

# the liberator

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## what's news



photo by Kayla Le

Teams start get a headstart on the school year with summer practices!

see **BREAKING A SWEAT** page 4



**MOMENT OF SILENCE** Students had a moment of silence in the courtyard on May 26 to honor the victims of gun violence. The event was organized by students to provide a time to grieve and reflect following the tragedy in Uvalde, Texas. photo by Edith Holmsten

## GEN Z: THE LOCKDOWN GENERATION

**CONTENT WARNING:** Article contains accounts of gun violence.

**LILI XIONG** | student life editor

There hasn't been a week in 2022 without a mass shooting. The Buffalo supermarket shooting in New York left 10 dead and three injured. The Highland Park shooting during a Fourth of July parade in Illinois left seven dead and over 30 wounded. The Robb Elementary shooting in Uvalde, Texas, claimed the lives of 19 students and two teachers.

These shootings add on to the names people already know by heart: Columbine, Sandy Hook, and Marjorie Stoneman. In fact, there have already been 27 school shootings and 314 mass shootings in 2022 alone. Not only do large numbers of shootings take a toll on the mental health of survivors and others closely connected to gun violence, but the tragedies affect those who simply keep up with current events. A study from UC Irvine showed that consuming media shortly after a tragedy can lead to increased levels of stress and fear. According to March for Our Lives Austin organizer and Anderson High School junior Levi Langley, the sheer commonplace of gun violence causes it to be on many students' minds.

"Everytime I walk through the doors to go to school, it crosses my mind," Langley said. "Every time the principal comes over the speaker at an unusual time, it's on my mind. Even on one of our last days of school, the power kept going off, and anytime anything unusual happens, it's on our minds."

According to the Washington Post, while some students have faced actual school shootings, it is far more common for students across the country to undergo lockdowns or gun violence scares. According to senior Catherine Masey, LASA had its own scare at the campus the school shared with LBJ back in the 2019-2020 school year.

"When I was a freshman on campus at LBJ, there was a guy with a gun in the neighborhood, and everybody had to go into lockdown and freaked out," Masey said. "Some kids were crying, and some kids were acting like it was nothing... a school shooting might not happen to [us], but our friends could absolutely be killed by gunfire."

According to LASA Audio Video Production

teacher Vanessa Mokry, it's important to create spaces in classrooms for students to talk about the violence in schools. She believes it is especially important to incorporate these discussions in curriculums for Gen Z students.

"After the tragedy in Parkland in 2018, it did feel like students were more on edge," Mokry said. "In that year, one of the films nominated for the short film Oscar was about a school shooting as well... I focused on preparing the kids a little as well when we watched that film. It served as a good primer to get a group conversation started about how people were feeling, about safety in the school, and just feeling in general."

Similar to Masey, Langley has experienced a gun violence scare and went into lockdown at Murchison Middle School in 2018, where a parent had been walking around the school with a firearm on his belt. Langley and March for Our Lives are calling for common sense gun laws to eliminate these threats.

"One of our action goals, specifically in Texas, is passing red flag gun laws," Langley said, "which are basically common sense gun laws like raising the age to have a firearm and having universal background checks. We're also calling on [Gov.] Greg Abbott to hold a special session on gun violence, and listen more to young people and community members."

see **THE LOCKDOWN** page 3



photo by Edith Holmsten  
graphic by Kayla Le

## PARAMOUNT Summer at the Movies

In the heat of the Austin summer, the Paramount, a downtown theater, provides a respite from the sun with their film series. Inside the building, snacks, drinks, and cushy red chairs await guests. A variety of movies are shown all summer long giving people many opportunities to visit.

This year marks the 48th anniversary of the Summer Classic Film Series which is hosted in the downtown Austin theaters, the Paramount and Stateside. It consists of films in a variety of genres—ranging from musicals to sci-fi to anime to a good rom com. Screening times vary in times of day sometimes with multiple movies showing a day and with many showing every week.

Paramount Theater film programmer Stephen Jannise is responsible for the movies featured during the film series. He described the usually monthslong process of picking films and researching in order to create a diverse and fun series for the summer. Jannise said he chose many different movies, such as "The Princess Bride," "The Sound of Music," and "To Kill a Mockingbird", so everyone gets a chance to watch something new or something they love.

"I always have a running list of films I'm interested in showing," Jannise said. "Sometimes they're films I've just seen on Turner Classic Movies or elsewhere. Other times they're films I didn't have space for the previous summer. At the beginning of every year, I also look at what films are celebrating major anniversaries that year and also which films have recently been restored by the studios. I use all of that information to start planning the summer schedule in the winter, and I usually have it completely booked by early April."

Jannise also picks out creative titles for the film categories each week, doing his best to organize the films in a cohesive manner. After the movies are organized he also comes up with names that he thinks group all the films together and will spark people's interest. Some categories include "Screwball Through the Years," "Hitchcock Week," and "An Epic Finish."

"When I have my full list of films I'm interested in showing, I usually start to see some themes where I could group some of the films together under those themes," Jannise said. "Sometimes the theme leads me to think of other films not already on the list that would be a great fit. The idea behind doing themed weeks is that hopefully, if you recognize some of the more popular films in that given theme, you might also be interested in giving the less well-

known ones a try too."

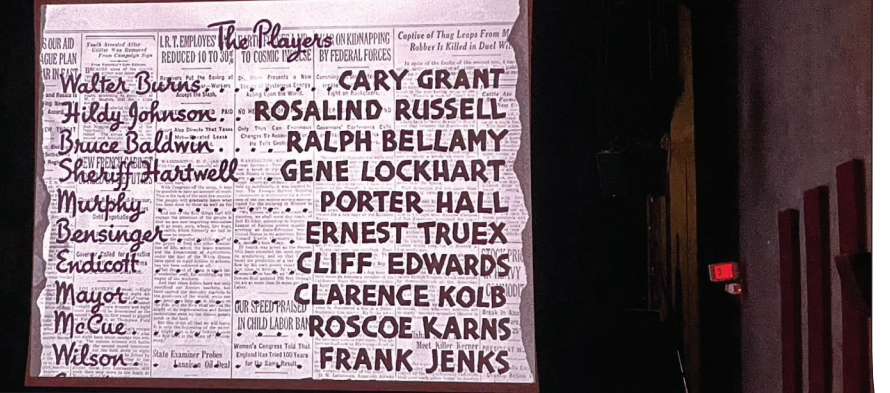
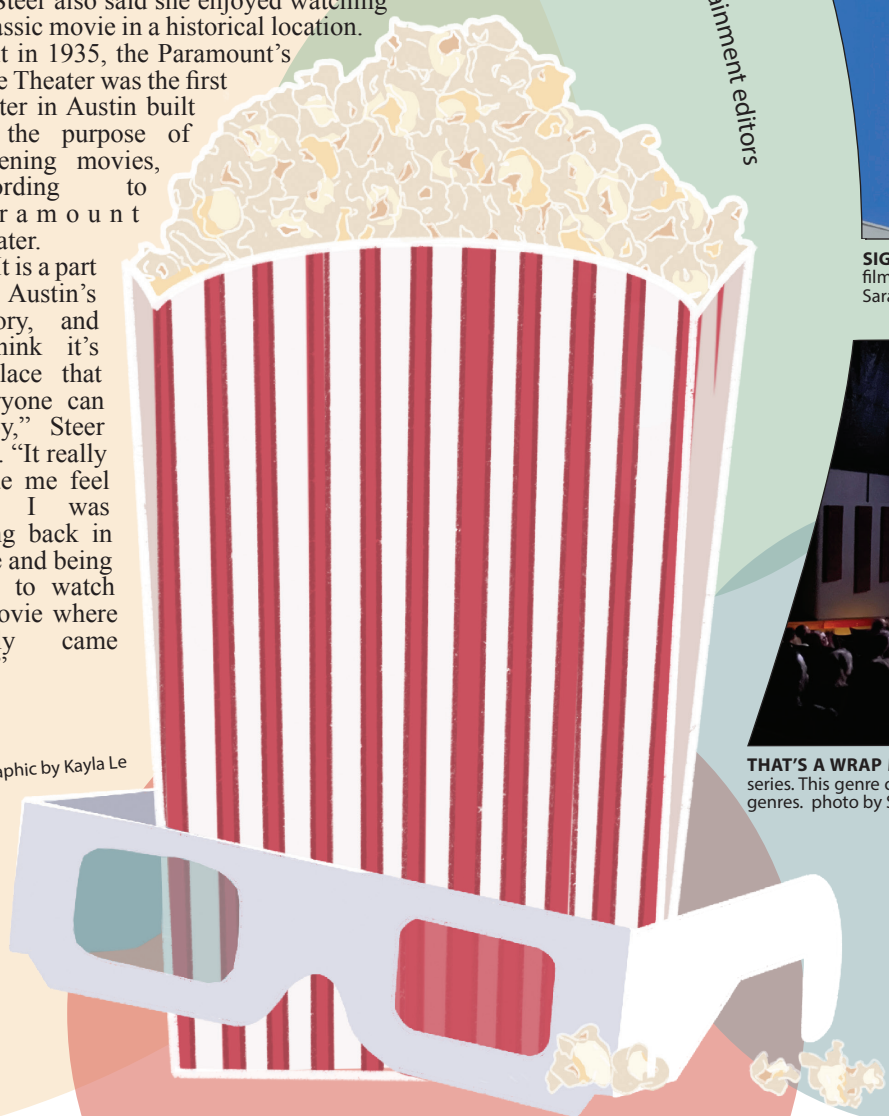
Anderson High School junior Emily Steer enjoyed watching "His Girl Friday" through the Summer Classic Film Series. The film was categorized under "Screwball Through the Years", which Steer found suitable for the comedic manner of the story.

"I think that's a very fitting genre," Steer said. "Through all its hysterics, it's still a rom-com."

Steer also said she enjoyed watching a classic movie in a historical location. Built in 1935, the Paramount's State Theater was the first theater in Austin built for the purpose of screening movies, according to Paramount Theater.

"It is a part of Austin's history, and I think it's a place that everyone can enjoy," Steer said. "It really made me feel like I was going back in time and being able to watch a movie where really came out."

graphic by Kayla Le



**ROUND OF APPLAUSE** The credits roll for the 1940 romantic comedy, "His Girl Friday". The film was part of a prominent cultural trend, screwball comedy, in which women were depicted as domineering in relationships. photo by Sarah Garrett



**SIGN OF THE TIMES** Paramount Theater opens its doors to the public for viewing classic films in the summer heat. Each screening had a different theme based on genre. photo by Sarah Garrett



**THAT'S A WRAP** Movie fans pack into the dark Paramount Theater for the "Screwball Through the Years" series. This genre can be classified under comedy, however the theater featured films from a wide array of genres. photo by Sarah Garrett

### CONNECT WITH THE LIB



If you would like to submit ideas for articles or photos to the newspaper's social media scan this QR code. You can also view our website and online publications.

see **SUMMER AT THE MOVIES** page 3

## New Year Means New Policies

**MALVIKA PRADHAN**  
**AVA SPURGEON** | news editors

With the resignation of Dr. Stephanie Elizalde, the previous superintendent of the Austin Independent School District (AISD), and a new budget for the 2022-23 school year, LASA students and teachers could expect to see a lot of changes moving forward. Some of these changes will include an increase in staff pay and improvements to LASA's campus.

First off, AISD received a new budget of \$1.6 billion, according to KVUE. The new budget includes approximately \$20 million for staff pay raises and an increase in the district-wide minimum wage. About half of the \$1.6 billion will be recaptured to other districts in the state.

AISD District 1 trustee LaTisha Anderson said she wished teachers could have gotten a greater salary increase with the new budget. However, Anderson also said that it is hard to find a balance between giving teachers higher salaries and cutting positions from AISD headquarters [HQ] that might hurt district management or students' education.

"I don't know how to balance that, but I really wish we could have given more, for example, a five or ten percent pay increase," Anderson said. "Right now, we're sending a boatload back to the state for recapture so that five or ten percent pay raise, where's the money going to come from? Say we start at HQ, even if it's not a classroom cut, it could still be a position that supports the classroom. That's what I mean when I say it's going to impact students."

Along with changes to the budget, Anderson is adjusting to the interim superintendent, Anthony Mays. Anderson said she hopes that while Mays is in office, he will involve staff in his policy decisions.

"I'm looking for whatever he's planning to do in his time as interim that he's making sure to bring staff along on the journey and making sure that whatever decision he is making that he's had time enough to talk to staff and say 'Hey, this is what I'm considering, how can your feedback make this better, or what area have you identified that maybe I've missed,'" Anderson said.

School Board Trustee Noelita Lugo said that the district would like to start the process of finding a new superintendent in November, after trustee elections. Lugo said she wants this process to heavily involve the community as well.

"Probably in January 2023 we would then begin formal community engagement and see what it is the community would like to see in their next superintendent, like their leadership qualities and other things that are most important from their perspective," Lugo said. "Then probably in May we would be close to having what's called a lone candidate. My hope would be that then that would lead to additional community engagement with that particular finalist."

Along with these changes, a new bond package is being created that will be voted on in the Nov. 8, 2022 elections. Nevin Hall, a member of the Bond Steering Committee, said LASA students could see many changes and facilities improvements if the bond package passes.

"A lot depends on whether this bond passes or not, if it does, students will see a pretty hefty difference in quality of life," said Hall, a former Liberator editor. "You'll fix the really important stuff that is currently broken."

Hall said that if this bond passes, LASA will receive about 30.9 million dollars. Along with fixing problems around the school, such as heating, cooling and security issues, the money will also go to new facilities, like turf performance fields and a mental health center. Hall said that although the end goal is to be a schoolwide improvement, it might be a while before LASA students see specific advancements to the campus.

"Of course, this certainly won't happen soon after the bond passage, but within a couple years, you'll see some definite improvement on that," Hall said. "Most of the changes you'll see — if LASA ends up getting fast tracked, which is not impossible — you may see by spring semester some improvement. That'll be if LASA got incredibly lucky. More likely than not, students are only going to start seeing a serious change in LASA in the 2023-24 school year, if not even later than that, somewhere closer to 2030."

According to Lugo, day-to-day changes will vary for grade levels. In elementary schools, students will now start attending physical education class everyday, instead of rotating between physical education, art and music. As a result, elementary students will have less class time in art and music. As for middle and high school students, teacher vacancies will most likely be the largest change they will see.

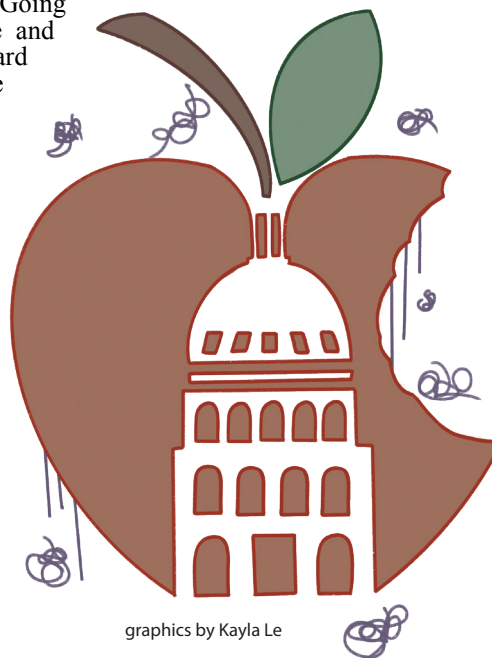
"There are at least 500 vacancies, and we are a month out from school starting," Lugo said. "If I were a student, I would be concerned. Definitely one of the pieces of the budget I was relieved to see was that they worked very hard to scrape together to increase salaries, and not just for incoming staff but also staff who have been with the district."

With all of these changes occurring in the district, there are plenty of ways for students to get involved and get their voices heard. According to Lugo, it's extremely important for those impacted by these changes to voice their concerns.

"I think the youngest board member is 40," Lugo said. "That's a completely different generation. We need to hear what y'all are going through as students and young people, what we should invest in, what you wish we could change. Going to the AISD website and looking for the board member webpage would be the first thing to do, each of us have our phone number, our email, and if we have social media, our handle. The other thing would be twice a month, the board holds meetings and at those meetings, anyone from the public, including students, can come and voice their opinions."

More likely than not, students are only going to start seeing a serious change in LASA in the 2023-24 school year, if not even later than that.

- NEVIN HALL, BOND STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER



graphics by Kayla Le

## the liberator

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### Editorial Policy

Responsibilities of a Free Student Press: Serving the primary communication link within the Liberal Arts and Science Academy and between the school and the local community, this newspaper accepts the responsibilities inherent in being a free press. The Liberator staff strives to produce a professional-quality publication that follows the Code of Ethics of the Society of Professional Journalists. The objective is to print the news in a fair and objective way with the utmost regard for integrity.

#### Editorial Content:

1. The students on The Liberator staff will print articles which have been researched to the best of their ability to obtain most complete information.
2. The information will be presented in an objective, truthful and fair manner.
3. When personal commentary is given it will be in good taste on issues that have been researched, analyzed and where expert opinion has been sought, and then presented with the best ability of the writer. In addition, all opinion or commentary will be clearly labeled as so.
4. No material which is obscene, libelous or that will cause an immaterial and substantial disruption of the school day, according to accepted legal definitions, will be printed.

#### The Editorial Boards and its Functions:

The Liberator staff will be governed by an editorial board comprised of the following individuals: editors-in-chief and section editors.

#### The Editorial board will:

1. Determine the content of the publication (with input from other staff members).
2. Stress the editorial policy.
3. Ensure the accuracy of the publication.
4. Address disciplinary or other inappropriate behavior of staff.
5. Vote on removal of staff members.
6. Change or add policy as necessary with three of four board members voting favorably.

#### Viewpoints:

Printed material which is a view of a staff member or a contributing writer will be labeled as such. These views are not intended to reflect the view of the administration of Liberal Arts and Science Academy nor the School Board of the Austin Independent School District. Viewpoints will be given in two areas in the newspaper.

Editorials: These will be determined by the staff consensus. The editorial will be unsigned and will represent the viewpoint of the publication.

Letters to the Editor: Letters to the Editor are accepted for topics of general interest to the readership of the newspaper. Letters must be submitted typed or neatly printed in ink and must have the signature of the writer and the writer's grade level. Editors reserve the right to determine which issue the letter goes in, with every effort made to print the letter as soon as possible. The editors also reserve the right to edit the letter for grammar, length and repetition.

Non-Staff Contributors: Bylined contributions are welcome. Correction of Errors: The staff makes every effort to print accurate information. In the case of errors, a written correction will be made in the following issue of the newspaper.

#### Sources:

In general, no anonymous sources will be used in reporting. Sources from within the school, as well as those not connected with the school, will be used. Under no circumstances will gifts, including coupons, etc., be accepted by the staff members from sources or advertisers.

Note: The Liberator is an open forum.

Have an opinion about a new school policy? Got an issue with this issue? Anything else on your mind? Email us at [lasaliberator@gmail.com](mailto:lasaliberator@gmail.com) or DM us at [lasaliberator](https://twitter.com/lasaliberator).

## GREEN with Envy

### Businesses Lie to Customers About Their Sustainability

**NORAH HUSSAINI** | commentary editor

When Starbucks made the choice to release a "strawless lid" in 2018, it certainly wasn't anything groundbreaking. From a multi-billion dollar company, most expected much more— maybe a program to raise large amounts of awareness or a substantial donation to a climate-based charity. Nevertheless, it was still a step in the right direction— a step in a climate-positive direction. Fewer Starbucks straws would go into the oceans, and pollution would be lessened. However marginal the decrease may be, many thought this meant less plastic would be used.

Unfortunately in this case, the promise of using less plastic was simply a way to make patrons of the company feel more at ease and more climate-aware. Even though Starbucks claimed the strawless lid was going to decrease plastic use, more plastic was actually used in the strawless lids than the previous lid and straw combination, but the information was not advertised as part of the campaign. This kind of misleading advertisement is known as greenwashing, a tactic that many companies use to assuage concerns about their role in adding to the rapidly accelerating effects of climate change. By doing this, businesses are able to promote themselves as "climate conscious" and "environmentally friendly" for marketing purposes while making little to no effort towards changing their usual practices.

Starbucks is not the only perpetrator of greenwashing; other huge corporations such as H&M, Zara, Nestlé, Exxon, and Volkswagen have also blatantly lied about their climate goals. For example, in 2019, Volkswagen admitted to cheating on emissions tests by adding a device to make the car seem to emit less during

product testing. Following the conclusion of the tests, the device was removed which allowed the cars to emit higher amounts of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere than customers thought.



graphic by Alexandra Valencia

Other companies have simply tried to distract customers from their negative environmental impact by claiming to have climate conscious products. H&M, one of the biggest fast fashion giants in the world, started a 'Conscious' line, advertising that the clothes had climate benefits. In reality,

the line used more synthetic material than their normal line and was only a fraction of the products the company sells. Similarly, Nestlé announced in an ambitious campaign that it was aiming to eliminate all of its nonreusable or non-recyclable products by 2025. However, Nestlé has been among the top five plastic polluting companies in the world for the past four years, according to Break Free From Plastic.

The companies' deception of customers has helped the businesses make more money though. According to a study from Businesswire, people are 78% more likely to buy a product if it is labeled as environmentally friendly. Time and time again, large corporations like this prove that the only reason they have eco-friendly initiatives is to deceive customers into buying their products in a ploy to rake in more profit for themselves.

Although the lies and deceit of companies such as Volkswagen, Starbucks, and Nestlé are egregious, the acts of corporations like ExxonMobil may be considered far worse. The oil conglomerate has consistently ranked in the top 10 on the list of top 100 producers of greenhouse gas emissions according to the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Also, the behemoth company placed fifth on the 2021 list of the 90 companies responsible for two-thirds of climate change, on the report of Science.org. However, ExxonMobil has historically placed blame on the consumer in order to gloss over the fact that they are one of the least environmentally conscious companies in the world. In 2007 and 2008, Exxon put out ads praising the "energy-saving consumers" of the world— those who limit and consider their electricity consumption, use heating and cooling sparingly in their homes, and seek to maximize the miles per gallon of gas in their car. While encouraging

citizens to be conscious about turning off the lights before they leave home, the company continued to do nothing substantial about their carbon impact.

Another example of companies misplacing blame is the concept of the carbon footprint. The consumer's carbon footprint is the summation of the gas emissions created as a byproduct of their actions such as driving a car, using electricity or turning on the heater, even buying unsustainable clothing. At the beginning of the 21st century, British Petroleum hired Ogilvy and Mather, a PR agency, to promote the term "carbon footprint" and associate the term with the individual consumer, according to the Guardian. This allowed for large businesses to avoid taking accountability for their own massive amount of carbon emissions. Ogilvy and Mather were successful. People became so distracted with accusing one another of having a larger carbon footprint, that they forgot the real villains were not their neighbors or coworkers but rather the large corporations responsible for mass pollution. The power of the phrase continues to thrive today, unfairly targeting the miniscule actions of people who don't have the power to reduce emissions by hundreds of millions of tons and letting greedy oil giants off the hook.

In order to make any progress in the short window of time left to reverse climate change, the companies most responsible for climate change will need to make changes starting immediately. Larger goals need to be set using stricter language that does not allow for loopholes and mistakes. Companies will need to be honest with the consumers and themselves as to how much they have contributed to the growing environmental problem. Other corporations that try to market "green" lines or "eco" products need to realize that even the best version of their product may still be extremely harmful to the environment. Small carbon reductions and fractional minimization of harmful materials is not an option anymore. Companies can no longer put off taking action to reduce their impact on the environment. The climate crisis is no longer coming — it's already here.



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Jannise agreed that the Paramount is a fantastic place to screen movies and films. He appreciates the antiquity of the theater and the efforts to preserve its cinematic history.

"Throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Paramount was the place to see movies, especially big event movies," Jannise said, "and thanks to the tireless work of many people over the years to carefully preserve the theater, it remains a unique and fun place to see movies that is different from any other movie venue. Not many theaters like the Paramount continue to operate, much less show movies on a frequent basis, so to be able to see classic films in this classic theater is a real treat."

Jannise said he is glad the theater is still open particularly for younger generations of film viewers. He recalled watching famous movies and the impact they had on his life and perspective of the cinematography world.

"When we're young, it's natural that we mostly stick to the films released in our lifetimes," Jannise said. "I know I wore out several videos and DVDs of my favorite movies when I was a kid, but the more I watched Turner Classic Movies with my parents and went to see classic films at the old movie palace in my hometown, the more I realized that those old movies haven't aged a bit. They still have so much to tell us, and they offer younger generations a window into the past."

Nonetheless, not everyone enjoys the traditional 'classic' movie genre. Leah Evans, who visited the screening series, was thrilled to learn that the "classics" film series included more recently produced films as well.

"I really enjoyed that they had a variety of titles that could fit into 'classics' other than just old black and white movies because



**A BLAST FROM THE PAST** The State Theater in Austin is a vintage movie house built in 1935. This theater has been showing old summer classics along with the Paramount Theater, which it stands next to on Congress Avenue. photo by Sarah Garrett

not everyone really likes those or has had a connection with them," Evans said. "That's why I think it's nice that they have movies like 'Howl's Moving Castle', a classic Studio Ghibli film."

Evans had never seen "Howl's Moving Castle" and enjoyed watching it in-person after years of isolation. She also appreciated the ingenuity of the program, and being able to experience a new film in an interesting location.

"I think [the film series] it's a really cool idea," Evans said. "Especially after the pandemic it's nice to just be able to watch a movie in person."

Jannise agreed that watching a movie at home is not quite the same as watching one in a theater. He believes that watching a movie on the big screen is the true way to make movie memories and hopes that more people will fall in love with the experience of going to the movies.

"Before I started this job, I attended many films at the Paramount as a fan and made a lot of new discoveries," Jannise said. "In this world of countless distractions, I know that I wouldn't have responded as well to several of those films if I had watched them at home with all the things that can compete for my attention. I will never forget what it was like to see 'Sweet Smell of Success' or 'The Hustler' or 'Cabaret' for the first time at the Paramount, and it just wouldn't have been the same on my TV."

Paramount Theater's Summer Classic Film Series provides an opportunity for people to immerse themselves in classic movies of all types. From Studio Ghibli Classics like 'Howl's Moving Castle', to musical Classics like 'Grease', to classic '90s movies such as 'Clueless', the Summer Classic Film series is a great experience, according to Jannise.

"If you're thinking of watching '2001: A Space Odyssey' or 'The Godfather' for the first time, I encourage you to do it at the Paramount," Jannise said. "It'll be an experience you never forget."

## Liberator's Picks Movie Reviews

### "His Girl Friday"

SARAH GARRETT | entertainment editor

"His Girl Friday", released in 1940, starring Rosalind Russel and Cary Grant, centers around spunky, former star reporter Hildy. When Hildy tries to leave the newspaper business behind to become a housewife, her clever ex-husband, Walter, comes up with a plan to lure her back to journalism—and to him. Throughout the hysterics, Hildy gets caught in the allure of creating a great newspaper story and wonders if her fiance is the man she truly loves. The overwhelming feminism in this black and white film is truly refreshing, and the hysterical dynamic between characters makes for a wonderfully witty and eccentric romantic comedy.

### "Howl's Moving Castle"

KATIE BUSBY | entertainment editor

"Howl's Moving Castle" is a heartwarming movie that comes from the beloved animation studio, Studio Ghibli. The film, released in 2004 and written and directed by Hayao Miyazaki, follows Sophie, a girl living a fairly simple life—until she becomes cursed. The curse causes her to flee her home in shame and she ends up as part of a found-family in a castle owned by the infamous wizard Howl. It is very sweet to see all the characters in the film develop a love and trust for each other as they face challenges and watch as the world outside their bubble of friendship devolves into a state of chaos. The animation style is endearing, as in many studio ghibli films, and makes you fall in love with the characters and the setting through little details and emotional moments. I would definitely recommend this movie to anyone looking to feel good and run off into a fantasy land of their own.

## The Lockdown Generation

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In recent years, Abbott has passed several bills making purchasing and owning a gun easier, including authorizing the 2021 Constitutional Carry legislation, a law that makes it legal for Texans to carry a handgun without a license to carry. Masey said she expects nothing less from Texas politicians but believes that banning assault weapons and increasing mental health support is what Texans deserve.

"What I expect versus what I want are two very different things," Masey said. "I don't expect anything from our Texas officials. What I think we deserve is putting in place restrictions that are going to protect their citizens, strengthening background checks, strengthening mental health supports, and early childhood intervention...What I don't want is their thoughts and prayers."

While passing gun control legislation and funding for mental health lies in the hands of elected officials, there are still actions students can take. According to Langley, supporting local organizations is important to implementing change. For example, March for Our Lives Austin, which is led by Langley, will be posting updates on Instagram about how to join the chapter and when marches are happening.

"It sucks to ask students to do the jobs of adults, but Texas has so many gun violence prevention organizations you can join like Texas Gun Sense and the Community Justice Action Fund," Langley said. "Even if you text the March for Our Lives number 954-954, they actually text you daily actions you can do to stay involved.... The organizers around you are doing the work every day, even when gun violence isn't in the headlines."

According to Masey, remembering and honoring the victims of shootings is equally important as advocating for gun restrictions. For example, Masey organized a vigil in the LASA courtyard on May 26, 2023 to honor the victims of the Uvalde shooting.

"I remember just wanting to do something, wanting to not feel like I was doing nothing again," Masey said. "I wanted to do something that would let other people who were feeling grief in the same way as me come together and think about those kids because I know that if that was my kid, I would want people to not only do things but to honor their memory."

Mokry worked with Masey to organize the vigil, helping get approval from the school for the moment of silence. According to Mokry, LASA students are very passionate about policies that affect them but could also do more to initiate activism at school.

"School shootings now feel like one kind of tragedy in a long list of events in which we are constantly bombarded," Mokry said. "Uvalde happened at the end of school, so there was not really a lot of time to get a sense of how it affected students...I think student voices can make a real difference, and [LASA students] want to help when an opportunity presents itself, but they don't really know what to do otherwise."

Days after March for Our Lives gathered in Austin on June 11, the United States Senate passed the first bipartisan gun violence prevention bill in over 30 years. The bill expanded background checks on people buying weapons and contributed to federal mental health funding. While Langley believes the bill is not nearly enough to completely mitigate gun violence, she also said

it is important to focus on the small successes that come from the movement.

"It's very discouraging when you get involved with this kind of work because there's one mass shooting after the other, and it can be really intimidating because of how devastating and draining it can be," Langley said. "But I think it's important to know that progress is always being made."



**CALL FOR ACTION** Levi Langley (right) speaks out at a March For Our Lives protest at the Texas Capitol. March for Our Lives also organized over 300 localized marches on June 11, 2022. photo courtesy of Levi Langley

## editorial

## Examining the Dangerous Behavior of Sports Fans

ANNABEL ANDRE | sports editors  
SANWI SARODE

Soccer, ice hockey, and motorcycle racing are known to cause many sports riots following an event, according to Science Direct. The New York Times found these protests have often wreaked havoc in streets, resulting in injuries, sometimes deaths. Along with the postgame commotion come an influx of negative emotions, according to the National Library of Medicine, that can be intensified if betting and drinking is involved, making sport riots a dangerous affair.

According to the Washington Post, intense fan identification with a team is the main reason sports fans feel the need to riot after a game, whether it's in commemoration or anger. Once a fan becomes loyal to a team, researchers from Harvard University have found that fans tend to feel as if it's their duty to celebrate or protest on the team's behalf after an intense game, similar to how one feels the need to defend their own family. Researchers have also found that sport riots take place due to the tendency of fans to associate their own self-worth with the performance of the team they support, as reported by the Washington Post. As a result of this personalization, the team becomes an extension of the fan, so when a fan's supported team loses it feels like an attack on themselves.

Sports riots are also brought on by the behavioral changes that occur when one becomes part of a mob. Once in a mob, people take on the

behaviors of the people around them—known as "mob mentality"—which continues to build as more people join the group. According to the New York Times, what may start as a small group of rioters could quickly triple in a short amount of time due to the causality of mob mentality, leading riots to turn dangerous. For example, following the 1984 World Series, and the Detroit Tigers victory over the San Diego Padres, fans of the Tigers rioted in celebration of their win. According to The Baltimore Sun, what started as a small group of fans outside the Tiger stadium grew to a massive crowd of over 50,000 people that began to engage in destructive behavior, overturning cars and hurling bottles or rocks at fellow members. One person was found dead, and over 80 others were injured.

These riots are a danger to the public and should be minimized to maintain public health. According to the National Library of Medicine, it has been found that people in close proximity to sport riots have seen an increase in depression by 7%, regardless of whether those affected were actively involved in the riot. Post traumatic stress disorder also ranged from 4% to 41% in riot

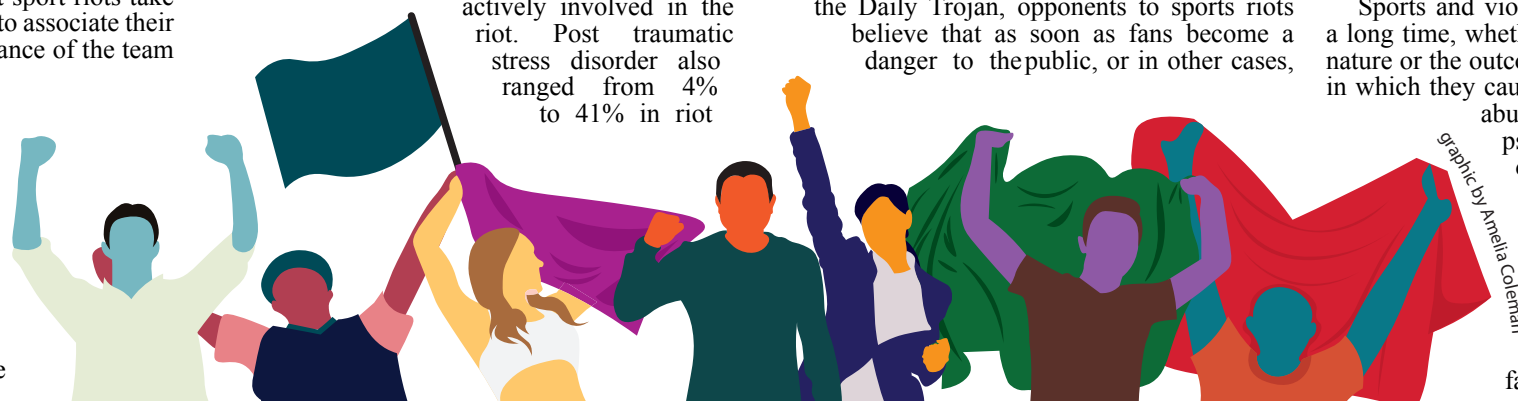
affected areas, which is much higher than the average percentage of approximately 3.6%, according to the National Library of Medicine and the National Institute of Mental Health. The deterioration of public health that comes from these riots, as well as the physical injuries that occur, are simply not worth the celebration or mourning of a sport's event. Public safety and mental health should always be a priority.

The question of whether the deleterious nature of these riots could be justified have been debated amongst the public. The Daily Trojan reported that fans should not be blamed for riots that start off as celebrations and eventually go awry as they believe fans should have the right to celebrate or protest a team's loss or win. They also point out that when similar behavior is initiated by political protesters over sport protesters, less people tend to oppose them. Although it is important to acknowledge the rights of fans to be able to react to major sport events, sport protests and celebrations should be able to take place without the need for violence to ensue. According to the Daily Trojan, opponents to sports riots believe that as soon as fans become a danger to the public, or in other cases,

engage with the players on the team, the fanbase has gone too far. They believe that riots, such as the Philadelphia riot following the Eagles' victory over the Patriots in the 2018 Super Bowl which resulted in vandalized buildings and fires across the city, should be condemned.

Additionally, fans' intense connection to sports teams can do more damage than just taking the form of riots; it can also often result in domestic abuse. Many studies across the world, including the United States, Canada, and England, have shown that reported abuse cases increase after sporting events. A study from Lancaster University in 2013 found domestic violence reports in northwestern England rose 38% after England's national soccer team lost and rose 26% even if they won. It is still important to consider these cases though and understand that sporting events are often used as an excuse to justify abusers actions. Domestic violence is often thought of as physical, but can also be more about control, such as an abuser preventing their partner from entering the room they are in when they're watching sports.

Sports and violence have been connected for a long time, whether the sport itself is violent in nature or the outcomes affecting fans to the point in which they cause dangerous riots or domestic abuse. These behaviors are psychologically linked to a fan's devotion and often justified by that. Although the connection between violence and sports has been viewed as relatively normal for years, it is time for people, stadiums, and sports networks to advocate for a change to protect their fans and their families.



graphic by Amelia Coleman



**GET INTO FORMATION** Dance officers practice choreography that they will teach incoming members during the summer dance camp. Officers also teach new members about dancer wellness and stretches for injury prevention. photo by Edith Holmsten



**STAR SPIRIT** Junior Madelyn Zarate receives an award for All-Star Cheer. Zarate was one of seven LASA cheerleaders to receive this honor. photo by Kayla Le



**STEP UP** Senior band leader Aaryan Sharma shows other band members how to walk on the top of their feet to balance better while marching. The students walk to the sound of a met, or a steady beeping noise, to practice their timing skills. photo by Edith Holmsten

design by Kayla Le

photo by Kayla Le

RAPTORS

# Breaking a Sweat

**LUCI GARZA**  
**EDITH HOLMSTEN** editors in chief

While most students vacation and relax over the summer, some students are already gearing up for the next school year in their extra curricular activities. From July 18 through Aug. 12, 140 band and colorguard members meet Monday through Friday to practice as a team. The Velocity Dance team captains also meet throughout the summer, and all team members practice together July 29 through Aug. 12. Meanwhile, orchestra practices are underway from Aug. 8 to Aug. 12.

Band Director Ponder East said he uses band camp to review fundamentals for marching band such as how to perform in the block—a grid of students—that the band will stand in during their competitions and football halftime shows. Students also practice playing their instruments and start learning their competition choreography.

“We will start teaching all of our students how to carry themselves right, how to stand in the way that marching band students need to stand up to get their best sound and to create the on field picture,” East said. “On August 1, all the bands in Texas are allowed to begin learning the drill, so whatever our drill will look like, that’s the day we start putting each set on the field.”

During the Velocity Dance camp, the team works on different styles of dance each day including ballet, jazz, and hip hop. Dance Director Paige Edwards said the practice is important to ensure that during the school year students only need to review skills or choreography instead of learning a whole new dance in only a few weeks.

“We’ll have different drills that we go through across the floor or in center in the dance space so that way we have some turns and any anything else we might do that is in our dances,” Edwards said. “We try to strategically plan what our skills are for the year based on what’s in our routines.”

Over the course of two weeks, Edwards said the dancers memorize all their football routines and two out of three of their competition dances. According to East, the band similarly learns at least half of their competition show which is helpful since the after school band practices are shorter once the school year starts.

“The about three to four weeks that we spent at band camp equals, in total clock time, almost the same amount of time [we practice] starting the first after school practice through the end of the season,” East said. “So we learn a lot during band camp.”

Along with learning the new routines, Edwards said the dancers get their supplies, like uniforms and dance bags, for each football game. The Velocity Dance team officers also review the fall calendar and hear from incoming students about their ideas for the team.

“I like to open up a discussion with the team and I ask everybody to contribute what their goals are, individually and as a team, what they want to see happen throughout the year,” Edwards said.

While the camps have instruction time, East said the band also includes more light hearted activities to help students get to know one another. According to East, there is a competition dubbed the Band Olympics in which instrument sections compete as a team in events such as dress up days.

“Tuesday [July 26] during lunch the kids are having a contest, sections versus sections, about



**LEAP OF FAITH** Dance officers sophomore Mackenzie Waldinger (left), senior Carther Matheny (center), and junior Nell Kaminski (right) try out new leaps and lifts during the officer camp. The dancers finalize choreography for their competition pieces in August, so they have more time to perfect the dances during the school year. photo by Edith Holmsten



**BLOCK IT OUT** Band students line up in the block, a grid of students, and practice how to march together and stay in straight lines. Students also practice how to change directions precisely to make exact visuals on the field during competitions and football game shows. photo by Edith Holmsten

## Summer Practices and Rehearsals

who dresses up in the most awesome navy blue,” East said. “Then Wednesday is dress like a mummy day, and kids go through a lot of toilet paper on that day.”

Similarly, the orchestra has activities during their camp focused on helping students meet other people in the orchestra, instead of simply for a competition. Orchestra teacher Rachel Horvitz said she chooses music that will be fun to play for all skill levels.

“We want to find a way for them to as quickly as possible, as instantly as possible, feel like they are in a group, regardless of where they are on their instrument,” Horvitz said. “They are in a community of musicians where what they have to offer is important and valued.”

Horvitz said the orchestra officers are particularly important for welcoming students. Student officers show new members their music and orchestra traditions to help incoming students feel supported and comfortable.

“They realize they have not only someone else from the team supporting them,” Horvitz said, “but they know that in the future they could go to other people to ask questions, or to say, ‘Hey, can you listen to me? How’s the sound of this? What suggestions do you have?’ It’s setting up that environment where the students have that ownership and that leadership.”

East and Edwards agreed that as long as the team has a good relationship and members have a good time, that the technical aspects will take care of themselves. East said building connections with students and watching their hard work come together is one of the main reasons he loves the camps.

“There’s the feeling of all of us pushing generally in the same direction, consistently over so many weeks,” East said. “It’s a very special feeling that until you’ve done it, there’s really no way to describe it.”

**PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT**  
Senior Lee Ripp practices with the other percussion students in the cafeteria during band camp. During the first week of camp, band members focus on tuning their instruments and getting used to working with other band members again. photo by Edith Holmsten



**POMS UP** Freshman Charlotte Whalen puts on a special performance for parents on the last day of cheer camp. The cheer team had summer practice for four days during July in which they rehearsed their routines and honed their tumbling skills. photo by Kayla Le