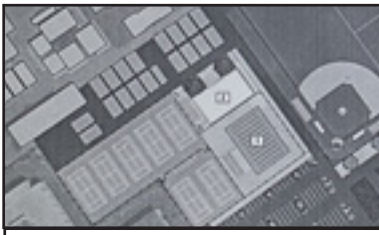




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2nd Place award-winner from the American Scholastic Press Association



# The Lion's Roar

The voice of Liberty High School students

Liberty High School  
850 Second Street  
Room J17  
Brentwood, CA 94513

Issue 1, Volume 30

December 13, 2017

FREE

## Skating in a Brentwood wonderland

By Nolan Spjut  
Staff Writer

Downtown Brentwood is extra chilly this winter with the arrival of a brand new ice skating rink in the heart of the city. The rink, by the name of "Brentwood on Ice", made its debut at 739 Second Street, right across the street from the Brentwood city hall, where it's expected to be a highly popular attraction for people of all ages. Liberty High School senior Caleb Hachler stated, "It's nice that we're going to have a sort of winter-themed thing to do this season. It's not too often that we get something special like this out in the

middle of nowhere, where we can have fun with friends and family." However, students and teens won't be the only ones spending the end of this year and the start of next on ice. With long hours from at least 11 A.M. to 8:30 P.M., several rentable party rooms, and prices ranging from \$10-\$13 per 90 minute session, everyone of all ages will get a chance to lace up some skates this season. In fact, parents seem to be the most enthusiastic group. "It's pretty cool that we have a place to ice skate nearby," said excited Brentwood resident Lupe

Hernandez, "it is something to keep the kids and ourselves busy." All of this wouldn't be possible without someone organizing it in the background, though. Tom Gregory, the owner of this attraction and multiple other businesses, plans to keep it open from November 18, 2017 through January 7, 2018, with deals for veterans and special hours on occasions such as holidays. Gregory has said that opening an ice rink has always been a dream of his, and that he hopes to make this an annual tradition for the town for many years to come.



The ice rink in downtown Brentwood is currently open for a daily influx of customers.

Photo by Nolan Spjut

## Lions strut down the runway in 3D Art class fashion show

By Stephanie Snodgrass  
Co-Editor

Fashion is an art form that incorporates all kinds of mediums-- from luxe fabrics, to simplistic details. Ultimately, fashion has no bounds. And for the first time ever, the Liberty High School 3-D Art Design class hosted their own fashion show, to showcase students' artistic abilities and to offset the cost of their AP exams occurring later in the spring. The show, which happened on November 16th, started out as just an idea, according to student/creative director and Liberty Sophomore, Gabby Brodowski. She explained, "We were just talking to Mrs. S.K. one day, and we were like 'we should have a fashion show'. We had no idea it would actually happen". But this unique concept, got the attention of the art department, and soon

became a reality. The project was innovative, because students had to create clothes, using unconventional, everyday materials, like newspapers or duct tape. Most designers had their own model, and some modeled their own pieces. Every item was detailed and intricate; it was apparent to see that everyone put a lot of effort into their designs. The audience engaged the entire show. When it was all over, the students were recognized for their accomplishments, like junior Gabby Brodowski earing 1st place and seniors Chris Fuller and Josh Dodds earning 2nd and 3rd place respectively. Overall, the experience of this was an innovative way to obtain money for a worthy cause, as well as the beginning of a new tradition at Liberty.



1st place winner Gabby Brodowski, the other placed winners, and their models take one last pose.

Photo courtesy of Eli Swanberg-Kerns

## Meet Mrs. Harper: Liberty's new principal

By Nayeli Ayala  
Staff Writer

Most high school principals are stereotyped as grumpy old men with bad attitudes. Well, none of those characteristics apply to Liberty's first-ever female principal. Starting August 1st, Mrs. Heather Harper became LHS' new principal. Her first impression of Liberty was very welcoming. "I absolutely love it here at Liberty. Everyone has been so welcoming and it has quickly felt like home," she stated. Born and raised in San Jose, CA with her younger brother, she was always a busy and active kid. "I was active in sports and played volleyball, basketball, and also swam. Plus I was very active in a local youth group," she said. Really focusing on basketball during her final high school years, she received offers to play at colleges and decided to play at the US Air Force Academy. Her plans changed when she ended up focusing in a different field. "At the time, I wanted to be a doctor, OB GYN to be specific. However, I ended up becoming a pilot and absolutely loved my time flying in the Air Force." She met her husband now of eighteen and a half years and they were stationed in Tokyo, Japan, and flew medical evacuation planes all around the Pacific. "It was a lot of fun," she commented. Although it was something she loved, people might be surprised to know she has a deathly fear of heights. She explained, "If you asked me to go on top of the roof I would literally faint." She wasn't always like this though; she has jumped out of a plane five times during her time in the Air Force. Her fear of heights

all started when during her second time jumping off a plane when she almost landed on the freeway. After having kids of her own, she felt like she wanted a career change. "In 2005, I knew I wanted to work with kids, so I got out of the Air Force, got my teaching credential and master's degree in education and started teaching."

we want to accomplish can happen." She urges students who are struggling to find their way to talk to an adult. She admits that high school was also hard for her as it is for many other students, but it's only the beginning of one's life. Her morning routine consists of waking up by 5am to work on her computer, as most of her time at



Despite it being the end of the school day, Mrs. Harper continues to smile and value positivity at work.

Photo by Nayeli Ayala

She always knew she wanted to be a principal because she wants to make an impact on youth education. As a principal, she feels she can work with a larger team to accomplish that goal. She said, "We are special here at Liberty to have such a wonderful staff who care so much for our kids." Being a principal is a busy job and she wants to make sure her staff and students feel safe and cared for. "If people are not happy to be here, nothing

work is helping or working with staff, students and parents. She enjoys listening to music, especially country, as she is a huge fan of it, floating in her pool, and hanging out with her kids and friends. "I do not get a lot of that, so when I do it is special," she states. Although she is kept busy, she hopes her future consists of still being a part of the Liberty Lion family and feeling just as well and at home as she did on her first day.

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The newly proposed campus showcases a multi-story building with an array of windows and landscaping.

Photo courtesy of Rhaa.com

## The new Brentwood LMC

By Dylan Davidson  
Staff Writer

Los Medanos College is regarded as the sixth top ranked community college in the nation, and considering as of fall 2016 there were 2,800 students enrolled, they will be constructing a new Brentwood center as an upgrade, and to account for the new incoming students. The new center will be located about 15 minutes away from the pre-existing building, on a 17.5 acre plot of land purchased by the district in 2011. Joshua Brown, a Discovery Bay

native and current junior at Liberty, said that "The new campus location will be really convenient for me because it's 7 minutes closer than the current campus". Joshua is planning to attend LMC in 2020, around the time the new building is planned to be finished. Also, the new center is planned to be approximately 55,000 square feet, a whopping 23,000 square feet larger than the pre-existing campus location. It will offer expanded

faculty/staff offices, science labs, tutorial labs, library resources, linger and learn space, bookstore and food service, and instructional classrooms. That being said, the construction is scheduled to begin in July 2018, and is expected to take 18-24 months to complete, and is officially scheduled to open in spring 2020. The project is costing LMC upwards of 65 million dollars to complete, but will be prospectively beneficial to the community.

## Makeup vs "makeup"

### Counterfeit cosmetics on the rise

By Luisa Martinez  
Staff Writer

The makeup industry makes it a priority to show to the world that looks matter and do so by advertising it in commercials and billboards. For this reason, the beauty and makeup industry makes \$18 billion a year. This goes to show how the world relies on cosmetics, even those that are counterfeit, despite the risks and temporary benefits. Twenty year old reality star Kylie Jenner recently warned her fans, stating, "It might look exactly like mine, but it's not mine and the ingredients they're using in these products are really dangerous. Someone just Tweeted me one of their fake products and they said it has glue in it." However, fake makeup has its obvious benefits when it is used to help to bring out facial features and to beautify the appearance. Knock off beauty products are cheaper than the retail price which can be an incentive to click "add to cart".

Let's face it, many are on a budget and look forward to take advantage of bargains. But is it worth it to go through with the purchase? For instance, you buy your favorite brand's concealer online at a low price, but you end up having an allergic reaction and a new cosmetic with no use for it. Something similar happened to one makeup lover, named Haven Cruise, who brought to light her horrific experience. She woke up one day with a painful rash on her face. Haven points out, "I started doing some research and it turns out a lot of people have been fooled," she says. "I had never heard of fake Ben Nye products before; I only found out about the problem once I looked into it." Regardless of these claims, people will continue to purchase knockoff beauty products. They will because it's cheap, looks like legit makeup, and there's a quick and easy access to it. At the same time, legit

makeup brand companies are being impacted. As consumers purchase fake cosmetics for better deals, the legit makeup brand company's sales go down and they don't make money. A lower demand for real makeup results in a lower profit for them, so prices go up. For this reason, the company needs to find a way to make a profit without losing money. It can be stressful in the real world, not only for a legit makeup brand company, but also for their customers. For example, legit makeup, though expensive, reduces skin irritation, decreases wrinkles, provides greater sun protection, reduces breakouts, and is safer for sensitive skin. This is an incentive to purchase the legit makeup, but there's not always enough money to do so. A person's facial skin health can be more costly than when taken the opportunity to save money on counterfeit makeup.



While pleasing and high quality to the eye, counterfeit cosmetics deceive the buyer, like the Kylie Jenner makeup line.

Photo courtesy of Lexy Lebsack

## Playmakers are hopelessly devoted; Spring production of Grease underway

By Aaron Flory  
Staff Writer

Everyone is excited, as spring rolls around and LHS is preparing for Grease: the musical. Grease: the musical by itself has been replicated time and time again, due to the stellar themes of the 1950s and lovable songs and characters that the movie created in 1978. Mr. Kyle Roman, who took up the position as director of A Midsummer Night's Dream and now Grease after the retirement of Mrs. Dixon just last year. Mr. Roman claimed that much like Mrs. Dixon that there are many people who are integral in the process of taking a show from

page to stage. It really isn't just a one-person job, it's a group effort. But Mr. Roman explains that there are other reasons behind his effort to bring Grease to Liberty's stage. "When I was in college I did the show," he said, "and I met my wife during that show, so for me the first musical was always going to be Greece." however, the preparations for Greece have been all around exciting for the production team. Mr. Roman points out that it's the production team's job to take the directors vision and successfully bring it to life. In addition, the preparations

for the bi-annual Liberty High School musical have been more successful this year compared to the summer before the production of A Midsummer Night's Dream. "We weren't allowed in the Performing Arts Center all summer long... we weren't allowed to access our own rehearsal space." Mr. Roman explains that once Winter Break ends in January, there will be nonstop rehearsal until February 23rd, or opening night for Grease. Grease: The Musical will premiere its opening night on February 23rd, and will play for about two weeks.

## NorCal fires aftermath

By Cody MacDermott  
Staff Writer

Fires are a dreadful thing. Unfortunately, the county of Sonoma experienced a horrifying sight. All thoughts should be made out to the cities of Napa and Santa Rosa. a quote that was published by CNN News stated, "Homes leveled, cars reduced to their frames, entire neighborhoods gone. Families left with nothing." This was a tragic sight and feeling for all the families that experienced this event. LHS teacher Todd Beckstead said, "It reminded me of an apocalypse. I've never seen anything like it before. It gave me the feeling that I was in a war zone." Mr. Beckstead was fortunate enough to go visit the towns that were affected

by these out of control fires. Beckstead also expressed that it seemed like the neighborhoods never existed and point blank looked, "empty." Additionally, Kennedy News announced, "People have trouble sleeping, they are anxious, maybe angry, and I know I've been having trouble keeping track of what day it is." Many people around the world were affected by this tragic event. This is including people that are in other cities, states, or even countries. This affected these other people by seeing the families struggling and depressed even though they personally were not affected in any way.



Despite how damaging the fires were to California residents, their strength and pride prevailed.

Photo courtesy of The Mercury News

## Hour of Code

By Maya Morales  
Staff Writer

Those who had took an interest in this year's Hour of Code are sure to end this year with a "byte" of more knowledge. One of the many purposes of this event was to peak the interests of computer science to students and encourage them to get involved in the pathway. The Hour of Code is an hour guide through the basics of computer programming; the event was hosted by the LHS Computer Science Club and Computer Science classes. "I expect to introduce students into computer science, which is a growing pathway here at Liberty. I also hope to introduce computer science classes." Mrs. Kaddoura, a math and technology teacher at Liberty High School, announced.

Furthermore, the outcome of The Hour of Code drew more attention to the expansion of the field. Computer science not only brings more students to acquire new technical skills, but gives an opportunity to grasp a better understanding of technology. Computer science

and other technological fields are proven to increase growth of 13% by 2026, which is higher than average, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. With this statistic, and the Hour of Code tradition, students interested in a Computer Science career are benefitted.



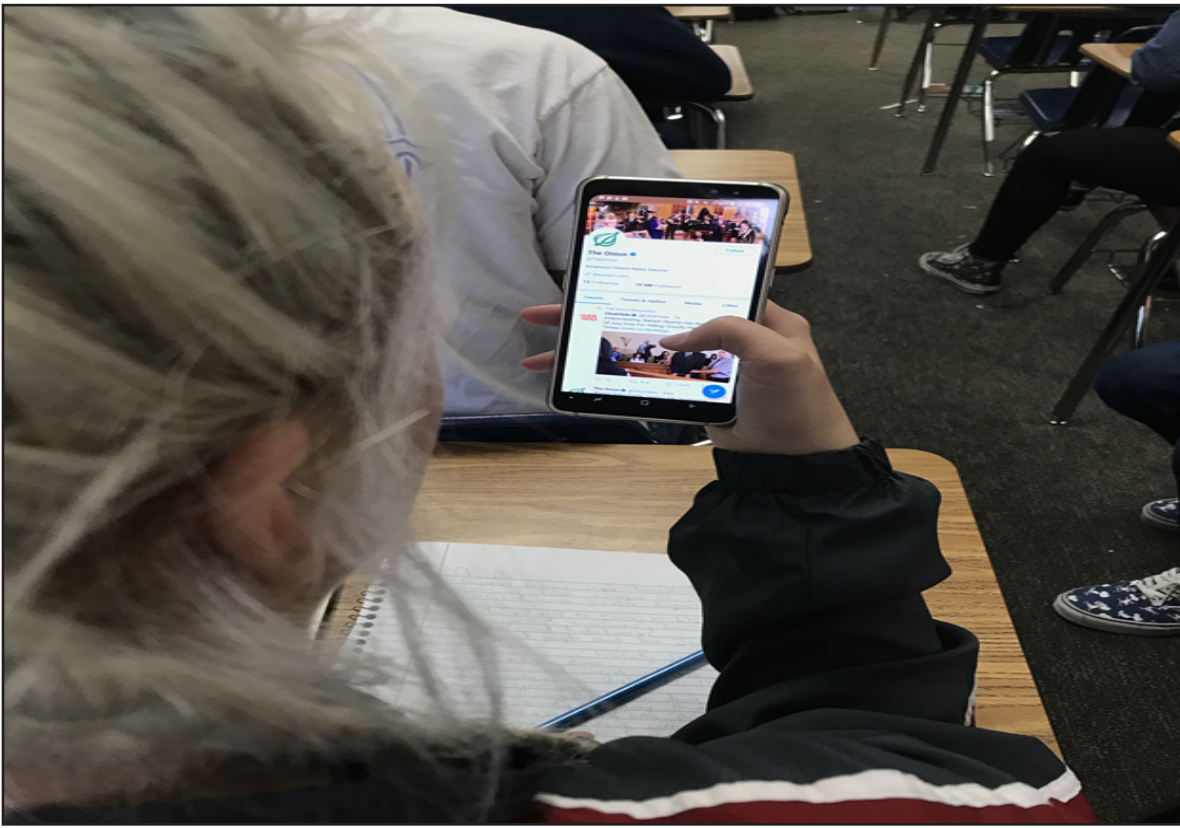
Tediously concentrated on the screen, Liberty students create art through computer science.

Photo by Maya Morales

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## Fake News Frenzy

Information bombardment leaves students vulnerable in today's electronic world



Looking to "The Onion" for news updates isn't the best choice.

Photo by Allie Cone

By Allie Cone  
Co-Editor

The good, the bad, and the gullible. The caution tape of fake news is too often camouflaged into the phosphorescence of computer screens, pixelating the truth. Hysteria is rising throughout the world over the presence of fake news and, the people are tired of being lied to. A classroom of juniors put their wit to the test and challenged themselves to decipher which news articles were fake. The median score of these juniors was 67% accuracy. Brooke Graham commented on the experience saying, "Some of these articles I just wanted to be real." That's exactly the motive behind fake news authors: their content is interesting, clickable, and unlikely. However, the drive behind every fake news article is far from innocent. Dishonest writers are profiting off of fabricated content, whether that be misinformation on national tragedies, political propaganda, or fear mongering. This disregard to credibility entirely distorts the integrity of modern journalism and harms the reputation of legitimate news. "Students have a

difficult time discerning valid and invalid sources with the shift in media between primary sources and internet research" stated English teacher Summer Rodriguez, "When you had to go and pull a book yourself, you knew where the source was coming from; now it's impossible to know where it's coming from." As the rise of fake news has increased, so has the misrepresentation of the term itself. Fake news is not satire, nor is it fake simply because one may disagree with it. Fake news is the distribution of fabricated content: no more, no less. This distribution is not going to end anytime soon, so as media adapts, media consumers must grow alongside it. Education built around identifying fake news is essential to decide which sources to trust. The most telltale sign in a fake article is the lack of an author's name. No, usernames are not legitimate. If the writer of an article is hiding their name, they're hiding it for a reason. Question the motivation and content of sketchy articles and read from trusted news sources. If the news the world digests is honest, it won't have to be taken with a grain of salt.

## Game of loans

Are public or private loans the way to fund a college education?

By Reese Watkins-Nelson  
Copy Editor

When a young bright student achieves the dream of making it to the world of college, there's always that one thing that usually drags them down to a dark, gloomy state: college tuition. On occasion one may get homesick, or not being able to see their friends, but college tuition is inarguably the hardest to deal with. Students of colleges and universities across the U.S deal with an average budget amount of \$24,610 for public

college and \$49,320 for private. "The price of college may seem overwhelming, but college educations come at many different price levels, and financial aid can greatly reduce your cost," COLLEGE data jubilantly reports. As previously stated, luckily there is indeed a way to get through this stress-inducing payment load with student loans. These loans differentiate between federal and privatized markets, and the controversy of which one is better still continues to this day. Thankfully, there are tools that help individuals to help make the smarter choice in utilizing federal student loans due to the numerous

protections and rules in acquiring them. For example, applying for FAFSA or avoiding private lenders similar to that of Sallie Mae, who don't secure borrower protections, are both responsible options to steer clear of unprotected and untrustworthy lenders. "Federal loans come with a number of borrower protections, including deferment and income-based repayment plans that give borrowers more flexibility. Private loans, by contrast, don't usually offer such protections," informs Maurie Backman. In addition, during school enrollment, if one is unable to pay off the loan, the government will provide payment

until capability is met, or when the school year ends. "Undergraduate students with financial need will likely qualify for a subsidized loan where the government pays the interest while you are in school on at least a half-time basis", the Federal Student Aid further elaborates. In contrast, private lenders don't do this, therefore the debt is to be paid by just the individual whilst being enrolled in college. This can negatively affect someone by halting investments into quintessential needs most people take advantage of, like food or hygienic products. Furthermore, federal loans don't need a co-signer or credit check

in acquiring the loan itself. "Most federal loans (with the exception of PLUS loans) don't require a credit check as part of the application process. You can typically qualify for a federal loan without requiring a cosigner," Maurie Backman adds. Unfortunately, private lenders almost always want a cosigner and a detailed credit check in which some students just aren't able to provide. Ultimately, when deciding whether to pick Federal or Private Loans for tuition, Federal Loans seem like an almost fool-proof plan, but the decision is ultimately up to the individual.

## From hunger to happiness

North Korean refugee becomes a Liberty Lion

By Austin Belcher  
Copy Editor

Military parades, communism, and the relentless quest for nuclear weapons: these are all things most Americans think of when it comes to the brutal North Korean regime. However, there is another side to this nation. John Kim, a Liberty senior, was born and raised in this so called "Hermit Kingdom," until his mission for freedom led him to Brentwood, California. John grew up in an orphanage along the Yalu River. He would often wander the large city despite the strict rules prohibiting him from doing so. Once outside, he would try to stray as far away from the orphanage as he could. Kim would carry wood and perform other small tasks for merchants just to get enough money to buy candy. His primary motivation was hunger: "I would sometimes steal food, but not any (other items), just food," he states, adding "the vendors would hit me (if I got caught)." Living in alleys, dodging police, and having to beg

just to survive led John to voyage further out into the world. After evading guards and crossing the river border into China, he quickly realized that staying there would be no easy task. His group was caught and sent back several times. Their primary goal was no longer finding a meal; it was staying away from the police. After a while of hiding, their luck started to turn. The group was introduced to a South Korean pastor by the name of Jayden who arranged for the group of nine to stay at a nearby hotel. Eventually Kim moved into a large apartment with sixteen other children Jayden was housing. Everything changed when a U.S judge came to their town one day to find a home for two boys older than John. The pastor quickly decided that he should go to America with them. The road ahead wouldn't be a smooth one; there were many days and nights spent on buses and the three boys had to split up to avoid being detected by Chinese police. The group endured a grueling ferry trip

across the Bohai Sea only to pack up and continue onto the next bus route 1,500 miles south near the mountains of Laos. Here the route ended and the group continued on foot. The boys laid low until a van ride three days later to Thailand where they surrendered themselves to the police. John describes the jail they were put into as "A protection jail, where you can go anywhere you want." In this jail they were interviewed by South Korean and United States personnel numerous times. Finally, John was sent a letter approving his immigration to The United States. "When they sent paper with (my) name, it was very exciting. We knew we were leaving." He recalls. A couple of days later, he was flown from Thailand to South Korea and then to San Francisco, California. A social worker and translator waited to pick John up from the airport along with his new foster family. John no longer worries about finding food and shelter day-to-day and enjoys the freedom of his new life.



John Kim poses for a picture in the H-wing.

Photo by Austin Belcher

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Hundreds of students gather to take the most anticipated test in all of high school: the SAT.

Photo courtesy of Steven Pinker

## Don't slack, SATs are back

By Adelle Senneca  
Staff Writer

Attention all Junior and seniors: grab your thinking caps, books, and more. The SAT is coming to town on March 10th, May 5th, and June 2nd. But how does one come prepared for this life changing test? According to Kelly Perkins from the LHS college and career center, "The advice I would give would be to take advantage of as many practice tests as you possibly can. Take the ASVAB, PSAT 10, PSAT, Mock SAT exams, and utilize the free study materials that the Khan Academy has to offer,

which can be found on the College Board website. Also, there are free study books available to check out in the college and career center, and there are additional study materials that could be purchased online or at Barnes and Noble bookstores. Please see the college and career center for help or questions. The big test will take place at local high schools at 8 a.m., but one should arrive by 7:30 a.m. to check in. Come refreshed and ready to go to take this important test. Senior Sophia Lowe advises, "Apart from the obvious things, you should eat a good, nutritious breakfast, make sure you're not tired. Take the test

seriously, but don't stress too hard because students can always take it again to improve their scores. The College Board website advises students not to bring any electronics (or else they'll take them), don't expect to get to pick a seat location, and for most students there are only two short breaks. One is ten minutes and the other is five minutes; and these are the only times one can eat and drink. While this test is stressful, make sure to get a good night's rest the night before and eat a nutritious breakfast the morning of the test, as studies have shown that this aids in concentration and overall test performance.

## Lion's Cafe:

*A review of Brentwood's Vitality Bowls*

By Micah Butler  
Staff Writer

Vitality Bowls has a very calm and serene atmosphere with one large TV in the middle of a wall to the right of the customer. The pricing was moderately expensive with a medium sized bowl costing around \$7-8. The portion size was not very large, but enough to satisfy the customer for a few hours. The food quality was great: it was the perfect blend of granola, berries, and other

fruits that Vitality Bowls likes to include in their cuisine. The restaurant was opened in September of 2015 and is located at the Streets of Brentwood next to the local theater AMC and plenty of retail stores. "Being an owner of Vitality Bowls for almost a year now has been a very gratifying experience for me and my family," says Amee Seth. Amee is the owner of Vitality Bowls, and was previously the banking executive for the location

here in Brentwood. "It was like an expensive and fancy Jamba Juice, but with food instead of drinks," tells happy customer Savannah Rodriguez. Although their bowls are expensive, they're no doubt delicious; and you get exactly what you pay for: a healthy and mood boosting snack. Vitality Bowls is light, just in case a customer needs to eat and get somewhere quick, leaving the customer feeling good and fully satisfied.



Vitality Bowl sells dozens of different fruit bowls to suit everyone's taste.

Photo by Micah Butler

## Homelessness is closer to home than you think

By Ali Bischof  
Staff Writer

Homelessness is more than just living in boxes or sleeping bags on the street: especially if that individual is a teenager. Becoming homeless can happen a variety of ways. People may get addicted to medication or throw away their money through gambling, use of illegal drugs, or they may have mental health problems and nowhere else to turn. There are many factors that make an individual homeless; for example, someone who is trying to escape from abuse, whether it be emotional or physical, or having an

unsupportive family. Not only does fleeing from these threatening situations deem one homeless, but staying at a friend's house for more than two months does too. Although one may have a roof over their head, clothes on their back, and food on the table, couch hopping does imply inconsistency which legally makes the individual fall under the category of homeless. Since 2014, Liberty High School has consistently had a staggering total of 54 students throughout all grades who are considered homeless each year. Counselors in every den try to help these teenag-

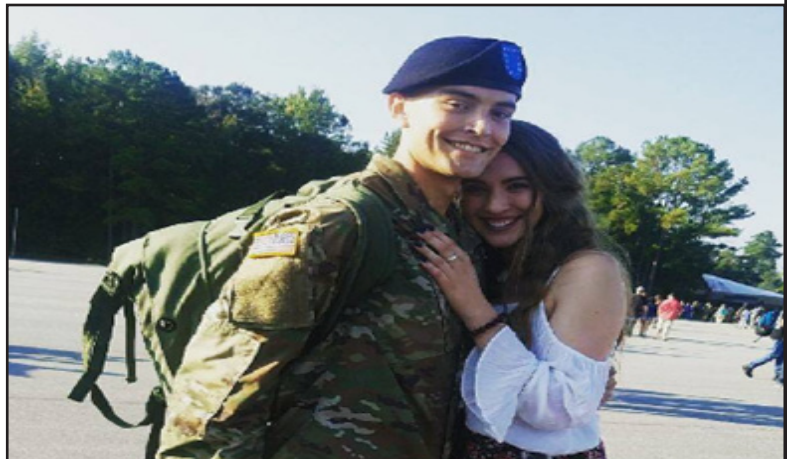
ers in any way they can and Liberty staff member Ms. Magana states, "We help those who might be in need of anything. We help provide materials and supplies for school if needed, help them with the free reduced lunches, and involve them in the school in any way... things such as clubs." It's important to remember that school administrators aren't only here to supervise kids, but they are also here to help these students in need to the best of their ability. Coming together and forming such an uplifting community is just one factor that contributes to the motto "pride matters."

## Military relationships, teen edition

By Sami Gibbs  
Editor-in-Chief

Relationships are often stressful, and at times emotionally draining for teenagers (although there are often many joys as well), but if a partner serving in the military is thrown in the equation, then the situation becomes much more complex. 2016 Liberty Alumni, Mikayla Furey, experiences maintaining a relationship with one who serves in the military. Furey's boyfriend of six months and 2017 LHS Alumni, Logan Thompson, is currently at Virginia undergoing AIT, or Advanced Individual Training, to become a Unit Supply Specialist. Before this, Thompson went through basic training. "Logan has always been ten minutes away, so three thousand miles is really difficult to get used to," Furey reveals from her experience away from Thompson during his basic training increment, adding, "I cope by keeping myself busy... the more successful I am, the better the future looks for the two of us." Although basic training is a mere two and a half months, it is apparent that those months seem much longer. Furey and Thompson

dealt with little communication. In fact, Furey reveals that they had no modern contact with each other, only hand-written letters received approximately every ten days. A lack of communication this way would cause issues in any stable relationship, let alone one divided by nearly fifty states. The waiting period between the few times they were actually able to speak is undeniably one of the most difficult parts, she says. Now, Logan has graduated from AIT and recently relocated to New York where he is currently stationed. As a Unit Supply Specialist, it is his job to maintain the Army's equipment and make certain that their supplies are upkept. Mikayla spends most of her time at Diablo Valley College working toward a degree in English which she hopes to one day use in becoming a high school theater arts teacher. The two are still going strong after nearly a year of trials and setbacks in their relationship and are able to talk daily without any more waiting periods. So, anyone currently in a long distance relationship with someone in the military can look to Mikayla Furey and Logan Thompson be a reminder that miles are just a number to overcome.



Mikayla and Logan share a hug just before saying goodbye for a few more months.

Photo courtesy of Mikayla Furey

## The History of Hanukkah

By Line Jensen  
Staff Writer

Everyone knows about Christmas and everyone has their own traditions, but not many people know about Hanukkah and how it all started.

It all started in 164 BC to mark the Jews' victory over the Greeks in the battle of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, as well as the rededication of the temple. Hanukkah is a Jewish tradition that takes place throughout eight days. Hanukkah is also known as the festival of light, but it really means "dedication". Many people think that it is one of the most beloved family traditions.

Mrs Einess said, "Hanukkah gives us an opportunity to celebrate our religion in a fun and family oriented way. It also reminds us how strong the Jewish people have had to be to endure."

The nine candles are an important aspect of Hanukkah. The middle candle does not have a specific meaning, it is just used to light the other eight candles. A new

candle is lit every day. The reason for the eight candles started back in 164 BC when a man was sent out to get more oil to burn because the amount they had left was only enough for one day; but it actually burned for eight days. Another part of Hanukkah are the gifts. The gifts became a holiday tradition in the 1920's, and are still very popular. It is especially the kids who enjoy the gifts and hopefully carry on the old and valuable tradition.

"My kids will most likely carry on the tradition of celebrating Hanukkah and other Jewish holidays," stated Mrs. Einess.

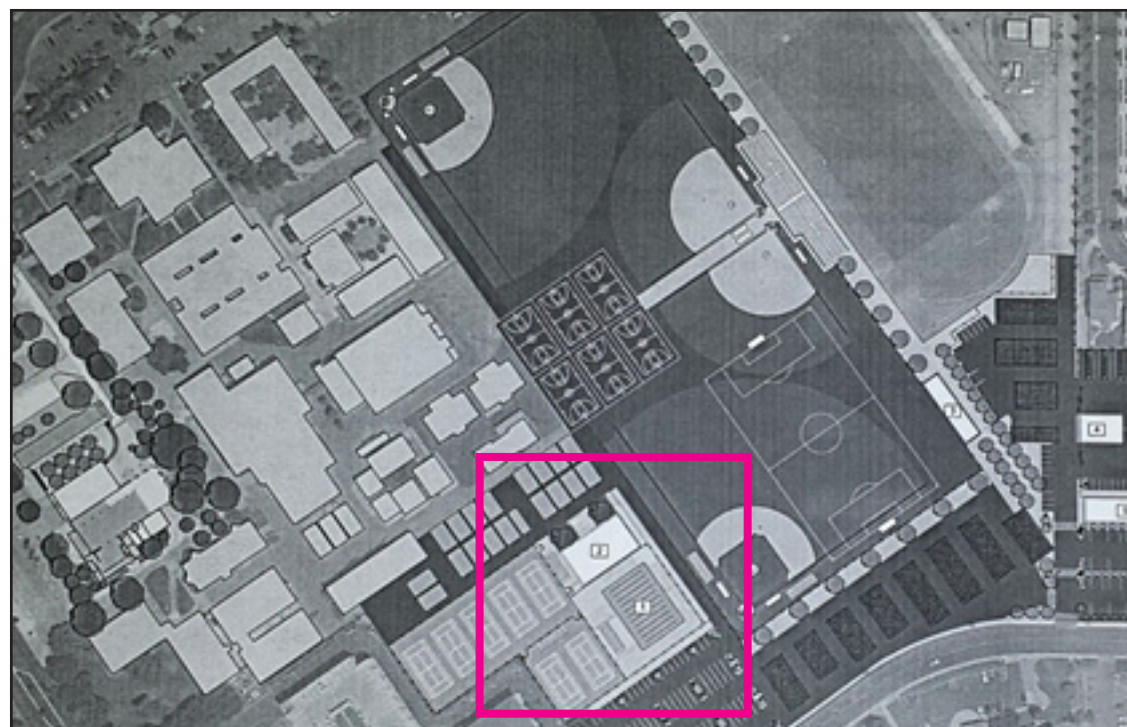
Hanukkah is celebrated every year, but it can be hard to figure when it is; this is because the Jewish religion follows its own calendar. Hanukkah is always on the 25th of Kislev but the Jewish month of Kislev is in November. As the "regular" calendar shifts days for the different holidays, so does the Jewish calendar. But this year it is from December 12th to the 20th.

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## Little league to Ivy league



Liberty Senior, Emily Muniz, at her soon to be home, Cornell University. Photo courtesy of Emily Muniz



An aerial rendering shows the newly-designed pool and poolhouse in the red square, designated to be built to the left of the baseball field.

Photo provided by Eric Volta

## Plans for Liberty's new pool coming along swimmingly

By Hugo Perotti  
Staff Writer

Bugs, dead animals, and unknown bodily fluids: all of these have been found in Liberty's current pool. Thankfully, the passage of Measure U ensures sufficient funds to completely replace the pool in addition to other much needed improvements to the schools infrastructure. Measure U is a 122 million dollar bond for new facilities and equipment for Liberty Union High School District. It was passed on November 8, 2016 with 61 percent of the vote. The most notable new facility will be the new pool, especially for varsity water polo player Christian Tota.

"I think the new pool is a good thing because it can be stressful for some players to make it to practice across town." Christian Tota is referring to one of the main problems with the current pool; it is too small for the water polo team to practice. Therefore, the players are forced to drive across town to Brentwood Family Aquatic Complex. The architectural firm hired by the district is Quattrocchi Kwok Architects, based out of Santa Rosa. They have worked with many high schools including Antioch, Napa, and many oth-

ers. Based on Quattrocchi Kwok's plans the new pool's dimensions will be 25x35 yards, big enough for a water polo match to take place, however this plan might undergo some changes, according to district Superintendent Eric Volta. "The cost projections came back a little high so there may be some cutbacks to the plan," he explained. Mr. Volta went on to state that phase one of Measure U will take about three and a half years to complete, but it is still unclear if the new pool will be subjected to potential cutbacks.

By Sawyer Stoddard-Newman  
Staff Writer

Emily Muniz, a varsity softball player, never thought she would get the amazing opportunity to play at Cornell University. Muniz is seventeen years old and a senior at Liberty High School. She has been playing softball since she was twelve years old, and the team she plays for now is the Norcal Storm 18G. Emily has also been playing on Liberty's varsity softball team since she was a freshman; she is currently the star catcher on varsity. Getting seen by Cornell was a miracle, says Muniz. "Julie Fallow, the head coach of Cornell, was watching one of my teammates when I caught her eye at a tournament in southern California." As much as Emily enjoyed high school ball, her athletic roots ran much deeper than Liberty's field.

"All my exposure was from travel ball, high school really didn't help at all," clarifies Emily. Luckily, she was able to visit Cornell earlier this year and it was magic, so much so that Emily shared that Cornell feels like Hogwarts. "Cornell University definitely lives up to its name, and I love it." In addition to her excitement toward her education, Emily is sure that moving to a different state will be an adventure, especially with the support from her future coaches and teammates. Emily plans to major in biology throughout her journey at Cornell. "I get to play the sport I love while learning at one of the top universities in the world. It doesn't get any better than that."

### Liberty's Fall Coach of the Year

On Tuesday, November 14, Ryan Partridge was voted Fall Coach of the Year by the Athletic Directors of the BVAL. Partridge and his staff were awarded for developing a positive team culture, and nurturing the growth of character in the student-athletes under their care.

According to principal Heather Harper, "This is a well deserved recognition. Congrats Ryan!"

## Winter is coming The Olympics return to South Korea this February

By Mason Padilla  
Staff Writer

South Korea, home of N Seoul Tower, Everland Amusement Park, and soon the home of The 2018 Winter Olympics. According to Joey Mantia, ice speed skater, "I have grown so much as an athlete and Pyeongchang will be fantastic this year". There are many athletes to watch this February, but some key team members are figure skater Jason Brown,

snowboarder Chloe Kim, and Olympic veteran snowboarder, Shaun White. White is just coming off an injury, but in his most recent interview he stated, "This year's Olympics should be one to watch, and I'm shooting for the gold." A popular sport to watch this year will be hockey. Although the US team houses no NHL athletes, America's presence in the rink will be



extremely competitive. Liberty athlete and hockey enthusiast Jay Butterfield shares, "Hockey is my favorite winter Olympic event, and I can't wait to see these competitive matchups happen." The Winter Olympics have added four new events. Big Air athletes will compete

in big air snowboarding which will replace the parallel slalom, and mixed doubles curling, mass start speed skating, and mixed team alpine skiing will be added to the roster. It was recently announced that the Russian Olympic team was banned from

competition due to allegations of doping; this could open up the playing field for other teams to emerge victorious in various events. Viewers can tune in to watch the winter Olympics beginning on Friday, February 9th.

December 13, 2017

# History made



On December 2, the Liberty Lions made history at Heritage High School as they beat the Freedom Falcons 37-0 in the NCS championship football game. This is the first time that Liberty has taken the NCS Division One championship title, and Head Coach Ryan Partridge's first year heading up the program.

Photo courtesy of 49ers Cal-Hi Sports

OPINION:

## What it really takes to be a wrestler: one athlete's story

By Charlis Vega  
Staff Writer

November 6th is just another Monday: The beginning of the week for many, but not for wrestlers. It's the day season starts. The day we begin to stress about making weight and passing our hydration test. The day our moms have to start straying from traditional family meals to make us food for a proper diet in order to drop to our weight class. People will be able to tell who the wrestlers are around campus: We will be the ones with our sweats tucked into our socks, complaining to our friends how we have to eat vegetables like they are going to hurt us. We will be hoping and praying that all the work we put in throughout the week at those long practices isn't affected by our cravings. On this day and the months to come, Liberty wrestler's bodies will be tested to see if they truly have the makings of a wrestler. Then comes the unanimously disliked time of the season: hydration tests. We sit on the bench impatiently in the wrestling room, crossing our legs and bonding, and waiting for our coach to come in calling our name to be the next



Do you have what it takes to succeed in the world of competitive wrestling?

Photo courtesy of fsclub.com

one for the urine test. Terrified, we think to ourselves, did I drink enough water the night before? Are we going to fail and have to try again the next week?

LHS Teacher and trainer, Mrs. Heinz has the lucky misfortune to test all our urine, and she describes the test as, "My least favorite day of the year". She uses a refractometer for this test, and says, "The athletes have to pee in a cup and I have to test the urine to see if they are properly hydrated. I have to put some on the refractometer to read

the amount of water that is present." If we are lucky to be deemed hydrated enough we pass our test, but sacrifices come become even more excruciating. A wrestler has to be able to put in extra work and maintain self-discipline. As affirmed by sophomore wrestler Savannah Serrano who says, "You have to put a lot of work in every week to prepare for a tournament." However, all these sacrifices and hardships teach valuable lessons to athletes who take on the daunting challenge of wrestling. Wrestling

teaches an athlete how far a person can go before they reach their limit. As well as physical determination, wrestling also teaches respect for coaches, the opponents coaches, the opponent themselves and most importantly, self-respect. Self-acceptance is the hardest thing to learn, especially while being compared to your opponent so closely. They may have won just by that takedown in the third period with only 30 seconds left, and you're left to think to yourself, how could I let this happen?

Every experience from practices to tournaments including each hardship is worth it. Worth the feeling you get when you make weight on that early Saturday morning, or when you pass skin check to see if you have ringworm or any other funguses. That feeling of butterflies in your stomach when the referee raises your hand in your opponent's school. Knowing that your peers and opponents are following by your example. A wrestler must learn to stay humble and appreciate all the things that a coach does for them. As well as everything their parents, brothers, and sisters do for them while the season is in session. Parents and relatives sacrifice Saturday mornings to take their athlete a couple hours away for a tournament.

Dan Gable once said, "Once you've wrestled everything else in life is easy." Wrestling may be the most intense physical and mental challenge I've ever taken on, but it is by far the most rewarding challenge the athletic world has to offer.

## The troubling reality of an athlete's mental health

By Jamison Capio  
Staff Writer

Being a student and finding time to study is hard enough, so being a student athlete adds even more stress.

"I have very little time to study at home after practice. Cross Country causes a lot of stress I have so much to do every day, but it ends up working out. I have never thought of quitting because my team mates are my family and I will never leave for anything." Cross Country runner, Alex Bergquist says.

Alex continues to run on the Cross Country team, despite the stress that is caused by sports. The bond and passion he has for his teammates keeps him going, but there are other stressed out student athletes who have had enough, and

they continue for the sole purpose of facing different challenges and staying healthy.

"Time is very limited, plans get crammed, and I just get too lazy," soccer player Ashley explains. "My stress levels are through the roof, and I've even thought about dropping out of school and quitting sports."

Ashley explains that time is scarce and that she had considered options other than playing on the soccer team and being a student.

"Soccer has definitely affected my character though. I remember meeting lots of girls and them being worried about shaving their bodies, and being out of shape, and responsibilities like that. I've

learned to just be myself."

With all this in mind, Ashley continues to stay and play for her local church's soccer team. She says that she truly benefits from being challenged to finish work, taking care of responsibilities, and accepting herself. All of these benefits make the stress of being a student athlete worth it according to her.

"On a scale from one to ten, my stress level is at a six because we all have to get it together and look synchronized as one, and I've even thought about quitting sports, but then I told myself I can do it," Majorette Anna Murvine states, "and being a majorette motivates me a little to be a good student."

Similarly, Anna Murvine also says

she stresses over sports, but she has the perseverance to continue. Remembering routines, staying on beat, and coming home late and hungry are things she goes through on a regular basis, but according to her it's worth it.

"Sometimes my friends want to hang or I have a family occasion on the days I have a game. But other than that I'm required to eat healthier in order to stay fit and keep up with people. I think basketball makes me a better student because I have to be smart in order to play." Joshua Clark states.

Unlike many, yearlong basketball player Joshua Clark explains how he doesn't sacrifice much and doesn't stress. He benefits by becoming both

smarter and healthier.

"Most college athletes who have mental health issues do not seek help," according to Daniel Eisenberg, an associate professor at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, who surveyed student-athletes before and after they participated in educational presentations to all 31 athletic teams at the university. He reports that 33% of all college students experience significant symptoms of depression, anxiety or other mental health conditions. Among that group, 30% seek help, but out of college athletes with mental health conditions, only 10% seek help.

# OPINION

December 13, 2017

## Coasting on coins

New gas taxes impacting students



Gas-guzzling cars are guzzling up teenagers' wallets, too.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images

By Scott Yoshida  
Staff Writer

Get your wallets ready, because gas prices are going through the roof. Recently there has been a huge increase in gas prices, affecting millions in California, and even our local high schoolers here in Brentwood. On November 1st, 12 cents was added to the cost of regular gas and 20 cents added to diesel. But wait, there's more: since 2017 is coming to an end in a couple months, starting next year there will be a new fee, ranging from 25 dollars to 175 dollars for vehicle registration. The gas tax is designed to raise 5.2 billion dollars

a year for the next ten years. This money will go to fixing up roads and building new ones, which makes it even harder on us teenagers still in high school. "It's one of the dumbest, most corrupt taxes," exclaimed Liberty junior Daniel Park.

Now I do not disagree or agree with this statement because the government is doing this so they can help build more roads. But I think it is absurd to raise the gas prices by this much. What is the point of using that gas tax to make new roads if fewer people are going to drive because of it? Even though people will most likely not notice this in

the beginning, over time it will get bad. Also, by taking a good look at Liberty student parking, this is very unfortunate, considering that many students drive diesel-powered vehicles. This diesel gas price increase makes the diesel sales tax go from 1.75 percent to a whole 5.75 percent.

The only solution that seems to be reasonable is to have more car-pools when going to school. Brentwood is a small town so maybe try a bike or even a skateboard. Other than that, if you have a job, work overtime and save your money. The government needs to recognize that we have other things to pay for.

### Opinion Poll:

## What will our generation be remembered for?

By Isaiah Horat  
Staff Writer

Photos by Isaiah Horat



**Jake Dixon, Junior:** Trying to repair the economic and environmental damage of the 20th century. We are the first generation to grow up using technology for everything.



**Leah Crescini, Senior:** We will be known as the generation that takes things too seriously.



**Isabel Ochoa, Sophomore:** We are going to need a lot of help from past generations because technology has taken over our routines.



**Yoshi Aryen, Junior:** Our generation will be remembered for making positive change about racial prejudice within society.

## Ballin' on a budget

Why I love the Dollar Tree

By Nafisa Tarin  
Staff Writer

If people really want to save money and live better; then I suggest they go to the Dollar Store. You want fuzzy socks? Go to the Dollar Store. You want Christmas decorations? Go to the Dollar Store. You want house slippers? Go to the Dollar Store. The Dollar Store doesn't get as much recognition as such as Walmart, Target, and Costco; although it is now time to go inside the Dollar Store and find its true worth. The Dollar Store provides great quality products. They range from decorations, gifts, food, drinks, socks, shampoo, balloons. Many believe that due to the items all being a dollar that they are bad quality and cheap. However, I myself have tried out most of their products such as their Christmas decorations, nail polish, gift bags, and they have ended up giving me great results. They weren't cheap or old, they were real usable products you'd be able to find at Walmart and Target. The Dollar Store has high market brands as well; they sell Sharpies, Pepsi, Hot Cheetos. All for a dollar. In addition, the Dollar Store offers great savings. An item that many could find in Walmart and



The Dollar Tree located on Brentwood Blvd.

Photo by Greg Barber

offers many choices for students on a budget. Target for a couple dollars would be a dollar at the Dollar Store. For instance, a bottle of Pepsi at Target would be \$1.79 while at the Dollar Store it is a dollar. This can also be seen with Sharpies; at Walmart a pair of Sharpies will be sold for \$2.99, while at the Dollar Store it is \$1.00. That is also true with mason jars; at Michaels, a mason jar costs \$1.99 while at the Dollar Store it costs \$1.00. Furthermore, Brentwood has not only one, but two Dollar Stores. One is located at 51

Sand Creek Rd, Brentwood which is only 1.2 miles away from Liberty. The other is located at 3141 Balfour Rd in the Shops at Fairview, Brentwood, which is only 2.2 miles away from Liberty. Both of these locations are nearby and on the opposite ends of Brentwood, making it easily accessible to all. The Dollar Store is good for many things and shouldn't be looked down upon. Therefore, go ahead and visit today. Fall in love with the Dollar Store, just like I have.

## He Said vs. She Said: are anniversaries "extra"?

By Alegria Nelson  
Staff Writer

It is the thing that you are most likely to forget: anniversaries. They are celebrated all around the world, and it is important to many, some more than others. Today, we will be talking about the anniversaries between a person and their significant other, that marks the date they met, started dating, got married, etc. The question is, how important are they? In my opinion, I think that anniversaries should simply be celebrated on a yearly recurring date, such as the day the two got married or met each other. I just think it's silly when partners think a one month mark is super special. For example, you wouldn't celebrate a birthday for you turning 16 years and one month old, would you? I guess it would be cool to have that many parties and gifts, but after a while, it would just get old, and that same thing applies to couples, in my opinion. I also feel that short term anniversaries are



A gentle caress from your partner, or the touch of death?

Photo courtesy of Getty Images

often seen in high school; this is because high schoolers' cannot really hold on to a relationship for a long period of time, so instead of having a normal yearly anniversary, they supplement and celebrate it

monthly, or with some other small increment of time. Maybe this is out of fear that the relationship won't last long. But in that case, why are we in relationships in the first place?

By Trevor Aitchison  
Staff Writer

Anniversaries: they really should be downplayed. The flower's wonderful smell, the surprises around each turn, and the incredible gifts, all with the person you're in love with. Now imagine doing it all again for several more anniversaries. The fewer the anniversaries, the fewer there is to worry about remembering the dates, saving money up for the perfect gifts, and making the memory truly special. Fewer anniversaries will make them mean more because they won't be happening as often. It's like birthdays: you feel special on your birthday because it only happens once a year. Most people say the more anniversaries you have, the more opportunities you will have to make up for anything you forgot or messed up, but it also gives you more chances to mess up or forget. I see why people want to have more anniversaries, it gives them a chance to do something

romantic and fun, but it will make it seem over done when you do so many of them, like those people that celebrate "meet-a-versaries" and "first kiss anniversaries". I have also heard of first date anniversaries. And then there are the people that do weekly anniversaries like "happy one week" or "happy two week". And don't forget the one months, two months, three months, etc. What is the purpose of celebrating every little thing? I say just wish a happy anniversary and move on with your life. It'll make things a lot less complicated. I, personally, believe you should have at most two anniversaries a year, a half year and a full year. But, in all seriousness, anniversaries don't have to be celebrated full out, you can easily just do a little dinner and talk to each other. In the end, just don't make each anniversary become more and more like a chore.

# Two perspectives on Sexual Assault

“These are not the first victims and they certainly won’t be the last.”



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

“what happened this night is what changed my whole life.”

## Hollywood’s hypocrisy | My story: a girl interrupted

By Lily Aiwohi  
Co-Editor

In the wake of the Harvey Weinstein fiasco, it’s no secret that the list of accused sexual predators in Hollywood is growing exponentially every day. But what happens when a bandwagon mindset is created due to social media? What happens if innocent actors and actresses are caught in the crossfire? It’s clear that victims’ claims can no longer go unnoticed by the sheer quantity of them; but carelessly handing out blame borders on fear mongering. “An investigation by the NYT found previously undisclosed allegations against Mr. Weinstein stretching over nearly a decade.” A New York Times article states. The rape culture in our country, and in the world as a whole, is notorious for silencing victims with threats of violence or expensive settlements. Powerful men like Weinstein hide behind a planned façade; and whether it be a humanitarian or women’s rights activist, they use this false innocence to lure their victims in. But as Best Coast singer Bethany Cosentino tells: “there are Weinstains everywhere. Not just in big powerful industries...they’re everywhere.” Men who abuse their status, like

directors Woody Allen and James Toback, are only ever shamed out of the industry once multiple allegations begin to pile up. There’s an underlying hypocrisy: the same people who kept their secrets and protected these abusers for years on end are often the first to pose as allies. It may seem impossible to trust anyone in the film-making business these days, but it’s important to remember sexual assault has been going on under the radar for centuries. These are not the first victims and they certainly won’t be the last. Social media campaigns like Rose McGowan’s “#MeToo” shine light on how relevant the issue of harassment and assault truly is; but real change cannot come without naming the predators hiding in plain sight. The world needs to do better at providing a safe environment for victimized women and men to come forward and share their stories, but we also need to hesitate a moment before labeling all of the accused as “rapists”, like actors Jared Leto and Ed Westwick, without an investigation or trial. Sexual assault is a dangerous double-edged sword, but by listening more often and reserving blame, a difference can be made.

By Briana Kennett  
Staff Writer

I raised myself and my younger siblings, mainly because my mom was always high on some type of drug. Over the years I learned to block out some memories of the bad times when my mother overused or would use in front of me and my siblings; which I tried to prevent as much as I could for the kids’ sake. I would feed, dress, and bathe all my younger siblings spending all my time with them trying to keep them occupied to be oblivious to the things happening around them. I was, I would have to say, about five when my whole world changed, and the unexpected began to happen. My step dad was a drug dealer and he would get high on anything just like my mom. But whenever I and he were in the apartment alone together he would become sexual and use hand gestures to suggest what he wanted me to do to him. At this time, it was not that serious to report, I thought to myself, but after a year or two of this going on my mom had broken up with him and decided that we should all move out. No one was aware that any of this had happened up until a month after my step brother’s birthday party. What happened

this night is what changed my whole life. My siblings and I were spending the weekend over at my step dad’s place. It was two days after my step brothers’ birthday party, we were all sleeping in one room on some mattresses on the floor. I woke up feeling uncomfortable, noticing my pants had been removed and that my stepdad was touching my private parts. At this point in time I was petrified to even say or do anything because my siblings were sound asleep right next to me. (Yeah, I know this sounds sick, that a man would do this to a child, but it really happened). I pretended to sleep as this all happened so I rolled over as I normally do to get comfortable in my sleep and I looked at the tv noticing that there was porn on. I felt so many feelings at once as I just laid there letting him feel me up. Fast forward to a month later: I overheard my mom and aunt talking about how bad of a guy my stepdad is and my mom made the comment, “He better not have touched one of my kids”. Once I heard those words roll off her lips, I broke down into tears and explained the best I could to them how he had touched me the last time I was visiting. We went to the doctors and found out after I was examined that I was no longer

a virgin. So there I was, a seven year old, feeling that this situation could not get any worse, up until it did. We had placed a restraining order on my step dad from all of us children but my mom was so messed up she did not understand that. My mom allowed him to have visits with his two kids and eventually he was caught having my two younger siblings in his custody. My siblings and I were taken away from my mom by CPS. It was hard for me the most being the oldest and knowing the reasoning for everything. My younger siblings were kept together and placed in another foster home from my sister. To find out more on what happened, Google search “child molester shot and killed in Byron”. After all the sexual abuse, I am not over it. I still have flashbacks. But I’ve learned healthy habits on coping with it. I see a shrink once a week, we have some EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) sessions to have a healthy way of remembering the past, so it is not as traumatic when remembered. Personally it was very hard to speak and tell an adult what was happening to me. It is never too late to speak up and get yourself out of a situation that you know is not right. You are not alone.

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