



Lodi Academy

September Issue

2021

The
Academy
Zone

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Upcoming Events

September

09/24 - Evan DeChance's Birthday

09/23-26 PUC Student Leadership Conference

09/25 National Comic Book Day

09/27-10/01 - Fall Week of Prayer

09/27 - National Day of Forgiveness

09/28 - Gio Hernandez's Birthday

09/29 - National Coffee Day

October

10/01 - Raneem Abu-Ramadan's Birthday

10/01 - Community Service Day

10/02 - Campus Church

10/07-10 - PUC Volleyball Tournament

10/11 - National Indigenous People Day

10/15-17 - Rio Football Tournament

10/16 - Mrs. Kanas' Birthday

10/17 - National Pasta Day

10/19 - College Fair

10/20 - Parent/Teacher Conferences

10/20 SA Fall Party

10/20 Caleb Asmare's Birthday

10/25 - Kaitlyn and Kimberly Nakata's Birthday

10/25-11/01 - East Coast History/Humanities Tour

10/25-29 - Freshmen and Sophomore's Science Trip

10/26 - Kory Gabry's Birthday

10/29 - Iris Hernandez's Birthday

LODI ACADEMY
Lodi Academy is a fully WASC accredited Christian High School offering positive education you can depend on for grades 9-12.

8th graders

Come Check Us Out!
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209-368-2781
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The advertisement features several images: two girls in the top left, a boy in a hoodie in the bottom left, a girl in a pink shirt in the middle, and a boy in a lab coat performing a science experiment in the bottom right.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I have enjoyed these first few weeks of school. The environment created by the staff and the students has been amazing. At the previous schools I have attended, there was always a feeling of dread and obligation when school started; like you had just been sent to jail, but at Lodi Academy, there is a feeling of excitement surrounding the beginning of the school year. This may not seem like a significant difference, but it is. When you are put into a negative environment, it drains your energy, and feeling drained isn't the best thing for school. The positive environment at Lodi Academy doesn't drain you, it makes you excited to see what the rest of the year holds!

Brayden Perkins

Dear Editor,

Something that I have enjoyed about this school's campus life is that it's never the same routine every day. At my old school, there weren't a lot of school activities that anyone could attend. Everyone went to their classes every day for the whole school year. No one would know everyone like in this school, and my old school's teachers barely got involved, and when they did it was always very boring. I like that the life in this school, Lodi Academy, is filled with excitement, almost no one is left out and every teacher that I have seen has put their body and soul into school events, which happen a lot more than in my old school. My start to this school year has been the best start to any one of my school years in a decade. The last time I thoroughly enjoyed starting school was in kindergarten, like ten or so years ago. I really like the way this school operates. It may get stressful at times but for my first few months here, I see them as the best months in my school life.

Jasmine Umipeg

Dear Editor,

One thing I enjoyed about campus life so far is the all school campout. It was really fun to go on the all school camp out. We were able to hang out with our friends and we were able to get to know people in the school better. It was really fun to go to the beach and have fun and play games. Thank you for the food Mrs. Sakata, which was really good. Thank you Mr. Marson and Mr. Haesche for driving the buses. It was awesome that we were able to go since we weren't able to go on any trips last year.

Kaleb Nevis

Dear Editor,

I've enjoyed many things from this school year. Firstly, I noticed that the schedule changed. I think the schedule this year is more organized than last year. I'm especially glad we end school earlier on Fridays. Secondly, it was fun to have class rally night this year. There was no class rally night last year, so it was a fun and exciting experience for me. Lastly, I loved All School Camp Out! All the games and activities that we did were great. I wish it had been longer! Thank you to all the teachers and staff and SA for planning all these things. You make my school days fun and exciting!

Esther Han

TAZ Fall Survey

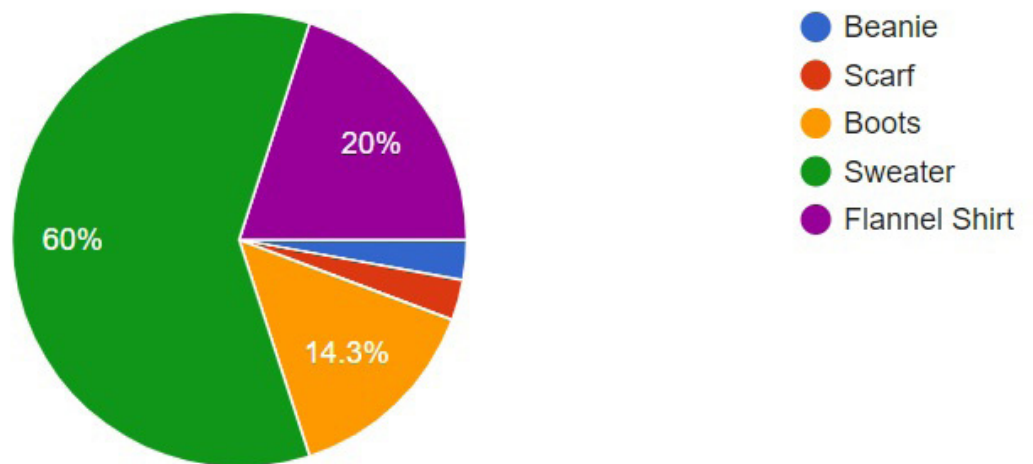
Favorite Traditional Fall Activity

35 responses



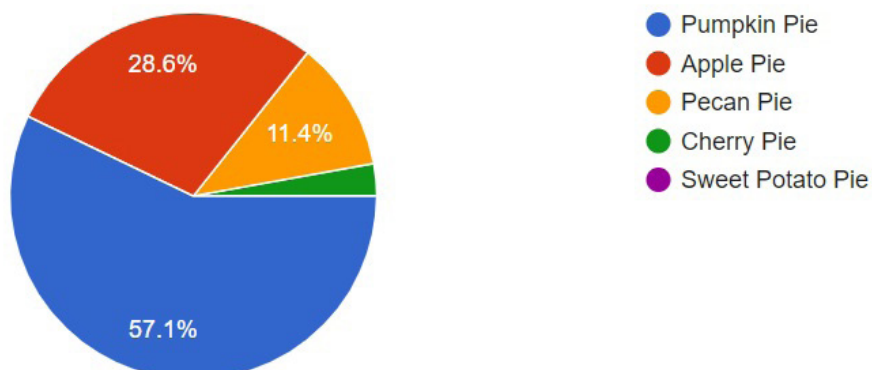
Favorite Fall Item of Clothing

35 responses



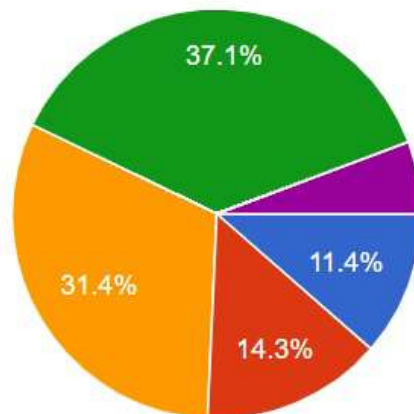
Favorite Fall Dessert Pie

35 responses



Favorite Fall Soup

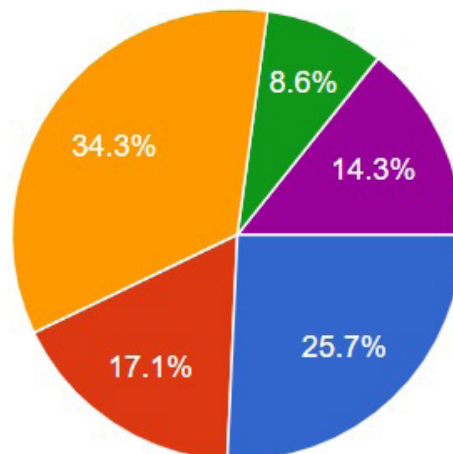
35 responses



- Butternut Squash Soup
- Lentil Vegetable Soup
- Broccoli Cheddar Soup
- Tomato Basil Soup
- Cauliflower Coconut Curry

Favorite Fall Party Costume Idea

35 responses



- A Superhero
- A Dinosaur
- A Zoo Animal
- A Clown
- A Pirate



Follow School Events Online:

Like us on Facebook by searching "Lodi Academy" (official page).



Follow us on Instagram @lodi_academy_official.

Also keep tabs on the school calendar at www.LodiAcademy.net.

Why You Should Play Sports and How it Can Improve Your Life



An Interview with Athletic Director Mr. Kory Gabrys

TAZ: What does it mean to compete as a Christian?

Mr. Gabrys: Players are taught to compete as a Christian by putting God first, team second, and yourself last.

TAZ: Is there a way to specifically try and be more like Jesus while you play?

Mr. Gabrys: Yes. Respect for opponents, teammates, coaches and officials is the first step in showing a Christ-like character to those that we come in contact with.

TAZ: But what if people get too competitive? Can't that be a negative thing?

Mr. Gabrys: Actually, it is our belief that competitive athletics can be a very positive educational tool. With the right spirit of participation, athletics teach commitment, discipline, and the spirit of competition as used in our society on a day-to-day basis.

TAZ: Playing on a sports team is hard work. You'll sweat all the time, and get scrapes and bruises. Why is it worth it?

Mr. Gabrys: Because participation in athletics provides student-athletes with the opportunity to push themselves mentally by allowing them to think and work through situations within the team concept.

TAZ: How can individual goals be part of group success? What if one player is much better than others?

Mr. Gabrys: When participants are motivated to achieve their personal best, it helps the team to reach its full potential.

TAZ: How does being on a sports team prepare you for life? Our students aren't going to be professional flag football players right?

Mr. Gabrys: Well, each day individuals are faced with challenging situations and tough decisions. A student-athlete is continually challenged mentally, physically and spiritually. We hope to equip them to appropriately deal with situations that they are faced with in all areas of life. Life principles are taught through participation in athletics at Lodi Academy.

TAZ: Why should a student at Lodi Academy consider trying out for a sports team in the future?

Mr. Gabrys: We would encourage every young man and woman to become involved in our athletic program. We believe that winning and losing have important and very basic lessons to teach young people.

TAZ: What are your goals as a coach, and P.E. teacher, as well as the goals of all the adults who work or volunteer within Lodi Academy's athletic program?

Mr. Gabrys: As a department, we will dedicate ourselves to work with, guide, and direct our young athletes toward the positive aspects of athletics and good sportsmanship in conjunction with our Christian beliefs and principles. Spirituality and Christian principles are emphasized by Coaches daily with players at every practice and in every game.

Staff Shoutouts!

By James Abu, Madie Johnson, Leilani Lemos, and Kimi Nakata

I would like to thank Mr. Gabrys for being one of our sophomore class sponsors. I feel like he has really brought up our class spirit, by helping us think of amazing fundraising, and making our whole class participate in events. I would also like to thank Mr. Lemos for being our other class sponsor. Last year he brought us treats at almost every meeting, like donuts, and candy; which was super nice. He is also very helpful to our class, and helps keep us on topic, which is not easy for us, so I am very thankful for that. Both of our sponsors have done so much, and I appreciate it.

I'd like to take a moment to write here about a special staff member of Lodi Academy who is very talented but sometimes goes unnoticed. I'm talking about Mr. Marson, of course. He really is a jack of all trades: he is our bus driver, welding teacher, a photographer, and an outdoorsman. I specifically admire his skills in photography. If you have seen some of his photography work, you know how outstanding he is at what he does. I recently learned from Mrs. Kanas that he worked with Ansel Adams, an incredible nature photographer who is famous for his photographs of Yosemite. The fact that Mr. Marson is such a great artist that he was able to work with a remarkable and prestigious figure like Adams is very admirable to me. He is a shining star of talent on our campus--Thank you so much for everything you do for Lodi Academy Mr. Marson! I seriously hope that one day I could be maybe half as great as him at photography. Mr. Marson is iconic!

I really wanted to thank everyone who is helping keep sports and trips going throughout everything that's happening. I think it really helps people get to know each other as we begin this new year. I also want to thank everyone who keeps the field looking nice so that we can play. I know it takes a lot of work. So thank you to those to work hard so it looks nice.

I'm also enjoying Mr. Surridge's AP Art History Class; sometimes we get to recreate some interesting pieces of art. I can't wait to see what else this school year has to offer.

The Value of SA Points and How to Make Them Even Better

By Zachary Chan and Andrew Kanas

I think something everyone should do is take part in Student Association (S.A.) events. First off, they allow you to bond with your class more, and second off, they can earn you S.A. points. They can also be really fun. If your class has the most S.A. points at the end of the year, you get to go on a trip to Santa Cruz.

All-in-all, participation is a very important part of the school year. It may even benefit you and your class. Thank you for everyone working really hard on S.A. games and all those activities, yet it might also be time to develop some new SA games too. We often play the same ones, and they start to get old, so I say we should play class football like class against class.

To compete for SA points, we should do freshman vs sophomores and juniors vs seniors. Then whoever wins the game there is going to play the other winner, and then we can make it so the losers don't have to watch they play each other.

I also think that playing should not be optional because the people who don't play could ultimately be the reason you don't win. You never know. They could score the winning touchdown.

Devotional: Take in Every Moment, No Matter Where You Are

By Alissa Barcenas

God wants us to find joy in his creation, so it is definitely important for us to dwell in it while we can. Some of my favorite memories from my freshman year were from all the different field trips we were able to have. It's a shame that we have been in the midst of a pandemic that prevented us from having all of these fun trips.

All school campout two years ago was definitely one for the books. In case you weren't there, we went camping up north near a lake, and it was just an amazing experience to be able to spend time in nature with friends from our school. I remember that I slept in a tent with the girls in my class and one of the senior girls and being able to wake up surrounded by nature and the people you love being with is a feeling that I will never forget.

The biology trip with our class and the sophomores at the time was for sure, an exhausting, but totally a worth-it experience. Our biologist, who was mentoring us throughout the day thought it would be such a great idea for us to go tide pooling the day, but when we got there when we were already so exhausted and tired. The rocks were so wet and slippery, and not to mention the purple sea urchins that would penetrate your skin if you tripped and fell. I had a great time spending time with my friends, even though we were all half asleep.



Through all of these experiences as a teenager in high school, it is important to take in every moment, to enjoy God's creation while you are at it. We were fortunate enough to actually have our ski trip last year during Covid. The whole day was a lot of fun. It came to a point where me and a couple of other friends were sitting at the top of the slope, just sitting and talking for a good thirty minutes while watching the view. Knowing that we had a couple of tests, quizzes, and a project to finish, we were able to set that aside and enjoy the moment as friends. As I look back on it, the whole experience seemed like a blur, and I wish I could go back and stay there forever.

Jesus came to this Earth for a reason. He gave us so much to explore and friends to go on those adventures with. In John 10:10, He says: "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full".

When my class all got back home from the ski trip, we were swamped with things to study for the next day and that project to complete. I was thinking about that whole day and it really showed me that even if we have a variety of tasks to do, it is still possible to sit down and be still in God's nature.

True Beauty, Inside and Out

By Chloe Galiza

No matter how you do your makeup --natural, dramatic, or no makeup at all-- you are still beautiful! Makeup is a diverse, multipurpose medium that can be used to enhance your natural beauty, or transform yourself into a whole different person or thing! Depending on the kinds of makeup products you use, you can create anything from a natural no-makeup makeup look, a glittery, sparkly, and shiny eye look, and even dive into the world of SFX makeup to create completely different facial features and cosplay as your favorite character from your favorite movie. However, to get to that kind of skill level, you have to master the basic dos and don'ts of makeup.

Everyone has to start somewhere. In this case, you'd first start by picking out the perfect base for your look. The first thing you would need is a primer, which will help the makeup stay longer. There are many different kinds of primers for different skin types and for the look you want, whether that be a dewy or matte look. After primer, you would pick a foundation that matches your skin tone, coverage level, and finish.

A more sheer or medium coverage foundation and concealer can give a more natural look, while full coverage foundation and concealer is good for covering everything and is typically used in more glam looks. You can also find finishes ranging from dewy, which is better suited for dry skin, all the way to matte, which is better suited for oily skin. After this, you can add any creme contour or blush or whatever creme product you like, and then set it with a powder so that it lasts all day.

Now that you've got your base down, it's time to do your eyebrows and eye makeup. The shape of your eyebrows dictate how your facial expressions will be perceived. Depending on your face shape, certain eyebrow shapes can make your expression more soft, while others can make your expression more bold. Same with eyeshadow and eyeliner. Using lighter, more neutral eyeshadow colors, maybe with a little brown eyeliner, will create a much softer look than if you were to use bright pink eyeshadow with a gigantic wing.

Another thing that can drastically change your eye look is false eyelashes. Wearing just mascara or using more natural lashes makes for a more subtle look, while using full, dramatic lashes are bolder and attention grabbing.

It doesn't really matter if you're pretty but aren't a kind, loving person. If you look great, but treat others poorly, then nobody would want to be around you and you'd have no friends. To the majority of people, it isn't the looks that matter, but more your personality.

As someone once told me, "looks draw people in, but personality makes them stay". On days when you don't feel pretty, you will still find people who share similar interests who like you for you, and not for whatever status you have.

The Girl With the Iridescent Wings: Human Boy, Meet Fairy Girl

A Story by Chloe Galiza

The marigold fields in the Valley of Bileagan-Fidhe. That's where Kalen first saw her: the girl with the long golden hair and dainty iridescent wings.

Kalen had always loved plants, but he especially adored the fiery petals of marigolds. They were one of the few colorful things in his monotonous village. Ever since he was a child, he'd eagerly waited for the summer months that would turn the valley various hues of fiery yellow, orange, and red. Almost every day was the same for him: wake up, help mother with various house chores, tend to his uncle's animals and crops, and many more tedious and boring tasks. Whenever he found himself with nothing to do, he would go down to the meadow to read or take a nap. Other times, he would make garlands and flower crowns out of the orange flowers to give to his younger sister and mother.

Today was Kalen's birthday, so his uncle let him off of work early. It was a sweltering summer afternoon, so he grabbed his book and a couple bottles of violet liqueur from the cellar and made his way to his favorite spot: under the large olive trees at the edge of the clearing. It was about noon, so there was still a few hours before his friends, Alston and Calla, would show up. He sat under the olive tree—feeling the coolness of the dirt, listening to the rustling of the leaves—and began to read.

Not long after he opened his book, a faint glint in between the clusters of orange caught his eye. Curious, he made his way to the mead. When he got closer, he realized what had caught his attention: the iridescent wings of a fairy. There was a fae village nearby, so Kalen had seen his fair share of fairies. As he approached her to introduce himself, he tripped and fell face-first into the sea of flaming petals. The fae girl saw everything, and rushed over to help him. Kalen took her extended hand and was about to thank her, when he looked her in the face and froze. He had seen a lot of pretty girls in his life, but they were nowhere near as beautiful as her. He knew he shouldn't fall for her, since he would be leaving for medical school in a distant city in half a year's time. Despite knowing this, he couldn't stop himself. Everything about her entranced him: her big doe eyes, as bright and green as the Northern Lights; the brown freckles on her glowing tan skin, which seemed as numerous as sand on the beach or stars in the sky; her plump lips, which were tinted the most stunning shade of coral pink; her wavy golden locks, with two braids pinned behind her head, while the rest cascaded over her shoulders and back. After some time, she finally said, "You've been staring for quite some time. Are you alright?"

Kalen snapped back from his daze in an instant. If his face wasn't already red from the fact that he tripped in front of a stranger, it was definitely red after he realized he was caught staring.

"I- uhh, yeah, I'm alright, thanks," he managed to stutter out, now looking at the ground. After a few seconds, he collected himself enough to introduce himself. "I'm Kalen. I live in the village just up the road," he said, as he gestured to the path a few meters back. "What's yours?"

"Lilia. I live in the fae village nearby," she replied, pointing to the opposite side of the path. "What brings you to the meadow?"

"It's my birthday today, so I'm just waiting for a couple friends to come here for a birthday picnic, though they won't be here for a while," Kalen said, a soft smile forming on his lips.

"Oh! Happy birthday!" Lilia exclaimed. "I've got just the thing!" She reached into her bag and pulled out a tin of chocolate crinkle cookies, handing them to Kalen. He took the tin, which was still a bit warm, and thanked her.

"Why don't you come wait with me under the tree?" Kalen asked, secretly praying to the gods that she'd go with him. After all, there was nothing better to do, and he wanted to get to know her better. He knew Alston and Calla wouldn't mind if there was an extra person; conversely, they might enjoy her company.

Lilia happily accepted, and they both made their way to the shady olive trees. They sat there and talked for hours, making flower crowns, exchanging their favorite book titles, and talking about anything and everything. They had so much in common: their love for strawberries, both having younger sisters, their extreme dislike for pickles, and how when they can't sleep, they go outside and stare at the stars until they do.

Even though it had only been a few hours, Kalen was already head over heels for Lilia. He fell for the way she laughed, the way her eyes lit up and wings fluttered when she talked about food, the various faces she made while making her flower crown. In that short amount of time, he fell for all of her, even the hand motions she does when she talks. He teased her for it, but he absolutely adored it. Kalen noticed that, although she never said it, Lilia began to take a liking to him as well. He noticed the sparkle in her eyes when he talked about things he was passionate about, even though it was apparent that half of what he said didn't make sense to her. How her smile would widen and her laugh grow louder whenever he tried balancing various knickknacks on himself, only to have them topple to the ground. They were both so entranced with each other that they didn't notice that Alston and Calla had arrived.

"Are we interrupting something?" Calla said, smirking.

"No!" they both yelled, jumping back a bit because Calla's sudden appearance startled them.

After everyone sat down, Kalen introduced Lilia to Alston and Calla, and Calla and Lilia got along almost instantly. They both had a love for all things beauty, exchanging tips and tricks for makeup, which eventually ended with both of them making daisy bracelets. Alston and Kalen talked about their favorite books the majority of the time, as they are both book worms. Eventually, the sun went down, and they all had to go home. Lilia left first, then Calla, leaving Alston and Kalen alone.



"You like Lilia, don't you?" Alston said, a sly grin creeping on his face.

"What- no I don't!" Kalen retorted, his face growing red at the thought of her.

Alston could tell he was lying. He saw how Kalen looked at Lilia like a lovesick puppy when she talked. Plus, Kalen was notorious for being a horrible liar. After some back-and-forth bickering between the two, Kalen finally admitted that Alston was right.

"Wait," Alston said, stopping abruptly, turning to face Kalen. "How is that gonna work? You're leaving in half a year!"

"I don't know," Kalen said, frowning a bit as those words of uncertainty rolled off his tongue. "We'll figure something out."

"Alright, just don't do anything stupid. I would hate to see both of you get hurt" Alston replied, patting Kalen's back as he spoke.

They both arrived at Alston's house, waving goodbye at each other as they parted. When Kalen tried to go to bed that night, he couldn't sleep. He was so preoccupied with the thought of Lilia and how he'd tell her he was leaving, if he should even confess his feelings at all. How if they did end up together, they'd have to be apart for many years, with letters as their only form of communication. He knew he couldn't bring her with him; she had a family to take care of, and he didn't want her to leave everything she'd ever known just to be with him. Another reason he couldn't take her was because the city folk didn't particularly like fairies. The humans and fae folk surrounding the Valley of Bileagan-Fidhe learned to live harmoniously with each other, but they were treated as less than human in the city of A'deàrrsadh.

Eventually, he climbed onto the roof and stared at the stars, wondering if Lilia was doing the same.

Teen Tutankhamun: When A Loved One Dies Young

By Katie Nakata, Spencer Hall, and Alissa Kaur

If a young king like Tutankhamun died today people would show similar levels of sympathy to the family, no matter the time period, Ancient Egypt or 21st century America.

The death of an older person can be sudden but friends and family have time to accept the eventual end. The death of younger people is more painful because of the lack of things they will not be able to experience. Teenagers are so much younger and had more to do before their time was up.

Campuses have memorial days on the date of major school shootings. Special memorials are set up to have the parents mourn. Towns will place flowers where a teenager died in a crash. Churches hold funerals to mourn the death of people you lose, and the funerals have so many people expressing regret. Classmates of a dead friend are shocked by how sudden death can be and aware of how much time they actually have.

It seems to be a much bigger deal when young people die. I think this is because they hardly lived any life when compared to senior citizens.

School shootings are especially sad because they're generally mass killings. I remember writing cards in third grade after Sandy Hook died. If, like Tutankhamun, the child of a highly revered leader was killed, there would likely be national, if not global, mourning. It's also extremely sad when young soldiers, like those thirteen in Afghanistan, are killed when they're just starting their life.

When you're older, you've seen and lived all the situations; whereas, the teenager still has so much more to enjoy.

If a beloved teenager died today it would still be as sad as how it was back then, thousands of years ago in ancient Egypt.

Sponsor's Historical Note: Did you know that Tutankhamun was only 18-years old when he died? It's part of the reason his burial tomb, sarcophagus and death mask are so spectacularly decorated. The increased level of tragedy brought about a heightened desire to celebrate his life. It may have been an infection from a broken bone after a chariot accident that caused his death. His tomb and beautiful coffin were discovered in 1922, right after World War 1, when the whole world was mourning the battlefield deaths of millions of young men the same age as King Tutankhamun.

What is a Ziggurat and Why Did I Build One?

By Esther Han

Ziggurat: (noun) in ancient Mesopotamia, a tower with steps going up the sides, sometimes with a temple at the top

This piece of architecture is called the 'White Temple and Ziggurat'. It was part of a history project that Mr. Solis assigned to our class. My group chose to make this ziggurat because, firstly, it was part of the Assyrian Empire that we were supposed to research about, and secondly, I was learning about this ziggurat in AP Art History class too. So we thought it would be cool to make this structure.

This ziggurat was built almost 7000 years ago, and it is now in modern-day Warka in Iraq.

I think making this ziggurat helped me in both World History and AP Art History class. I had to spend a lot of time making this building, but it was also a fun experience.

Sadly, ziggurats like this one in nearby Nimrud, Iraq, were destroyed by ISIS terrorists in 2016.



Console Wars: PS5 vs XBOX Series X

By Peter Lelis

Which console are you thinking of buying this year?

We've passed the summer vacations, but a vast majority of us still have not obtained either of the two consoles we have set our eyes on. We are of course talking about the Xbox Series X or the Sony PlayStation 5. The holidays are right around the corner and what we'll most likely be doing this fall and winter is gathering around with friends and family, whether it be online or in person, especially during this pandemic if it refuses to wind down. This article will be comparing which console is worth your money and time, especially since consoles have a new generation 5-10 years. We'll be debating their properties such as the looks, hardware and performance, exclusive games, and overall winner.

Starting by looking at the designs of these two consoles, you would find that the Xbox Series X is a rectangle and more compact. The PS5 however, has a black and white asymmetric design. It is much larger and owners have a much more difficult time storing it. I would simply wait for Sony to release a PS5 Slim or PS5 Pro.

What's the point of getting a console without games? After all, this is what both were made to do. At first glance, it is difficult to say which console has better exclusive games. The PS5 has the likes of Gran Turismo Sport, whereas the Xbox Series X has Forza Horizon 5. Furthermore, the Xbox Series X and PS5 are capable of playing the previous console's games. The Xbox Series X is capable to play games as old as the original Xbox. The PS5 is only compatible with PS5 games and PS4 games.

A console's first step in being high performance is having powerful hardware to compute. The PS5 has an 8-core 3.5 GHz CPU, the unit that does most processing and computation, being made by AMD. The Xbox Series X's CPU has the same cores, but it is more capable of producing 3.8 GHz, also produced by AMD. The central processing unit simply cannot produce all of the processing, especially graphics. The GPU is responsible for that. Both systems have an identical GPU (Graphics Processing Unit), also powered by AMD.

Despite having similar processing units, the Xbox Series X can compute 12 teraflops, a unit of computation power, whereas the PS5 can output 10.3. As previously mentioned, the Xbox Series X can compute 1.9 more teraflops. Even though the PS5 is down on computation strength, both systems are capable of 120 FPS with 8K resolution. Both are also capable of viewing 4K Blu-Ray video.

The Xbox Series X takes the edge in hardware, mainly because the numbers are larger and more brag worthy. The PS5 may be down on hardware, but it's just as capable of 8K video with 120 FPS. Think of it like two different cars. The Xbox Series X is like a NASCAR, with a big and loud V8. The PS5 is comparable to a Formula 1 car with a V6 engine that's quieter. One is louder and more brag-worthy than the other, and while the other is not as loud, all of its key components are optimized to work in tandem with each other.

In an article posted by Marshall Honorof on the website tomguide.com, he says that "PS5 beats Xbox Series X by a huge margin, says new survey". This means that the PS5 is vastly more popular and I personally think that is the better console.

What I've Learned About the History and Beauty of Nintendo Video Games

By Railey Pandjaitan

The Super Smash Bros. video game series are my favorite videogames of all time. I remember getting destroyed by my cousins in that video game but I didn't care if I was losing or winning, all I cared about was the amount of fun I was having.

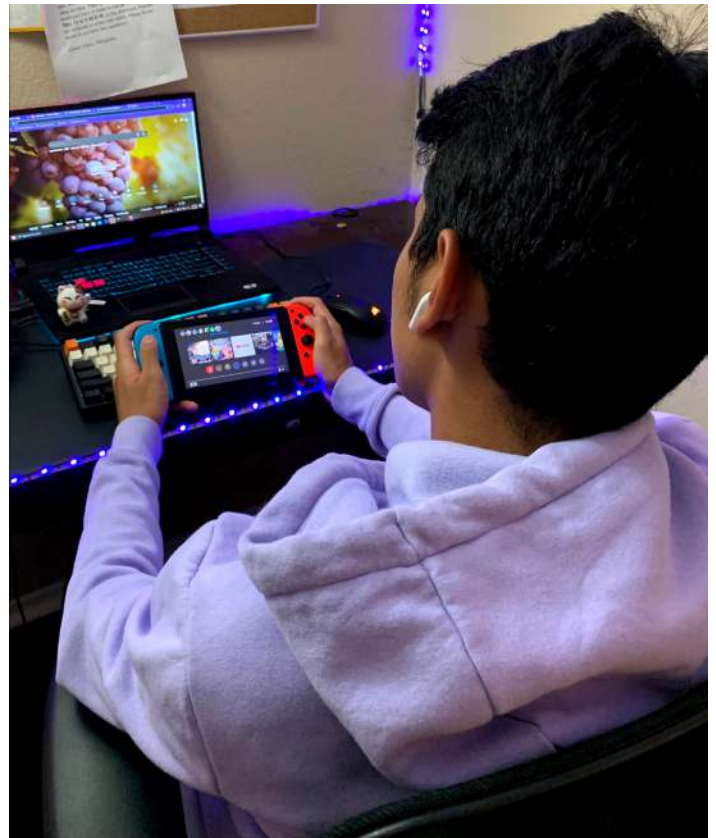
I remember first playing Super Smash Bros. Brawl with my cousins when I was about 5 or 6 years old, but the real beginning of this story started all the way back on September 23, 1889 when Fusajiro Yamauchi decided to sell hand-painted playing cards under the company name Nintendo Karuta. Those playing cards soon became the most popular brand in Japan. But Nintendo didn't make a massive appearance in America until 1985. A man named Shigeru Miyamoto decided to create an arcade game called Donkey Kong. This led to the creation of Nintendo's famous mascot Mario Mario. Yes, Mario's full name is Mario Mario, which led to Nintendo's worldwide success.

Many people all around the world enjoyed the Nintendo video games because of many reasons. Some enjoy it because it brings nostalgia, happiness, or peace. But this is why I personally enjoy playing the Nintendo games. Ever since those days with my cousins, my interest in fighting games, such as Street Fighter and Tekken, has greatly increased but no fighting game can beat my immense interest for the Smash Bros. video game series. But the Smash Bros. video game series have helped me connect with many people, and this is the same with others as well. So I enjoy playing Smash Bros. not only because I have fun, but because I can connect with other people thanks to that game.

The Legend of Zelda is a fascinating video game series but Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild is easily my favorite game out of all of the Zelda games. Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild is an open-world video game that allows you to explore and experience hundreds of different parts of the game's map. I love playing Breath of the Wild because you can find many hidden things in the game and you can experience the beauty through the graphics. But I especially love the game because the game doesn't tell you what to do, but instead, lets YOU decide how to beat the game. You can make many errors in the game, but you can find interesting ways to fix them. In conclusion, Breath of the Wild has taught me that we'll make many mistakes in life, but we shouldn't give up. Instead, we should get up and look for different ways to fix the mistakes.

One of my favorite Nintendo games are the Animal Crossing video game series, preferably Animal Crossing: New Horizons. Animal Crossing: New Horizons is a sandbox game that allows the player to express their creativity through their own island in the game. The game also has a money feature where you use bells, which is the money currency in the video game, to buy furniture, clothes, tools, seeds, and even houses. But one of the major reasons why I love this game is because it helps me and millions of people with stress and anxiety. Every time I feel stressed out, I always turn on my Nintendo Switch and find interesting ways to design my island or my little house. Expressing my creativity on my island always releases the pent-up stress and anxiety inside of me and I am at peace whenever I am done playing.

There are many more Nintendo games that I loved playing but these three games: Smash Bros. Ultimate, Legend of Zelda: Breath of the Wild, and Animal Crossing: New Horizons are definitely my top three favorite games. But I really suggest that if you ever want to express your creativity, find hidden secrets in a massive map, or connect with others through a hobby, I suggest that you try out those three games and see if you like them, because I definitely love them.



The Most Dangerous Conspiracy: Holocaust Denial

By Lizzy Narvaez and Madie Johnson

Sponsor's Note: Some conspiracy theories can seem harmless, such as claims that the earth is flat or that birds aren't real, but what would you do if you were to encounter someone who said that the Holocaust didn't really happen? How do you respond to someone who believes something so hateful and inaccurate?

I would disagree with any person who speaks in this way. There are multiple proofs of the Germans atrocities. First of all, the gas chambers still remain to this day. It cannot be made up.

I would ask about their proof, and the evidence that they have uncovered to prove their theory. If they continued to argue with me, I would bring up the fact that the concentration camp Auschwitz is still here today, and has been turned into a museum.

I would then mention that there are still Holocaust survivors, and former Nazis alive today, that those people have been willing to share their stories to educate others on the horrible events of the Holocaust.

Then I would bring up Elie Wiesel, and how he is a real Holocaust survivor. He had a first-hand experience with those traumatizing events, and I would reference his book. I would also recommend the book to them.

Elie Wiesel himself experienced first-hand the atrocities of the Germans. I do not believe for one second that this nice old man exaggerated anything in the book Night. If anything, he might have under-exaggerated for the younger readers. Also he might have understated the horrors of the situation because after being in Auschwitz concentration camp he became numb to the things that seemed so brutal and unfair.

I think it is rude and selfish and racist for anyone to say that the Holocaust never occurred. The evidence is too obvious to ignore.

My View From Half Dome

By Ethan Nevis

As the whole school has probably heard by now, many exciting and memorable events happened during this senior trip to Yosemite, but I'll leave those for my other classmates to share. Before the day had even started for climbing Half Dome, I could not stop thinking about what I would feel when I got to the top. I had seen numerous pictures of when my older brother had climbed Half Dome with his senior class. His facial expressions reflected the feelings I hoped to experience when I reached the top. As the day drew nearer and nearer, the anticipation grew and grew. Finally, the day had arrived and we all loaded the bus to drive to the spot we would begin our hike, which happened to be at Tenaya Lake. The hike to Half dome consisted of riveting conversations, intriguing stories, laughs, breath-taking views, and a bird stealing gummies out of my Camelbak.

After endless hours hiking, I reached Sub-Dome, which is the part right before the cables up to Half Domes. If I'm being honest, Sub-Dome was probably the hardest hindrance to reach Half Dome. Every step up Sub-Dome's 2-foot tall rocks were worth it.

Then, it was time to enter the cables, which if you haven't seen pictures of, or hiked it personally, runs at a very steep incline up to Half Dome. I wasn't one bit nervous about the cables. The only problem with the design of the cables was there was traffic both ways; you had people coming up while others were going down.

After a long thirty minutes and a brief talk with some family friends I ran into while on the cables, I had reached the top. I made my way over to the side of Half Dome facing the valley. I'm not exaggerating this when I say my heart literally stopped, in a good way. I felt free, alive like I was capable soar through the clear sky.

From surrounding mountains to the lush valley below, I felt as if I was in one of Bob Ross' paintings. I couldn't help but think of my Creator. God designed every detail of the view that my eyes could visualize at that moment. It reminded me how innovative, creative, and imaginative God truly is. Every time I picture that view from Half Dome, it will remind me of how grateful I am to have such a creative God who blesses us with fulfillment.



A Wilderness Trek: A Few Students and a Teacher

By You Guess Who

The trip started off well for the group of five. They were headed to a certain creek in California. It was going to be a nice end to Spring Break. Little did they know that they would be a little unprepared, and lacking of skill. One of the members got stuck under a log on the hike, while two buffoons chased a runaway sleeping bag.

The group ended up arriving at camp and set up a little, but wasted no time to get to fishing. All but one were skunked that evening. Eventually everyone got hungry and decided to eat. The leader of the group went off, so the rest started an all-natural fire. Some members of the group complained about the food. When it came time for filtering water, a skilled member of the group walked over and saw two people trying to filter water. To sum it up nicely they were using the filter backwards. After cracking some jokes a group member started worrying about the leader, because it was getting dark. They figured that they would have heard the leader if something bad had happened. When they all went to bed, the three that brought hammocks didn't set them up properly. After about half an hour of the three stooges trying to figure the hammocks out, they finally got in them.

It was a brisk morning and the fire got started around 5:00 a.m. There was some fishing done before breakfast, but everyone got skunked again. After an okay breakfast the group packed up camp while the leader laid in their sleeping bag and cooked breakfast. They hiked to the trail and set their packs in poison oak. Once they had their fishing rods and some tackle they set off. No one brought water, because they weren't informed it was a six mile hike.

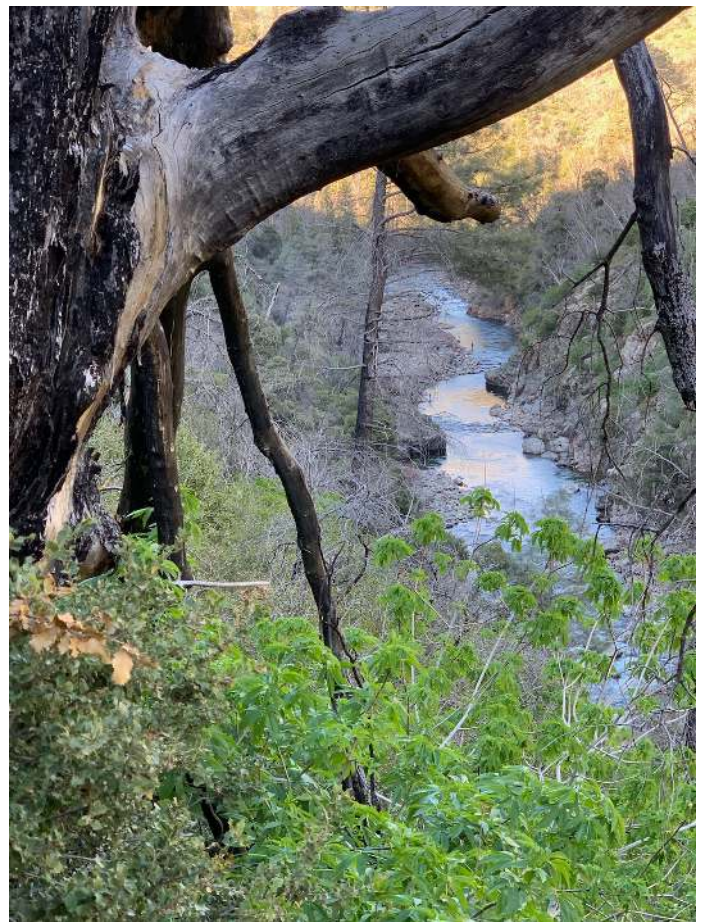
After trekking through poison oak and tripping on logs they made it to a spot, but the spot was down the side of a cliff so they had to slide down. One trout was caught but fought and handled like a bass by a human, before the group trekked up the mountainside.

When they got to the top they mentioned water would be nice and the leader says, "Oh I have some". The water everyone got was thirst quenching. There were more fish to be caught so they kept trekking till they reached a small waterfall rapid section. Two phones were tossed between the rocks which was not a good idea. The rocks were decently far between and required a big leap. Eventually they got to the second spot they wanted to fish, so again they slid down the mountain. Near the bottom, the previously mentioned skilled member of the group slipped and cut their hand open on a rock. A Chubby Chernobyl wing works well in place of a band aid or gauze.

Well down along the creek the leader caught a fish and then wandered off again. Then when the same skilled member wanted to go fish a new sport they were standing on the side of a rock. Needless to say they slipped and fell in the water, which was refreshing, but wasn't going to be fun hiking back soaked.

After drying off a little bit the group scaled the mountain up again and hiked back. On the way, they had to cross the waterfall rapids thing. The member who fell in the creek at the bottom had soaked shoes so jumping onto another rock wasn't the best idea. Sticking their foot between rocks under the current seemed like a better idea so that's what they did. After everyone crossed, they hiked back to their packs. Avoiding poison oak was a lost hope. When they got back to their packs they guzzled down water which was needed.

Eventually they got back to the car which had several gallons of water in it. The leader tried claiming the credit for bringing the water, but his wife made him. Keeping the water in the car was a good idea, especially when the group said they probably wouldn't need it.



No Indoor Shoes in Japan: Personal Culture Shocks

By Reina Nozaki

Coming from a Japanese family, but born and raised in America has its pros and cons. I would say my family is an average traditional Japanese household and do most things that most other families won't. Many of which sounds very strict, nitty-gritty, painstaking rules that either does make sense or doesn't make sense. So sit back and relax as you experience with me one of my personal culture shocks.

The number one rule in my house is that you shouldn't wear your shoes indoors. In Japan, we have a traditional entryway called the genkan which specifically serves the purpose of taking your shoes off. The shoes are left in a shoe rack off to the side and the visitor may enter the house with the option of wearing slippers provided by the host. These are why I would personally love to have a genkan constructed into any home: it keeps your entrance foyer clean, keeps it tidy from the shoe rack, and keeps out the outdoor filth outside the house.

Why do we do this? The reason ties ultimately to the culture of Japan. In Japan long ago, people didn't really have tables, instead we were very close to the ground. We are neat-freaks and would love to keep most things clean and organized. Most Japanese people like to keep clean whether it be in our office cubicles, jobs, home, yard or anywhere. Even in schools we would normally have two pairs of shoes—one to specifically wear indoors, and ones to wear specifically outdoors—to preserve cleanliness in the school buildings and avoid extra measures to clean after yourselves.

Walking into a home with outdoor shoes that have just been walked all over outside is just disgusting to me personally. It collects all grime from all the places you walked from and stains the clean house which you spend most of your day in. It sent shivers down my spine when one of my friends came into a carpeted area of the house with shoes on! I politely told them to remove their shoes and explain my family rules; thankfully, they were pretty chill about it and did as they were told.

All in all, it seems like an overkill to even have this kind of entrance, but a little organization and cleanliness can go the extra mile.

Alive... Forever: A Devotional

By Kristina Pogodina

Will we ever get used...to eternity? Over time, will we start taking the beautiful creation of God for granted? Or maybe forget every little detail that happened down on earth? I've thought about it myself and at one point I even thought that I wouldn't want an eternal life; however, the good news is that in knowing God, eternity will never be boring.

Have you ever felt passionately about something, like a certain subject or a hobby, and then after a few days it becomes boring and you lose interest in it? Yup, that's right. It's because you start getting used to it. We humans get used to everything with the right amount of time, and we find ourselves taking for granted the things that matter.

How would this work in heaven? When you think about it, we have all of eternity with God. That's a really long time. I haven't done much research on this topic but I believe that there will be an eternity of things to learn about, people to meet, and infinite amount of things to do in eternity.

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18, says, "For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words."

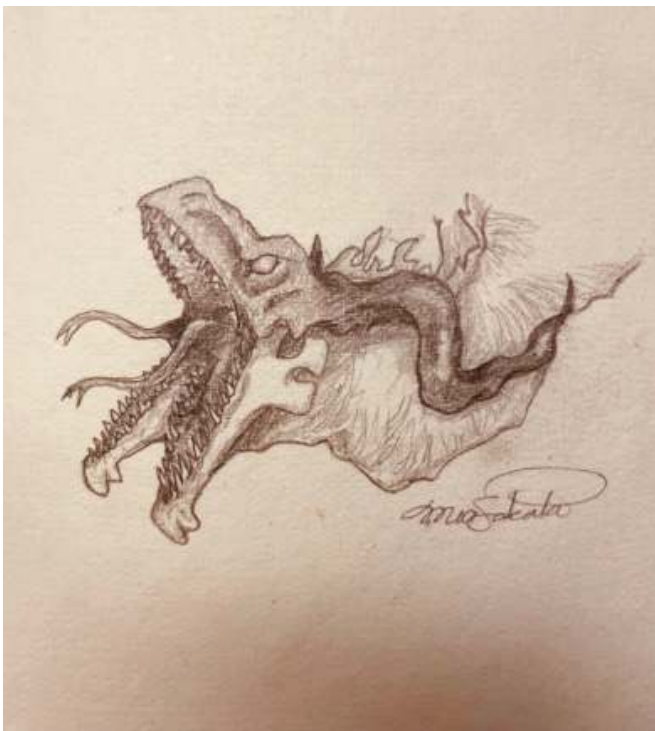
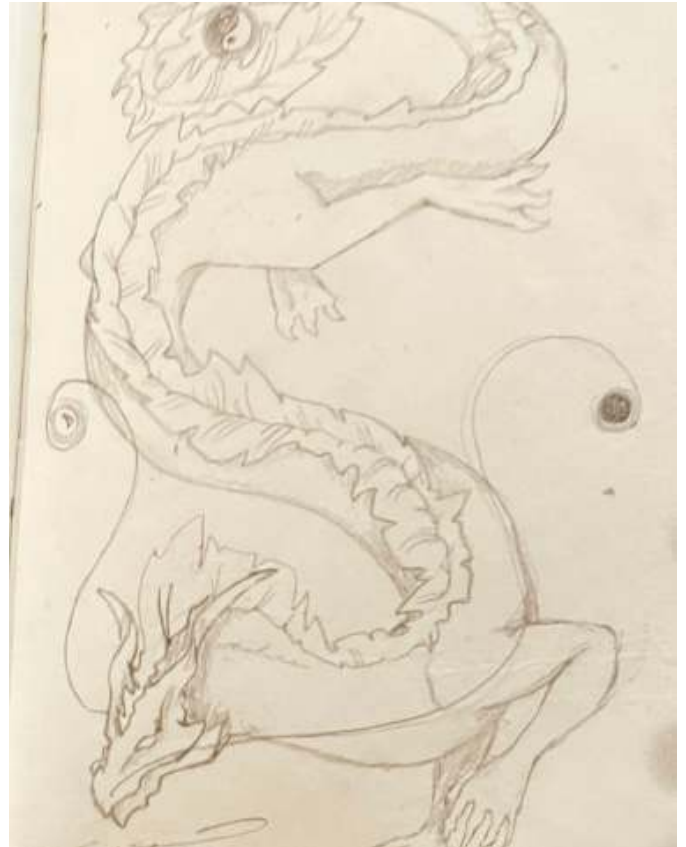


Art Corner: Let There Be Dragons

By Mia Sakata

If you don't already know, I love dragons. I love dragons, dinosaurs, and everything that doesn't exist. Kind of unfortunate, but we work with what we got. From a young age I've always had an acute fascination with mythical creatures (thanks Narnia). Due to the slight dilemma that no phoenixes, griffins, dinosaurs, or dragons have been recently spotted, the next best thing is to bring them to life through art. So here I present to you, my dragons:

(Clockwise from top left: Challenger, Yin-Yang, Bone Doctor, and Venus)



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