 200 works of Seattle Public School's middle and high school students. The exhibition will be on display from April 8 through May 14 in the first floor community gallery, featuring the artwork of five BHS students.

This year's students had photography, paintings and ceramics on display. Junior Lily Beckerman, senior Bella Mojos, senior Andy Guthrie and senior Logan Evans reflected on their displayed art pieces.

Beckerman's piece, called "265,180," is a painting inspired by her 1986 Volvo, the first car she purchased after saving up all summer, and the first place that felt like her own space. The name comes from the number on her odometer in the picture she used as inspiration. Beckerman described the feeling she wanted to evoke on viewers seeing her painting.

"I just wanted the piece to bring forth a sense of comfort, and I wanted to showcase the character [of my car]," Beckerman said. "I like having a space of mine that's different and it just feels comforting to me."

Mojos's painting "Quiet Right Now," was inspired by the desk in her room on a late summer day where she felt completely at peace, not having to worry about schoolwork. She describes the choices

she made to impact the feeling the final piece induces.

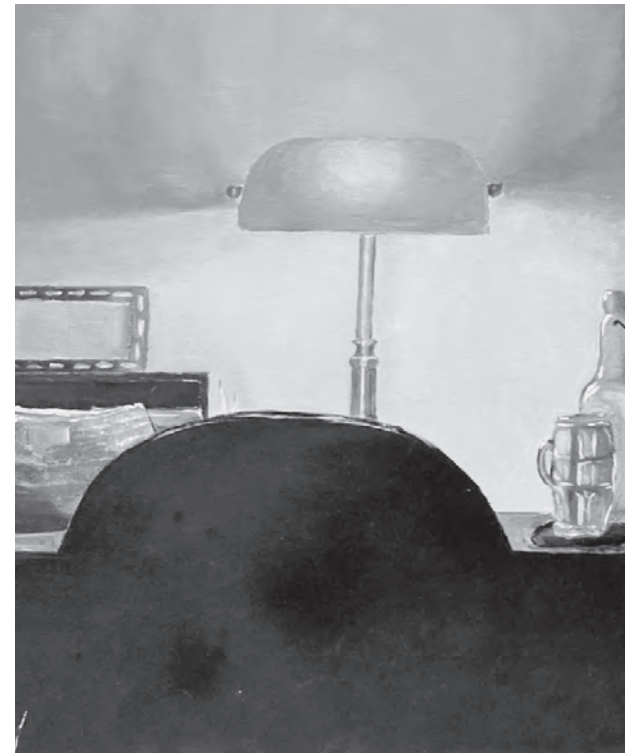
"I wanted a moody sort of thing going on," Mojos said. "I used a lot of green color schemes. I also wanted to show that you can make anything visually appealing, because I literally just took a picture of my desk and that was it."

Guthrie's work featured at the art show are two plant pots that he made on the wheel in Scott Cachopo's ceramics class. The two pots compliment each other, with identical designs and alternating colors. Guthrie explained the inspiration behind the design choices he made.

"I really like mosaic patterns so for this one I used little bottles that would give it more of a 3-dimensional texture, and you can actually feel it's similar to a mosaic tile," Guthrie said.

Evans's piece at the art show is a photograph taken near Park Butte Lookout, a WWII-era fire lookout on the Southern flank of Mt. Baker, in the North Cascades. The image was captured in late Sept., looking up at the mountain with its crystal-clear reflection seen in the still water of the pond below. Evans reflected on how he became interested in photography, and what he hopes people will take away from his work.

"Ever since I found out about Jimmy Chin, an outdoor adventure photographer based in Wyoming,



Bella Mojos' (12) piece "Quiet Right Now". (Courtesy of Matthew Harkleroad)



Logan Evans' (12) photograph, taken near Park Butte Lookout. (Courtesy of Logan Evans)

I have been inspired to take photos of the moments I've experienced in the outdoors," Evans said. "I hope that people who see this photo will want to get out and explore the mountains for themselves — it's a lot better in person."

New assistant librarian brings her love of Winnie the Pooh to the school

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter

The first person you see when you enter the library is the face of the library assistant. They'll greet you, maybe ask for a pass, help you find a book and check it out for you.

The library's previous assistant, Shelby Dupre, was a beloved addition but she left late in the first semester for a job as a children's librarian.

Enter Alana Gaulin, almost finished with her Master's program at the University of Washington and the newest library assistant. While new to the school, her love of libraries certainly isn't.

"For the longest time I wanted to be a teacher," Gaulin said. "Then six years ago, I got a part time job at a local library and fell in love with it."

Public and high school libraries have very different roles and experiences, which begs the question of what made BHS appealing to Gaulin. "So

said jokingly. "That was my number one goal."

In reality it has much less to do with passes and more to do with location, location, location.

"Jokes aside, I saw this position was open and I thought it was a great way to get into school libraries in this area," Gaulin said.

She even mentioned that school libraries give librarians more free reign in how they organize and structure compared to public libraries.

"In public libraries, librarians either have one specific focus they do, which usually means working with the books, or they're doing more outreach and programs," Gaulin said. "In comparison, school librarians can do both while seeing the same people everyday."

While public libraries may have weekly or possibly monthly regulars, school library's have students come and go every day. Especially BHS's library,

which has been tailor made so that students are always there doing something.

The tolerance for food makes the library a popular lunch spot, centered by the two people running the show — the head and assistant librarians.

"I'm a huge 'Winnie the Pooh' fan," she said. "It's my pride."

A popular character that dominates the media, "Winnie the Pooh" is one of the things that has shaped Gaulin into who she is.

"It still brings people together and it has a childlike innocence for me that helped me see the world in a slightly different and better way," she said.

Now, almost all her clothing is dominated by shirts, socks and accessories — even a Winnie the Pooh onesie that she wears regularly.

Celebrating the diverse cultures at BHS

Hugo Heim Romero Staff Reporter



Violet Vargas (10) (representing Puerto Rico) follows senior Michelle Angel Cabrera (representing the Philippines) in the Multicultural flag run. (Arden Rathkopf)

This year, the Multicultural Club and ASB joined hands to celebrate the various cultures that students are a part of. Dedicating a week to multiculturalism, they worked to plan activities and educational opportunities for the student body.

Sophomore Violet Vargas designed the posters that hung on the walls advertising Multicultural Week.

“We wanted [Multicultural Week] to be really fun and to be all about each other’s cultures,” Vargas said. “People of different ethnicities coming out and showing their cultures and showing everybody else what makes them them and their history.”

The event took a lot of people and time to plan. “Most of ASB and the Multicultural Club [contributed],” Vargas said. “We were all working together to create this fun week for everybody.”

Those who were at the head of planning were mainly the presidents of the student unions, including Anya Souza-Ponce, the head of the Latinx Student Union (LSU).

Once the Multicultural Club was interested in hosting Multicultural Week, they decided to reach out to ASB.

“It turns out ASB was already kind of playing with the idea [of Multicultural Week] and so we came together with ASB and were able to put this on for everyone,” Souza-Ponce said. “[They] were great



Mirabel Peterson (11) (left) and Michelle Angel Cabrera (12) perform to NewJeans’ “OMG”. (Emma Steinberg)

with providing resources that we would need.”

ASB provided funding for the Multicultural Assembly and promoted the events on Instagram. Although many people helped, the event was not planned overnight.

“We were planning for this since I want to say [the] beginning of February,” Souza-Ponce said. “We met every Tuesday [at] the Multicultural Club. As we got closer to the week we started meeting every day during lunch to be able to plan it and really flesh



Michelle Angel Cabrera (12) wows the crowd as she balances a glass on her head with two in her hands, in the Binasuan Philipino dance. (Emma Steinberg)



Violet Vargas (10) performs Mexican folklore to “Palomita”. (Emma Steinberg)

it all out.”

Halfway into Multicultural Week, an event called Unions Unite was hosted in the library, where all the student unions met with students and staff to celebrate and share their cultures.

“It was pretty crowded. It was really fun though because we got to tell teachers and students about our cultures and I think it was very informational... I wish there was a bigger area of space,” Vargas said. “I think it would’ve been better if [Unions Unite]



Vicky Valdes Antonio (10) twirls her traditional skirt, during the folklorico piece. (Emma Steinberg)

was [in the commons].”

As this was a new celebration, student leaders thought there was room for growth.

“I would really like other events, at least three events, including the assembly and Unions Unite,” Vargas said. “I think we should have planned it well ahead, cause we kind of started doing things the week of.”

Unions Unite and the assembly weren’t the only parts of Multicultural Week. PowerPoint slides were shown in classes celebrating accomplished people of color.

Unfortunately, student leaders had some concerns about the slides.

“[The PowerPoint slides] didn’t have the impact we were hoping for in some classes, as [not all] teachers showed the slideshow in classes,” Souza-Ponce said. “And that wasn’t necessarily with mal intent, it might have just slipped their mind.”

Despite the issues, Multicultural Week was overall seen favorably by the student unions.

“I feel like it was such a success in the end,” Vargas said. “I really hope for future generations it’s the same feeling each year and that we get to celebrate [our cultures].”



Student union members end the assembly with a group dance, containing Latino, Philipino, Eritrean and NewJeans’ music and moves. (Emma Steinberg)

Multicultural Week culminates in assembly

Annie Welman *Editor-In-Chief*



Multicultural Club president Semai Hagos (11) (left) and JSU president Izzy Kim (12) (right) introduce the assembly. (Emma Steinburg)

With billowing flags, a collection of dance performances and an audience clapping along, Multicultural Week came to a close. This celebratory assembly came about after a month of planning and practice by the ethnic student unions, who banded together in projects throughout the week.

Among those who participated was Izzy Kim, the co-president of Jewish Student Union (JSU).

“Our intention ... is to honor the intersectionality of our identities and cultures,” Kim said as she introduced the assembly to students.

Malik Prince, a BHS coach and Black Student Union (BSU) faculty adviser, led an exuberant opening of the assembly. Prince called out various nations as student representatives ran around the gym waving their flags. Philippines, Eritrea, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Afghanistan, Cherokee Nation and Crow Tribe were all included in the flag run.

Then, several multilingual students shared a joint poem. They discussed their experiences at BHS and encouraged a celebration of differences, all while alternating between various different languages. Along with the following performances, this poem sought to make students feel seen, as diverse representation can be limited at BHS.



Three Skandia Folkdance Society dancers danced on the gym floor while two members played the fiddle. (Arden Rathkopf)

“It’s really striking that I have been in SPS since first grade and I’ve never had a teacher of color,” Junior Anya Souza-Ponce, Latinx Student Union president, said. “I think it’s so important to have a diverse student body and staff because that is how we are able to see ourselves and see our identities and our representations and teachers have such a big influence over kids.”

Language teacher Christina Russell assisted in writing the poem, which served as a “multilingual welcome” for the assembly.

Following the poem, sophomore Violet Vargas was the first to take the dance floor. Vargas danced to the song “Palomita,” in a style of Mexican folklore. She clicked her heels against the gym floor with intricate steps and swirled a billowing red skirt to the beat of audience cheers and claps.

The next performers were guests from the Skandia Folkdance Society, invited to join the assembly in recognition of Ballard’s Norwegian roots. Clad in colorful skirts and buckled shoes, they took the audience by storm. Three couples danced in circles across the floor, accompanied by an announcer and live fiddle player. Highlights, of



Jennifer Garcia Cruz (10) places her hand towards the center of the circle as part of the Philipino routine. (Arden Rathkopf)

which there were many, included cartwheels, twirls and a four-person dance that involved complex partner tradeoffs.

After the guest performers left the floor, they were followed by four other dance acts, performed by a collection of students, family and community members.

Senior Michelle Angel Cabrera and her older sister showcased their knowledge of Filipino dance with their performance of “Binasuan.” Dressed in floral skirts with flowers pinned in their hair, they danced with glasses in their hands and balanced on their heads.

“The glasses are traditionally filled with rice wine and this is performed during joyful gatherings,” sophomore Vicki Valdes Antonio said during the assembly.



Coach Malik Prince hypes the crowd as he introduces the countries for the flag run. (Emma Steinburg)

For Cabrera, this was an exciting opportunity to celebrate her experience with dance. She has been learning different styles from the Filipinas Performing Arts of Washington State for about 2 years, but has always been a dancer.

“I’ve been a performer for a while, and so it’s my favorite part to always share ... what I’ve worked on and everything,” Cabrera said.

Adding on, Cabrera cleared things up for skeptical viewers.

“If anybody [asks] if the glasses that I was balancing on top of my head were real, they are real [and] ... I was balancing them. They were not glued to my head,” Cabrera said.

After an eruption of cheers for Cabrera, dancers with PASIFIKA followed suit, performing Tongan and Samoan dances. Students spoke of the value in faith and family as they introduced the performances.

Eight dancers with the Polynesian Student Alliance (PSA) took the floor, lined up in two rows. Throughout the dance, family members and others tossed money towards the dancers, littering the gym floor with bills as the dancers performed.

To close out the assembly, students across various student unions united in a final, collaborative dance.

“We planned it for ... two-ish weeks, but we only were able to practice it the week of,” Cabrera said. “We just mashed all the cultures together; it was really fun to plan.”

Moving onto and off of the dance floor interchangeably, the student performers alternated between different styles of dance and music.

Student speakers wrapped up the assembly by thanking those who contributed and emphasizing the importance of the event.

“Thanks to all of our talented performers who’ve put in so much work to celebrate their cultures with us and shared this piece of what makes us, us,” Souza-Ponce said. “In a homogenized, white community, it is so important for those of us with strong connections to our cultures to be able to find community and preserve and celebrate our identities.”

New chat

chat.openai.com/chat

ChatGPT makes its mark on student integrity

Olivia Schaer and Alina Zahn Staff Reporters

In recent months, issues of plagiarism and cheating among students have risen to a new level with Generative Pre-trained Transformers, or ChatGPT. The San Francisco-based Open AI software company reached over 1 million users within the first week of its launch with users logging on across the globe.

The software as a whole is an autoregressive language model that uses deep learning to generate human-like texts. The model learns from human feedback and is projected to generate a revenue of 1 billion dollars by the end of 2024.

Over the course of the next few years, chatbot extensions like ChatGPT could reduce the employment of college-educated workers specializing in web design, journalism, coding, graphic design, media writers, legal industry workers, market research and teachers, as a Business Insider article describes.

Because ChatGPT and other AI writing platforms specialize in generating human-like pieces, who is to say what work was produced by an individual versus a browser extension?

Various questions about this revolutionary technology have been raised: Who is using this software? How exactly does it work? Can it be accessed on school laptops? The answers to these questions, however, are best answered by the users, students.

An anonymous junior gave insight into how ChatGPT works.

"There are five different formats for the different types of essays you can write," he said.

In addition to the variety of prompts the software can respond to, students have noticed that AI-generated writing tends to achieve high grades.

"The lowest grade I have ever gotten from using this was a B+," he said.

Another anonymous student discussed how he heard about this 4.0- promising software.

"My friend told me about it," he said.

AI technology has become increasingly prevalent, and according to another anonymous junior, he feels it's taking over.

"I'd say 50% of students use it at our school, they just lie about it," he said.

He also speculated that this takeover will be observed outside of schools.

"It is definitely going to take jobs," he said.

This software has a presence on social media apps as well, with platforms such as Snapchat adding a feature where users can interact with a human-like chatbot.

"My AI is even on Snapchat Plus," he said.

This anonymous student also shared how school laptops, which typically cannot access AI writing platforms, can be adapted to have these programs.

"There is a way to download an extension on a school laptop," he said. "Turnitin.com doesn't detect it."

If this software is accessible during school hours, it is plausible that students rely on it for daily assignments.

Katrina Katre, ELA teacher and AP coordinator, spoke about her experience as someone who has seen AI software grow in popularity.

"I'm trying not to panic because I have been alive long enough to see how tech can be integrated in a successful way and we can all adapt," Katre said. "It definitely prompts a question of the value of academic integrity."

As an educator, Katre wants there to remain some form of student autonomy when it comes to her assignments.

"As a teacher, I don't think it's avoidable," she said.

Katre has tried to fend off the threats that chatbots pose to her assignments.

"My prompts are so dense that ChatGPT could not respond to them so far now I don't feel my curriculum is threatened," Katre said.

As far as maintaining integrity, Katre has some suggestions.

"It would involve supporting teachers and believing in their professional opinion of a student's work being considered faulty or cheating," she said.

Kristin Storey, an ELA teacher, feels far more optimistic about the future coexistence of traditional language education and AI tools.

"Frankly, I am quite intrigued," Storey said. "I have seen tabs open on computers and I have seen things written by students that don't match things that they have written in the past."

Storey understands the potential of the ChatGPT software and doesn't want her students to feel ashamed for wanting to use this resource.

"It's only going to get better at what it does. The real question is how to maintain integrity while using it as a tool," Storey said. "I still want to encourage all of my students to be independent thinkers while understanding that this is a resource and is not completely off the table when it comes to my assignments."

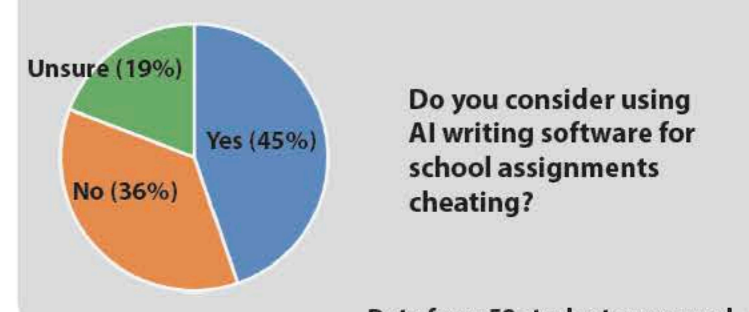
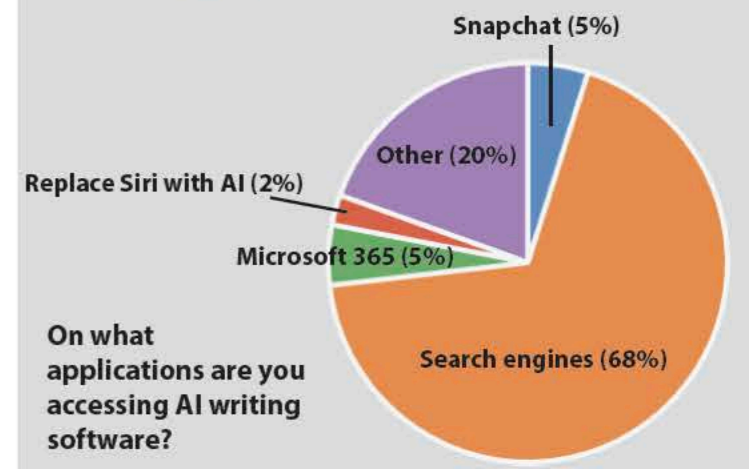
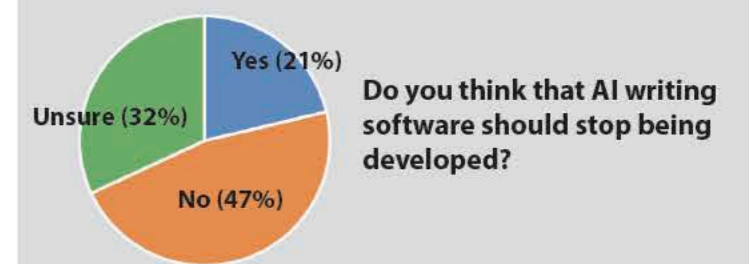
Storey sees the upside to the situation as a whole.

"In some ways, I find this development very exciting," Storey said.

This software is complex, and after hearing the different student and teacher perspectives it's clear that ChatGPT is impactful. In the upcoming years, we will learn shortly about what kind of effects this software will have on the school community and what steps will need to be taken to preserve student integrity.

Send a message...

BY THE NUMBERS



Data from 50 students surveyed

49%

of students have used AI writing software at least once

Data from 50 students surveyed



Seattle Kraken cuts girls' hockey programs

The team created a girls' hockey environment, but are now cutting more than half of their ice time

Penelope Neireiter Staff Reporter

The Western Washington Female Hockey Association (WWFHA), also known as the Washington Wild, is committed to promoting girls' ice hockey and expanding female players in the Pacific Northwest. Since the opening of the three-rink Kraken Community Ice plex in Northgate, the girls teams have had a place where they can practice and play.

However, the Kraken, Seattle's newest NHL team, has cut the ice time for the girl's Wild hockey program by nearly 60% for next season. On top of that, they have also asked that the 8U, 10U and

12U girls house programs be stopped altogether. This news comes as a shock to the Wild community, which has seen record growth and demand for their programs. There are many girls around Washington that are angered by these remarks, including Izzy Kim, a senior on the Washington Wild girls 14U-19U development team.

"The situation is deeply upsetting mostly because it's purely a capitalistic and greed-based choice from the Kraken," Kim said. "They don't see an issue with that because they're trying to build their monopoly over hockey in the area."

The Kraken has defended their decision by citing the need to make room for their AAA boy's teams and expand their adult programs. While this move may make sense from a business perspective, it is evident that the impact on young girls who love hockey has significant negative consequences.

The Wild Hockey Program describes in their website that they have always strived to provide a supportive and empowering environment for girls to play hockey. It's a place where they can feel comfortable and confident, and where they can develop their skills without fear of judgment.

Kraken's decision in cutting girls' ice time has been a persistent topic for months, causing frustration and inequality in the sport. This has not only affected the development and opportunities of female players, but also perpetuated gender disparities in ice hockey.

"[The Kraken have] been trying to shut us down and make us pretty much disappear for a while now," Kim said.

Despite this setback, the Wild programs are determined to find a way to continue providing a supportive environment for young girls who love hockey. They are exploring all options and are committed to finding a way forward, but it's clear that they'll need the support of the local community to make it happen.

It's apparent that the impact of the Kraken's decision will be felt far beyond the ice rink. It's a reminder of the importance of supporting programs that empower and inspire young girls. The Wild programs may have lost some of their ice time, but they haven't lost their spirit.



Senior hockey player Bella Neireiter (97) skating uprink in a 14U-19U intersquad Wild scrimmage. (Courtesy of Meg Patillo)

Baseball player compares school sports in Korea to Seattle

New student-athlete Julian Pyo adjusts from a full time athletic schedule in his hometown of Daegu, South Korea

Alina Zahn Staff Reporter

Most 16-year-olds could never imagine moving across the world to a place they'd never been before. This life altering change was what Julian Pyo experienced in December of 2022.

Moving from Daegu, Korea was a shocking experience.

"I grew up there my whole life until moving here," Pyo said.

The small city where he grew up had a different culture, especially for education. Pyo started playing baseball when he was just seven years old. His love for the sport of baseball would begin to detract from school life.

In fact, throughout middle school and high school, Pyo didn't even attend school.

"Korean education [is] very different," Pyo said.

Instead of a school and sports schedule typical to American high school athletics, Pyo followed a rigorous full-time baseball training schedule.

"I couldn't go to class because I was a baseball player, and our school practice was all day," Pyo said.

Despite the all-consuming nature of South Korean high school baseball, Pyo loved being able to play the sport he is so passionate about all the time.

Pyo plays the middle infield and outfield positions.

He is very consumed by this sport, and the dramatic change that came with adopting Seattle's more limited sports schedule was a major shift.

"It's very weird to only play two hours a day," he said. "I used to play 10 hours a day."

However, Pyo knows that his education is very important. In fact, a higher quality education was the primary reason his family decided to move.

"Our school culture was bad, I knew I wanted to go to college and be educated," Pyo said.

Pyo feels that the popularity of baseball in South Korea has a lot to do with the lack of competing major sports.

"We don't have football in Korea, it's just baseball, which makes it a lot more

popular for people to play," Pyo said.

Although this has been a drastic change for Pyo, he believes that Seattle is where he is supposed to be.

"I miss my players in Korea, but I am happy to be here," he said.



Pyo playing for his high school in Korea. (Courtesy of Julian Pyo)

Brazilian student-athlete's transition to Seattle

Since moving here, exchange student Eduardo Lavender of Rio Grande has experienced differences in school, soccer and other aspects of life

James Liska Sports Editor

Brazilian Eduardo Lavender, known by most as “Dudu,” is participating in a six month exchange student program, and has joined the boys’ varsity soccer team.

Traveling over 6,000 miles to come here, Lavender has observed drastic differences when comparing life in Seattle to that of Rio Grande.

Lavender noted that Seattle is much more car-centric than his hometown.

“In Brazil you usually walk or ride a bike every place,” Lavender said. “Here I know that I need to get a ride to go places; things are more spread out. You can’t drive [at age] 16 in Brazil, we just can drive [at age] 18, so it’s a big difference.”

Being from a tropical climate, Lavender also said that the cold weather was one of the most noticeable differences.

Lavender said that sports are structured differently in Brazil.

“In Brazil, we play sports [separate] from school,” Lavender said. “Here you see everybody playing sports after school, and it’s interesting because we don’t have this in Rio Grande.”

Despite being from Brazil, a country that has historically been a dominant force in the soccer/football world, Lavender has been impressed by the level of play here in Seattle.

“I was really impressed because I thought it [would] be so different, but it’s not,” Lavender said. “My varsity team is so good...it’s relatively similar [to] how it is in Brazil.”

Because of Brazil’s prestige in the sport, Lavender initially noticed a high set of expectations for him as a player.

“When I said ‘I’m from Brazil and I play soccer,’ everybody [was] like ‘oh my god, Neymar?’ but I like the expectation, [it] makes me improve myself more,” Lavender said.

Even though Lavender considers the level of play

here to be more or less on par with the level of play in Brazil, he has noticed a substantially different style of play.

“Here, I’ve seen that you use your body [to] make plays, but in Brazil, you create your own skills in the game, [and] it’s more for you,” Lavender said. “I prefer how we play here...I like how the team works when you pass to make plays.”

Lavender primarily plays midfield and center back, where he focuses on distributing the ball upfield to initiate attacks and counterattacks.

“I really like to play for the team, so I like to read the play for the team and help make plays upfield,” Lavender said.

Along with the adjustments to the style of game, Lavender has also had to adapt to differences off the pitch.

“It is difficult because I am changing my language ... every single day I learned about Portuguese and now it’s different,” Lavender said.

“I think I’m doing pretty well. I have some friends already and I like my team.”

Lavender appreciates the variety of classes offered in American high schools. “There are a lot of classes to choose from and a lot of different sports that you can do,” Lavender said.

“I like the kind of freedom that this school gives you. [Also], Ballard’s about four times bigger than my other school, so it’s interesting.”

Lavender said that his favorite classes are weight training and algebra.



Eduardo Lavender (12) of Rio Grande, Brazil warming up pregame. (Finn Keenan)

Lavender shared some closing thoughts about his experience as a high school exchange student.

“In my first two months in Seattle, it was a really [big] change in my [life],” Lavender said. “How I live, how I do my breakfast, how I eat, how I drink, everything is different. But I’m really enjoying [it] because it’s a unique experience.”

Mariners enter transformative new MLB season

In late March, the 2023 season of Major League Baseball kicked off, featuring a set of new rules incorporated into the game. How will the Mariners fare?

Amare Srinivasan Staff Reporter

The 2022 season ended in a promising trajectory for the Mariners. After finally ending their 21 year drought of not making the playoffs, the Mariners knocked off the Toronto Blue Jays in the wildcard, but fell in the ALDS to the eventual champions, the Houston Astros. After their season ended, the Mariners went into the offseason determined to make the team as well rounded as possible.

While the Mariners did lose key bats in free agency, they attempted to upgrade and retool the roster around their core pieces. The main acquisitions the Mariners made was trading for former all-star and veteran outfielder Teoscar Hernandez from Toronto. In addition to this, the Mariners traded designated hitter Jesse Winker and infielder Abraham Toro to Milwaukee for 2nd

baseman Kolton Wong. The Mariners also sent former American League rookie of the year Kyle Lewis to Arizona for catcher Cooper Hummel.

However, offseason acquisitions weren’t the only change in baseball this year. New rules were implemented by the league, including a “pitch clock” which gives the pitcher a limited amount of time to start winding up, and the batter a time limit for getting in his stance. The rule was implemented in order to speed up the game, and to increase viewership among the sport. The league also decided to make the bases larger in order to increase the chances of a stolen base.

Senior Kaden Larson approves of MLB’s rule changes.

“The new rules are beneficial to baseball because of the increased action in less time,” Larson said.

“These rules will benefit teams who steal bases often, and the pitch clock can help runners time up with the pitcher.”

The Mariners have now started their 2023 campaign, but have not started as planned. Beginning the season with a 6-8 record (as of April 11), the Mariners are still adjusting to their newly put together roster and the rule changes around the league.

“The Mariners can turn it around by calling up young pitching talents like Emerson Hancock and Bryce Miller from the minor leagues, by moving Jarred Kelenic higher in the batting order, and by waiting for Robbie Ray to come back healthy,” Larson said.

After a promising 2022 campaign, the Mariners are looking to get back on track.

'The Secret Garden' is the perfect spring musical

The show's themes showcase the dedication and talent of students and staff

Maisy Clunies-Ross *Opinions Editor*

I'll admit, I was initially skeptical of "The Secret Garden" as a musical. I remember the book being slow and gloomy, with few characters, built on a melancholy atmosphere and evocative descriptions of the natural world.

I wasn't sure how well the narrative or themes could be adapted to a musical, a generally less subdued medium. And yet, as I sat back to watch the show my doubt lessened, replaced only by feelings of awe and amazement. I was immersed, the seats of the auditorium a distant memory, replaced by the lush greenery and complex characters of Misselthwaite manor. It felt magical.

Setting the Stage

While challenges arrive with every production, this show was put on under especially extenuating circumstances. Without the oversight of the director initially intended to helm this production, the cast and crew had to get creative. Many people stepped up, taking on larger leadership roles and responsibilities.

Choreographer, Eia Waltzer, became the director and choreographer, joined by Indira Rampersad who took on the jobs assistant director, accent coach and dramaturge.

They put on a stunning show and received appreciation and acclaim from those who worked with them. Other leaders included choir director, Courtney Rowley, as the vocal coach and the band director, Jay Gillespie, as the director of the pit orchestra.

Students also played a major role in the execution and success of the show stepping into leadership roles that were previously reserved for adult directors.

The Story

The Secret Garden is a classic, a dark but optimistic tale about the power of life starring the bratty Mary Lennox (sophomore Anna Hoffman). The show begins in India, amidst a cholera outbreak, which kills Mary's parents and the only life she's ever known. Mary is then taken to Misselthwaite manor, to live with her Uncle Archibald Craven (senior Milo Palmer), on the dreary English moors.

Mary is upset to leave India behind, which manifests in her being rude to those around her. The situation isn't helped by her Uncle Archibald, a man so consumed by grief about his late wife, Lily (junior Izzy Rampersad), he pays little attention to those who still live around him.

The audience learns more about the characters' complex relationships through long heartfelt ballads between Lily and Archibald and flashback sequences with Lily and her sister, Mary's mother Rose (junior Amelia Wignall), who had a fraught relationship leading up to Lily's death.

Lily marries him nevertheless, bringing joy to a once unhappy man. Without her, Archibald returns to his solemnity, his lust for life dying as she did. Although she is combative and petulant, Mary would go on to fill the same role as Lily and bring joy back into the house, and back into the lives of those who reside there.

Through the help of Martha (senior Ella



Corinne Iacobucci (10), Sophie Nash (11) and Anna Hoffman (10) depict the pivotal moment in which Mary meets Colin, this is one of the many touching relationships found in the show. (Emma Steinburg)

Papineau), Martha's brother Dicken (senior Elliot Jacupcak), the gardener Ben (sophomore Sam Ruzumna), Mary develops a love for the outdoors, becoming friends with the robin who lives in the garden, and learning more about the plants. After finding the key to the titular Secret Garden, Mary begins to spend her time there, rehabilitating it, in spite of the warnings.

Mary's pattern of snooping and disobeying directions continues, when she finds Mr. Craven's bedridden son, Colin (sophomore Corinne Iacobucci). Colin is a perfect counterpart to Mary, equally as bitter and haughty as she. They bicker constantly, but clearly care for each other deeply.

Despite Colin's protests, Mary believes going outside would be good for him. She convinces him to visit the the garden with her where, with the support of Mary, Dicken, Martha, and Ben, he is finally able to walk. It wasn't worry, limited freedom, or the fierce judgment of Dr. Craven (senior Alden Payne) that he needed. He needed Mary. He needed fresh air. He needed a friend.

While few characters are chipper or classically kind, they show their dedication and compassion for each other in other ways.

Even the overbearing and antagonistic Dr. Craven demonstrates care for his family, even though it often manifests in meddling and control.

It felt like there were no true villains, simply lonely pained people learning to cope and love each other. Mary's relationships with those around her mirror the state of the roses in the garden. They appear harsh at first, but with some time and care the beauty and complexity that lies beneath can be revealed.

The Music

The pit orchestra, comprised of students from both band and orchestra, led by Jay Gillespie, added subtly but beautifully to the production. Like stage crew, the musicians often go overlooked, dressed in black, and hidden from the bright gleam of the spotlight.

They too are an integral piece of the ensemble, heightening the emotion of every scene with crescendos and descents, rising and falling notes.

When combined with the vocal talents of the cast, the songs always served a purpose, whether it be character development or moving the plot forward. The consistent refrain of 'I Heard Someone Crying' set the mood and atmosphere of the house perfectly, the songs "Lily's Eyes" and "How Could I Ever Know" delved into the depth of Archibald's love for Lily, and "Come Spirit, Come Charm" provided an upbeat and catchy number to solidify the themes of community and rebirth in the show.

The Costumes

Just like the actor's performances and the lush greenery of the set, the costumes were stunning. The chorus, who represented the group killed by cholera, all had sickly greyish yellow makeup and dressed in muted earth tones.

Their distinctly light, dusty color palette served to clearly differentiate them from the rest of the cast, communicating both their ghostly nature in relation to the live characters and their connection to India and Mary's life before she came to the moor's.

For the costumes in this show, a lot is revealed by color. The ensemble's colors distinguish them, Mary's colors represent her evolution, and palette is used to denote a character's possible moral standing.

Curtain Call

In many ways, the story of the production mirrors the story of the Secret Garden. Against the odds and despite past challenges, a group came together to create something beautiful.

For Mary, it started with a dream, a hope for a little bit of earth, that flourished into something greater, but she wouldn't have been able to do it without the guidance and support of those around her, like Martha, Dicken and Ben.

For the BHS production of Secret Garden, it wouldn't have been possible without the relentless dedication of the cast, crew, pit orchestra and the directors. Both the show and the story end the same way, everyone standing in the garden, surrounded by the greenery, taking in the growth and joy around them. In this way, both were a triumph of time and effort, one that reminds all who see it, just how wonderful life can be.

'Perfect match' and the dystopia of Netflix dating shows

One of the platform's newest creations is contrived to cater to a rapidly decreasing attention span

Alexa Terry A&E Editor



(Netflix)

I was recently perusing the vast array of entertainment the streaming platform "Netflix" has to offer. Scrolling past various offensive stand-up comedy specials, "Big-Mouth" adjacent adult animation and teen rom-coms, I eventually landed on the newest dating show produced by the platform, "Perfect Match."

The premise of the show is yet another ripoff of the UK hit "Love Island," in which ten hot people are put in a beautiful tropical resort together and told to mate. The twist? Every participant has previously been on another Netflix reality show.

When making my decision, I was expecting a hate watch. Under certain definitions, that is exactly what I got. I found the relationships cringy, many of

the people bizarre or just awful, and the setups to be predictable. However, another part of me could not look away.

This is of course, the appeal of reality TV: we want to watch people we feel that we know, engage in a life we will never get to experience. However the newest iteration of the genre we are seeing on Netflix shows such as "Perfect Match" is a complete 180 from where it began.

In the past, shows such as "The Real Housewives" franchise, "Jersey Shore" and "Vanderpump Rules" have gained cult followings due to the unique and expressive personalities of their subjects. While parts of these shows are no doubt manufactured to appeal to the limited attention spans of their viewers, they did not rely on cheap gimmicks to give the viewer a hit of dopamine every three minutes. Though parts may have been scripted, the lives these people were living were real.

This is where they stray from recent shows of the same genre. On "Perfect Match" there are hardly five minutes that pass without the contestants being forced into some sort of challenge, arbitrary pairing or interference from the host, Nick Lachey. Though the personalities on the show can be interesting, the plot doesn't rely on them for entertainment. Instead, the plot relies on the producers to create interesting dynamics among the cast.

Additionally, the progress being made in relationships is seemingly constant. Most of the conversations between couples revolve around their current state as a couple.

Of course the relationships are the main point of the show, but how can they possibly be forming connections when the only thing they seem to have in common is their mutual attraction to each other.

It seems this is not the most effective way to start a long term relationship because not a single couple from the show is still together today, even Joey and Kariselle who ended the season by getting engaged.

The charm of classic reality TV was the lack of production, the drama was rewarding because it wasn't being forced down our throat.

This cannot be said for "Perfect Match." From the second characters are introduced, the screen is overrun with flashing lights, writing on the screen and cheesy catch phrases such as Chloe who "puts the sex in Essex."

The characters on the show are similarly contrived, with all of them having previously been on a Netflix reality show of some sort, creators are able to hand pick the people who will create as toxic and precarious an environment as possible.

A standout example of this character selection is one of the series villains, Franchesca. On her former show, "Too Hot to Handle" she was known for stirring the pot, often making poor (yet entertaining) decisions regarding her relationships to other members.

On "Perfect Match", she is no different. Selecting the men she wants to chase and then leaving them in the dust when she decides they are no longer entertaining. Even going so far as to make fan favorite Dom, cry in a confessional.

Everybody on the show plays a role, as if they are fictional characters creating an intentional plot. Franchesca is the villain, Joey and Kariselle are the two lovebirds with a long history, Chloe is the ditzy brit and Chase is the noncommittal heartbreaker.

Rather than containing depth and personality as real people do, the characters are confined to tropes so the show can be an easy and enjoyable viewing experience, requiring minimal thought from the audience.

While there is nothing wrong with entertainment made for cheap laughs and entertainment or those who consume it (I have had periods in my life where Netflix reality television is the only entertainment I can stomach), the popularity of the genre is symbolic of a larger shift in our culture.

"Perfect Match" is a glimpse into the future of reality TV, a future in which we no longer want to be dedicated to the media we consume. Instead, we just want to consume it raw as if it is a pot of leftover halloween candy, providing dopamine hit after dopamine hit until we vomit.

Three, two, one

Two friends live out their last day in 'On the Count of Three'

Evan Sadler Staff Reporter

Directed by and starring Jerrod Carmichael, "Val" and Christopher Abbot's "Kevin" are two best friends who would do anything for each other. These lifelong friends are currently at the end of their ropes and see no way out of their situations but to end their lives.

Forming a suicide pact, they set out on a journey to savor their last day on Earth, embarking on adventures of a comic nature, with the recurring theme of a dead-end at the end of the film. The film features a menagerie of adventures, including a pregnant girlfriend, the murder of a psychiatrist and the attempted robbing of Val's father.

The movie is a feel-good indie film for the most part, and although it speaks on mental health, male suicide rates and the idea that death is the only

exit this movie really is a drama at its finest.

After rewatching this film it only gets better. From the chilling soundtrack to the engaging camera work, "On the Count of Three" made me feel like I was along for the ride with Val and Kevin, and, spoiler alert, the pivotal ending scene in which Kevin shoots himself in the head is one of the most well directed scenes in all of film.

The development of the two's friendships in their town made the film extremely engaging, retracing early life trauma and broken relationships along the way. This is a movie which tackles depression, indecisiveness, and what it means to want to take your own life, all with a touch of humor that comes crashing down in the final minutes.



(IMDb)

Rapper EBK Jaaybo and the negative portrayal of rappers in the media

Clyde Curtis Staff Reporter

“Hip-hop artists have often used albums and other creative outlets to challenge the hyper-caucasian society they live in. Naturally, the hyper-caucasian media conglomerate isn’t very fond of these messages being spread, causing a rift to exist between rap artists and the media.”

- Matthew Traverso

Stockton California’s EBK Jaaybo is an up and coming rapper just now gaining mainstream attention following his recent release from prison, a new track titled “Accidental smoke.” Jaaybo served just under two years in the Stockton County Jail for allegedly selling thirteen illegal firearms to an undercover ATF agent.

Fortunately, Jaaybo only played a small role in the alleged crimes, and was a minor at the time of the offenses so he dodged the almost inevitable prison time that comes with them. While Jaaybo maintains a hardened street soldier image, he is vocal about the mental health issues that come with his lifestyle, and doesn’t condone it.

In one of his most popular songs, “Street Love Song (PTSD),” he raps about losing family and

friends to gun violence, suffering from PTSD and living in constant paranoia of the life he used to live catching up to him: “When I told you I was damaged, I was serious Sometimes I cry ‘cause my pops ain’t get to hear this s*** Even a thug be in his feelings F*** love, I’m reminiscing ‘bout them killings.”

He also raps about how being surrounded by violence from a young age shapes you, and how quickly loss can change you: “when Casino lost his life, that was the saddest day I ain’t even shed a tear, my mama had to pray, She knew her baby changed.”

Songs like this are what set Jaaybo apart from a lot of the other popular underground rappers right now. While some of Jaaybos music could be perceived as violent or toxic, a lot of it is him simply rapping about what comes with his hard upbringing.

Jaaybo has been trying to focus on music and stay out of the streets since his release. In a recent interview on the NoJumper podcast, he was asked how he feels about being back. Jaaybo told the host, “I’m feeling good bro I’m just happy to be home, you feel me, I’m happy to be alive for sure.” In the same interview he talks about wanting to “move different” and focus on his career, and how there’s nothing good for him back in Stockton.

He also talks about losing friends while in jail, and specifically about losing his close friend and up and coming rapper, Young Slo-be. Earlier this year, Young Slo-be was tragically killed in a shooting in Manteca, California over a dispute with another man outside a restaurant.

Jaaybo talks about how he and Slo-be had recently settled an issue they had, and how they had plans for the future that they hadn’t put in place.

Growing up in Stockton and other dangerous

areas in the United States requires you to grow up fast, be hard and learn how to avoid the negativity that surrounds you. With only a small amount of room for upward mobility, lots of kids from these areas turn to the streets from a young age just to survive and support their families.

A frequent issue in mainstream media today is the dehumanization and misclassification of rappers. Rappers are often reduced to their criminal records and past, putting their talent to the side.

Instead of being treated like other musicians who are praised, supported and embraced by the mainstream, they are shunned, labeled as ignorant and considered violent criminals who snuck their way into the music industry – instead of artists.

Celebrities have had controversies since the beginning of time, and have been forgiven and given the luxury of a second chance, while when a Black man from a “dangerous” neighborhood messes up they are seen as subhuman and incapable of change.



(Spotify)

Boygenius lives up to their name in new album ‘the record’

Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus come together once again to produce ‘the record’

Annie Welman Editor-in-Chief

“Emily I’m sorry” is the song that started it all. After Phoebe Bridgers finished her most recent album, she sent a draft of the song to the rest of the group and asked if they could be a band once again. The album that followed was a true joy to listen to.

For those who are unfamiliar with the Boygenius trio, now is a great time to dive into the music of this indie folk rock supergroup. Despite having three different members who spend most of their time as stand-alone artists, none of the artists dominate, and each is given their own time to shine.

Older fans may know that they pulled together their first EP in a matter of days back in 2018, but “the record” shows just how enthralling they can become with more time.

Unlike some recent albums that feel like a collection of songs spliced together, each with choruses that are marketable on TikTok, “the record” feels like an intentional sequence of songs.

In the first three singles, for instance, each song has a distinct leader. Julien Baker sticks to her recognizable style in “\$20,” which was a head-banging single to lead with.

Then, Bridgers showcases her classic soft, candid lyrics in “Emily I’m Sorry,” the second single. To complete the first collection of songs, Lucy Dacus follows with my current favorite of the three, “True

Blue,” a song that is stunning, both lyrically and melodically.

Sticking to the album intentionality, the next songs slide into a more collaborative style. They are filled with “democratic fun,” as a Variety article put it. “Cool About It” is a lovely example of this, with each artist taking a verse for themselves, and then joining together in the background. Accompanied by minimal instrumentals and broken cleanly into three parts, it’s hard to imagine another group doing this song justice. With verses traded between artists and harmonies layered together, the shared songs are just as charming as the first singles, if not as distinctly memorable.

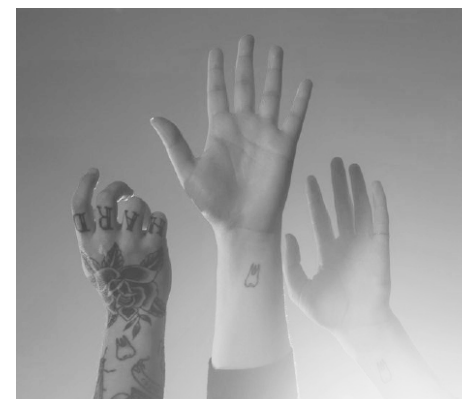
Another thing that adds charm to the album is the evident connection between the artists. Showcased in the video for “Not Strong Enough,” the trio appears to sincerely enjoy each other’s company. This video, which is paired with a 14 minute film for the other singles, is simply a compilation of causal, joyous moments they spent together.

Along with affection for one another, the 12 songs on “the record” express care for and knowledge of others in the music world. The trio loves to pack in references, some more subtle than others. For instance, the melody of the beginning verse in “Cool About It” mimics “The Boxer” by Simon & Garfunkel and the song title “Leanord Cohen,” provides a

direct reference before the lyrics begin.

Even the name of the band is a reference, this time to music culture more broadly. The name “Boygenius” pokes fun at male artists who are often considered divinely talented. In doing so, the trio seems to claim that “genius” for themselves.

Looking back on “the record” as a whole, it is clear why it received overwhelmingly positive reviews. There are times when I felt like the album and music videos rocked back and forth between pretentiously unpolished and wonderfully raw, but I nearly always ended up believing the latter. In the end, their cleverness and affection for each other push me over the edge. “The record” is an album you can listen to all the way through, made up of artists that blend together with remarkable ease.



Cover for the newest Boygenius album “the record.” (Spotify)

'The Last of Us' shows the best of us

Recent TV version of 'TLOU' paves the way for better video game adaptations

Hugo Heim Romero Staff Reporter

The video game "The Last of Us" or TLOU as known by fans, was released in 2013 to the Playstation 3. It was created by Naughty Dogs, LLC, famous for the "Uncharted" series. In March 2020, "The Last of Us" was announced to have a television adaptation. It was directed by the creator of the show "Chernobyl," Craig Mazin, who was familiar with post-apocalyptic settings.

In January 2023, the television series of "The Last of Us" released to critical acclaim and has started paving the way for other video game adaptations.

TLOU has been touted as one of the best story games ever created and so the announcement of a TV show being made about the game was no surprise.

The story is of a man named Joel, played by Pedro Pascal, and a young girl named Ellie, played by "Game of Thrones" veteran Bella Ramsey. The story follows these characters as they travel across the U.S. growing closer, after what can only be explained as a zombie outbreak.

The use of scientific explanation in describing the zombie outbreak makes it so that the viewer believes it may happen in real life.

At its core, TLOU is not about the zombie apocalypse, it's about a surrogate father-daughter relationship and what it means to protect your family. It is not just in Joel and Ellie where we see family, but through every part of the show. Such as the relationship between Bill and Frank in episode three, the siblings Sam and Henry, and Tommy and Maria.

TLOU is about allowing things to speak for themselves, from the story, to the score to the visuals, to emphasize subtleties.

The score of the games makes a triumphant, yet somber return. The soundtrack by Gustavo Santaolalla has been remastered to give it a crisper and more visceral feeling.

The tracks are succinct, often composed of one or two instruments.

Notes are often spread out and sustained, letting them linger in your mind, enough to allow one to fully immerse themselves in them but also giving them just a touch of anxiety, as one holds their breath waiting for that next note to ring out.

This anxiety continues throughout the visuals of TLOU. Often, the show depicts desecrated and ruined buildings overrun with moss and fungal roots growing onto them, making them seem not only overrun by the infection, but as if the cities themselves are living, breathing things.

TLOU is not restricted to one location either, showing vast forests, some with skeletons and corpses lining the dirt. Open fields with destroyed planes in the distance, and even perfectly kept settlements that contrast with the continuous destruction and death riddled throughout.

With the bombastic success of "Arcane," "The Witcher," last year's "Cyberpunk:

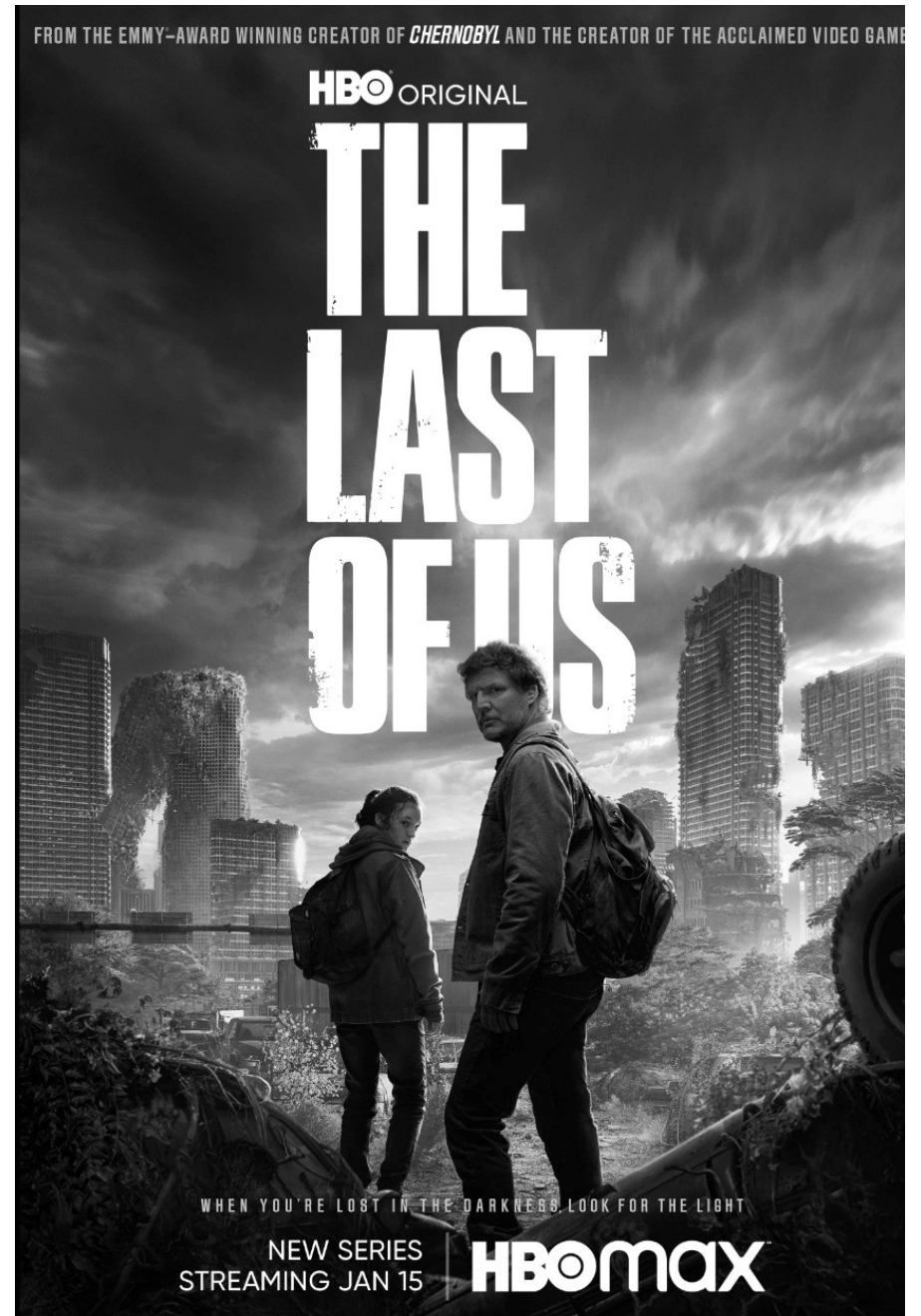
Edgerunners" and now TLOU, it seems that video game adaptations are finally taking a swing in the right direction after years of profound mediocrity.

From "Super Mario Bros" (1993) to "Silent Hill: Revelation 3D" (2012), video game adaptations have only received scornful insults from the original fanbases, heartless cash grabs to profit off of fans, whereas nowadays love can be felt through the screen.

Like "Arcane" being made by the artists of the original game or Henry Cavill being a huge nerd for "The Witcher."

The largest difference between TLOU and other successful video game adaptations is the fact that most of it came from the game. Of course there are many original pieces such as the fantastic episode three, but even if all the original pieces were removed, this still would have been a good show.

The fact that TLOU was made relatively faithfully to its source material and is so beloved will no doubt bring rise to many more competent and exact video game adaptations that will bring many more fans to their franchise.



(IMDB)



Ellie (Bella Ramsey) and Tess (Anna Torv) in Episode One of "The Last of Us." (HBO)

Advertising and overwhelm: the chaos of professional sports

Marley Helfer Copy Editor

What do monster truck shows, professional wrestling and hockey games have in common? They are all competitive and incredibly physical, but ultimately, they are chaotic. There are advertisements, flashing lights, obnoxiously loud noises and stadium-wide activities. While I am an athlete, I know nearly nothing about hockey. I was expecting to be completely lost attending a Seattle Kraken hockey game, anticipating a half time instead of three breaks and confused about the absence of hand balls (or pucks, in this case).

Instead, I found myself laughing at the ridiculousness of the event. From the five minute team entrance to the dance highlights and trivia games on the jumbotron every two minutes, it was overwhelmingly confusing and amusing.

I found myself slouching in my seat, embarrassed to be present at this monster truck show. Snacks were outrageously pricey and tickets ranged up to \$500. There was an employee walking around with a camera, ready to film another group of millennials dancing and chugging beer for the jumbotron. It was a relief when the game would finally resume – when I wouldn't have to watch another trivia game, card sort, dance party or stadium-wide activity.

So, why was my experience at this Kraken game so overwhelming? Why have live professional sports (like hockey) become so chaotic to watch? Why is there so much advertising, such high prices and so little attention paid to the game itself?

It comes back to a few unfortunately predictable things: money, attention and technology.

Behind the high prices and constant advertising, as you might expect, is the growth of consumerism. The Seattle Kraken was only recently founded, having the 2021-2022 season as their first in the

National Hockey League (NHL). The last time Seattle had a professional hockey team was in 1974, meaning the founding of the Kraken certainly received attention.

This high pricing is also a league-wide issue, with the NHL lacking access to online and TV broadcasting, instead pulling from their revenues. This in turn has caused NHL teams to have to up their prices to unreasonable levels, unlike professional football, baseball and basketball leagues.

It's not desirable to have to pay upwards of \$100 for a ticket to a sports game, nor is it desirable to pay that much for anything. As demand for tickets (in this case) increases, prices increase. As prices increase, things get cheap.

Another thing to consider is that not that long ago, hockey teams didn't have access to the technology to have this level of advertising and promotion. From 1973 to 2023, a mere 50 years, it's unbelievable how much technology has changed. We have gone from fax machines and blackberry phones to computers, iPhones, social media and ChatGPT. Was there a jumbotron 50 years ago constantly displaying advertisements for hockey merchandise, or a team app to play iPhone games on during the game?

Maybe that's why there was so little attention paid to the game of hockey itself; we are constantly having our attention pulled in every direction by ads for Kraken giveaways and for the new "Authentic Reverse Retro Jersey" for just \$125!

Beyond the money and the technology, though, why is this constant advertising successful? What keeps people going back to Kraken games or buying a season pass? Have you ever noticed that when filling up your car at a gas station – a minute and a



(Daphne Knox)

half-long period – a jingle and ad are played? It's an unfortunately brilliant thing marketers have done: they have taken advantage of the human need for distraction – to constantly have noise in our minds and our thoughts preoccupied.

I wish I could've come away from that Kraken game with that smile I saw all of my peers with. When I was able to, it was an engaging sport to watch; it was fast-paced, athletic and visually interesting. But with the constant advertising and overwhelm, it was impossible to pay any attention to the game. Given that sports are – at the heart of it – for entertainment, I have to give it to the Kraken: what an entertaining experience, for better or worse. Perhaps my confusion and overwhelm at this game was simply my experience, but it certainly was a notable one.

How to study for AP tests: Real methods by students

Xander Howarth and Olivia Schaer Staff Reporters

What I do to study!

It's a month before the big AP test and I'm so excited! Here's what I do to stay prepared:

1. First off, I pull out my color coded Cornell notes. They're extremely detailed and have even been used as the example for my other peers because of course! Highly recommend Cornell notes, they just help me organize my thoughts and notes in such a creative and helpful way.

2. After I pull my notes out, I of course get out my seven packs of index cards, which I spend an hour inscribing all the important information I can onto. I know some people use Quizlet or another app to remember their important terms, but I personally remember them more when writing them.

3. Once I have my finished flashcards, I then study a small chunk of each of the units covered. I fully put my time into the sections that I struggle with (which is rare), but would highly recommend!

4. I do this for about two hours before guzzling water and going to sleep before 9:00. I love having a schedule!

5. I do this over and over and over til it's the night of the test. I'm extremely prepared, like, so prepared.

6. So I make sure to journal, exercise and drink as much water as possible before going to bed before 8:00. I journal about how I'm feeling and I take an



(Tansy Velush)

hour-long jog and I drink a gallon of water!

7. The next morning I eat two slices of avocado toast with a protein-packed smoothie. A full stomach means a full mind.

8. I don't drink caffeine of any sort. Don't drink caffeine guys! Just get good sleep!

9. I took the test and I did great and amazing and I got a sticker for my hard work! The sticker is a gold star.

10. Because that shiny A is so worth it! So worth it! Because at the end of the day, I put everything into getting that perfect 5! Everything.

What do I do now?

It's four days before the big AP test. Here is a list

of how I must buckle down and prepare.

1. The truth is, I haven't even been keeping up with the reading since the start of the third quarter.

2. Since most of the work we've been doing is non-deliverable, I just cannot find the motivation to keep up.

3. My teacher is not helping me improve, they continually give me a low score on the work that I do turn in and I am so confused on what limits they are grading my assignments.

4. I have known about the date of this test since September, but haven't even looked inside my textbook out of fear for how behind I'll be.

5. So tonight I'll go home, sit in my bed hunched over, reading a large portion of text that I have little to no interest in.

6. Maybe I'll even do a couple of practice MCQs.

7. I wake up, eyes swollen from lack of sleep, and drudge down the stairs in search of a microwave burrito or month-old Kind bar.

8. After arriving at the Aux gym ten minutes before the test is about to start, I realize that I am about to sit in a small seat in a cold gym for four hours.

9. This is my chance to leave, skip the test entirely, but I don't, of course.

10. I just wanted to push myself by taking these classes, but I feel totally and completely stuck.

Rethinking honors policy: HCC can help but at what cost?

Sadie Clark News Editor

Ballard offers honors classes to all students when course selection occurs. Students can choose to check the small box next to sophomore year “World Lit and Comp - Honors” instead of general education. From the outside, it’s all so easy. Maybe a student has an extra homework problem on occasion, or maybe they have to write three essays instead of two, but it’s so accessible—right?

Background

Advanced Placement (AP) and honors classes are programs that aim to help students prep for college coursework. They’re often more challenging and cover more content, and both will boost a weighted GPA — half a point for honors and a full point for AP. While transcripts don’t list weighted GPAs, things like class rank, college credits and college applications are affected by whether or not a student takes these classes over general offerings.

One of the determining factors of whether or not a student will be encouraged to enter honors classes is whether or not they participated in a K-8 program called HCC, or Highly Capable Cohort. It’s about as pretentious as it sounds. The program offers young kids an opportunity to take accelerated humanities and STEM courses. Students are chosen for eligibility based on standardized test scores, grades and other academic records.

HCC is not required to qualify students for AP, honors or International Baccalaureate (IB) classes, but students from HCC programs are far more likely to enter those more advanced courses. In my personal experience as a former HCC kid, this “cohort” leads to greater academic self-confidence, but it also fosters a false sense of superiority over other learners.

Inequitable

The reality of the HCC program is that it’s been built on segregation. A survey conducted by the NAACP Youth Council found that both the socioeconomic and racial disparities within the HCC program are significant.

Studies show that the standardized tests used to qualify students into HCC have consistently been beneficial to wealthier students. Preparatory classes are expensive, and many of the resources to do well are barred by financial inequities.

A study done by Seattle Public Schools in 2020 shows the ways those wealth disparities also represent racial disparities. While 15% of SPS students are African American, only 1.8% of HCC-eligible students are Black; by comparison, while only 45.6% of SPS students are white, 63.2% of HCC-eligible students are white. Similar disparities can be shown for other BIPOC groups, such as indigenous, Latinx and Pacific Islander students.

Once you look slightly under the surface, you can easily see the racist reality of this system. Isolating select students, giving them special resources and telling them that they’re better than the other kids is a sure-fire way to perpetuate racism in a public school.

Argument for?

Now that there’s no question that the current system favors wealthy white kids, some concessions must be made. Not every kid learns the same way, and the idea of “general” education is definitely dysfunctional.

I can tell you, based on personal anecdote, that my time in my general education during elementary school made me miserable. My teacher didn’t like me because I was a disruptive student due to my boredom; I would read instead of doing my math homework, and I’d teach my friends crafts instead of paying attention to class activities. When I tested into HCC, my classes began to feel engaging and exciting, and my behavioral issues dropped away.

I have great difficulty within the discussion of honors policy. The system, as we know it, contains many crippling flaws that render it useless. The problem is that the system is actually supposed to promote the very equity it hurts. Not every learner is the same.

It was capitalism all along...

The thought I keep coming back to is that our current education system doesn’t actually promote learning; it promotes getting ahead. Students are encouraged by parents, colleges, educators and peers to choose classes that check off that honors box, regardless of whether it’s the right decision for them.

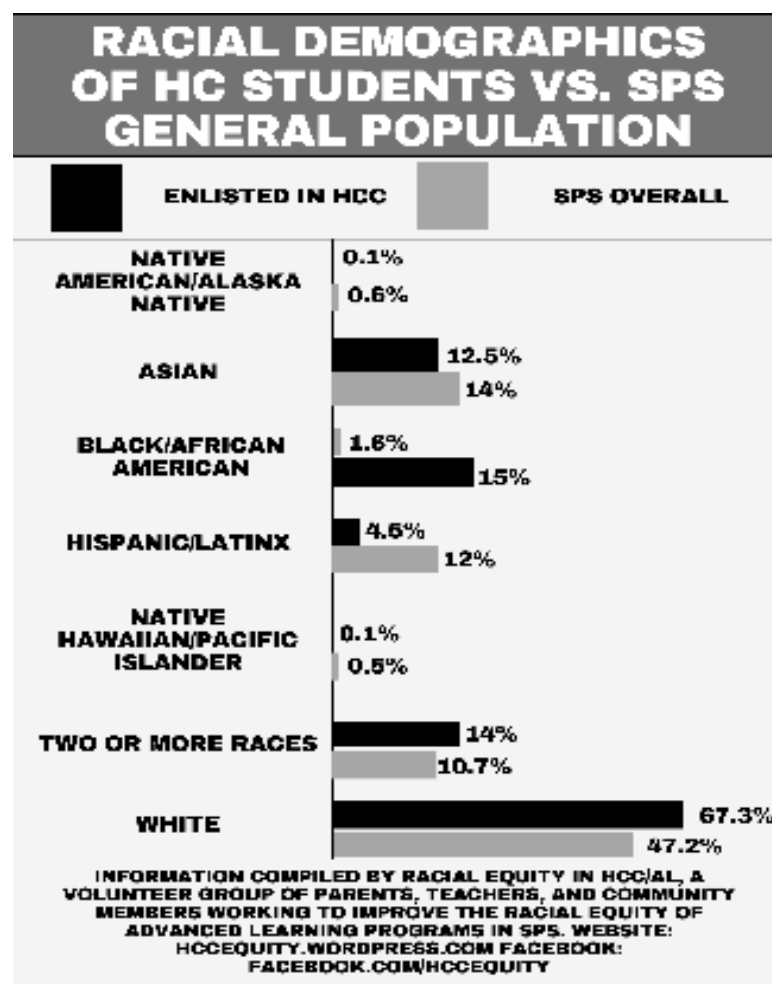
Our factory-style school system is not effective in promoting students with diverse learning styles. It’s not even a matter of speed of learning, but also what’s most effective for the individual.

I know I’m the most successful in discussion-based classes, but I have friends who freeze during discussions and would much rather independent work. I know people who can learn the most by making diagrams and maps and others who can absorb anything they need from copying notes out of a textbook.

Simply put, not everyone learns the same way or at the same pace, and that shouldn’t distinguish people, especially developing teens, as better or worse than their peers.

The inequity I mean to illustrate is that children in a school system are not pushed to be curious or work harder by being offered honors classes; they are pushed to be better workers. I would be fascinated to see what happens when schools stop valuing individuals based on how much they can buy into the system and start valuing students—children—based on their individuality and the unique abilities they hold.

This also ties into the racial inequities we see in HCC, and in turn, honors. It doesn’t benefit our



Disclaimer: Data was compiled in 2018. (Maisy Clunies-Ross)

current system to promote equality or individuality among students because the current system is built on the back of racial inequality for the purpose of white promotion. It doesn’t benefit our current system to promote people of different races, genders, sexual orientations, cultural backgrounds or financial backgrounds because what our society intrinsically looks for is the best, brightest, most efficient, most conforming little worker bee who won’t mess with our societal standards. Our students are not exempt.

School, for me, has always been a safe haven. I’ve been incredibly lucky to happen to check the boxes that result in academic success, and it’s frustrating to see that those same boxes become barriers for many of my peers. Education is supposed to be about becoming a whole person, and what I keep seeing is that it ends up just being about conformity to a list of standards.

I understand that what I want to see in a public education system is almost entirely impossible. Bare minimum needs are barely being met by funding, and the kind of systemic change in approach of academics necessary to actually benefit all students as opposed to the current economy is so far out of reach it hurts. As we approach honors policy and the way we present courses to students, all I ask is that we remind ourselves that school is about creating people, not a profit.

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Lucas Salm-Rojo

BEAVESDROPPING

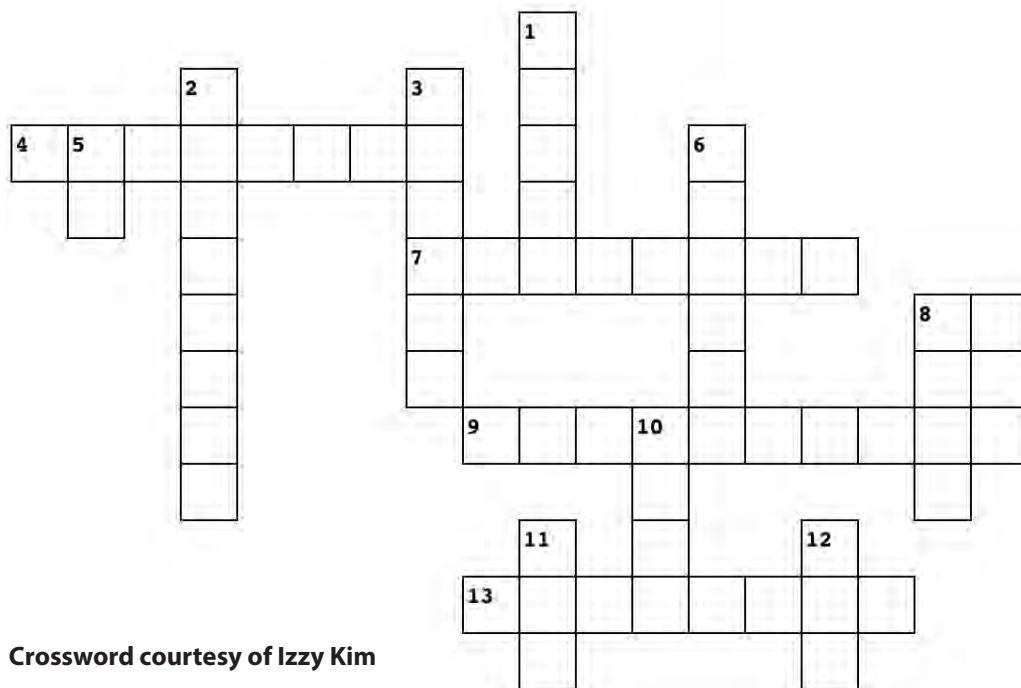
HEARD IN THE HALLWAYS: WANT IT TO BE FUNNIER? SAY FUNNIER THINGS

“I’m lowkey an alpha on the freeway. I be switching lanes and everything”

“My teenage BS detector just exploded”

“I think I’m going to start hanging around the tractor store until I get a husband ”

“What’s the definition of senioritis? I forgot”



Crossword courtesy of Izzy Kim

Across

- 4. Tailgate for this girl’s sport on April 25
- 7. Apps for current juniors and sophomores due May 5
- 8. Monday spirit day
- 9. Location for recent band and orchestra trip
- 13. Where choir performed over spring break (hint: NYC)

Hint: Spring class colors are all used!

Down

- 1. What you might call someone who is a newbie
- 2. Wednesday spirit day theme
- 3. Here comes the sun!
- 5. Centerfold issue
- 6. Blue + red
- 8. Artist who spells name with a !
- 10. Theme of spring dance
- 11. Where Ballard student art will be shown
- 12. ___ dye vs groutfit

Satire: Seattle schools infringe on swine wielding rights

Alexa Terry A&E Editor

Following the Tinker V. Des Moines Supreme Court case, it was ruled that students are able to express their freedom of speech within school as long as it doesn’t cause a substantial disruption to the educational process.

While bringing household pet such as a dog or a cat to school in order to freely express your love of furry friends would undoubtedly create a distracting and stinky learning environment, the district’s imminent ban on pigs in school is a violation of the rights of students, while simultaneously disregarding the many benefits that would be introduced by a growth of pig presence in public schools.

The ban on bringing common household pets such as dogs and cats has substantial backing, (the screeching meows of feline friends and the slobbery excitement from our canine companions are just a couple traits that make them incompatible with the school environment). However, the district has failed to define the reasoning behind their ban on bringing pigs to school.

The district was contacted to comment on this issue, however they did not respond, implying there is something they are hiding with regard to this issue.

Pigs are naturally cohesive with the learning process, many of the gripes filed against these porky critters have been unfounded and based on the

centuries-long misunderstanding of some of the most wonderful animals to walk the earth.

Most obviously, pigs are one of the smartest animals, they are commonly found between the top four and the top seven most intelligent animals EVER, they can easily be trained to use the potty, solve problems and distinguish categories. These are all traits that are commonly lacked by the average high school student. If some of Ballard’s duller students were able to see exemplary behavior being exhibited by a member of the swine family, they would feel a level of inspiration to better themselves up to that level.

Pigs are also one of the cleanest animals. Contrary to popular belief, the only reason pigs may be stinky is because of their habit of rolling in mud to cool off during hot summer days. Luckily for us, school doesn’t occur in the summer, and there are no mud piles to be found! Their dirty habits are not far off from the urge many of us get to bathe in our own sweat during morning weight training.

Another potential argument against allowing pigs in schools is that they would be an annoyance. Let me just say this, pigs are only annoying when they are in environments that were not designed to meet their specialized needs. If we were to put energy into making the school more accessible for these creatures, they would seamlessly blend with the existing community.

For example, the surfaces from which we grab our school lunches are much too high off the ground. How do we fix that? Troughs! I’m not saying we need to abolish the current system, but the addition of troughs for our pig friends to eat from is a vital step in making the school a successful learning environment for these animals. Now a hungry pig may cause some disruption, but a well fed pig? It’s not an issue.

All I’m trying to say here is that we have been far too closed-minded for far too long. I am asking you to help breach the divide between two species that have more in common than one might realize. Next time you see a pig, don’t see a filthy animal that would be a monstrosity in a school, see a typical high schooler. That pig could hold the secrets to academic excellence.

I MISS THE FARM



(Tansy Velush)