

**A BITTERSWEET ADIEU FOR BUTLER**



LASA wellness counselor Meagan Butler, center, holds a rainbow flag at a LASA Pride Alliance event. Butler recently received a promotion, and left LASA on October 234 to serve as the Secondary Counselor Coordinator for the district.

*see page 6*

**JAGS PERSEVERING AS A TEAM**



The Knights eked out a narrow victory over the Jaguars in the annual rivalry game on September 29, 38-33. After Head Coach Andrew Jackson was diagnosed with Stage IV cancer, he has taken on a less intensive role within the team.

*see page 13*

**THE [KIM]POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS**

LBJ junior Amya Johnson poses dressed up as Kim Possible on Character Day, Oct. 11. The Spirit Week before the homecoming game is a Jaguar tradition. Everything from tacky teachers to cosplaying students was out on display in the halls of LBJ and LASA.

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# the liberator

Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School

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## On cusp of bond election, will teenagers vote?

CLARA MORSE  
Editor-in-Chief

Thirteen percent. According to one estimate, less than one in seven 18-to-24-year-olds in Travis County actually cast a ballot in the 2015 election. As Austin looks ahead to its November 7 bond election, how are LASA students and student voters reacting? Interest is low, according to senior Joanna Ma.

"I would say almost little to no [student engagement], actually, which is kind of sad," Ma said. "We're leaving in a year so it doesn't really pertain to us. I know it's horrible to say that."

Ma, who serves as Student Council president, is not eligible to vote in the 2017 bond election, which will feature an Austin Independent School District (AISD) bond of over \$1 billion, including funds for a LASA move and LBJ medical school.

She is not alone—most seniors will not be 18 until after November 7, and will graduate without feeling many of the bond's impacts. This contributes to a culture of apathy and disengagement, which is present amongst LASA students as it is amongst many young voters, according to government teacher Ronny Risinger.

"LASA students tend to be very atypical in that you are much more engaged in following current events, so you're more aware; and if you're more aware, you'll honestly probably be more involved," Risinger said. "But still, the level of participation, even among LASA students, is low compared to the general population, as teenagers tend to be not engaged."

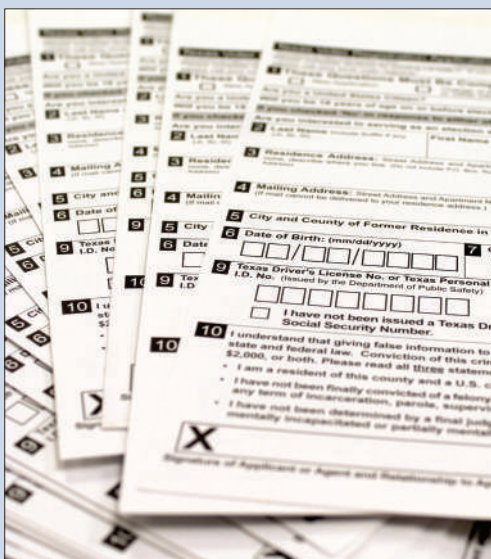
Engaging the community was one of the stated focuses of the bond planning process, which took place primarily in the fall of 2016 and spring of 2017. One element of the district's outreach was a special student input meeting, held the Thursday before AISD's spring break at Eastside Memorial High School (ESMH.) Under two dozen teenagers showed up. The district houses 84,000 students.

Mark Grayson, a member of the Facilities and Bond Planning Advisory Committee (FABPAC) which assembled much of the bond package, said that the committee heard from students "throughout many of our meetings."

While the bond does include general allotments for new computers and buses for school across the district, including LASA and LBJ, this is often overshadowed by the controversial LASA move proposal, which was first brought up less than a month before the final Trustee vote on the bond. Opinions on the LASA move, which would relocate the magnet to ESMH by August 2020 in time for current freshmen to spend their senior year and graduate at the possible new campus, have dominated much of LASA discourse about the controversial move.

Senior Conor Heffernan missed the voter registration deadline, but would have voted against the bond because it included the LASA move proposal, which he advocated against. He said that affected members of the community were not heard."

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Voter registration forms were available this fall in the LASA front office. Encouraging eligible students to register is one way LASA is trying to increase student voter engagement.



graphic by Kye Fisher

MEENA ANDERSON  
Editor-in-Chief

Spredfast, a company dedicated to improving companies social media strategy and overall experience, hosted their Smart Social Summit on Oct. 17. Leaders from various organizations including Presidents of charities, CEOs and content strategists gave speeches and held "thought leadership" sessions to motivate people to create a better social media environment and use it as a positive force.

There were six keynote speakers, one of which Spredfast invited 300 high school and university students to come see: former First Lady Michelle Obama. 10 LASA students were chosen to attend the Q&A session at the ACL Moody Theater, where Obama answered questions ranging from her time at the white house to her social media strategy. She emphasized the importance of interacting with people while her and her family were in the white house.

"[On Inauguration day,] we spent hours just greeting guests in the white house. Our thought was: 'it was the people who got us here. So we can't walk this path with all these people who voted and wrote small checks and knocked on doors and then walk into this big house as if we never knew them,'" Obama said. "We knew on the first day in that house that we needed to open up the doors to say thank you."

## MICHELLE MANIA

LASA, district students saw former First Lady Obama speak

Throughout their eight years in Washington, the Obamas made sure to include a

that could potentially affect you in the future," Rodriguez said. "My favorite part was when she suggested creating an app that would help people check any spelling errors and have the 'send' button move around to make sure the person posting isn't under some kind of influence."

According to Obama, it is crucial to have a team or committee to help people decide what content they're putting out on the internet; she says she never posts anything without consulting her team.

"It's just rare that the first thing that comes off the top of your head is something that you should say out loud," Obama said. "I hope that young people think when they're tweeting or posting, do it with a group of friends or someone older in your life who can help you think through if this is really what you want to say."

diverse group of

One of the submitted questions for Obama was on the topic of whether she would run for president in 2020. To much of the audience's objection (groans and pained laughs spread through the theater), Obama said she would not be running for office in the next election. She said she believed she could be more effective outside of a political position. Senior Justyce Williams thought it was a sad, but necessary thing to hear from her.

"I thought her bit about being labelled as a politician was really interesting, especially from her point of view," Williams said. "It broke my heart, but I get it now. I wanted her to be president, but she is not going to be."

Although Michelle Obama is firm in her stance on returning to the white house, she offered advice on how to be effective when being the only person representing a large group—being the only minority, the only woman at the table.

"You're here for a reason. Your voice actually does have value and merit; I think that's what we have to learn to tell ourselves. That your voice has value," Obama said. "We have to be kind, be hopeful, be human."

Be kind.  
Be hopeful.  
Be human.

people in their political journey. According to Obama, it wasn't just political leaders and aristocrats in attendance of the various events they held.

"We made sure every event we did involved real people; whether it was state dinners or balls, we made sure we had real people [there], not just big, fancy people," Obama said. "In that way we wanted to make sure that the country was a part of every event we did."

Senior Giselle Rodriguez said the part of the event she enjoyed most was when Obama gave advice on how to responsibly navigate social media.

"She gave us advice on how to use [social media] because it's important to think before you post something

## Taking music journalism to the next level at ACL

MAX RANDALL  
Entertainment Editor

For most bands at Austin's annual Austin City Limits Music Festival (ACL), work doesn't stop after the end of the set. Beyond general admission access is the ACL press lounge, an area dedicated to connecting bands with interviewers and photographers from all over Austin.

Sites such as Do512 and newspapers such as Texas Monthly and the Austin Chronicle each have individual tents to support their live coverage of the festival and artists from the grounds at ACL.

According to Andy Langer, an independent journalist who contributes to Texas Monthly, Esquire Magazine, and other publications, the

festival allows journalists considerable coverage of artists in a singular location.

"One thing that's special about the press lounge is that for those who enjoy music and want to cover it, this is a way to cover bands all in one place as opposed to seeing shows 15 nights in a row just to build up a knowledge base about what each band is about," Langer said. "The usefulness of these festivals on a fundamental level is that you get a sort of snapshot of what people are listening to right now."

With ACL occurring annually, journalists look to cover stories that change from year to year.

"Press is different every year because each year bands are at different points in their career, so they have different stories to tell," Langer said. "While the event is the same



A concertgoer photographs Solange's Austin City Limits performance on their phone. photo by Megan Ornes courtesy of Stetson Yearbook

every year, each year there is a different story. That can be due to different headlines drawing in different people. This festival over the years has shifted from mostly americana and country to something that now has Jay Z and Chance the Rapper and a bunch of EDM stuff so no two years are theoretically alike."

Bands that perform at

ACL often return to the Live Music Capital of the World for shows outside of the festival circuit. Austin American Statesman writer and music critic Deborah Sengupta Stith, uses the press lounge in order to gain insight into artists ahead of local performances.

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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.

STANDSTANCE

What we talk about when we talk about taking a knee

Controversy surrounding athletes taking a knee has been simmering ever since NFL 49ers player Colin Kaepernick began taking a knee last year. He declined to stand for the playing of the national anthem as a protest of our national failure to effectively address police brutality and racial injustice. Debate on the meaning of taking a knee has exploded following President Trump's exhortation to NFL team owners to crack down on their "activist" players. In his deliberate effort to redefine #TakingAKnee as an unpatriotic act that is fundamentally anti-American and disrespectful to men and women in uniform, we at *The Liberator* see a calculated effort to undermine resistance to his "Make America Great Again" agenda.

Nevertheless, as Friday night lights have begun to shine once again this fall, more and more high schoolers, in solidarity with their professional sporting counterparts, are announcing their unwillingness to cede ownership of this discourse to Trump. All over the country, including here in Austin, Texas, high school students have been pushing back in defiance of Trump's corruption of the message encoded in the act of kneeling. Over the last few weeks some McCallum and LBJ cheerleaders have taken a knee during football games. Students are insisting that their communities hear what they are talking about when they take a knee.

In September, Woodrow Wilson High School's Head Coach Preston Brown explained why his New Jersey football team, coaches and players alike, made it a practice to take a knee before each game last season. Coach Brown points out that during games, players kneel anytime a teammate is hurt on the field. In keeping with this practice, when athletes and others kneel, it conveys recognition that many of our fellow Americans are suffering as a result of discrimination. Taking a knee says: we are with you. We do not forget when we play. We kneel in honor of our collective (and unrealized) commitment to freedom and justice for all.

This message transcends the act of taking a knee. Athletic protests have gone beyond specific physical acts— from the Black Power raised fist in solidarity at the 1968 Olympics, to standing with linked arms, to kneeling in the present day. President Trump may count it as a success when athletes stand rather than kneel for the National Anthem.

However, standing with linked arms rather than kneeling is not a capitulation. It does not represent students yielding to decorum or cowering in response to threats from administrators - or presidents. It is an indication that the message, the struggle - the conversation - is evolving. As coach Brown noted, "[last year] we knelt because we were in pain. We were hurt. But it comes

a time when men and women need to stand and fight through the pain and hurt." This year, his team is standing, arms linked, forming a chain of solidarity. This year, kneeling and standing athletes and students are speaking directly to Trump and rejecting his vision for our country.


Predictably, even as student athlete activism has gained momentum, so has the backlash against student protest. These reprisals are wholly unsubtle in their attempts to silence student voices. Two Texas private high school football players have been kicked off their team for taking a knee. A Louisiana school district superintendent has threatened students from removal from their sports team if they kneel instead of standing "in a respectful manner." And on Saturday October 7th, at the collegiate level, an Albright College football player was kicked off of his Division III team for kneeling during the national anthem.

Setting aside the illegality of these tactics as violations of First Amendment protections, there appears to be a concerted effort to delegitimize student - and athlete - voices by declaring our messages trivial, our methods disrespectful and our participation in the ongoing, intersectional conversation on race, justice, and our national identity "inappropriate."

We at the *Liberator* wish to remind our leaders, that this strategy is astonishingly short-sighted. When has telling young people to stay in their lane, to shut up and, yes, stand up, ever worked? Young people have always been on the vanguard of social change, and when necessary, political resistance. Our voices will not be silenced. We share in the task of ensuring progress

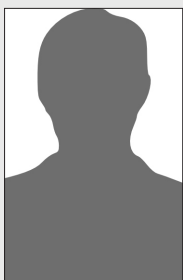
towards a more perfect union. We kneel and we stand because we recognize that inequalities and injustices are compounding today and cannot be ignored.





liberated  
minds  
speak

*What do you think about the controversy surrounding athletes taking a knee during the anthem?*



Anonymous

"I feel like the entire situation and controversy is completely over exaggerated by the government (Donald Trump) and the players protesting."



Anna Davs

Senior

"I think people should be able to kneel because it is a way of practicing free speech. Because it is nonviolent, legal, and the NFL is allowing it, it shouldn't be an issue that athletes are kneeling."

Patrick Connor

Sophomore

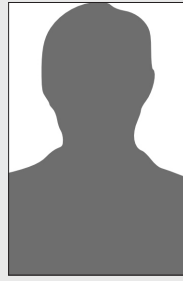
"I think that it is appropriate for athletes to take a knee because it is in their full rights to do so. It is being over exaggerated by the government because athletes have made clear that they aren't trying to be offensive."



Aishu Gandhi

Senior

"If I had the chice to kneel or not, I think I would kneel. I think [Colin Kaepernick] kneeled not only because of his peaceful protests, but also out of respect for the anthem. People should be able to kneel (it's their first amendment right)."



Have an opinion about a new school policy? Have a bone to pick with something the *Liberator* has published? Anything else on your mind? Anything exciting happen to you over the summer? We work year round! Write us a letter and drop it off in portable 5A or in the boxes in the school offices. It is the policy of the *Liberator* to not respond directly to letters to the editor.

Need for better seating

Dear Editor,

"I think it is annoying that juniors have to sit behind the entire band at pep rallies because we cannot see anything over the band."

-LASA Junior Lisa Moomaw

Why is the dungeon so cold?

Dear Editor,

"I wish the dungeon didn't feel as cold and far away from everything as it does."

-Anonymous

Appreciation for purple hall

Dear Editor,

"I like that all our hallways are colored, especially that some of them are purple. Purple is a cool color."

-LASA Sophomore Eli Hanser-Young

Call for thermostats

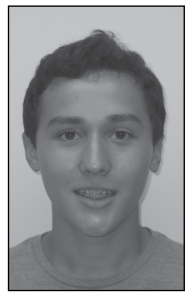
Dear Editor,

"I wish our school had some form of temperature control so that it wasn't either always freezing or burning hot."

-Anonymous

# To move or not to move?

## Why LASA should move



MAX IRBY  
Staff Writer

2020. This would allow the school to expand its base of students up to 2000, in addition to placing it in a more central location of the city. As a current junior, I would not be a LASA student when the move is planned to occur, but I feel that it is a necessary step towards the expansion of the school, and making it more accessible to a wider range of students.

While LASA and LBJ have existed alongside one another in close proximity for a long time, I think that the student bodies of both schools have grown in size to a point that separation will be necessary in order to progress. LASA's estimated capacity is around 940 students, and there are currently over 1,000 enrolled, a number which is projected to only grow larger as time progresses. As the population of Austin remains one of the fastest growing in the state and even country, the school district expands with it, and so I feel that a move inevitably must happen.

Moving LASA into a new school building allows both schools more room, as well as the chance to admit more students and have access to better expansion prospects in the future. In the new building, LASA will be able to increase its student size significantly, accepting a greater number of applicants each

year. The bond will also give LBJ a new medical magnet program, meant to complement the health sciences training program already there.

Some LASA students, especially those living in south Austin, have commutes to school of up to 25 miles, leading many to complain about long bus and car rides to get to or from school. In the proposed move, this long drive could be significantly reduced, allowing a greater number of students easy access to the school.

The move, beneficial for the expansion of LASA, has been met with arguments that proper community input hasn't been received from the schools involved, and that moving the school away would leave LBJ in a vulnerable position and represent a defeat in the effort to desegregate the district. I agree with the claim regarding community input: some have said that this decision, made over the course of a four-hour bond discussion by the board, was overly hasty, and should have taken into account the values of the communities and schools involved. I would disagree though, that the move would leave LBJ in a bad position or mark a shift towards segregation in the district. Rather, I think that this move sets LBJ up well for a period of growth through the new magnet program. While there may initially be a void for each school after being together for so long, it will eventually be filled with new students, grateful for an opportunity to attend their school of choice.

The idea of moving LASA onto their own centrally located, larger campus is certainly appealing for many students and parents at the school, and the idea seems great on paper. I would fully support this plan if it would objectively improve the prospects of all schools involved, and I feel that this bond is close to that.

## Why LASA should stay



TREVOR ANDERSON  
Staff Writer

The LASA move has largely been hailed as a good idea, and I won't argue that it has its merits. However, I don't think that it is the best solution to the problem at hand. The LBJ / LASA campus is overloaded in terms of students, and both schools no longer have room to expand. I won't argue that things aren't great right now, but I think what has been proposed is a hasty solution with little comprehensive oversight and input from all sides. I think with more planning and community input, a better solution could have been put in place, but I digress. First off, the bond proposed has a massive price tag at around \$1 billion, including over \$100 million for the LASA building alone. That's a huge amount of money, and the money has to come from somewhere, presumably out of taxpayer pockets. It won't be an easy task to convince people to pay for a school who some people consider to be too privileged already. LASA's reputation as an excellent school has often raised problems with its diversity, or lack thereof. I've heard opinions from students and parents from other schools that feel like LASA is championed too much and receives too much help as is, and I'm sure they wouldn't be happy if LASA received even more help from the district.

The proposed move would allow LASA to move to what is now the Eastside Memorial High School. Classes would, in theory, commence in fall of 2020, meaning the current freshman would have to pack up and move right before their senior year. They wouldn't have to move during that year, but going into what is supposed to be the best year of high school at a new building is not by any means ideal. I don't think it's fair to force students into a new (probably disorganized) environment in such a pivotal time in their lives. LBJ High School would remain on the current campus and foster a magnet program of their own, a

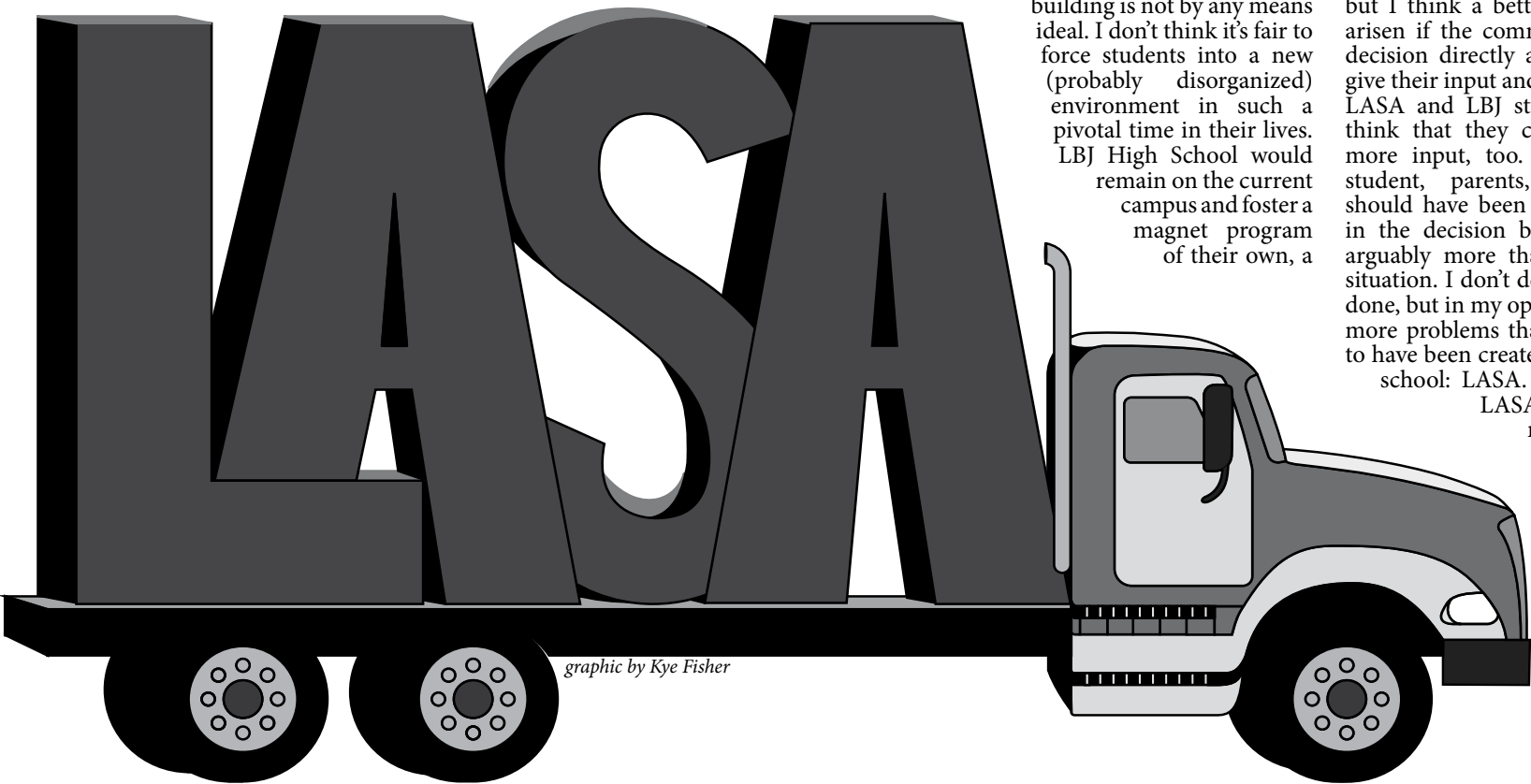
medical magnet that compliments a health sciences training program that started this fall. To be quite honest, I see that as the only true upside to this bond. Other aspects of the bond (like LASA's move to the Eastside Campus) do have some positive aspects, but for me, the negatives outweigh the positives.

And what about current East Side Students? I don't think it's fair to kick them off of their campus just because it benefits LASA. The proposed bond would allow current Eastside and International High School students to move to the old L.C. Anderson high school, but many Eastside administrators, students, and parents have protested the bond as their input and ideas have allegedly gone largely unheard by the committees overseeing the proposition. Many people from Eastside have expressed displeasure at that hastiness of the decision while getting limited or no input from the Eastside community.

The division between LASA and LBJ is not a good thing, but I think that complete separation of the two schools would cause more problems than it would fix. What would happen to band, sports and other activities that both schools participate in? I understand that sports are not LASA's strong suit necessarily, but it seems like an issue that needs to be addressed. It's very possible that the band would be split in half. That's the best case scenario; it assumes that the band is evenly split between LASA and LBJ. I don't think the divide is that even, and either way both schools would be left with a fragment of a band. I don't think LASA has enough players to field a football team on its own, and LBJ would more than likely have enough players for a single baseball team. The move would make the current divide between schools into an impassable chasm, and I don't think the good outweighs the bad. I'm not saying that things are great right now but would it really be better to permanently divide the schools and splinter joint activities like band and sports?

I understand that the current situation is less than ideal for all parties involved, but I think a better solution could have arisen if the community and people the decision directly affects were allowed to give their input and be heard. I don't mean LASA and LBJ students, even though I think that they could have been given more input, too. I think that Eastside student, parents, and administrators should have been given more of a voice in the decision because it affects them arguably more than anyone else in the situation. I don't deny something must be done, but in my opinion, this bond creates more problems than it solves, and seems to have been created in the interest of one school: LASA. LBJ benefits from the

LASA move, but it seems to me that the bond was created primarily to benefit LASA and help it expand.



graphic by Kye Fisher

# Appreciate, don't appropriate cultures



NIA ORAKWUE  
Staff Writer

treats the culture with respect and acknowledges the significance of their actions. If a white man marries a Vietnamese woman and wears traditional vietnamese clothing at their wedding when he is being accepted into the family, this can be called cultural exchange.

The exchange of ideas and concepts from other cultures is normal and very common, but there is a point where borrowing becomes exploitation. Cultures are always evolving and moving.

Cultural appropriation often gets brought up around

The increasing occurrence of racially themed college parties dedicated to the exploitation of other cultures and the furthering of racial stereotypes reflect the social situation that the US is dealing with today.

Cultural appropriation is the act of taking or using things from a culture that is not your own, especially without showing that you understand or respect this culture. This is not to be confused with cultural exchange, in this instance, someone

Halloween season and provokes reactions of disgust and defensiveness from some people who don't understand it and see it as an accusation. Feeling attacked by the idea of cultural appropriation is much more typical when someone doesn't actually know what it is and it is more common among people who may be unknowingly appropriating cultures themselves. Similar to how many people are often more offended by being called racist than they are by actual racism.

Although cultures can be appropriated by minorities, as well, it is more frequently seen from the oppressing people, namely white people. While cultural appropriation doesn't mean that someone is inherently racist it is something you should be sensitive to when choosing your outfit because using another culture as a costume is inappropriate and offensive.

This issue is important to talk about because years of oppression can be perpetuated through racially or culturally based costumes. White American oppression of racial and religious minorities can be explained as the unjust burdens placed on non-white people.

Some costumes such as huge hoop earrings and long acrylic nails are viewed as "ratchet" or "ghetto" when worn by the racial or cultural group that started the trend, but are seen as "cool" or "high-fashion" when worn by white people, the people who popularize it, or the oppressing people. For example, there are countless young black girls who are scared of being bullied for wearing cornrows to school while on white people they are seen as "modern" and "trendy". These disparate

reactions send the message that traditional African-American beauty styles are somehow less than unless they appear on white people.

Disrespecting and degrading another's cultural and history is never okay. Especially today when questionable costume choices can be shared via social media instantly, and can be seen and judged by anyone. This being said, it is often hard to decipher what is and isn't cultural appropriation.

Some good questions to ask yourself to know if your costume sexualize another culture? does this costume use someone else's cultural traditions? does this costume portray a racial stereotype? and does this costume portray respect towards the culture it represents?

This doesn't mean that it's bad to dress up as someone who is a race other than your own. But it is not appropriate to dress in blackface or a KKK hood or robe. It also means Native American and Asian cultures are not to be copied or made fun of in a costume.

If you're still confused on what cultural appropriation looks like, there are multiple examples in pop culture. See for instance Kim Kardashian's boxer braids, Katy Perry's geisha performance and Karlie Kloss' Native American inspired outfit from the 2012 Victoria's Secret Fashion Show.

When picking a halloween costume make sure to think about what you're doing and how it could affect others. There are countless other costumes to choose from that don't appropriate or sexualize others' cultures.

They are not hard to find, it just requires awareness of your actions and sensitivity to others. Cultures are not costumes. Even if you don't mean any harm, the stereotypes that you may popularize for one night are stigmas that others have to live with for their entire lives.

Thumbs up  
Pumpkin bread  
Fall colors  
Big sweaters  
Newspaper Club  
Halloween candy



LASA SENIOR JENNY DANG



LASA JUNIOR KADEN WESTON

PSAT memes  
Dropping shampoo  
Forgetting sweaters  
Losing keys  
Hurricanes

Thumbs down

Above are the opinions of The Liberator staff



With the world warming ever faster and climate change causing major national disasters all over the planet, it is imperative that all people start paying attention to how their actions affect the Earth. Because if not, who knows what will happen. Graphic by Katherine Walton.

## Call to Action: Climate Change



ERICA MOOMAW  
Staff Writer

The topic of climate change has slowly evolved from a taboo subject to a more widely accepted matter. In the past, people turned a blind eye to the effects of global warming because it was easier to deny when signs weren't exhibited in everyday life.

Global warming is the gradual increase of Earth's temperature which has risen by about 0.8 degrees celsius in the in the last century.

Especially in recent years, global warming has become a clear threat to our species' wellbeing and the main cause is our own human activity. Because of this, it is essential that we contribute as much as we can to decrease the effects of climate change.

As the population of humans has risen, so has our need for nonrenewable resources such as petroleum and coal. Earth is not able to support this growth and the effect is a deteriorating quality of life for all living humans.

The largest contributor to climate change is the burning of fossil fuels. In order for cars to move, houses to be air conditioned, and lightbulbs to be lit, fossil fuels are burned to create what we consider livable circumstances. These activities lead to an excess release of carbon dioxide, which plays a role in the greenhouse effect. Heat is retained by greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, including carbon dioxide, and sent back down to Earth. However, the greenhouse effect is not necessarily a bad thing. In fact, without it, Earth would be cooler by 30 degrees celsius, creating an uninhabitable place for humans. The problem stems from the overload of gases trapping heat and warming air all over the world.

The United States alone produces 2 billion tons of CO2 by burning fossil fuels every year, making it the second largest contributor of atmospheric CO2 only behind China. As privileged US citizens who have access to these resources all the time, we have an obligation to cut down our excess usage of energy and prevent the major effects of climate change that are

already visible.

One prominent example of this is the destructiveness of Hurricane Harvey and other natural disasters that have blown through cities in the past couple of months. Harvey hit Texas harder than any weather forecast predicted, resulting in over 100,000 damaged homes and billions of dollars needed for repairs. Other places hit hard include the northeastern Caribbean by Hurricane Irma and Puerto Rico by Hurricane Maria. The massive damage caused by these hurricanes raises the question of how much climate change played a role in their intensity.

As the air temperature rises as a result of climate change, some of the heat is absorbed by the ocean, creating unusually warm waters. Hurricane Harvey was able to use this warmth to upgrade to a category 4 hurricane in 48 hours. Another abnormal occurrence of Harvey was the way it intensified up until the moment it hit land, a pattern never seen before. This was likely caused by the continual pickup of warm water continuing to spark growth in the storm.

Although Harvey represents a serious effect that climate change has on the planet, it alone is not the best representation of the future. Hurricanes are destructive, climate change being a factor or not. Climate change has many other consequences to worry about that will affect every human on the planet. Worldwide temperatures rising will compromise infrastructure, agriculture, and the economy. In the near future, water availability will decrease, summers will become hotter and longer, and heat related illnesses will be diagnosed more frequently. Long term effects could be as drastic as unbreathable air and creating massive areas of inarable land; some climate scientists have even predicted climate change to be the start of the sixth mass extinction.

All that said, there are ways that we can ease these effects. Energy efficient products are being sold more and more often, reducing the carbon footprint of transportation and other products. Small changes to your daily life including turning off the lights when you leave the room, using air conditioning sparingly, and driving less will contribute more than you would expect. Unless we as a population take responsibility and implements these changes, our Earth will reach an irreversible stage. Every action counts.



## Fluffernutters, Frappuccinos, knock-knock jokes, oh my!



ISABELLE AMANUEL  
Staff Writer

LASA students have enough on their plates with studies, extracurricular activities, and not enough holiday time to have fun or simply enjoy life. I think days such as "National No Beard Day" and "National Clean Your Virtual Desktop Day" in the month of October are totally unknown to the general public and are the perfect way to blow off steam and commemorate your fellow humans and what

makes life on earth seem like a blast. Some Instagram pages are even dedicated to these fantastic events and must be discovered in our pop culture. My favorite (forgotten) holidays this month were "National Fluffernutter Day", "National Frappe Day", and "National Knock-Knock Jokes Day".

A Fluffernutter is a sandwich, usually on white bread, filled with peanut butter and marshmallow fluff oozing its contents down the sides of the bread when you bite into it. This food is found very popular in New England, the northwestern region of the US containing Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and the recipe for this concoction originated there as well. I also love this holiday because it makes me think about all of the experiences I have that are yet to happen to me, like eating a Fluffernutter in the streets of its origin or jumping in a cold shower early in the morning to fully wake up before getting ready for the day ahead.

Starbucks Frappes have had such a long-lasting effect on this world, including how most students get so much work done in one night, that they got their own holiday! "National Frappe Day" is a day to celebrate the chilling drink, water beading down the cup like my forehead on most summer days, welcoming with its refreshing taste. This amazing day goes for every flavor imaginable including vanilla bean, cookies and cream, cinnamon roll, and even baklava!

Good ol' knock-knock jokes will make someone roll on the floor in tears, either because of how good the joke was or how horrid. I used to own a joke book filled with these sensationally humorous lines but I always try to find a time to fit in one of these knee-slappers. The longest knock-knock joke had to do with fruits and a never ending cycle of repetitive anger for me and my mind games. Once it was over, the opposite person would either hug me or strangle me because of my insane need to trip up my classmates. I have found that knock-knock jokes are the best way to shake out the jitters of everyday LASA life and feel ready for anything.

I've always been interested in these holidays since I was in middle school. These simple events make my day a little bit brighter because they fill me with excitement and having to wake up at 5:30 am and stay up until midnight that same day is not easy on the mind of any LASA student.

## Waxing and waning: why phasing is okay The importance of creating a stronger sense of self



JORDAN JEWELL  
Staff Writer

Kids go through all kinds of phases, which are usually considered cute and funny and can just be slipped under the umbrella of kids being kids, but when kids turn into teenagers and are entered into the judgemental fishpool of high school this same changeable behavior starts to be something they are expected to be ashamed of.

The phase of being obsessed with anime or wearing exclusively bright pink could

last only a week, or it could last for the rest of a lifetime. In the end these kinds of phases don't hurt anyone and instead act as a gateway for teenagers to figure out who they are most comfortable being. Dismissing or even making fun of these phases is both unnecessary and cruel.

Many teens go through phases of acting

like or dressing like another person entirely, which is perfectly natural. The brain is not fully developed until 25 years old, but teenagers still feel emotion on the same level as adults, just with less physical ability to handle it. Adolescence is an incredibly tumultuous time where teens are being taught how to manage independence while at the same time undergoing physical changes that change their very body chemistry, so it's understandable that they'd want something steady to rely on. If focusing completely on one interest can give teens a bright spot in a sometimes frightening world, then that's a great coping mechanism.

The problem lies in the way people who are obviously going through a phase are perceived by their peers. Kids who don't know them can make judgements based on this one feature of their personality, and even their friends can begin to feel annoyed. The judgement may come from going through a similar phase in their own life and trying to take that embarrassment out on someone they see themselves in, or they might just be unwilling to try and understand why someone would be so preoccupied with one thing or idea. No matter where it comes from, this negative attitude can make a person going through a phase feel

insecure about their interests and possibly become shy about talking to others for fear of being ridiculed.

At their root, these phases are about the teenagers' need to belong. This derision goes against that in the most damaging way. Every unique fixation works as a test to discover if that kind of book or genre of music or style of dress works to make that particular teen feel secure in being themselves. Each different kind of alternative style has it's own community, and subscribing to their brand of unusual can provide the sense of community that many teens crave.

If listening to metal and wearing black skinny jeans makes a teenager feel less lonely, then there's no reason to tell them that what they're going through is just a phase. If it truly is a phase then it will pass on it's own, and leave behind a person more knowledgeable on their own interests. Though someone might find a phase particularly embarrassing and try to pretend that it had never happened at all, the fact that they went through that phase means that they have that aspect of themselves buried in them somewhere. Being able to express that person inside as a teenager means that they can keep that facet of their personality as they continue to grow, and be a more secure adult for it.



graphic by Lochlyn McClure

# Twitter troubles: Debate over choice to admit non-district students

GEORGE GUCKENBERGER  
Staff Writer

Former AISD Trustee Paul Saldaña tweeted that LASA accepted 92 students from non-Austin Independent School District (AISD) schools for the 2016-2017 school year on Wednesday Sept. 30. This prompted LASA Principal Stacia Crescenzi and Academy Director Andy Paulson to spend hours answering questions about why LASA allows students who are not in district schools to apply, according to the Principal's Message.

Students who join LASA from schools that are not part of the district generally come from private schools such as Paragon Prep, Trinity Episcopal School and St. Stephen's Episcopal School. Charter schools are another source of non-AISD students. The students coming from these schools live inside the boundaries of the district.

"For 16-17 AISD school year 186 coveted slots to AISD's four magnet schools were given to non-AISD students," Saldaña tweeted. "LASA accepted 92 non-AISD students."

Paulson said he viewed Saldaña's claim as misleading and contradictory to data he found. Saldana clarified in a later tweet that he was referring to combined number of students living inside and outside district boundaries joining LASA. Paulson says that there is an important distinction to be made regarding the different types of non-district students.

"I think there was some confusion between non-AISD and truly non-AISD," Paulson said. "If you go to a private school and you are in Austin ISD, those numbers were included in the non-AISD figure,

which I think is misleading. Because they are taxpayers, so they should be able to come to LASA."

Paulson also said that students returning to LASA from other districts is a good thing because it generates more money for the district — it receives approximately \$10,000 of funding per student enrolled. This comes primarily from a combination of local, state and national tax revenue.

"In a perfect world, we could have as many kids coming to LASA as possible and have people apply from anywhere that they qualify to come in and it would only generate more money for the district," Paulson said. "The more people that come to LASA, the more tax money the school can use."

According to AISD Board President Kendall Pace, the money the district receives per student varies based on a formula. A large portion of the money the district takes in goes to paying employee salaries.

"The finance formula includes allotments for regular basic education, special education, career and technical education, bilingual/English as a Second Language education, compensatory education, gifted and talented education and Public Education Grants," Pace said. "Tier I also includes an allotment for specialized programs at the high school level, the high

graphic by Kye Fisher



school allotment." Pace said every public school district gets two types of state money. One is for maintenance and operations which covers daily activities. The other is for interest and sinking to help with capital development. The AISD tax rate is a combined rate of those two sources.

The district spent \$850,000 on advertising last year focusing on increasing enrollment, in part because it is a highly reliable way to increase district revenue. Per-student funding is especially key because the district is projected to send over \$400 million to the state in 2017, and because of the

district's shrinking enrollment.

Junior Nelson Barnes said that he did not understand why LASA accepting students from private schools was bad. He says that as long as they pay taxes they should be able to attend magnet or regular schools.

"I think that if their families are living in the boundaries of the district and they are paying their taxes then they should be able to go to any public school in AISD," Barnes said. "I don't

think it should matter if they are magnet schools. If they meet the requirements on the application then they should be allowed to come here."

*In a perfect world, we could have as many kids coming to LASA as possible and have people apply from anywhere that they qualify to come in.*

- Academy Director  
Andy Paulson

# Helping keep Austin clean with Zero Waste by 2040

SOPHIA BLAHA  
Staff Writer

Austin is one of 13 US cities committed to zero waste by 2040. In 2005, Austin signed on to the UN Urban Environmental Accords, which means the city is bound to a 21-step process to reduce waste.

The accords are intended to achieve sustainability and to protect the world's ecosystem. As of 2015, 42 percent of Austin's waste is diverted somewhere other than landfills, and there are many programs in place to divert more waste. This includes an increase in recycling, composting and a reduction in the amount of waste creates overall. The city has a goal for a 90 percent diversion rate by 2040.

The city's Resource Recovery department, as well as Waste Diversion Planner Tom Gleason has spearheaded this drive.

"Zero Waste is all about minimizing waste, maximizing recycling or diversion, getting the highest and best use out of materials, and emulating natural processes," Gleason said.

Austin has instituted programs including the Universal Recycling Ordinance, Curbside Compost and Zero Waste Rebate to help increase the efficiency of the Austin waste system, making the city much greener.

The Curbside Collection program, which picks up compost from individual houses in order to encourage composting, plans to expand to over 54,000 houses by 2020. This program has raised awareness about composting in the city, as well as the in the LASA community, including sophomore Reha Kakkar.

"Composting is really natural and good for the environment," Kakkar said. "It's a good way to perpetuate the circle of life."

Composting takes biodegradable and organic materials households would normally waste such as food waste and yard trimmings and turns them into fertilizer and natural products. In fact, Austin Resource Recovery found that 46 percent of people's trash is compostable. There are many benefits of composting, beyond simply more

efficient waste management.

"Compost can create local jobs, save land, reduce methane emissions, and emulate natural processes" Gleason said.

With the Zero Waste program, Austin continues to expand their composting program. The city's Resource Recovery department has compost carts at 38,000 homes and hopes to reach 200,000 homes in the by 2020.

Landfills can cover hundreds acres of land. With composting and recycling programs, these plots can be much smaller and more condensed. This allows for more land to be used to promote infrastructure and stimulate the economy.

When organic matter is put into the landfill, it breaks down and generates methane gas. This is much more potent than carbon dioxide, and so while it's not as abundant as CO2, it still has a disastrous effect on the environment. Composting stops this process from taking place and organic materials break down naturally.

Rather than adding organic materials to a landfill where they harm the environment and the ecosystem, composting does not produce harmful chemicals. After composting, the city will be able to reuse biodegradable materials to support plant growth or sell to local companies.

"Austin Resource Recovery trucks pick up compostable material from approximately 47,000 homes in the City of Austin currently and bring the material to our site for processing," said Noelle Bugaj, Organics "By Gosh" Recycling Accountant Specialist.

The city has contracted commercial compost facility, Organics "By Gosh" to take in and process waste and sell it as compost to residential and commercial customers.

"If everybody did their part, I feel like we could make a big difference," Kakkar said.

The Zero Waste Program hopes to get the entire city composting, both individual homes and Austin based companies or restaurants.

"The soil is the skin of our planet, one teaspoon of soil contains more living organisms than there are people on the planet" said Bugaj.

graphic by Marlen Avila



# Remember the Alamo AISD properties up for sale

ISABELLE AMANUEL  
Staff Writer

Last year, Austin Independent School District (AISD) put 10 of its properties for sale. Since then, companies have been lining up to propose sums up to \$36.5 million for the locations across Austin, including Baker Center and the Millett Opera House. AISD has not made final decisions yet, as companies are still in negotiation with the district.

Some of these properties are not buildings, but acres of land, including one at the intersection of Doris and Hathaway Drive and another at Tannehill Lane and Jackie Robinson Street.

Austin's Alamo Draffhouse bid on Baker Center, which required a minimum of \$10.6 million. Others at the auction were mostly housing companies. However, information concerning the actual proposal is confidential. One source said that the Draffhouse would plan on constructing affordable housing for AISD employees and families, art galleries and a commissary kitchen space on the property.

The format of this auction is in line with the "Resolution Declaring Intention to Issue a Request for Proposals for Certain Identified Properties" the Board of Trustees adopted last year.

Communications specialist at AISD, Cristina Nguyen, discussed four principles considered when the district offers and sells properties.

"Partnerships (public, private, and non-profit) that expand academic offerings available to students support efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing, especially for district employees and families with children; consider district's administrative space and design needs; are fiscally advantageous for the district when factoring in the costs and benefits of community goodwill and provide a one-time or preferably recurring revenue source for the district," Nguyen said.

There are other things AISD would be expected to do with this land, like build a new school, but AISD has said the district does not have surplus funds dedicated to building anything there with their own money. Even if the district had the money, Nguyen said AISD is only allowed to use those funds for educational purposes. However, the district does have other properties that could acquire about \$40 million if sold for supplement bond funds.

Regarding the Baker Center, which the Draffhouse is interested in, the district has mitigating factors to consider.

"In the specific case of Baker Center, the building needs substantial renovation and it is very costly to operate," Nguyen said. "In times of insufficient resources, it will cost more to maintain and operate the Baker Center than the District can afford."

AISD has sold properties of its own in the past, the most recent in June of this year for \$11.8 million for single-family residences with 25 percent of these affordable homes going first to AISD employees.

*In times of insufficient resources, it will cost more to maintain and operate the Baker Center than the district can afford.*

- AISD Communications specialist  
Cristina Nguyen

graphic by Carolina Gokingo



# THE SKINNY

## Canvas blended into all AISD classrooms

MATEEN KONTORAVDIS  
Web Editor

When students entered the classroom for the first time this school year, they were greeted by a new application icon in their student drives. Austin Independent School District (AISD) prepared a new platform over the summer and implemented it on Aug. 21, the first day of classes. Canvas, an online educational technology company used by many universities nationwide, was chosen by AISD to be implemented in classrooms of all grade levels under the name "BLEND."

Technology has become increasingly prevalent in classrooms within the past few years, with access progressing beyond computer labs to having one-to-one laptop access for students. This shift led to the popularization of online services like Google Classroom which facilitated digital learning. However, AISD wanted to have a centralized platform that was more streamlined and accessible to all teachers. According to AISD Director of Technology Integration Eric Bowen-Anderson, picking Canvas as the platform for AISD's online classroom tool was not an easy decision.

"We were seeking a digital platform that facilitated the experience for students and teachers most effectively," Bowen-Anderson said. "We described a product and hoped that there was something that met those requirements."

The software went through a rigorous screening process prior to being officially chosen, with teachers, campus administrators and district administrators involved in the final decision. To ensure Canvas was the right choice for the district, the Anderson High School vertical team piloted the online software in the spring semester of 2017. Members of the pilot group included Anderson High School, Murchison Middle School, and Doss, Davis, Pillow, Summit and Hill Elementary schools.

"During this time, AISD was able to test the settings necessary to support many teachers and students, prepare training for thousands of teachers and learn the ins-and-outs of possibilities with the platform," Bowen-Anderson said.

The application's name, Canvas, was changed before entering AISD classrooms. According to Bowen-Anderson, the name BLEND is supposed to capture what the application really is for: blended learning.

"The ultimate goal is not that Austin ISD goes to a 100 percent, all online experience," Bowen-Anderson said. "Far from it, blended learning is all about using digital technology when appropriate and face-to-face experiences when that is more effective."

Another benefit of blended learning is that students will begin to have more control of their pace, path and even place for their own learning. Previously, Google Classroom was a popular application used by LASA teachers and other AISD schools. Chemistry teacher Helen Wilson is the Campus Innovation Coach and the SLO Campus Contact at LASA. Wilson incorporated Google Classroom into her classes after becoming an official Google Certified Teacher in the summer of 2016. A Google Certified educator is a teacher who has taken an exam to prove they are able to utilize and navigate google tools in the classroom environment. Wilson believes that BLEND is a good addition to her classroom.

"I can easily link my Google Docs, Slides, Forms, etc. to the modules I create in BLEND for my students by using shareable links set to 'anyone can view the link,'" Wilson said.

Google Classroom and BLEND are fairly similar. They both have assignment and quiz functions, including the ability to attach readily accessible documents for students in and out of classrooms. BLEND also has a 'Commons' feature available for teachers, which allows them to "share" their work for others to use. Wilson said this feature is an easy way to find quizzes, pages and even graphics to enhance the look of courses.

"I've also shared some things I made in the Commons," Wilson said. "I also get a lot of district professional development through BLEND, and it's very nice to have all of that in one place right next to my classes."

For Wilson, the biggest benefit of BLEND is the SpeedGrader function. This feature allows teachers to attach a rubric to online assignments, grade all submissions at once, and add the student's grade in the BLEND gradebook. While teachers must still manually add grades to TEAMS at this time, the district is working to fix this inconvenience. The application allows teachers to create a "formula question" where every student taking a quiz gets a different number to calculate. BLEND is also helping classrooms around the district become paperless. In Wilson's Wicked Problem Project class, she has not had to make physical paper copies for the class in weeks.

"They submit all their work online," Wilson said. "BLEND also has a peer review function which allows students to see each other's work and make comments."

According to Bowen-Anderson, the transition to BLEND has been fairly smooth. AISD Learning Systems Coordinator Lauren Fox was hired to help ensure a successful integration of the new software.

"So far, it has been incredible how quickly it has taken off," Fox said. "The usage is much higher in the high school grades, then middle school grades, and then elementary."

As part of her job, Bowen-Anderson has been working with a team of coaches who work with teachers everyday to make the shift into BLEND easier. One challenging aspect of the integration has been moving online textbooks to BLEND. Although the books are currently only available on the AISD cloud, the district envisions a time when everything a student needs is available in BLEND. While the district is encouraging everyone to use BLEND in order to streamlining the student experience, teachers are still able to use other approved software, such as Google Classroom.

"The district is encouraging everyone to use BLEND because of the vision to streamline the student experience," Bowen-Anderson said. "With the integration of Google into BLEND, so much of the functionality of Google Classroom is shadowed by what BLEND can do."

## No tricks, only treats with UNICEF's annual Halloween-themed fundraiser

SARAH LUCAS  
News Editor

This Halloween, some LASA students will be asking for donations as they travel throughout their neighborhoods in search of candy. Since 1950, the Trick-or-Treat campaign has been annually conducted on behalf of the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), a United Nations organization that aims to better children's health, advocate for their rights, and foster healthy environments. The LASA UNICEF club sponsors a campus-wide collection of the funds obtained.

"This fundraiser helps students see the power they have to make an impact on the world, simply by taking an extra minute while trick-or-treating to ask for donations," senior and LASA UNICEF president Pranathi Bingi said.

Although the fundraiser has traditionally taken place by door-to-door collections, Bingi said that the club hopes to boost participation with a special event leading up to Halloween. On Friday Oct. 27, club members passed out candy to students in exchange for any amount of donation.

"We're hoping that we raise more money than last year with these measures," senior and UNICEF club member Shruti Prasad said.

As in previous years, club members will be passing out the trick-or-treat boxes prior

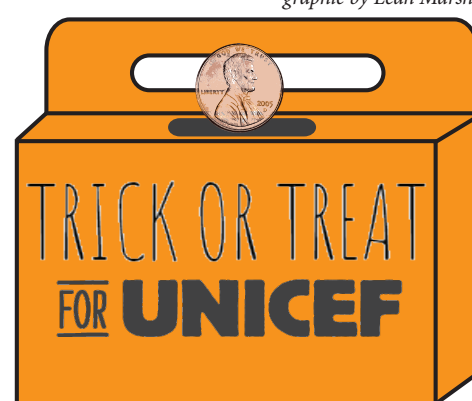
to Halloween so students can collect donations. Donations also can count as sponsored hours for LASA's National Honors Society.

"In order to coordinate this event, the club spends a lot of time spreading the word," Bingi said. "We have delivered lots of announcements, put up posters, and spread the news about the event by word of mouth."

According to Bingi, the fundraiser presents its own set of logistical challenges to organizers. In order for the club to be able to collect the money and ultimately send it to UNICEF, it must have an official school bank account. Club members are also responsible for making a deposit each day money is brought in, making it especially important to bring in money as soon as possible — with fewer deposits, processing time can be greatly reduced.

"In order to send the money to UNICEF, we write a check to UNICEF from this school bank account and we mail the check to UNICEF in New York," Bingi said. "We fill out a form that we send along with the money so UNICEF can attribute the donation to our school's hard work!"

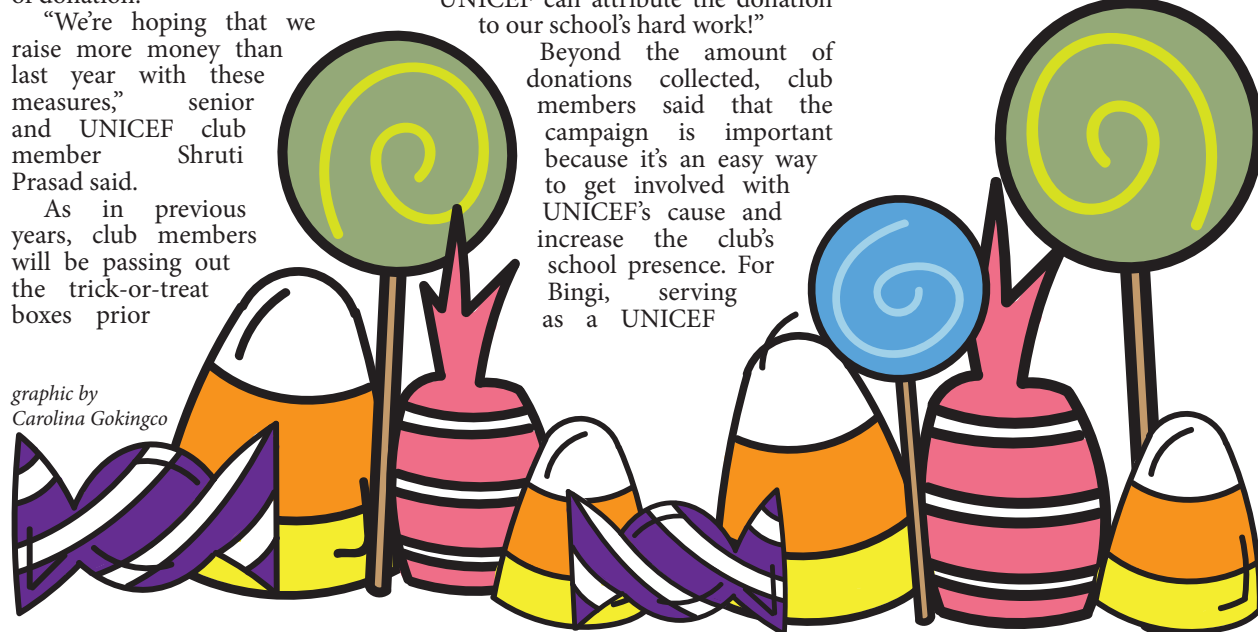
Beyond the amount of donations collected, club members said that the campaign is important because it's an easy way to get involved with UNICEF's cause and increase the club's school presence. For Bingi, serving as a UNICEF



graphic by Leah Marsh

committee member at a Model UN conference her sophomore year left her frustrated by its lack of funding yet inspired to help the cause. She said she hopes that participating in the Trick-or-Treat campaign will strike a similar chord in others.

"The campaign is a way for high school students feel like they are able to contribute to the aid desperately needed in third world countries suffering from depravity," Prasad said. "It's important that we know that we can make a difference, and it comes in small steps like trick-or-treating for UNICEF."



graphic by  
Carolina Gokingsco

## Bidding farewell to Ms. Butler!

MARLEN AVILA  
News Editor

There were many bittersweet goodbyes from both students and teachers after LASA's Wellness Counselor of seven years, Meagan Butler, announced she was leaving the school. For the past years, Butler has co-sponsored the LASA Pride Alliance (LPA) and helped to organize school events such as Denim Day, International Women's Day and National Coming Out Day. LASA will dearly miss her efforts to unite and provide support for students.

"I've gotten lot of really sweet cards and emails and gifts and notes," Butler said. "I've been really overwhelmed by the gratitude that I'm feeling, just to know that I've helped people is really why I get up in the morning."

Earlier this year, Butler received a

"It was definitely surprising to know that this change was gonna happen now," Butler said. "It's a really good opportunity to try to bring an improvement in mental health system throughout the district, so it's a really wonderful opportunity for me. It's also really bittersweet because I love LASA. It's like my second family here, and I'm connected to so many students and teachers and it's hard to leave."

Many students, including LPA co-president and senior Ames Jewart, are glad Butler's hard work throughout the years is being rewarded. Butler has sponsored LPA since 2010 and helped it grow to be one of LASA's most prominent clubs. Jewart said that Butler guided her and co-president and senior Charlie Diaz through the club and its customs.

"She was there since the beginning

more prominent organizations, LPA has expressed their gratitude for Butler's dedication.

"She's super amazing and a great ally to LGBTQ kids and everybody in the school," Jewart said. "She loves us all. So we're really sad that she's leaving but she's going to go do cool things now and support all of the kids in AISD, which is really neat."

During her time at LASA, Butler emphasized the importance and awareness of many wellness topics through a series of annual events. These include Sleep Week, Denim Day and the Kindness Board.

"When I first started at LASA, there wasn't that much of a wellness focus, and we didn't have two wellness counselors," Butler said. "Our teachers didn't know the services that counselors can provide for students so we're trying to shift that over time so that our teachers trust the counselors, and our students trust the counselors. We try to provide good services and help people. I feel like we've done a really good job at creating that culture and I hope it continues."

Butler worked to improve relations between students and faculty. By being part of many student groups, she was able to create a bond between both parties.

"I feel like coordinating with students has been one of the things that's been really important for our counseling team," Butler said. "Learning to connect, empower the student's voice and really let them take the lead."

Butler said her stay at LASA has taught her the importance of community and building relationships with people. She said that through a series of conversations, someone can continue to learn.

"I think one of my favorite quotes is from the Dalai Lama: 'If you want others to be happy, practice compassion, and if you want to be happy, practice compassion,'" Butler said. "That's one thing that LASA really taught me: the importance of compassion for others and for yourself."

According to Jewart, there will be a period of adjustment because Butler is leaving before the end of the school year. Dr. Susan Palacios is slated to replace Butler's wellness counseling position. Additionally, teachers Caitlin Palmer and Luis Miguel Ramirez will be sponsors for LPA.

However, Butler's departure will not be without farewells from students. Diaz expressed her appreciation for Butler's accomplishments at LASA.

"We're really going to miss her," Diaz said. "LASA has greatly changed for all the things she did for LASA like the Denim Day, helping with displays, helping LPA and helping other students grow."



Butler helped with the execution of certain events at LASA like National Coming Out day. Pictured from left to right: seniors Kalyani Allums, Ames Jewart, teacher Caitlin Palmer, Wellness Counselors Marissa Rivera and Meagan Butler. photo courtesy of Sanjana Aluru.

“That’s one thing that LASA really taught me: the importance of compassion for others and for yourself.”

- Former Wellness Counselor  
Meagan Butler

promotion to become the Secondary Counseling Coordinator for Austin Independent School District (AISD). The job entails supervising and supporting all middle and high school counselors throughout the district. In addition, she will provide individual support for certain campuses and help create systems of support.

and has all of the history knowledge for us of what we've done in the past," Jewart said. "It's really sad that she's going to be gone."

As one of the founders of LPA, Butler has supported the exponential growth of the club and its agenda. As a club initially consisting of only five members to evolving as one of LASA's

# AISD launches two new health initiatives

CAROLINA GOKINGCO  
News Editor

Austin Independent School District (AISD) has created two initiatives, which initially had generated controversy, but now will go on to affect nearly every school in the district.

Within its Comprehensive Health Services, which includes a range of topics from health education to nutrition to community engagement, two initiatives are in the process of implementation over the course of the school year. These are virtual healthcare and the addition of nurses.

According to AISD, recent decreases in enrollment and increases in low-income students were the primary reason for the health policy changes. AISD hopes these programs will improve health outcomes and narrow health disparities among youth in the district, which will ultimately help the district to achieve its goal of reducing non-academic barriers. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC), an advisory board made up of parents, community members, students and school staff will guide AISD in their efforts. Assistant Director of Comprehensive Health Services in AISD, Tracy Spinner, is the district staff liaison to the SHAC.

"SHAC meetings provide an opportunity for the district, parents, and community to engage in collaborative discussions around areas related to comprehensive school health and provide recommendations to the Board of Trustees on areas of interest," Spinner said.

Through coordinated school health programs, the SHAC hopes to aid AISD in improving the health of all students and families within the district. For instance, on Aug. 24, AISD announced its plan to implement virtual healthcare. According to SHAC Co-chair and AISD parent Vivian Ballard, virtual healthcare was an extension of the system already in place between nurses and student health assistants (SHAs).

"As I understand it, virtual care is an extension of the system SHAs and nurses already had—consult by phone on issues of concern," Ballard said. "Now they are able to use video to see each other, and it also allows nurses to see and hear students, rather than relying on a verbal description from a SHA."

Virtual healthcare is a system where certified SHAs connect and communicate with nurses using secure audio and visual technology. This allows for the assessment of students at campuses where a nurse may not be present. Through virtual healthcare, AISD hopes allowing students to be treated at school will limit missed instruction time

and save parents the hassle of scheduling appointments and needing to leave work.

"Virtual healthcare allows nurses to visually assess a student from anywhere in the district," Spinner said. "The use of technology in the healthcare setting isn't new, and as it expands and improves patient health outcomes, I anticipate more school districts will also implement a virtual care resource for their health teams."

When initially released, virtual healthcare received mixed reviews. According to senior and SHAC student ambassador Alex Mancevski, virtual healthcare was an initiative made without SHAC's recommendation and could have resulted in a change in medical contractors and a decrease in nurses.

"It seemed to only consider financial reasons—to cut costs," Mancevski said. "Last year I was idealistically hoping to have a nurse at every campus, improving the [old] system where a nurse takes turns going to two different elementary schools during the week...My instincts said virtual healthcare would result in a decrease in quality of care, but only studies would confirm that."

Mancevski wrote a letter to the AISD Medical Advisor expressing his concerns.

"I sat on my draft for weeks because I didn't know if it was my place to doubt the decision," Mancevski said. "I really care about at-risk children's health, since almost every Title 1 elementary school has a student who suffers from pediatric Type II Diabetes."

Implementing virtual healthcare would cause a change in medical contractors, meaning the current Children's Hospital nurses who treated students with Type II Diabetes would no longer work at their designated schools.

"I have met some of them, and I commended the efforts of the nurses who checked kids' necks every year for acanthosis nigricans, which are dark patches in the skin made visible by Type II Diabetes, and followed up on those kids, measuring the patches periodically and advising the kids' families on how to deal with the condition," Mancevski said. "The letter's main question asked who would do that essential task now that the nurses were gone."

Mancevski said virtual healthcare and its impact on health services within the district remains a touchy subject, as parents of children who need daily medication or have severe allergies expressed concerns with the system. However several parents, like Ballard, view virtual healthcare with a more positive outlook



Senior Alex Mancevski (left) with Dr. Pont who was, at the time, the medical advisor to the SHAC from Dell's Children Hospital, photo courtesy of Alex Mancevski.

"As technology changes, I believe it's appropriate for the student health delivery to take advantage of those changes," Ballard said. "There is always room to improve, of course, and taking advantage of technology, where appropriate, to improve service is a really good idea."

Nonetheless, in order to relieve some of the concerns about virtual healthcare, AISD responded by implementing an initiative to increase the number of nurses in the district. Seton/Dell Children's Medical Center, who has been in a 22 year partnership with AISD, is the primary contributor to the initiative. Seton will provide up to \$1.8 million to hire new district nurses.

"The district is increasing the number of nurses by 32 this semester," Spinner said. "This will be a total of 74 nurses providing care in AISD. In addition to adding nurses, we will continue to support campuses with the health team approach of an nurse and student health assistant (SHA) on campuses with enrollment of 700 students

or less." Spinner believes this increase is important because nurses facilitate access to primary care, and nurses on campus can provide referral services to community providers when students are identified with unmet health needs.

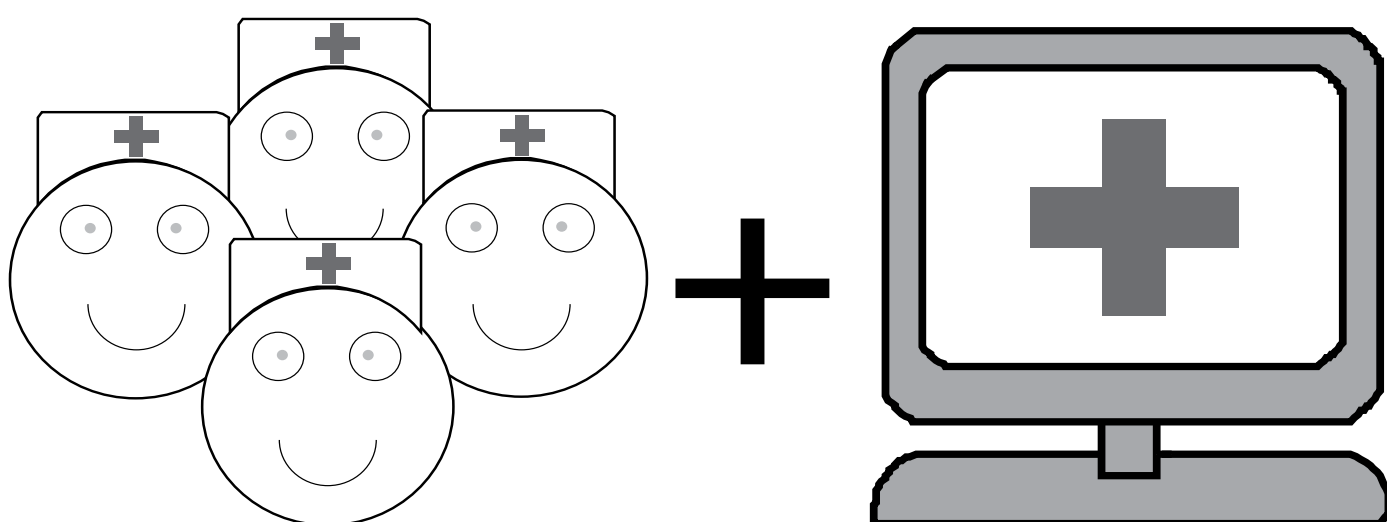
"Research shows that healthy children do better in school, from attendance and behavior to academics and overall performance," Spinner said. "In cases where significant barriers to primary care are encountered, nurses work to remove those barriers and provide linkage to care."

Ballard also said he increase will answer many parents' questions about healthcare in the district.

"The increase in nurses is a welcome response from Seton to parent concerns raised at the beginning of the school year about health care staffing at schools," Ballard said. "I am not a health care expert but from my view as a parent, it seems like a reasonable response from Seton."

As of now, the school health delivery model includes full-time nurse coverage in each of AISD's larger elementary and middle schools. Medium-sized elementary and middle schools will share one nurse and one SHA, and smaller schools will have full-time SHAs and a shared nurse. Additionally, there will also be float pool of nurses to provide additional support for the health team. According to Spinner, LASA/LBJ will continue to have a full-time nurse and a half-time SHA.

"The SHAC Health Services subcommittee will be examining best practices in the delivery of student health services over the next few months, and they'll provide feedback to the full SHAC—and then on to the Board and the District—on the results of their efforts," Ballard said. "That effort will help with evaluation of what the District is doing, and point out the direction for possible modifications."



graphics by Mirah Gordon

## The basics of bonds

AARON BOOE  
Staff Writer

On Nov. 7, voters will decide the fate of a single-proposition \$1.05 billion bond package, which includes plans for constructing, such as modernizing or constructing 16 new campus facilities, some of which will be replacement schools. The bond also entails updating campuses with capital improvement projects.

### FAQs

#### How do bonds work?

The sales of bonds begins with an election to authorize a specific amount—the maximum the district is allowed to sell without another election. The school district sells them as municipal bonds when funds are needed for capital projects, usually once or twice a year. Bids are taken from interested buyers, usually large institutional investors, and are sold at the lowest rate offered. The rate is based on the district's bond rating; the higher the bond rating, the lower the interest rate to sell the bonds. Principal and interest on the bonds are repaid over an extended period of time with funds from the debt service tax rate.

#### If a bond is approved, is the district obligated to spend in money?

No. Voter approval is an authorization for the district to issue bonds. They will be sold in the future only when funds are needed.

#### If a bond is passed how does the school district cover the debt?

The bonds do not cost the district anything until they are sold. Even though the voters approve the bond issue, there are not costs incurred until the bonds are sold.

#### Why are bonds used to finance non-facility items?

It is a financial advantage to the district to pay for some capital expenditures, such as technology, buses, land and portable buildings with bond money, rather than from the General Fund.

First the cost of the purchases can be spread over the life of the asset, rather than coming from a single year's General Fund. In addition, taxes that are levied for bonded debt are not subject to the same recapture formulas that reduce state funding based on General Fund tax revenues. The district sells bonds that mature at different times, so bond expenditures for items with a shorter lifespan, such as computers, are paid off before the purchase becomes obsolete.

#### What is a bond election?

A school bond election gives individuals an opportunity to vote on paying for the construction and renovation of school facilities. It is a request to give the elected Board of Trustees the authority to sell bonds when facilities are needed.

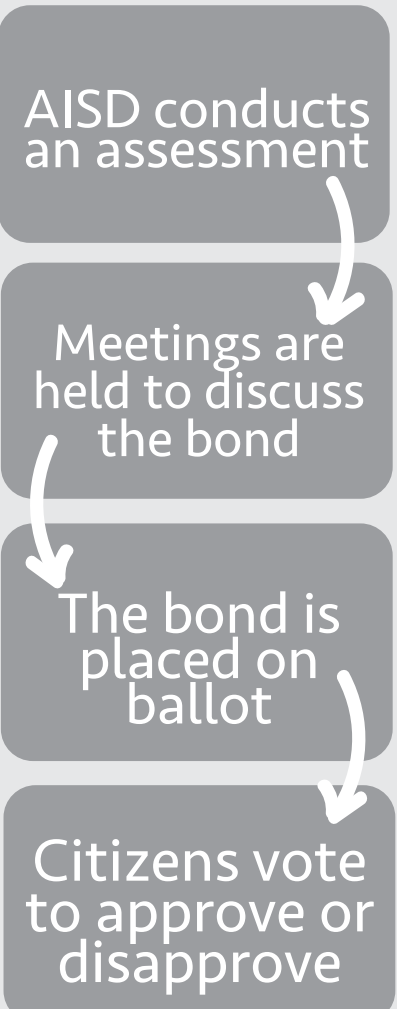
#### What are bonds and how long does it take to pay them off?

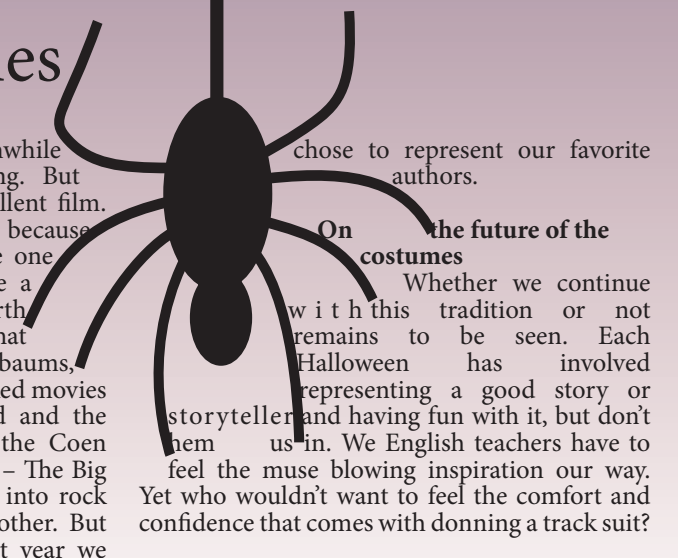
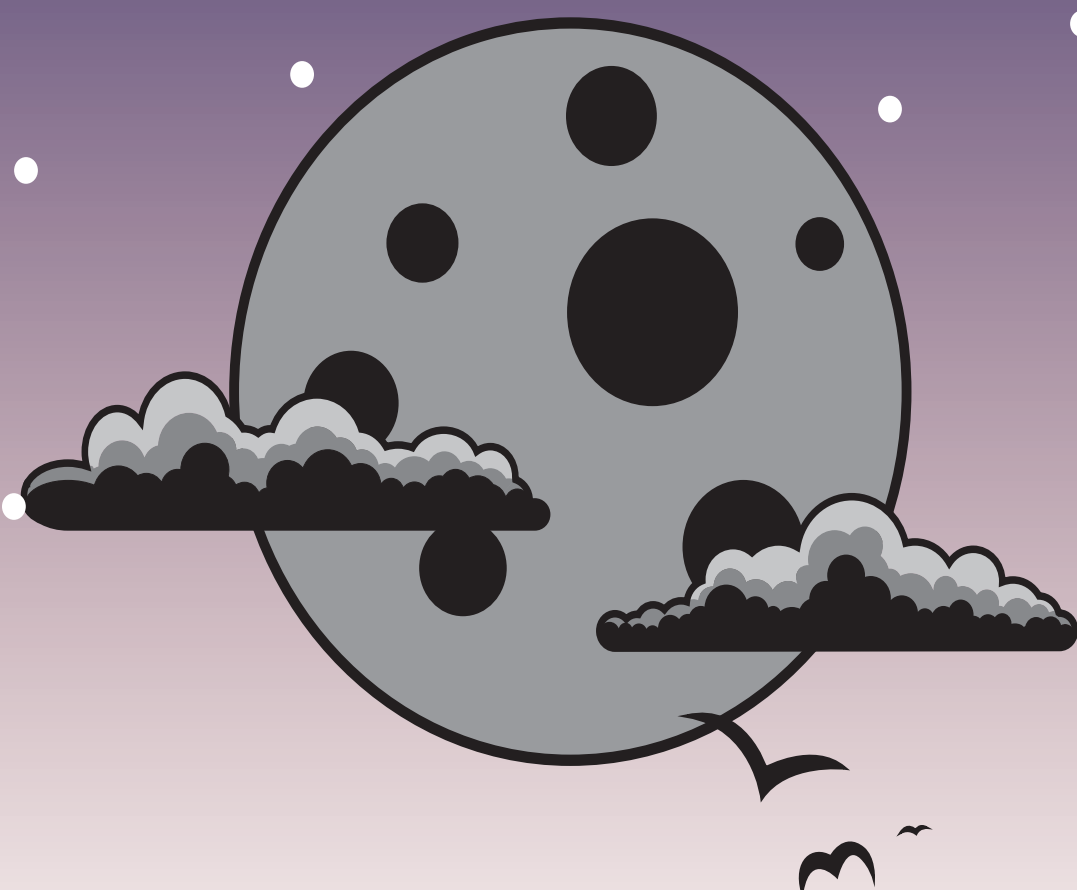
Bonds for school projects exist to finance construction projects. The district sells bonds to investors who will be paid principal and interest. Payout is limited by law to 40 years.

#### How can bond money be used?

Proceeds from a bond issue can be used for the construction and renovation of facilities, the acquisition of land and the purchase of capital items such as equipment.

## HOW BONDS ARE MADE





## Celebrating heritage, history and Halloween traditions

MEGAN RAMSEY  
Staff Writer

In late October, cemeteries come alive with color, the scent of food, and laughter. Designs cut out of thin, brightly colored paper, called papel picado, are strung around houses. Pan dulce is brought from the store and altars are made in remembrance of the dead. At the same time, children pull on their costumes and prepare to collect bags of candy from neighbors. Teenagers watch horror movies and attend parties, and adults also find themselves drawn into the celebration. Neighborhoods light up at night and fill with crowds of creative costumes and decorations. Carved pumpkins sit on porch steps. Plastic spiders and ghosts hang from trees, and the front gates become entrances to cemeteries and haunted houses.

October 31 is a day known to many as a time when the boundaries between the worlds of the living and dead begin to blur. Día de los Muertos, which honors the ghosts of family members between Oct. 31, and Nov. 2, originated in Latin America and is celebrated primarily in Mexico. In contrast, Halloween originated in the Celtic and pagan culture and is, today, mostly an American celebration. On the outside, the two celebrations of Día de los Muertos and Halloween may seem similar: they're both colorful celebrations around death, but each celebration has different traditions and significances.

*I really like Día de los Muertos because it's connecting to my Mexican culture.*

-junior Tania Rives

Junior Elizabeth Torres-Schulte celebrates both Día de los Muertos and Halloween. Following the traditions of Día de los Muertos, Torres-Schulte's family goes to the cemetery, participating in the cleaning of their relatives' graves. Torres-Schulte said that Día de los Muertos has changed her view on death and given it a new meaning. Día de los Muertos is a celebration. Torres-Schulte said it's important to see death as a continuation of life and to respect it instead of fear it.

"The idea that you can be visited by the spirits of family members has never been frightening, but rather comforting," Torres-Schulte said. Like Torres-Schulte, junior Tania Rives celebrates both holidays. Rives said that Halloween is the bigger of the two October 31 celebrations. For Rives, Día de los Muertos is a fun family celebration. She said it brings her family closer to her mother's Mexican roots; the purpose of Día de los Muertos is to bring together family through connecting with the ancestors they remember and celebrate.

"I really like Día de los Muertos because it's connecting to my Mexican culture," Rives said. "Día de los Muertos kind of gives me a glimpse of a life I could've had if my mom had chosen to stay in Mexico." Not all people with Latin American heritage celebrate Día de los Muertos because not all families retain those aspects of their ancestral culture. Even in Central American

and it remains a tradition throughout the course of people's lives. Rives said that the traditions she observes on the Day of the Dead, while different from what's celebrated in Mexico, are still enjoyable.

"There's a lot of reminiscing," Rives said. "And then, it's really fun actually because you find pictures of the people you loved and put them in an altar and you get a lot of cool food, like pan dulce, which is nice."

While Austin has Día de los Muertos parades and festivals, they are not considered the same as the ones in Central America, according to students who celebrate the holiday. People who celebrate partake in smaller traditions, like the consumption of traditional hispanic foods and the use of altars. Junior Zoe Taulli said that while Halloween is mostly about the candy eating, Día de los Muertos actually has a purpose that Taulli appreciates.

"It's really unique and a really cool celebration that I think more people should invest time to because it has a good message," Taulli said. "[Halloween] is a lot more silly than Day of the Dead, which has a purpose to pay your respects."

"More fun, I would say Halloween, because you kind of just get to run around and get candy," Santos said, comparing the two holidays. "But I feel like [with] Día de los Muertos... you have to take it more seriously because... you're remembering a person." While Día de los Muertos is considered a fun holiday by those whose celebrate it, participants say it isn't treated the same way as Halloween

The house I lived in from my birth through third grade had a poltergeist. Not a malignant one, it was kind of just there. My mother had a friend who was psychic and training to be a professional psychic seer. She came over to the house and was like, 'You have a female poltergeist and she's tied to the land. It's not the house, it's just she's tied to this land.' I'd always kind of known that we had a poltergeist, but had never really interacted with her. Sometimes we'd wake up and all the cabinets would be open in the kitchen, but they hadn't been open the night before. Lights would just turn off! I'd be sitting in the living room and they'd just turn off. I'd get up and turn them back on and it was fine. But what I really remember was a time I was sitting on my bed reading. Above my bed was a shelf that I kept stuffed animals on, and the shelf just fell on my head. It had been there for years and it'd never fallen, it'd never seemed insecure, and when we looked at it there were still screws in the wall. Something would have had to lift it up and move it, and that was really weird. I wondered, 'How would that shelf have fallen on my head? And my mother was like, 'Oh, that's the poltergeist!' And I was eight so I was like, 'Okay?' We moved and I don't know if she's still there, but in my new house we haven't had any activity of that sort."

All graphics by Kye Kane  
Page design by Gabrielle Jabour and Sarah Mines

## Teacher Feature:

### Harry recounts history of English department's elaborate costumes

MO HARRY  
English Teacher

Every six weeks the Life & Feature section shows off the interesting characters of the LASA staff by asking them to write about our focus for the issue. To get everyone ready to rave at homecoming this year, Organic Chemistry and Planet Earth teacher David Walker, discussed his experiences at his own school dances and at LASA school dances as a chaperone. The interview was edited for clarity and length.

On the iconic LASA English Department group costumes of the past

It all started with track suits. That and an iconic storyteller: Wes Anderson. Sure, you

need good directing to make a worthwhile movie. Accomplished acting. Editing. But writing is the key factor in any excellent film. We also chose Wes Anderson's movies because they present like photography. Pause one during almost any scene and you've a tableau, a compelling portrait worth viewing. Worth imitating. So that's what we did. First with The Royal Tenenbaums, later Moonrise Kingdom. We also picked movies because visuals are already provided and the characters already recognizable. So the Coen Brothers were another natural choice - The Big Lebowski. For fun, we branched out into rock duos one year and SNL partners another. But we're nerds for good writing, so last year we

chose to represent our favorite authors.

On the future of the costumes

Whether we continue with this tradition or not remains to be seen. Each Halloween has involved representing a good story or storyteller and having fun with it, but don't let them us in. We English teachers have to feel the muse blowing inspiration our way. Yet who wouldn't want to feel the comfort and confidence that comes with donning a track suit?

## IT'S NOT SO (PARA)NORMAL: students share their spooky stories and unusual encounters of Halloweens past

These stories have been edited for clarity and brevity.

JORDAN JEWELL  
Staff Writer

Sophomore  
Dolly  
Broughton

"This summer I stayed in a cabin for a summer camp because I am training to work there, and they've always put the oldest kids in that cabin because it's haunted. You're not allowed to talk about the cabin, and you're not allowed to make any jokes or anything, unless you're in the cabin or on the deck, which is preferable because you don't want to piss the ghost off. We didn't know where this ghost came from. At night it got a little bit weird because this thing had a fascination with me. It was very uncomfortable because I'd wake up and I'd see a figure. There were these poles that would support the cabin because it's kind of flimsy, it's made of wood, and it'd always be standing against the pole or by the counselors bed. We wouldn't say anything to the counselor like 'Oh by the way this creepy shadow dude is by your bed!' My friend was always so fascinated by this thing. She said that it was always looking at me and I was like, 'I don't want to hear that!' I really do not want to hear that some creepy ghost is staring at me at night, that's not going to help me sleep. And then she said, 'Oh no, if you ignore it, it'll go away!' And I'm like okay? And? What's the issue there? Then this whole shadow figure ghost thing became kind of a joke throughout the cabin."

Sophomore  
Kate Kerwick

"I saw the ghost of a dog. It was a few years ago, when I was still in middle school, and it was some time a little bit after the fires in Oak Hill. We were wandering around the park where the forest burned down. There were a lot of pets that were lost in the fire, and that's what I think this dog had come from. I only saw it a couple times and I didn't really interact with it much. We'd just been wandering around the park where the creek was, though it was all dried out at that point because it hadn't rained recently. I saw this dog and it just kind of wandered off, and I didn't see it again for a while. I tried to follow it for a while and it just wasn't there. I assumed it was a ghost because it didn't make any noise. I think it was just coming around to check on where it had died, perhaps. It was kind of weird, but it was also kind of cool."

Anonymous Junior

The house I lived in from my birth through third grade had a poltergeist. Not a malignant one, it was kind of just there. My mother had a friend who was psychic and training to be a professional psychic seer. She came over to the house and was like, 'You have a female poltergeist and she's tied to the land. It's not the house, it's just she's tied to this land.' I'd always kind of known that we had a poltergeist, but had never really interacted with her. Sometimes we'd wake up and all the cabinets would be open in the kitchen, but they hadn't been open the night before. Lights would just turn off! I'd be sitting in the living room and they'd just turn off. I'd get up and turn them back on and it was fine. But what I really remember was a time I was sitting on my bed reading. Above my bed was a shelf that I kept stuffed animals on, and the shelf just fell on my head. It had been there for years and it'd never fallen, it'd never seemed insecure, and when we looked at it there were still screws in the wall. Something would have had to lift it up and move it, and that was really weird. I wondered, 'How would that shelf have fallen on my head? And my mother was like, 'Oh, that's the poltergeist!' And I was eight so I was like, 'Okay?' We moved and I don't know if she's still there, but in my new house we haven't had any activity of that sort."



Top: Flags mark the ACL grounds. Left: British rapper Skepta performs at the HomeAway stage. Right: Michael D'Addario of the Lemon Twigs showcases the Twigs' retro sound. Photos by Meena Anderson

## Austin City Limits

*continued from page 1*

"A lot of these bands are just starting on their tours so you can get a chance to get a feel for the band before they, for instance, play at Emo's six months after the festival," Sengupta Stith said. "It's a great introduction to a lot of the bands."

Many journalists that work in the press lounge write stories and record interviews throughout the day in order to provide updates from the festival as the festival is progressing. These stories are often put up on respective websites the same day as the events they describe.

"With different formats we can often times cover things in ways that we haven't before. Using the internet, we can provide live coverage of sets" Sengupta Stith said. "Maybe we've already seen the artist, but they might do something on stage that's different or worth noting."

In recent years, the presence of social media has granted journalists and small businesses new opportunities to reach out to readers and customers. Both the festival itself and Waterloo records used Instagram to provide updates on events such as artist signings within the festival.

"A lot of social media gives us eyewitnesses that we can contact for events," Sengupta Stith said.

From booths set up in the press lounge behind festival headquarters, radio stations like KGSR, KUTX, and 101X can record and broadcast performances and interviews.

According to 101X DJ Toby Ryan, interview slots are set up weeks in advance in order to prepare for the festival.

"We try and set up interviews with bands that are appropriate for our format—and even if they're not, we try and have them by if they are interesting characters," Ryan said. "Usually I try and set things up about two months

in advance."

Ryan manages the weekdays from two to seven p.m. slot on 101X, an Austin-based alternative rock station. He has been 101X's main correspondent for ACL for the past eight years. According to Ryan, press competition has increased with the size of the festival.

"Nowadays it's a little more difficult to get things hammered out and locked in with artists because so much media happens back here now," Ryan said. "A lot of the bands have to figure out when they're gonna be in town, what other media they have, and what their stage time is, so it usually takes a while to get everything solidified because as ACL has evolved so much else has evolved around it."

In 2013, ACL was expanded to two weekends instead of one, which allowed bands to choose which weekend to conduct interviews or do promotions if they plan to do so.

"The fact that ACL is one of the last festivals of the festival season, a lot of bands that have been touring all of the festivals and have probably been doing press the entire time don't really want to do press," Ryan said. "If they do it's usually all in weekend one."

Ryan's experience as an active DJ on 101X has allowed him to observe the rise and fall of trends in the music community. According to Ryan, a resurgence in the popularity of synthesizers has led to a plethora of mainstream keyboard led groups.

"Nowadays a lot of bands are very synth oriented and keyboard oriented," Ryan said. "That synth sound is like a brand. It's hard to explain but when a band comes out with a sound that is very popular and moves music and sells tickets, you'll find that labels will want to find other bands that have that same sound. It leads to sort of a rise of that particular sound and it permeates to all levels of music."

The comeback of 'synthpop' has created problems for 101X's studio performances, which are traditionally arranged in preparation for acoustic performances.

"You don't really plug in anything for acoustic sessions," Ryan said. "It's tougher nowadays because bands are really less equipped to do so but we would like to do those sort of things."

Synthpop first gained popularity through bands such as New Order and Depeche Mode, acts that have since influenced contemporary groups such as Beach House, Future Islands, and Tame Impala. According to Ryan, this repetitive nature of music is something that is common.

"Anyone who notices the things that I notice through the radio and listening to music is that music is cyclical and that things change," Ryan said. "Right now music is in

a very pop-oriented stage. There's not a lot of heavy guitar or loud screaming."

One side effect of the rise of mainstream pop has been the decline of mainstream hard rock that gained popularity in the late 80s and charted until the early 2000s. Due to the recurring trends of popularity, Ryan predicts that rock will make a comeback.

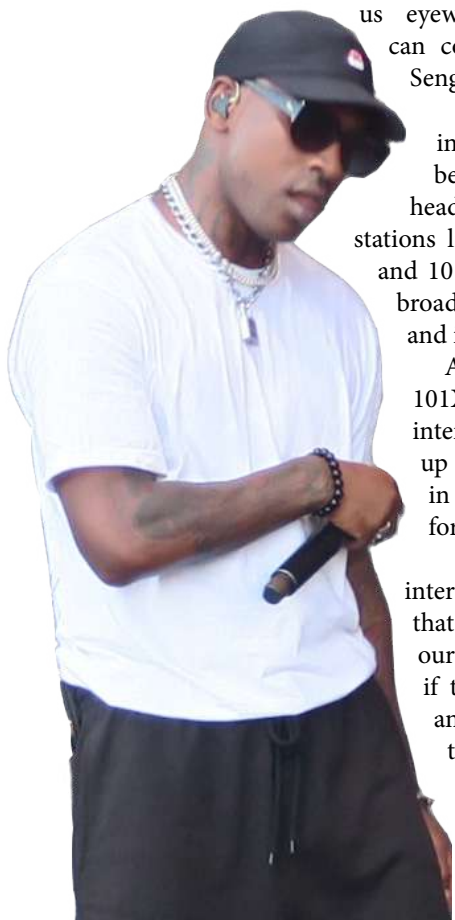
"It will happen when rock sounds fresh again and right now rock doesn't seem fresh because we're still coming off the heels of the grunge era, the Nirvanas and Soundgarden, and that's still relatively ingrained into people's heads," Ryan said. "There will be a time when we move so far away from that and something new will come out that will make guitar and rock sound cool again."

According to Ryan, ACL and 101X has provided him a unique outlook into what is popular among the greater music community. One developing trend over the past few decades that Ryan has noted is the distinct lines between scenes and classifications of music have disbanded.

"Right now it's all about experimentation," Ryan said. "I think it's cool that music has evolved so that the barriers of genres have really been broken down where formats don't really mean much anymore and for younger people who get their music via spotify or online, genres don't really mean much anymore."

ACL's inclusive attitude towards all genres of music allows fans to witness groups and genres in concert that they would not experience otherwise. The same goes for journalists looking to cover a wide array of tastes for their audiences.

"These festivals almost force you to go see shows you would have never seen on your own, which can be very helpful when you're trying to find things to cover for the rest of the year," Langer said. "It's only six days, but it's six useful days with that mindset"



## Festival facilitates future filmmakers

LENI MILLIKEN  
Entertainment Editor

The city of Austin is home to a screenwriting focused conference and film festival, Austin Film Festival (AFF), that was the first of its kind at the time of its origin in 1993. According to AFF's mission statement, the festival furthers the art and craft of filmmaking by inspiring and recognizing the work of screenwriters, filmmakers and artists who use the language of film to tell a story. The festival also has a special relationship with high schools around the city, granting access to over 300 selected students. Access includes specifically designed student

“It's a really fun experience and you get the ability to feel the attainability of a job in the film industry.”

-LASA Audio Video Production teacher Vanessa Mokry

panels, and oftentimes film screenings ahead of release.

The LASA Advanced Audio Video Production class (AAVP) has gone to the festival in past years and plans to attend it again this October. AAVP teacher, Vanessa Mokry, expressed gratitude towards the festival for their scholarships because, according to her, they will allow for over half of her students to attend this year.

"This conference says you need a scholarship? Here's a badge," Mokry said. "When I think about that, I don't know if I would give 300 badges to high school kids if I was running this conference, but it just means that they want the students to really learn and get something from it and get inspired, which they are."

According to Mokry, the festival offers opportunities that allow students to experience a look inside and get involved in the film industry. Students even have the opportunity to pitch story ideas to film-making professionals who attend the festival.

"You just get really immersed in the industry," Mokry said. She added that students begin to feel like having a job in the industry, "is very possible when you're there attending with all these other people who actually work in the industry."

Beyond scholarships and pitching, the festival offers a competition, the Young Filmmakers competition, that allows students from 12 to 18 year olds to submit short films. The films must be less than 12 minutes in length. This year, LASA senior Ashley Merka was accepted to the Young Filmmakers competition with her film, Pack Animals, that she wrote and directed in the spring of 2017.

"I didn't even think to apply at first because I thought, oh small time AVP script that we shot together in the bathroom isn't going to go anywhere especially in something as popular or as big as AFF, but Mokry convinced me just to submit it," Merka said.

Because the AFF competition submission deadline takes place at the beginning of the

school year, in mid-September, not many LASA students submit, according to Mokry. The process of students' submitting their films is similar to other festivals, but competition has grown in years past.

"I think the level of competition has increased for Austin Film Festival over the years because nowadays kids are just able to make better films overall," Mokry said, adding that most film festivals are, "similar in what they look for in a quality product, and that focuses on story."

According to Merka, screenwriting is a very unique way to tell a story opposed to prose and that is why she found a love for it so quickly.

"It's more about action and everything that is happening visually whereas things like prose and creative writing are more of what's happening internally," Merka said. "So, it's a new way of looking at your story, how it takes place, and how the characters interact and that's really fun to

explore."

AFF's screenwriting conference will hold around 200 panelists that will make up over 175 panels, roundtables, and workshops as part of the conference throughout the weekend. According to Mokry, the panels will usually open up for questions at their end to get the audience more involved with the panelists, who hold job positions in the film industry.

"We go to a panel that is often lead by some of your favorite writers from some of your favorite actual tv shows and movies," Mokry said, while describing past AAVP classes' festival experiences. "It's a really fun experience and you get the ability to feel the attainability of a job in the film industry."

Though Merka said she feels as though careers in the Liberal Arts, specifically writing, including screenwriting, are often discouraged, she believes screenwriting is a great outlet for emotion and creativity. But, beyond that the film process is still very difficult, according to her.

"Writing my script was fun, but producing it with the crew was really stressful," Merka said. "So, it felt wonderful to have other people recognize all the work we put into and think: this is worth seeing."

The festival takes place on Oct. 26 through Oct. 29 at multiple theaters and conference venues around Austin.

# Horror Movie Reviews

ASHLEY THOMAS  
Staff Writer

## Raw



image courtesy of Focus World

This French horror film is sure to make you gag at least once or twice. Starting her freshman year at college, Justine (Garance Marillier) seems to be living the perfect life after being accepted into one of the most prestigious veterinary schools in the world. After living her whole life as a vegetarian, Justine is forced to eat meat for the first time during freshman hazing week. Disgraced with herself for her new love for meat, Justine is forced to face another rude awakening when she learns that this craving extends past dead animals after she takes a bite of her sister's finger.

If you love any of the Saw franchise movies than this is definitely a must watch for you. Director Julia Ducournau managed to horrify audiences at the Sundance film festival in 2015 after reports came out claiming audience members left the film feeling disturbed, and that guests even vomited at the screening inside the theatre. Ducournau's existential look on how genetics can influence personal growth is explored throughout the film. This art film can be incredibly graphic and gory, but the underlying message of self acceptance and female power adds an incredible amount of depth and psychoanalysis that extends past the film itself.

The development of Justine from an average college freshman to a bloodthirsty maniac is what influences the horror within this film. This movie includes none of your typical horror go-to's such as jump scares, but rather uses the progression of the main character to horrify audiences with the suspense of her fate.

## The Strangers

This sadistic take on the classic home invasion story never fails to get me in the mood for the Halloween season. In the film, couple Kristen McKay (Liv Tyler) and James Hoyt (Scott Speedman) are struggling with their relationship after Hoyt's marriage proposal is rejected. With their relationship in turmoil, the couple returns home for the night, but things take a turn for the worst as three strangers torment the couple from outside their home.

The Strangers offers more than cheap thrills and jump scares with the idea that simply being in your home can lead to your worst nightmare. Taking ordinary situations and manipulating them into someone's worst fears is a challenging task that director Adam Wingard effortlessly achieved.

One of my biggest pet peeves in horror movies is when you can clearly see the character leading themselves to their own demise with their foolish decisions. Unlike traditional horror movies, Wingard is able to electrify audiences by creating a film in which all of the characters seem to be taking the right steps to survive, yet still seem to end up with a tragic fate.

This sadistic take on the classic home invasion story never fails to get me in the mood for the Halloween season. In the film, couple Kristen McKay (Liv Tyler) and James Hoyt (Scott Speedman) are struggling with their relationship after Hoyt's marriage proposal is rejected. With their relationship in turmoil, the couple returns home for the night, but things take a turn for the worst as three strangers torment the couple from outside their home.

## Alien

If you're in the mood to binge watch a movie series, the Alien franchise is my recommendation for you. Director Ridley Scott's franchise has become one of the most iconic horror series in Hollywood. Starting with the original Alien, Scott combines the classic trope of monsters vs humans, and combines this with a fleshed out sci-fi universe. The original films follow Ripley, played by Sigourney Weaver, who is repeatedly thrust into a game of cat and mouse with a murderous race of Aliens known as the Xenomorphs. Her journey is one of suspense, horror and action as she switches from being the hunted to the hunter of the perfect biological killing machine.

While I recommend watching the original franchise, the contemporary prequels, Prometheus and Alien: Covenant, offer a fresh take on the series. Scott has turned what once was aliens vs humans into films that questions the extent of human morality. Scott is able to test the limits of his characters and how much they're willing to value the lives of their friends and families compared to their own.

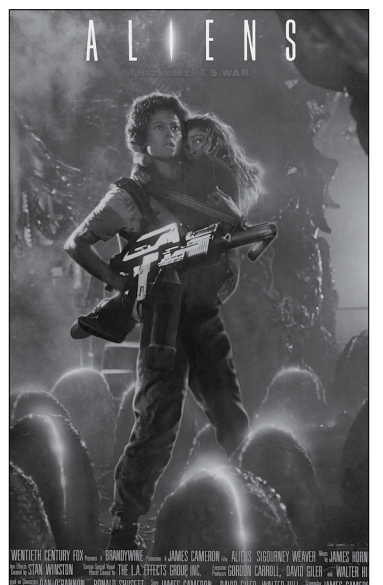


image courtesy of 20th Century Fox

# Monster Word Puzzle

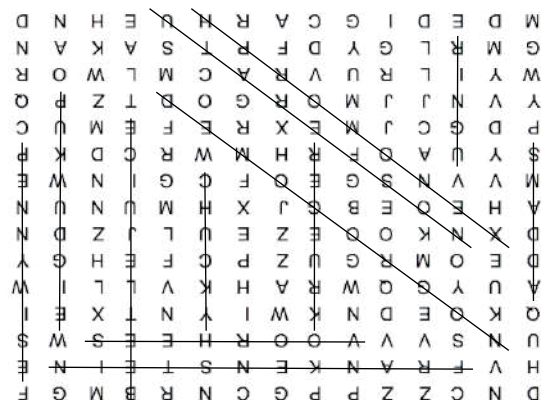
What's your favorite movie monster? Can you find them all?

JACOB CHLEBOWSKI  
Graphic Designer

D N C Z Z P P G C N R B M G F  
H V F R A N K E N S T E I N E  
U N S V V V O O R H E E S W S  
Q K O E D N K W I Y N T X E I  
A U Y G Q W R A H K V L L I W  
D E O M R G U Z P C F E H G Y  
D X N K O O E Z E U L J Z D N  
A H E O E B G J X H M U N U N  
M V V N S G E O F C G I N W E  
S Y U A O F R H M W R C D K P  
P D G C J M E X R E F E M U C  
Y V N J J M O R G O D T Z P Q  
W Y I L R U V R A C M L W O R  
G M R L G Y D F P T S A K A N  
M D E D I G C A R H U E H N D

## Word List:

- BEETLEJUICE
- FRANKENSTEIN
- NOSFERATU
- VOORHEES
- KRUEGER
- CHUCKY
- RINGU
- PENNYWISE
- ADDAMS
- DEMOGORGON
- XENOMORPH
- PUKWUDGIE



Answer Key:



## A day at ACL in photos

Editor-in-chief Meena Anderson captured some moments from Friday of the second weekend of the Austin City Limits Music Festival.

1. Festival attendees gather with their friends as they wait for British rapper Skepta's set to begin at the HomeAway stage.
2. Crowds congregate under the shade of the flags that fly at the center of Zilker Park during ACL.
3. Michael D'Addario of the Lemon Twigs plays to the crowd at the Miller Lite stage.
4. ACL's HomeAway stage held many artists throughout the weekend such as, Martin Garrix, Russ and Portugal. The Man.



photos by Meena Anderson



Juniors Andrew Mauro (left) and Robert Yam (right) concentrate on their game. Chess Club has attracted new and seasoned players alike over the past few years and the game has become more and more popular among LASA students, according to junior Walker Holmes. Photo courtesy of LASA junior Zayan Vohra.

## Chess: not just for champions and challengers

GRANT MCCASLAND  
Web Editor

Every Wednesday and Thursday at lunch, students gather in room 208 for a fierce competition. Friends are pitted against each other and find themselves in deep thought, looking for any way to outsmart their opponent. No, this isn't any school sport or sport-related club, but the new and improved Chess Club. According to junior and new leader of the Chess Club Walker Holmes, the club has reinvented itself and is consequently rising in popularity during the new school year. Holmes said he played chess in elementary school but lost interest during middle school. After coming to LASA, Holmes said his interest was revived through playing and reading books on chess.

"It has grown significantly this year, mostly due to the club being better advertised and the format changing to be more organized," Holmes said. "I didn't understand why a school as bright as ours didn't have a flourishing chess club, but after inviting people around the school and participating as a club in events like Back-to-School Night and Club Fair, I've realized our school has plenty of chess players who just didn't realize they could join the club, either because they had concerns about their skill level or because they didn't realize the school had a club."

Junior Jonathan Yu joined Chess Club this year. He said having already having learned chess in elementary school made him fit right into the club, enjoying the sense of community it provides. While Yu does have experience, he said that the club also welcomes those without previous experience and helps all members to improve their chess

skills.

"Chess Club is a resounding success," Yu said. "It has attracted many people from different grades and allows people to come together and play chess. Chess Club was created to get people into chess and let them learn. Some of the people who came to the club to do homework... have actually played a few games of chess and actually like it."

*Our club motto is 'sapientia per certamen, res gesta per victoriam' which translates to 'knowledge by competition, success by victory'.*

-junior Walker Holmes

Holmes sees the growth of the club, as the weekly attendance has increased from single digits to over 20 members. He said the club is looking forward to even more expansion and change in the future, including an eventual focus on more on the game and tournaments.

"I'd like to see continued growth, and, as I mentioned

before, I'd like to see the meetings become more organized and oriented towards learning and gameplay," Holmes said. "Also, the players divide themselves up the same way each meeting, so in the next month we're going to change the format to better unite the club."

Chess Club Officer and LASA junior Christian Stromberger learned to play chess from his grandfather at a young age, similarly to how Yu and Holmes were first taught. He said he rediscovered a love for the game while sitting near Holmes as a freshman in Ezine. Stromberger noted that learning more strategies in Chess Club made the game more fun to play.

"I was initially shocked by the popularity of the club during the first meeting, as I had no idea so many people at our school liked to play chess," Stromberger said. "We probably should've known, we are LASA after all. Our club is set up in a way that anyone of any skill level can come in during lunch if they feel like playing a game, they don't have to be an official member."

Holmes said that Chess Club welcomes all who want to join, whether they're looking to win a match or just wanting to learn how to play the game.

"Our club motto is 'sapientia per certamen, res gesta per victoriam' which translates to 'knowledge by competition, success by victory,'" Holmes said. "This embodies the goal of the club, as our primary goal is to educate ourselves on the game by playing against each other, but we also want to give each game a worthy effort to enforce the competitive nature of the club."



LASA seniors Zoe Trungale and Holden Hunter lead the LBJ football fans in cheers. They, along with LASA senior Sawyer Timco, are the 2017-2018 student section leaders, responsible for maintaining the crowd's enthusiasm. "It's really cool see the students feeding off our energy and working together as a school," Hunter said. photo by Jorge Villa

## New year, new leaders, same spirit

ANDY DEGRASSE  
Staff Writer

They may be ordinary high schoolers by day, but every Friday night ordinary high schoolers become the hypemen for hundreds of Jaguar students. The student section leaders are regarded by many as one of the most important aspects of the Friday night football experience, controlling the energy of the game, and providing the players with encouragement. According to Holden Hunter, a senior and one of this year's three leaders, the position comes with a lot of responsibility, but is also a lot of fun.

"At first it was kind of intimidating, because we were leading so many people, and even though last year's seniors prepped us for it, we were still learning as we went," Hunter said, "but I think we've gotten into the groove of it now."

The student section leaders go beyond just using cheers to hype up the crowd, opting for more creative methods, such as spraying the crowd with water guns. Zoe Trungale, another one of this year's section leaders, believes these tactics are what makes the student section so special.

"Most other schools don't use all the cool stuff that we do, and I think that sets us apart," Trungale said, "Usually the most exciting moments of the games are when we celebrate with the water guns and powder and stuff, even though we're technically not supposed to use the powder."

Throwing powder is one of the most popular ways to celebrate at LBJ football games, but is no longer allowed at games. According to senior and section leader Sawyer Timco, keeping the crowd excited while also preventing students from getting in trouble has been the biggest struggle for the leaders this year. While many fans may want to be rambunctious all the time when cheering on their team, there are some times when it's actually better to be quiet, according to Timco.

"When people say we aren't doing enough cheers, or are being too quiet, they probably don't realize sometimes the team doesn't want us to be loud," Timco said, "When they are on offense, they actually want the students to be more quiet, so the offense can focus better. At the end of the day the most important thing for the student section is to do what's best for the team."

While the student section leaders have faced challenges this year, they all agree that being a student section leader has been a rewarding experience overall.

"I was in cheer the year before, and while we got to interact with the crowd some, it was much more structured and rigid than being a student section leader has been," Hunter said. "It's really cool see the students feeding off our energy and working together as a school."

## bond

continued from page 1

"I went to one of the meetings that was held, and at that meeting, which was held at Eastside, the district trustee member who represents Eastside wasn't there," Heffernan said. "There wasn't an effort... to respect the words of the people who are going to be affected by this, like the Eastside students, who would lose their campus for the second time in a decade. I mean, that's not right, right?"

Committees to address questions about the possible move, comprised of LASA, LBJ, and ESMH

teachers, parents, and one student from each campus, are in the works.

Senior Hattie Lindell, who plans to vote in favor of the bond, said that the lack of district outreach was understandable because of the dearth of students eligible to vote.

However, she said that the district should do more to meet students where they are and ensure that more students understand the impact of the bond.

"I think we need to have outreach at all schools," Lindell said. "I think it needs to be targeted towards every school. I know LASA and LBJ will be heavily affected by this; I think they should target all schools to make sure millennials are voting. It's important to have it sent out and sponsored by the school."

In addition to belonging to a disengaged age group nationwide, with only 17% of 18-to-24-year-olds turning out to vote in the 2014 midterms, student voters this year will likely be diminished in numbers because the election is not a presidential or congressional one. Off year elections generally have lower turnout than higher-profile, national elections. However, Risinger said that

voting in local elections was critical.

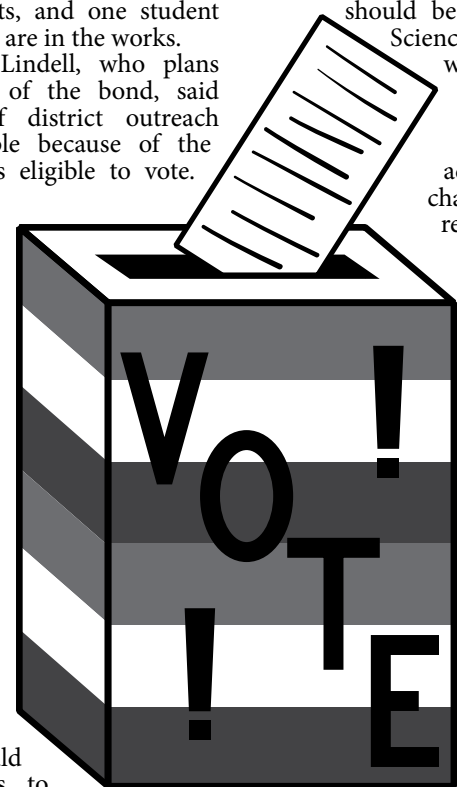
"The truth of the matter is that off year elections are more important than presidential election years, because you're electing our local officials, and those local policies, whether it's school board policies or city council policies, will have probably more of a direct impact on your life than abstract presidential politics," Risinger said.

Although seniors are generally the only students who can vote, and will not be around to see a move if one does occur, Lindell said that all students should be involved. Original Science Academy alumni, who graduated in the 1980s and 1990s, have participated in anti-move advocacy, with one change.org petition to reunify LASA and LBJ garnering over 500 signatures.

"I feel like there is something to be said for the legacy that your school leaves behind," Lindell said. "So even if you are graduating, you still went to this school, you still want to be a part of what happens to this school."

Risinger said that whether or not students can vote, they must be engaged and informed if they want to make a difference.

"Students, if you want your voices to be heard, you have to get engaged," Risinger said. "Even if you can't vote, you can attend rallies, you can spread messages via social media, and you can encourage other adults to vote in your interest. But if you just sit and gripe and never get engaged by either getting active or getting involved through voting, your message will never be heard and you'll always just be disappointed."



graphic by Kye Fisher

# A season like no other



The LBJ Jaguars varsity football team standing in a line to salute the flag and national anthem before their homecoming game against the Reagan Raiders October 13, which they won 48-0. photo by Ailsa Grieve

**TREVOR ANDERSON**  
Staff Writer

The LBJ Jaguars football team is ready for the playoffs, with one exception. Head Coach Andrew Jackson has taken on a smaller role within the team after a cancer diagnosis, but the coaches and players are determined to make it to the playoffs despite whatever challenges the team faces.

Jackson's influence within the community extends far beyond the football field, according to the team. He pushes players to excellence both on and off the field, and the players are eager to do what they can to support him through his battle with cancer.

"We know what he is going through extends way beyond football and we just want to help him through it in anyway we can," McIntosh said.

LBJ senior Malych Dukes has been a player under Jackson for all four of his high school years, and he thinks things are different with Jackson being less involved.

"It's hard to not have Coach Jack around as much because ever since we were freshmen he's always been there to make sure we were always doing things right, on and off the field, and try to make us better men overall," Dukes said. "It hurts not to see him out there every day because we know that he wants to be there and help his team."

In the players' words, Jackson is more than just a coach. They think he has a special relationship with all of them that goes beyond football.

"Coach Jack wants us to grow up to be

men," Dukes said. "Deep down he doesn't care about what we do on the field; he wants to make sure that we're doing right in the classroom and make sure that we're going to be greater men when we graduate and leave LBJ. He always has a smile on his face even though he's going through hard times right now. He's a great coach and an even better man."

McIntosh agrees with this statement, elaborating that Jackson's appeal is universal.

"I really appreciate the way he cares for and loves all of his players," McIntosh said. "He's been one of the best and most influential coaches in my life because of the way he is able to lead a team and make every player feel like he is important. I haven't met a person who doesn't like him."

Jackson's influence has created a stronger, more unified team overall, according to Interim Head Coach Jahmal Fenner. He thinks that any adversity the team faces makes them stronger and more cohesive.

"We have been tested this season with some tough games that we feel will prepare us for the playoffs," Fenner said. "It's always good to face adversity early so you can find out your team's identity and how we respond as players and coaches. We have been given opportunities to evaluate our players in tough games. We want to continue to progress and see growth in our performance throughout our season."

Fenner feels that growth is very important for the team and that the team will continue to draw inspiration from Jackson, even in his reduced role with

the team. He misses having Jackson's consistent guidance around constantly, though.

"We miss having his leadership and direction around" Fenner said. "He has years of experience in coaching and we miss soaking up his knowledge. He will continue to be an inspiration to the team and we play every game for him."

Jackson's involvement with the team may be reduced, but he is still ready and willing to help when he can, according to coach Fenner.

"For the past few weeks he has been focused on his health, although he wants to attend practices," Fenner said. "He hasn't missed a game and he advises us throughout game situations. He helps motivate our players to perform at a higher level by coaching them up on the sidelines. Each of the players strives to perform well not only for themselves but for him, too."

LASA junior Ian McIntosh appreciates Jackson's unwavering commitment to the players and the team, even if he can't be present all the time.

"It's definitely been different and we all miss him a lot during practice," McIntosh said. "However, all the coaches and players have done a good job of coming together to try to make practices with the same intensity and passion as if he were there. We still hold ourselves to the same or even higher standard with him being out."

When Jackson is absent from practices, Fenner tries to keep everything similar.

"We have tried as a staff to keep everything consistent," Fenner said. "We have not changed much in the absence of Coach Jackson. We believe in the way we

did things when he was here everyday and we will continue to do things that way."

Consistent improvement and discipline are the backbone of Fenner's practices, and the players have put everything they have into practices and games in hopes of a shot at a good playoff run.

"My expectations are to get better every week, stay disciplined and make it to the playoffs and see what happens from there," Fenner said. "The kids embrace practice and are getting ready for the playoffs. The kids are more committed than ever and I think they have the potential for great things this season."

Fenner thinks practice will pay off. He sees great things in store this season.

"I'm very proud of how our kids have come together during this time," Fenner said. "In situations like these you can either fall apart or grow closer together. As coaches and players this situation has brought us all closer together. The kids have really unified and become a family more this season. Seeing our leader fight for his health has given us all inspiration."

Jackson has made and continues to make a lasting impression on the football program. Fenner knows that Jackson's initial leadership and drive have created the football program he now has more involvement in.

"I think our season is going great and we're headed in the right direction," Fenner said. "I have a great relationship with our athletes and they understand my expectations in our program. Everyone wants what's best for the team, and the players understand what they need to sacrifice so that the team can be better overall."

# TOP 5

## FICTIONAL SPORTS

JEFFREY KOVAR  
Sports Editor

### 1 Quidditch: Harry Potter

Arguably the most popular of the sports on this list, Quidditch comes from the magical wizarding world in the book series Harry Potter by J.K. Rowling. Teams of seven people fly on broomsticks trying to score points in three hoops, while their "seeker" tries to catch a tiny, golden ball. Though the rules are long and convoluted, the game itself is enjoyable to watch in the movie adaptations. Quidditch has since inspired a real life counterpart with the same name and roughly the same rules, minus the flying.

### 2 Pod Racing: Star Wars

The bright spot in an otherwise poorly produced movie, Star Wars: The Phantom Menace, Pod Racing is a death defying race of hovering pods that travel at crazy fast speeds. It is essentially car racing but hovering over rougher terrain and with much more sabotage and death. The movie scenes that contain Pod Racing are among the fastest paced and most exciting from the prequel movies in the Star Wars franchise. Though it is one of the most dangerous of the fictional sports, Pod Racing is certainly one of the coolest.

### 3 Calvinball: Calvin and Hobbes

The one rule of Calvinball: you can not play the same game twice. Invented by Calvin, the main character of the comic Calvin and Hobbes by Bill Watterson, often plays this rigorous pastime with his best stuffed friend/tiger, Hobbes. Rules of the game vary each time that Calvinball is played, with the only holdover rule being the one previously mentioned, meaning renditions of this activity will never look the same. Any rules for that one match can be made up on the fly, with the only limitation being the imagination of the participants enjoying one of the greatest fictitious sports ever.

### 4 Light Cycling: Tron

From the stellar sci-fi movie Tron directed by Steven Lisberger in 1982 and the sequel Tron: Legacy directed by Joseph Kosinski, light cycling is a truly unique motor sport. Competitors ride on motorbikes with a light trail following their path. If a participant comes in contact with a trail, they derezz, which is Tron's equivalent of dying. A truly death defying sport, the skill required to maneuver one of these rapid vehicles makes Light Cycling a spectacle to behold.

### 5 BASEketball: BASEketball

Probably the most realistic of the fictitious sports out there, BASEketball is the product from the fusion of two of America's most beloved sports: basketball and baseball. Coming from the movie of the same name, this sport is the brain child of the two protagonists after they were challenged to a game of basketball at a party. Though the rules are much more complicated and include many of the respective ones from the parent sports, BASEketball is one of few fictitious sports that can be played successfully in the real world.

# Mascot's mask-off

NIA ORAKWUE  
Staff Writer

The LBJ Mascot is a consistent part of all LBJ football games. Whether it's hyping up the crowd or giving out hugs, it makes everyone's time better. It can be found in his famed jaguar suit playing with the little kids or bringing spirit to the student section.

While many may not recognize him outside of the jaguar suit, LBJ senior Akili Pool was the LBJ/LASA mascot for the first half of the fall season. LASA junior Lily Sellers will be taking over mascot duties beginning on October 27, at the game against Austin High School.

Pool first played the part of mascot when asked to do so for a male leadership group called LBJ Significant Leaders in Male Education (SLIME) in his sophomore year. He said he had enjoyed the energy and excitement of it all. In his senior year, he was asked by the cheerleaders to mascot for the football team and decided to accept.

Pool attends every game and helps out at pep rallies. To bring school spirit, he goes out onto the field to get the crowd at the game excited. For Pool, the appeal of being the mascot comes from being able to hype up the crowd and spending time on and off the field. Pool interacts with students, parents, and other children who may be at the games, but when Pool tells people that he is the school mascot they often don't understand.

"It's weird, but then it's also funny because people don't think that I would stay in the hot mascot suit

just for a game or for fun," Pool said.

Pool said he didn't know how he was able to stay in the suit, as he is only able to drink water before the game, during halftime, and after the game is over, but he does make sure to eat before every game. The mascot has also attracted student attention for his obvious excitement and passion for the job.

Senior Zoe Trungale and student section leader, spends her Friday nights pumping up the crowd with the mascot and makes sure to show her school passion.

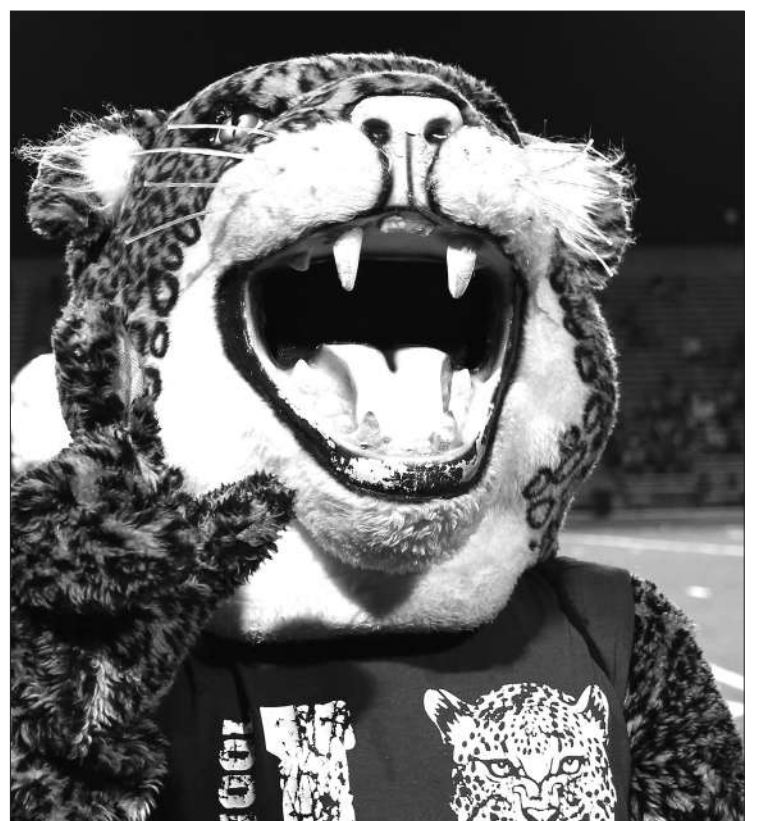
"A mascot needs to be able to hype the crowd up... They have to be personable and fearless," Trungale said.

Both the mascot and the student section leaders need to be confident and committed to the school, as they sacrifice most of their Friday nights for the games. The mascot is very popular among younger students as well, especially those who are dedicated LBJ football fans. Freshman Jordan Riechers, who has attended almost every LBJ football game for three years, applauds this year's mascot for his specific qualities.

"He's energetic and interactive with all the fans, not just the students. He talks to the parents and the little kids," Riechers said.

Some students even feel personally connected to the mascot through his never ending supply of hugs and high-fives according to Riechers.

"I feel like the mascot and I are buddies, even though I've never met him outside of a game," Riechers said.



The LBJ Mascot performs in front of the crowd before the Regan game. photo by Ailsa Grieve

# Climbing their way to PE credit

ELAN McMINN  
Sports Editor

In order to graduate with a magnet diploma from LASA, students must have a PE credit. How students attain that credit can vary. From participating in an afterschool sport such as soccer or football, to taking the class during school, students have a variety of ways to earn that credit. Some students found the current options inadequate or just not appealing to them, so in response they found a way to get credit from off-campus rockclimbing.

LASA senior Ruth Mewhinney was one of the students who decided to try this option. She and a group of four other students went to the Austin Rock Gym for two times and five hours a week. They were able to take rock climbing for credit with a cost. While they did rock climb for the majority of the time, they had to also do paper work to cover the requirements of a PE credit.

"For about the last half hour of every class we would have to do really boring paper work because it was off-campus PE," Mewhinney said.

When the students first arrive each class, they are led through a series of warmups to keep up with the enforced safety policy of the off-campus PE.

"First we do some exercises to get the blood flowing, so we are all stretched out like the course guide says," Mewhinney said.

Another climber in the group is LASA senior Noam Benavi, who found the whole ordeal to be quite challenging at times.

"One of the hardest things was keeping sustained effort for the whole two and half hours," Benavi said. "It's hard to keep giving it your best after your arms are worn out."

By the end of the long classes, both Benavi and Mewhinney found themselves exhausted, but during the class, they had

taking routes up the rock wall without much idea of how to really take on the courses. But once they figured out how to

completing a whole route without falling down," Mewhinney said. "And you would keep doing that route until you got super fast at it."

Benavi felt that he got much better over the course of the off-campus credit class, and it showed with what he was able to climb eventually.

"I ended up working on progressively more and more difficult routes which really showed by the end of it all," Benavi said.

It may seem difficult to have variety in rock climbing, but the off-campus curriculum for rock climbing offered a mix of constant variety in the routes and activities.

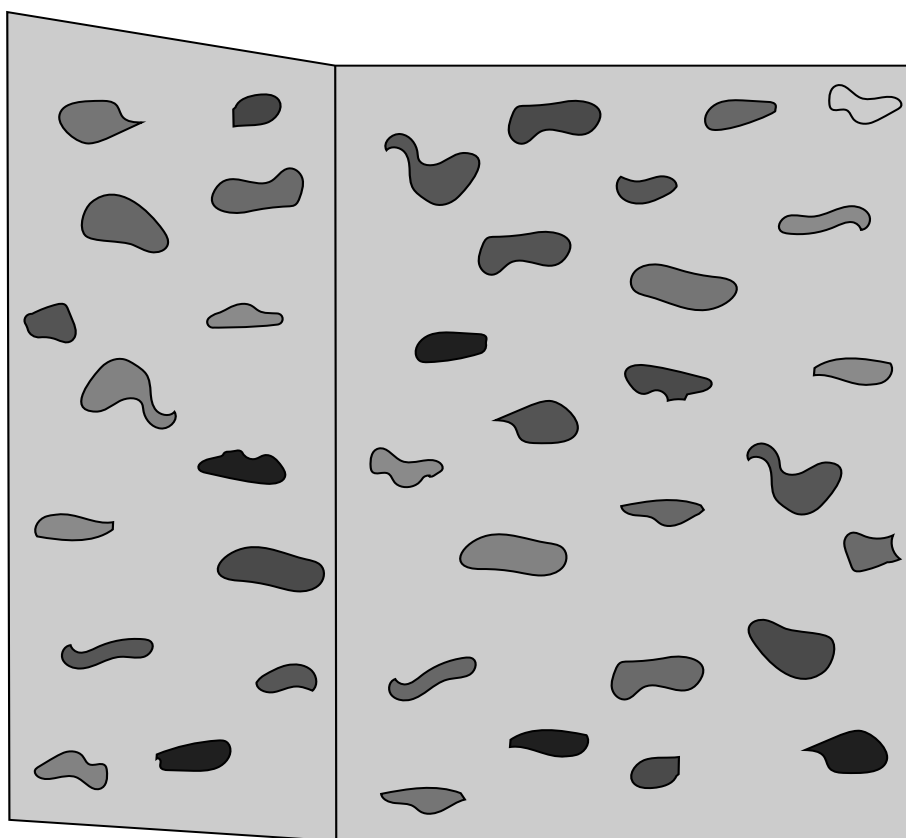
"There are lots of different difficulties and routes that we eventually got as far as we could," Mewhinney said. "But we didn't only climb, we also have to sometimes hang on these really narrow ledges to help our finger strength."

At the end of the class, Mewhinney and Benavi both had a swath of good memories, but also some scary moments.

"One time I fell, and on the route below me there was a really big rock, so on the way down I seriously scraped myself and it hurt a ton," Mewhinney said.

These memories are also paired with some of much happier moments.

"I found the most fun part is completing a route after weeks or even months of work. It is a really cool feeling to finally capitalize on all of your training and have that moment of glory," Benavi said.



Graphic by Francisca Lee

fun trying to learn different climbing routes.

"Usually I have fun, but I always felt tired by the end of our long lessons," Mewhinney said.

First, the group had to try it out,

climb it effectively, each person is pushed to master the best set of moves for that route.

"At first you would just get the basics down and learn how to use proper form, and then after that you would move up to

## A closer look into football past

ANDY DeGRASSE  
Staff Writer

The tradition of LBJ football goes far deeper than many people may realize. The football team played its first game in 1974, and over the years things have changed a lot, both on the field and off of it. LASA teacher Glen McNeil, who has been involved in LBJ football since its second year, was able to provide his perspective on the changes that have occurred, from both a fan's and a player's perspective.

"The biggest difference that I've noticed is that the game itself has changed a lot," McNeil said. "When I was playing for LBJ, we set the AISD record for rushing yards with nearly 5,000 yards in just ten games. Meanwhile we only had about 300 yards passing. LBJ really didn't discover the forward pass until about 10 years ago."

McNeil's association with the LBJ team has continued years after his playing days. Over the years he has also seen how the fan experience has changed.

"The first game I attended as a fan was in 8th grade," McNeil said. "Back then I wasn't even allowed to sit alone because I wasn't a student. I had to sit with my parents instead. Nowadays they don't care as much about that kind of thing. They'll babysit anyone."

According to McNeil the student section hasn't always been what it is today. Over the years, it has evolved in many ways.

"I'd say the student section we have now is pretty great," McNeil said. "Around the time that LASA started up, it became more of a social thing for kids to go to, and that led to a lot more students coming to games. There were periods before that when lots of students came to games, but LASA joining LBJ really helped make the student section more popular."

LASA Teacher Ed Davis is another veteran to LBJ football, attending his first game in 1974, which just so happened to be an LBJ vs. Reagan game. According to Davis, the rivalry between these two teams has changed greatly over the years.

"In the beginning, the rivalry stemmed from the fact that LBJ and Reagan had split up the year before," Davis said. "This made things more intense because all of the kids knew each other, and Nelson field was packed to the brim. What you're seeing downstairs today is just a small subset of what used to happen."

While Reagan may no longer be LBJ's biggest rival, the rivalry between the two schools has still had some pretty great moments, according to Davis.

"My favorite moment in the history of LBJ football was the 1976 Reagan game," Davis said. "We came back from a 14 point deficit, and came back to win 31-21. It was one of the most high energy games I've ever been to."

Davis believes the biggest determining factor for a rivalry is less about the location of the opposing team than the team's talent and the threat they pose to LBJ.

"The biggest reason McCallum became more of [a] rival is because when we played them, it was usually for the district championship," Davis said. "In the last 15 years, we've only lost to Reagan once, and that was back when they had Jackson as a coach."

Davis refers to LBJ Athletic Director and head coach Andrew Jackson, who in the past 5 years has helped guide LBJ football deep into the playoffs. Davis attributed Jackson's success to his ability to get more and more students to go out for the team, from both LBJ and LASA.

"Obviously he's got great coaching knowledge and coaching style," Davis said, "but the most important thing he did for the team was encouraging more and more players to try out, especially LASA kids. There's plenty of kids who may not play on varsity, but still contribute to the team on JV or Freshman."

LBJ graduate Deitrich Heard was able to attest to the effect that Jackson had as a coach, as he was a Sophomore when Jackson started coaching the Jaguars.

"Coach Jackson was really able to change the culture of team," Heard said. "I was just a sophomore when he started coaching, and he was really able to help guide me the right way on the field and off of it."

This year however, Coach Jackson has been forced to take a step back from coaching due to health issues. Without Jackson at the helm, LBJ lost to McCallum for the first time in 3 years. However when asked about the loss, Davis didn't seem too worried about LBJ's prospect.

"People are putting much store in the McCallum game," Davis said. "The last time we made it to the quarterfinals, we didn't beat McCallum. The playoffs are really the only thing that matters at the end of the day, and I think our team this year is good enough to make it far."

## Yo-o-o-o-o-ga stretches it out

GRANT McCASLAND & HELENA MARTELETO LARA  
Web Editor & Staff Writer

Every year, LASA students look for a way to get out of the state's necessary PE credit, as a large majority of students don't play sports. Popular choices usually include band, rowing and golf. But this year, there's a new choice at school. Yoga, once an off-campus option, is now a class offered at school. Dixie Metz, the new yoga instructor at LASA, was originally introduced to yoga while she was training at a martial arts studio and got offered an opportunity in yoga. For the past seven years, she has run a yoga studio that gave off-campus PE credit to high school students. Metz believes that yoga is the best way for students to get stronger, increase flexibility and balance, and help manage stress.

"I use yoga to help people move better and this trickles down to all other areas of their lives, including managing the rigorous workload at LASA," Metz said. "We can't change a lot of the stressors we have in life, but we can change how we react to them."

Yoga is a new class and a new experience for many. Many students said the class helps them learn to manage stress in their daily life. Senior Lara Williams said that the class helps her deal with stress because she is an athletic person.

"Physical exercise is how I deal with stress," Williams said. "I like physical exercise and I like that it teaches me to use my body correctly because that helps me, because I dance and also because that way I will be just in better shape as I get older and theoretically won't have as many injuries."

Stress management is not the only benefit of yoga. Metz believes that yoga helps you keep in touch with your body, as well as becoming stronger and finding balance.

"There is a big misconception about yoga, that it's all about stretching," Metz said. "Then we laugh some more and relax in a restorative pose. It's more about finding balance in the body. I'm helping people get strong, stable and supple."

Williams enjoys the convenience of the class, which was previously only offered off-campus. For her and other students, that added convenience was enough for them to discover yoga, which they might have not found otherwise. Williams also believes that yoga improves her body mobility. She says this is because during yoga, she pays more attention to the way her body is moving and makes sure she is moving correctly.

"I like getting exercise during the school day, I am a very restless as a person," Williams said. "It improves my biomechanics because I work to make sure I'm doing the things correctly in class so that I'm training my body to move better."

LASA junior Macy Nelms agrees that the option for yoga at school made it very compelling for her. Often people can have difficulty finding an option for PE credit, and she decided that yoga was for her.

I started going to yoga classes with my mom about once or twice a week about 2 years ago," Nelms said. "So when I saw that taking a yoga class at school was an option as a PE credit, I thought it would be really fun."

The class at LASA is set up to be like an actual yoga workout, Metz explained. It begins with the warm-up, or savasana, where students move quickly to build up heat. This energy is then used to progress into exercises. In a typical workout, the poses are held for an elongated time to build strength, and the same is true in class. After the exercises the students cool down through stretches, said Williams. Metz explains that the stretches are important because it's the appropriate time to work on flexibility.

"We hold the poses for 8-10 breaths to build strength and work on balance poses," Metz said. "The cool down phase is where it's safe to work on flexibility but only working on normal range of movement."

After being in the class for a couple months Nelms now has a greater appreciation for the class because it offers a much needed break amidst the normal stressful days at LASA.

"Being in yoga gives me a nice break in my day where I can relax," Nelms said. "Being in a school as stressful as LASA, it is nice to be able to go to class and know that for the next hour and half, I don't have to worry about anything else."

Metz believes it's important to have body awareness because it can prevent injuries. Yoga can help one find their body awareness as well as improve self-confidence.

"I see how it has helped people, including myself, get out of pain and injury and build self confidence and body awareness," Metz said.



In a game against Reagan High School where the LBJ Football Team won 48-0, the team lines up on offense. photo by Ailsa Grieve

# Cross Country's run to state

HELENA MARTELETO LARA  
Staff Writer

Every day a group of students wake up to work out while it's still dark outside and all other sane students are still asleep. Team captains believe it takes a special dedication to be in cross country, and even more so to be on varsity.

Participating requires time and commitment, even for recreational and junior varsity runners, but to be on varsity calls for another level of time and hard work, according to varsity captain and junior Cameron Kleinman.

"Being on varsity means that you are training hard, so that you can improve as often as possible," Kleinman said. "Your times and how you do in your races are meant to reflect your dedication to cross country as a whole."

However, being on varsity is not just about breaking a personal record, or PR, and placing well in races, according to senior and varsity captain Suzanna Metcalf. It's also about supporting and loving cross-country teammates.

"It means that you take things seriously but you're also very very supportive of your teammates and it means that you love the sport and love the people who you run it with," Metcalf said.

Students on the cross country team love both their fellow team members and the sport, Metcalf believes.

"It's fun and enjoyable to be able to go out there and put in a lot of

work and come back and it's a really good feeling to know you've worked hard," Kleinman said.

Both Kleinman and Metcalf said all the hard work of morning practices is worth it in the end, if they do well in a race.

"After the race it's just the best feeling and you just forget how much it hurt and it makes it worth it," Metcalf said, "your team's always there, you're so relieved and proud like you can go do anything, that it's not gonna be as hard than what you just did."

Metcalf believes that completing the race is not the only reason the hard work is worth it, she also believes that she feels supported by the team and their support is also worth the dedication.

"I feel so supported by the people on the team. When I am walking through the hallways it's the cross country runners who I say hi to the most because we are just so bonded. I feel like there's not a sense of competition but community," Metcalf said.

Overall the captains said the team is a tightly bonded community that supports and cheers for each other, through losses and wins.

Romi Klein, a freshmen on varsity, explained that because runners wake up so early in the morning they suffer through it together and know that all that sleep deprivation and hard work pays off in the end.

"You see people at their worst because they are so sleep deprived," Klein said.

Kleinman believes that teammates become close friends that share

something in common, the love for the sport.

"That requires a special dedication and I really like that we have that bond, all the runners, it brings people together," Kleinman said.

The varsity captains said that all the time and effort put into the sport pays off when they cross the finish line, glance at the numbers on the clock and realize they have beat their PR, believes Kleinman and Metcalf.

"It's really fun to come across the line," Kleinman said. "At least like when you PR it feels really good."

Although it feels great to proudly finish a race, before and during the race is a different story. Metcalf said those periods of the time feel "so terrible" for her, although the "best feeling" she gets after the race makes them worth it. Kleinman said the actual races were painful.

"I'm actually dead and like I have like no energy left and I'm trying to breathe properly," Kleinman said.

It's this type of dedication that defines what it means to be on varsity cross country, Metcalf said, and over the past few years that's changed for the better.

"I owe it to this group of captains that really changed what it means to be on varsity cross country. Varsity is a whole 'nother achievement, because our team is so competitive now and we really work hard to try to get in," Kleinman said.

He, along with present and the past captains, have worked hard to make sure that the runners were getting the most out of practices.

"Last year we picked up the intensity," Kleinman said.



## The Paper Jaguar

with Oliver Powers

*The Paper Jag is an experiment in "participatory journalism" which was pioneered by George Pimpton. Pimpton wrote a book called The Paper Lion detailing his trout with the Detroit Lions professional football team.*

*Inspired by the idea, intrepid former sports editor Jake Stewart practiced with a different LBJ athletic team each issue and cataloged his experience here. In this issue of The Liberator, sports editor Oliver Powers practices with the LBJ Volleyball team.*

When I first entered the gym, I was greeted by the sounds of girls shouting and volleyballs bouncing off hardwood. I rounded the corner and found the team warming up before practice. Being the confident individual I am, I awkwardly stood off to the side waiting for the coach to come in. After introducing myself to the coach and explaining why I was there to the rest of the team, we started the warm up.

It began pretty simply, with some dynamic stretching, but quickly progressed into yoga-esque stretches for which I was not prepared. After holding the pigeon pose for 10 excruciating seconds, I was fully prepared to tap out. Thankfully, after that we were done with the stretches and moving on to passing.

Having nine years of Austin ISD Physical Education under my belt, I anticipated crushing it on some easy passing back and forth. Boy, was I wrong. As soon as the ball was safely on its way (in the opposite direction I might add), my forearms were a bright red. Little did I know, my experience with Volley-Lite brand volleyballs wasn't going to cut it. The only thing consistent about my passes were their inconsistency. The first would nearly hit the ceiling and the next would hit the ground about four feet in front of me. But soon enough it was over and we moved on to setting. The two people I was passing to were beyond speechless, as I was able to set three balls in a row with moderate competency.

Next up was hitting (what I would call spiking) practice. The coach would lob a ball up for the player to jump and spike the ball over the net. I've played ultimate frisbee for a number of years and as a result I expected I would do well in this drill, but as the ball soared through the air over my head, I muffed the footing and ended up putting my forearm into the ball and the ball into the net. After boasting to the only two people I knew on the team about how well I was going to, I returned to the back of the line with more than a few jabs thrown my way. On my next approach, I managed to get the ball over the net but without much force. My remaining runners went about the same. I was looking to keep at it so that I could finally have a shining moment but alas, it was not to be.

Finally, we moved on to serves. Going into practice, I would've said that I would ace it every time, but after the fiasco that was passing warm up, I was unsure of my ability. The first serve went better than expected—it went over the net, surprising the team and myself—but still ended up out of bounds. I chased the ball down and returned to the line. My second serve was far and away better than anything else I had done at practice thus far. It went perfectly over the net and placed itself in the far corner of the court. At last, my shining moment was found, drawing praise from the entirety of the team. A few moments later, the coach brought everyone in to wrap up practice.

I was prepared for the same ol' same ol' "practice was great, let's go get 'em on Friday" spiel. Instead, she talked about the talent of the team and their postseason potential. It made even me feel like I could go out and win state. It left me thinking there wasn't any wonder why this season the LBJ Volleyball team will finish with their best record in years and a trip to the playoffs.



Team captains Dylan Cox and Cameron Kleinman lead the pack at the 25-5A District Meet where the Boys' Team placed first. photo courtesy of Cathy Cox

# Futsal Club: kicking and screaming

MAX IRBY  
Staff Writer

As the sun pounds down on the tennis courts at lunch, so too do the feet of members of Futsal Club, as they chase back and forth after the soccer ball. The LASA Futsal Club, which was formed three years ago and has grown in size each year, expanded its base of members even further with the new combined LASA and LBJ lunch, a shift that has brought major changes to the club.

Club founder and president Robert Yam wanted to continue the tradition of his middle school's futsal club, and so in 2016 the LASA Futsal Club was born.

"I started it my freshman year," Yam said. "Fulmore had a club which I went to all three years of middle school. I wanted to continue it at LASA and I did. I also like soccer, a lot of people like soccer, this is why futsal is successful."

In the beginning, the club was formed around a group of friends, including club member Zayan Vohra, who came to have a place to hang out and stayed to play the game.

"I was drawn to futsal by my friends, who all committed to spending their lunches developing their skills, and I wanted to hang out with them," Vohra said. "It was a great way to get a burst of fun physical activity in the middle of the day so I could make it until the end. Over the years, futsal became a loving and welcoming environment for more and more people in the LASA community. What was once a scrappy group of freshmen who wanted to have fun became a full fledged club dedicated to bringing good times to LASA students."

Experience in soccer isn't necessarily required to participate in club activities. Even beginners can come to

have fun, learn to play, and improve their skills over time, according to Vohra.

"I have close to no soccer experience, and in the beginning it was hard but I've seen myself steadily improve in the last few years and that really makes going to the club so much more valuable," said Vohra.

The club steadily grew in size over the first two years, which changed this year with the new schedule, which combined LASA and LBJ's lunches into one time slot. Christian Salinas, who has been a prominent member of the club since its conception, spoke to this.

"I think it's a major benefit for the club as soccer seems to be more popular with LBJ so they naturally flock to the club, it's a great bonding experience," Salinas said. "It's become more open and less of a clique."

This large expansion, while attracting more members, brings with it a set of new challenges, which Vohra expanded on.

"The combined lunches have brought a lot more people into the club, and I'm all for inclusivity but it's almost become too crowded," said Vohra. "It makes it difficult to ever get the ball and it invalidates dribbling because someone will just tackle you. I wish we could have 2-3 games going at the same time."

In addition to this change, many previous club regulars have been staying indoors during lunch due to hot temperatures and heavier homework loads. According to Salinas, adapting to these conditions have helped the club develop its true identity.

"This year, some of futsal's more marquee names have been holding out waiting for the temperatures to drop. While last year, numbers weren't in much flux I feel like this year the club has had to really power through a potentially difficult time and has been reborn and evolved in what was really a learning process for everyone."

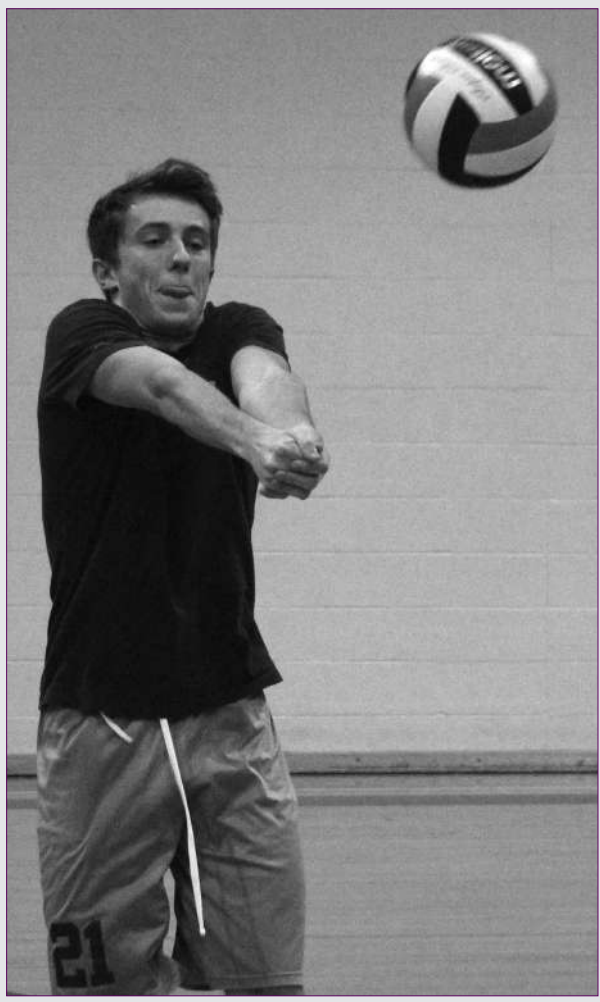


photo by Elan McMinn

# What day is it?



Tacky Day, Character Day, Twin Day and Spirit Day constitute Spirit Week at LASA, which culminates in the Friday night homecoming game against rivals Reagan. Spirit Week and homecoming combine to make one of the most celebratory weeks of the year, where students can show their character among friends and teachers.

Tuesday

Tacky Day

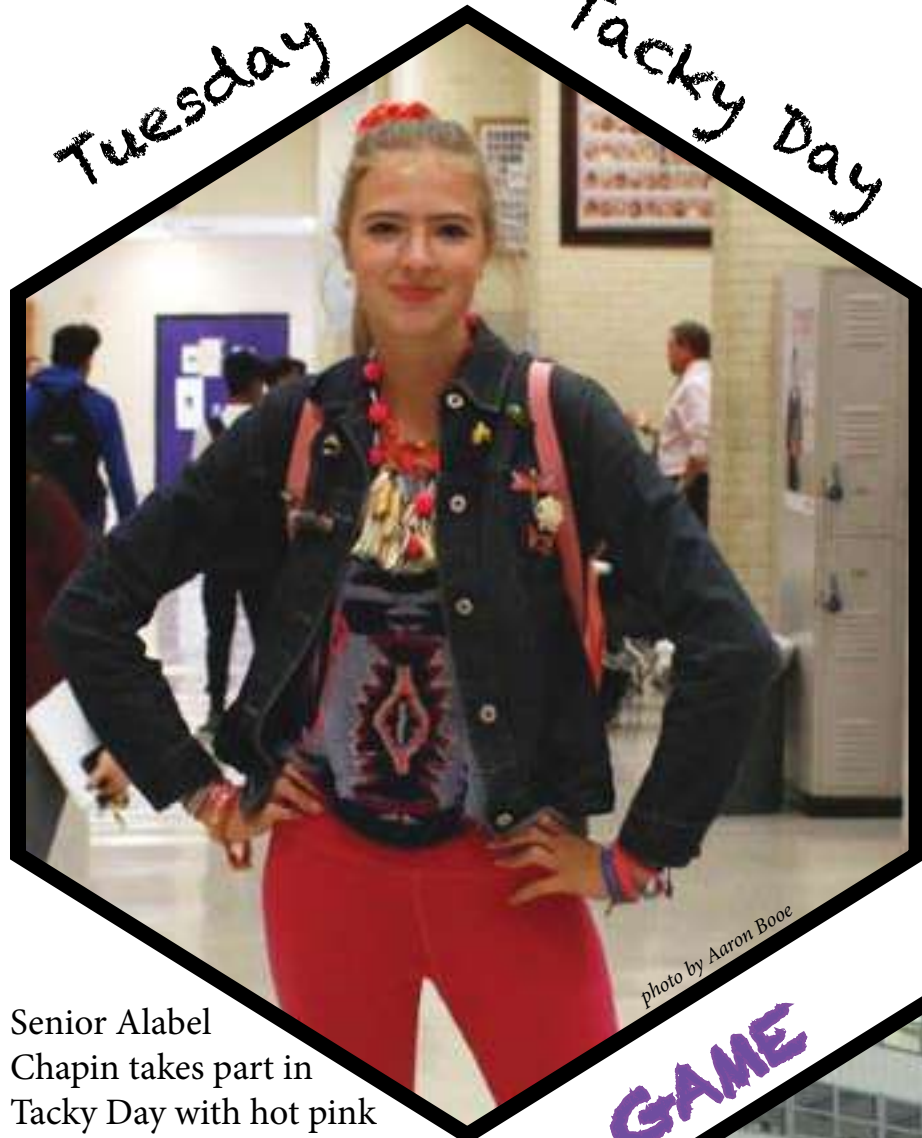


photo by Aaron Booe

Senior Alabel Chapin takes part in Tacky Day with hot pink leggings, a leather jacket and a variety of colorful necklaces.

Wednesday

Character Day



photo by Samantha Porter

Sophomore Alina Aguilar turned into the lifeguard from The Sandlot with her white glasses and red top.

GAME NIGHT



photo by Alysa Griev

Jaguar cheerleaders perform a routine at the homecoming game against Reagan, the final event of Spirit Week.

Ezine teachers Kelli Touchstone, Kevin Garcia and Jill Giulietti (l-r) pose for Twin Day. Touchstone and Giulietti dressed up as Garcia for the day, emulating his signature beard and love of comic books.

Seniors, including student section leaders, posed during the Reagan pep rally to show off their Jaguar pride for Spirit Day, the last day of Spirit Week. From left to right: Zoe Trungale, Sawyer Timco, Ayush Bhansali, Leni Milliken.

Thursday

Twin Day



photo by Helena Mareleto Lara

Friday

Spirit Day



photo by Samantha Porter