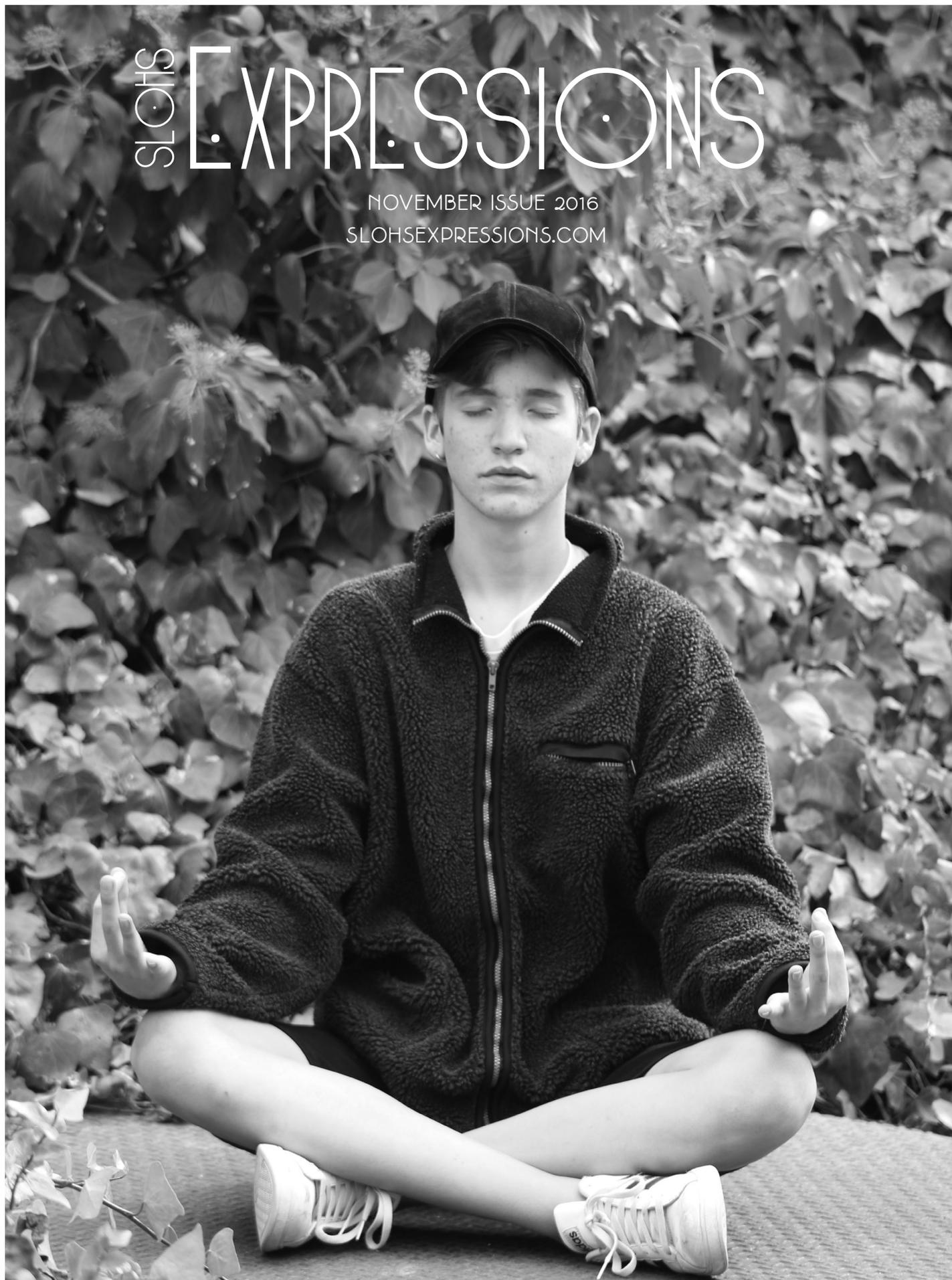


# SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

NOVEMBER ISSUE 2016  
SLOHSEXPRESSIONS.COM



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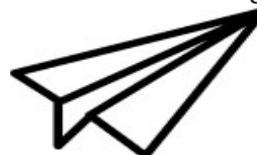


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BREAKFAST  
LUNCH DINNER

OPEN 7 DAYS  
A WEEK!



*Award-Winning Clam Chowder in a Freshly Baked Sourdough Bread Bowl*  
 Seafood Specialties & Salads  
 Burgers & American Fare  
 Handcrafted Beers & Local Wines  
 Fresh Baked Pastries, Cakes & Breads  
 Artisan Fair Trade & Organic Chocolates

Three Locations:  
**Pismo Beach (The Original)**  
 197 Pomeroy Ave.  
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 1491 Monterey St.  
**Downtown SLO Grill**  
 Next to Barnes & Noble,  
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SplashCafe.com



# SLOHS to Move

## From Trimester to Semester?

By Rae Odom and  
Karly Bonzi

Should San Luis Obispo High School go to the semester system or stay on the trimester system? This was the question at hand at a Conflict Resolution Team (CRT) meeting on September 14, where San Luis Coastal Unified School District Superintendent Doctor Eric Prater and San Luis Coastal Unified School District Assistant Superintendent Doctor Rick Robinett gave a presentation on the pros and cons of the two scheduling options. It was made clear in the meeting that there is no perfect solution for the issue, although a few options were discussed.

Two of the main problems brought up by Robinett were how, "Advanced Placement seminars are taking the place of 'real' electives, and how there is inequity within our school as well as our district as a whole."

Many of the teachers at the meeting seemed opposed to the ideas and potential solutions being presented. One argument had to do with our school's success academically, as well as in our elective programs, such as automotive technology, which has won many national awards. Academic achievement and student test scores are statistically higher at SLOHS

compared to Morro Bay High School, which is run on the semester system, making many of our staff question the purpose of the meeting. If our school is more successful using a trimester system than Morro Bay is using the semester system, why would we change? A question similar to this was asked by a staff member and the answer to it, along with many previous and forthcoming questions throughout the meeting, was simply, "inequity."

"Robinett stated that there are significantly less 'brown' students in AP and honors classes than there are in regular or intermediate classes. The use of the term 'brown', although not intended to be offensive, didn't sit right with the staff."

"I didn't feel like the meeting was about trimesters or semesters, at least the way it was presented. Our superintendent has concerns about inequities being brought about by the current way we offer classes," said English Learners /Advancement Via Individual Determination teacher Rita Delkeskamp.

This seemed to be a theme as Prater, took over the question portion of the meeting. After a few too many occurrences of the word, one staff member decided to ask what he meant by this and to clarify. The clarification that Prater presented explained that through data analysis and thorough research, he and Robinett have seen that there is an issue within our school relating to the correlation of ethnicity and class difficulty. Robinett stated that

there are significantly less "brown" students in AP and honors classes than there are in regular or intermediate classes. The use of the term "brown", although not intended to be offensive, didn't sit right with the staff.

One point brought up was that when teachers voted to implement the trimester years ago, they agreed to teach more classes per year than they were required to.

"Those of us who voted for the trimester did so because we wanted students to have fewer classes per

trimester so they wouldn't be stressed out and have a lot of homework," said Delkeskamp.

"I like trimesters because they align with sports. It's an easy transition from each trimester with sports because it matches up with your schedule pretty well," said Senior Vincente Rivas.

Do you prefer the trimester or the semester schedule?

"I see value in both, but overall, I see more opportunity for students in the trimester system. Opportunity for more classes."

**Math Teacher Steve Boaz**

**History Teacher John Franklin**

"I prefer trimester because as an AP History teacher, I need to be able to teach my students up until the test in May."

**Campus Security Trey Franke**

"The trimester

system is a far more efficient way of tackling subjects for the students to get stuff done."

**American Sign Language Teacher Kristen Nusbaum**

"If people are pro-trimester they need to make themselves heard."



# Gender Neutral Pronouns



By Molly Foster

With the growing acceptance and support rate of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, etc., community rising at San Luis Obispo High School, there comes confusion surrounding how to address an individual's gender. Gender-neutral pronouns (they/them) are singular, third-person pronouns which give no indication of a person's gender. These non-specific pronouns are generally used amongst non-binary and gender fluid people so that others will not categorize them as neither male nor female. However, one doesn't have to identify as genderqueer to use gender-neutral pronouns.

It's important not to assume what pronouns someone may use based off of their appearance. The only definite way to know what pronouns one uses is by simply asking them.

When asked her perspective, Co-President of SLOHS' Gay Straight Alliance Club, junior Amber Ernst, said, "If a transgender person is addressed with the wrong pronouns it causes gender dysphoria which can be extremely damaging to their self-confidence." This may give one

the feeling that their physical form doesn't emulate their internal gender identity and bring back memories of their assigned gender at birth.

## SUBJECT

They

## OBJECT

Them

## POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVE

Their

## POSSESSIVE PRONOUN

Theirs

## REFLEXIVE

Themselves

The pronouns "he" and "she" can often bring unwanted expectations and judgments about how to express one's identity

or to conform into acting a certain way.

**Expressions** interviewed senior Sam Rankin and asked them to give us some insight on living with gender-neutral pronouns. When asked what pronouns they use and when they began using them, Rankin said, "I use they/them or her/she pronouns. I started using them around the summer of last year." As far as the support of her family and friends Rankin said, "My family accepts that I want to use gender-neutral pronouns, but they think it's unreasonable for me to expect them to remember. My close friends are very supportive and use them correctly." Rankin said that, "When it came up in an English class, the teacher didn't think using they/them pronouns was grammatically correct."

Being aware of everyone's pronouns can be challenging with such a large population, but it's essential for everyone to be respectful and open-minded towards each other in order to create a welcoming environment at SLOHS.

Sources:

<http://motto.time.com>

# Shining a light on the conflict in Syria

By Grace Berscheid

Tensions and ideas started when revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia inspired peaceful protests against dictatorship running the country. The government retaliated like a true monster. They started by quietly killing activists, then became more brazen as they started kidnapping, raping, torturing, and killing not only activists but also their families. Eventually, after the government decided to simply start opening fire on civilians, the protestors started shooting back. This escalated into a full blown civil war.

People have been fleeing Syria and the ar-

reas surrounding it at alarming speeds. For the past five years America has idly sat by watching the horror happening across the sea. Alongside that is the controversy of accepting refugees into the country. *Expressions* found a student to approach about the topic.

**Expressions:** Have you heard about the war in Syria?

**Junior Maya Hampsey:** I've been hearing about the war on the news, but it does not get as much coverage as events closer to home such as the election.

**Expressions:** Do you know what's happening?

**Hampsey:** There is ongoing, extremely violent conflict between the rebels and the

current government. Also, there is conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims and ISIS.

**Expressions:** Do you think we in America can help?

**Hampsey:** I think we can, by taking in refugees, though actually getting involved in the conflict would be far more complex. However, for this to happen we need to combat islamophobia and anti-immigrant thinking.

**Expressions:** Would you be willing to house a refugee?

**Hampsey:** Yes, I would. I would love to help someone escape from living in a war torn country.

# ITR: Cremation vs. Burial

By Rae Odom

In the question of cremation versus burial, cremation is the obvious choice. Its superiority can be seen in cost benefits, portability, and best of all, you don't have to rot in the ground! Cremation consists of a quick process of first incinerating the body in a furnace. After the incineration, bones that are left over are then ground up into a powder that we know as ashes.

Many people prefer cremation because it reduces the body to cremated remains within a matter of hours, whereas traditional burial follows the process of slow and natural decomposition. This quick process is often appealing to many families and individuals because they don't have to worry about rushing a funeral before the body decays.

Finding and paying for a casket and grave site can be expensive and

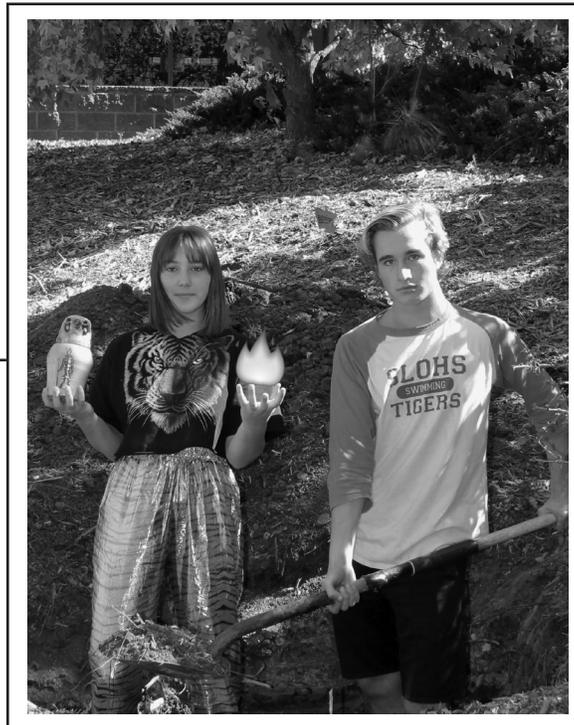
time consuming, especially if the deceased didn't make any arrangements beforehand. Having the body cremated gives much more freedom in the time span for the ceremony. "I would prefer to be cremated because then my ashes could be spread wherever I choose them to be," said freshman Annalise Smelser. This mobility is often appealing to people, making cremation more personal. People can choose exactly where they want their remains to be spread.

"I would prefer cremation because then my ashes could be in a special place like

the Grand Canyon," said freshman Nick Jackson. Special places such as this are often a common place for spreading ashes. With burial, the choices are generally limited to graveyards, which aren't the most liked places for many.

Some feel that cremation isn't as personal as a traditional funeral with an open casket. However, this is not true because spreading ashes can often be just as ceremonial and personal. Another plus to cremation is that the family is able to keep some of the remains in special containers called urns. This way they can keep their deceased loved one close to them at all times.

So, if you would rather your body be slowly eaten by maggots while your organs and skin rot, burial is a great choice. However, if you want your remains to be respected and in the hands of your beloved family, cremation is the way to go.



By Sam Wendt

Whether or not we'd like to admit it, death is a part of life. Before we die, however, it is necessary to choose whether we'd like to be buried or cremated. While supporters of cremation often claim they don't want to "rot in the ground," this is a moot point because you won't care about anything after you're dead. Burial is clearly the best option.

After the death of a loved one, family members often feel empty and desperate for answers. Having a burial allows those mourning your death to have a sense of closure as well as providing them with a place to visit. A physical memorial allows one's friends and family to maintain a meaningful connection with them even after they've passed away. This connection can be a crucial aspect of coping with a death and it is not provided by cremation. "Going to my grandpa's funeral gave me a

sense of closure and really helped me come to terms with his death," said senior Haley Block.

In addition, for those who are religious--a majority of Americans--burials can serve as an important symbolic ritual as the soul of the deceased enters the afterlife. The Bible mentions the importance of burial numerous times. According to Norman L. Geisler, author for the Christian Research Journal, "[burial's] continued practice is a reasonable inference drawn from biblical truths. Thus we believe the

evidence supports the conclusion that Christians, if at all possible, should practice burial. It is more symbolically appropriate to do so."

The practice of burying a loved one is an extremely meaningful and peaceful process. Cremation, on the other hand, is a violent and disturbing ritual, arguably reminiscent of burning in hell. As if being seared to a crisp wasn't already horrible enough, it turns out that cremation can have significant adverse effects on the environment.

Not to mention, standard cremations require the combustion of natural gas which releases greenhouse gases as well as the vaporization of other chemicals that may be present in the cremated body.

If you care about the happiness of your loved ones, religious tradition, or the future of this planet, burial is clearly the superior option.

Source: [www.sevenponds.com](http://www.sevenponds.com)  
[www.equip.org](http://www.equip.org)

# How Does Social Media Affect our Happiness?

By Michelle Kang

Students staring at their phones is a sight one can witness every day at San Luis Obispo High School. Every student can recognize the sound of a smart phone falling on the floor, or if someone is using a Snapchat filter. With procrastination as a close second, social media is likely the greatest addiction of students. This great addiction brings frequent joy and laughter. Personally, I can instantly feel better after watching a video of a Corgi belly flopping into a pool on Instagram; in the long run, however, is social media contributing to greater overall happiness?

Whether it be a celebrity, friend, or stranger, we are constantly viewing people's photos or statuses, and as part of our human nature, we compare ourselves to them. Much discouragement comes from seeing others' posts because they often appear flawless, unlike the reality we

view it from. However, what is habitually forgotten is how synthetic and edited many photos are.

It is amazing how long of a journey a photo can go on from different positions, fixing the lighting, changing angles, color correction with filters, or editing through Photoshop. People often go out on photoshoots and spend hours taking photos for the sole purpose of posting on Instagram. Social media has become a place where many just fabricate the wellness of their life and themselves as a figure.

In March, the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine released findings of their research that states more time on social media likely leads to more depression for young adults. Study author Lui yi Lin explains that using more social media can cause negative feelings when users become envious of others, realize how much time they have wasted, or become more exposed to negative actions or cyber-bullying.

"I become very angry when I see people just post stupid stuff," said junior Augusta Holyfield.

Most people acknowledge that their phone addiction leads to a disgusting amount of wasted time and infatuation. Just continuing to live with that fact and accepting it as true is not acceptable. Students should make an effort towards decreasing their usage of social media as it affects learning, lack of sleep, and real social interactions. Not only will it contribute to greater happiness, but students will stress less over trivial things like waiting anxiously for people to react to your new photo or regretting when you accidentally watched hours of random YouTube videos for the umpteenth time. While the world of social media is grand, we should have a greater heart and concern for the real world.

*Go to [slohsexpressions.com](http://slohsexpressions.com) for a poll taken by Expressions on social media usage.*

## New Food Laws at SLOHS

By Zach Wise

A new food policy has been set in place this year at San Luis Obispo High School. Though it holds similarities to the policy of last year, the big difference is that little has been defined.

While there is clearly a purpose of some kind for this new policy, the concept as a whole is senseless. Though allergies truly are of major concern for many students on campus, the explanation the administration has provided us with is unclear. The rationale that, because a handful of students bring drug filled snacks to school, the whole school should suffer consequences is utterly ridiculous. Do they really think that blocking us from bringing brownies to school is going to stop students from indulging in them? The ones who have made the decision to bring

drug filled snacks to school can still just go in the bathroom and eat it there. It doesn't solve any problems to say that we can't publicly eat our snacks.

The biggest issue with this new food policy is how open ended they have left it. During the senior class assembly at the beginning of the year, I asked assistant principal Nick Frost if there would be a list of approved snacks. This triggered a long speech ending with him stating, "no food." Does this mean that we can no longer bring a sack lunch? To be honest, I have no idea.

According to senior Erick Vasquez, "It's stupid." This truly reflects the views of many students around campus, who couldn't give me many more words than that of the ones along these lines.

Of course, I realize that allergies must be a factor in this discussion. It would not be good for us to make school an environment in which students with allergies cannot

feel safe. In this case, banning all of the ingredients that could cause an allergic reaction to people makes sense.

"Being allergic to almost everything, it's kind of nice not having to take Benadryl every day," said junior Jayde Westphal. From that standpoint, it makes perfect sense that a new food policy would be implemented to make special accommodations for people, but there are different ways of going about it. For example, having a specific list of banned foods that could cause people to have allergic reactions would be fair, but saying I can't bring a brownie because it might have drugs in it is preposterous.

I get hungry. We all do. In fact, if humans go anywhere from two to four weeks without eating, we will almost certainly die. I'm not saying the food policy will lead to us not eating anymore, but with the lack of clarity, who knows what will happen?

## MAINTAINING A HEALTHY STATE OF MIND

### AS A STRESSED OUT TEEN

By Sam Wendt

**F**or many high school students, school is one of the main sources of stress and anxiety. While it is easy to dismiss the negative effects that school has on mental health as “inevitable” and “manageable”, the reality is that the stress experienced by students at San Luis Obispo High School can have a significant impact on overall mental health, not just grades.

When seeking relief from stress, it is tempting to pinpoint one factor as the source of our negative emotions. However, the origin of stress or anxiety is usually much more multifaceted.

“It’s a combination of things in the first few months of senior year. I’m going to apply early decision and I’m taking four AP classes. I also get stressed about the amount of sleep I get so if I’m tired I get stressed out,” said senior Maggie Van Scoy when asked about the source of her stress.

Ideally, students’ parents will help them work through their stress and anxiety. However, this is unfortunately not always the case. Pressure from parents can actually add to the existing stress and anxiety that students experience on a day to day basis.

“Stress definitely has an effect on the relationship I have with my parents. I’m stressed often and they’ll think I can do too much. I put some of it on myself, but they also pressure me so it strains [our relationship],” said sophomore Lili Steele.

As high school students, it can sometimes feel like our success is based solely on grades and test scores. This belief that straight A’s equate to overall success and happiness is grossly oversimplified. The extreme lengths students will go to in order to achieve a perfect grade can negatively impact their mental health and thus, their outlook on the world.

Because stress and anxiety in high school is so widespread it is common for students to feel trapped, accepting their negative mental state as an inescapable. It is crucial that students actively seek out help to improve their mental health or, in less serious situations, develop techniques to alleviate stress on their own.

“Sometimes if I’m getting way too stressed out I’ll work out and take a shower. After AP testing last year, I realized that I really like writing poetry so if I have a lot of bad feelings, I’ll just start writing them down,” said Van Scoy.

Stress and anxiety are experienced by almost all high school students, but they are rarely addressed and many suffer the negative consequences on their own. Sometimes, just acknowledging that we all experience some form of mental health issues is the first step to improving our own personal struggles.

## TOP

### 5

## ESSENTIAL OILS

By McKenzie Berkshire

**E**ssential Oils are natural oils that are generally extracted from the leaves, stems, flowers, bark, roots, or other plant elements. These oils are believed to holistically heal different issues involving the human body. Students at San Luis Obispo High School experience common sicknesses as well as stress; here are some natural and healthy remedies that can make our high school experience more of a breeze.

**1**. Tea Tree: This oil is best known for its wound healing properties and has a rich history of being a local antiseptic for burns and cuts as well as treating a wide variety of bacterial and fungal infections. It is also very beneficial when it comes to acne, because it can be used as a cleanser to remove unneeded bacteria. This oil is highly concentrated so it’s best to solidify this oil before applying to the face.

**2**. Lavender: This is one of the most popular essential oils, because it has soothing and calming properties for those who struggle with anxiety. Best used when sprinkled on your pillow at night. You can also practice aromatherapy by adding a few drops into the palm of your hand and slowly inhaling.

**3**. Frankincense: If you are a person who struggles during cold and flu season, this oil will be your new best friend; it’s proven to build and boost a person’s immune system. This oil is best used when diffused into the air. If you don’t already have a diffuser handy, you can sprinkle a few drops into your shower prior to turning it on, and breath in the steam and essential oil mixture.

**4**. Hemp: Hemp oil is rich in protein and a great source in antioxidants. Hemp oil includes minerals like potassium, magnesium, iron, zinc, and calcium. This particular oil is popular with people who live a vegetarian or vegan lifestyle because of its high percentage of iron. Hemp oil is very unique in that it is edible. Take one spoonful twice every day to experience the best results.

**5**. Clove: If you are someone who struggles with acne or even just a few pimples here and there, this is one of the best known essential oils to treat it. Clove is known for being one of the top antibacterial oils which is why it’s so beneficial for all types of skin. It’s important to note that this essential oil is very strong, so it is best mixed with a carrier oil such as coconut oil or vegetable oil. Take three drops of clove oil and mix with two teaspoons of raw coconut oil. Apply all over face and rinse with warm water.

# MEDITATION'S ABILITY TO CLEANSE THE MIND AND SOUL

By Sean Kucer

“Leaving aside all the metaphysics, mythology, and mumbo jumbo, what contemplatives and mystics over the millennial claim to have discovered is that there is an alternative to merely living at the mercy of the next neurotic thought that comes careening into consciousness,” said Neuroscientist, philosopher, public intellectual Sam Harris.

Day after day, our thoughts consume and define us. As suggested by the above quote, there is another way to live. A way in which one can find equanimity above the cycle of desire and aversion. Lucky for us, practicing a simple technique called mindfulness meditation makes this peace available to all with a little free time and dedication.

When asked about the effects he personally gained from his mindfulness meditation practice, senior Logan McNichols said that he is “more often feeling at peace, feeling more focused, appreciating the current moment more.”

Mindfulness meditation is one of the simplest yet profoundly rewarding (and honestly, quite challenging) practices to incorporate into one's life. By simply setting aside twenty to thirty minutes a day, one can experience a myriad of benefits.

Scientific studies have found mindfulness meditation to decrease anxiety and stress, increase focus, increase life-satisfaction, providing experiences like McNichols', to be more than placebo.

So how does one start practicing? To start, set aside an easy twenty minutes a day and finding a place to sit where you won't be disturbed. Then, simply focus on the sensations of your breath. When you notice your mind has wandered, simply bring your attention back to the breath. When you notice feelings of boredom or restlessness, bring your attention back to the breath. Over time, as you repeatedly release thoughts and feelings and bring your focus back to your object of meditation, you will find that previously compelling anxieties and stressors have lost some of their hold. You become much more resilient and focused, and you gain a control over your mind which is very difficult to achieve when completely consumed by whatever unfortunate thought happens to appear in your mind. Do note that benefits will take time to appear, and deepen as you complete more sessions.

To deeper understand the practice, I would recommend reading a book called “Mindfulness in Plain English” by Henepola Gunaratana.

Infographic: [www.netchanting.com](http://www.netchanting.com)

## 4 MUST-KNOW FACTS ABOUT MEDITATION

### It Increases GRAY MATTER

Brain scans of participants in a meditation study by Yale, Harvard and Mass General Hospital showed increases of gray matter in parts of the brain, and that meditation may slow natural brain deterioration.

The parts of the brain with increased gray matter thickness are related to attention and processing sensory input.



### It Improves BRAIN PLASTICITY

A study of mindfulness meditation practitioners showed an increase in the number of neurons in the brain's hippocampus (related to learning and memory) and a reduction in the volume of the amygdala (related to anxiety and stress) after just eight weeks.

Similar studies have shown increases in the number of neurons and neuronal connections in the right frontal cortex (concentration), the right insula (emotions), and the right parietal and temporal lobes (touch and sound).

### It Helps You Sleep More EFFICIENTLY

Researchers reported that experienced meditators slept fewer hours than non-meditators and the general population, but were no less alert.

Separate research has found that meditation may be an effective behavioral intervention in the treatment of insomnia.



### It lowers blood pressure WITHOUT PILLS

In reviewing existing research, the American Heart Association in 2013 concluded that transcendental meditation lowers blood pressure.

High blood pressure (hypertension) contributes to the hardening of the arteries, and to the development of heart failure.



popexpert makes it easy to discover, hire and meet with experts face-to-face over video.

Sources:

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## Sports or Schoolwork: You Choose

By Brendan Avila

*Expressions* talked to scholar athletes of San Luis Obispo High School to gain insight on their schedules and how it affects their everyday life. These students typically stay busy between school, their after school practices, games, and homework.

Senior Alex Hasley and junior Pierson Mosichuk spoke to *Expressions* about their busy schedules when playing their seasonal sports and being in Advanced Placement classes at the same time. Knowing these heavy loads put on the many scholar athletes at SLOHS can

help the faculty better understand what their students face on a day to day basis.

"Typically, my weeknights are spent going to [Football] practice, going home to eat dinner, taking a few minutes to hang out, and then doing my homework, which usually takes a few

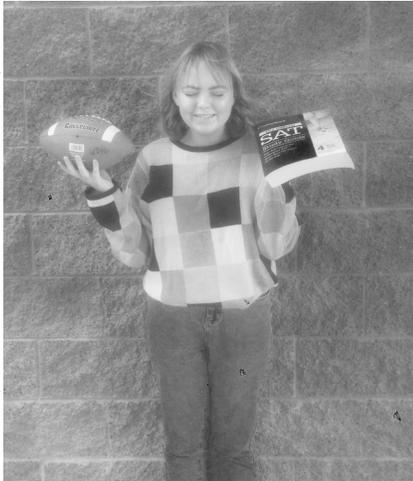
hours," said Mosichuk.

Last year, in my junior year, I was experiencing the same struggle. However, my teachers understood what I was dealing with and gave me some slack. For example, AP United States History teacher John Franklin typically gave students extra time for

certain assignments and other material because of their busy schedules. It's important to let teachers know if you're stressed out, and often times they will be willing to accommodate.

"The nights that you don't have homework are a blessing. Also,

senior year is just as hard unless you hardcore slack off on your course load," said Hasley. Seniors still have a heavy load with college apps this fall, so teachers still might be able to help out. Students have high amounts of stress and it's important to realize what students go through every day.



## Meeting SLOHS Martial Artists

By Joella Holmes

When thinking about student athletes at San Luis Obispo High School, sports such as football, basketball, and volleyball are bound to come to mind. However, there is another area in which many SLOHS students train hard: martial arts.

Junior Emily Linstead has done karate for 12 years. Seeing her childhood heroes Mulan, Jackie Chan, and Bruce Lee all do martial arts, Linstead began to learn karate herself. Twice a week Linstead goes to train and once a week she teaches a class. From the years of learning, Linstead appreciates the discipline it has taught her, which she finds is more than any school teacher has.

With many opportunities to coach and teach other students, Linstead has also grown in responsibility.

"It's more than just fighting. The place where I learn really reinforces developing your character as a person and has helped me reach a level of confidence and independence," said Linstead.

Sophomore Mason Cano has done Brazilian jiu jitsu for seven years. When Cano was younger, being bullied led his dad to show him the art of Brazilian jiu jitsu. He trains Tuesdays through Fridays and sessions can last from three to six hours. Cano performs submissions which include joint locks, choke holds, and leg locks. Boxing and clinch work is also part of his training.

## Off Campus Coaches

By Joella Holmes

Here at San Luis Obispo High School, we have several off campus coaches. These coaches are often not well known by students, so here's a chance to get to know our very own off campus boys water polo coach, Steve Jomaoas.

**Expressions:** Have you chosen coaching as a career or are you pursuing another profession as well?

**Water polo Coach Steve Jomaoas:** I am also a full time graphic designer.

**Expressions:** Do you feel there are any struggles to being an off campus coach?

**Jomaoas:** Yes, there are many challenges being off campus including limited access to the athletic trainer, transportation for athletes, limited student body attendance at home games, and limited pool availability. Just to name a few.

**Expressions:** What is your favorite thing about being able to coach high school athletes?

**Jomaoas:** Being able to pass on knowledge to younger generations, with the hope that they do the same for those that follow them.

**Expressions:** How did you get interested in this specific sport?

**Jomaoas:** My two oldest brothers played water polo, I grew up on the pool deck. Inspired by watching my older brothers, I began playing water polo at a young age. I have always loved water polo. I can't remember a day where water hasn't been part of my life.

"I just like to fight, I always kind of have," said Cano. After high school, Cano will continue training and plans to go pro in Brazilian jiu jitsu.

As with all high school groups, there are several stereotypes that float around the label of being a martial artist. Linstead argues that the stereotypes are false, and encourages anyone who has interest in martial arts to try it knowing that, "some people are scared they'll get hurt so they never try, but the trainers there teach you how not to get hurt. A lot of people think martial arts is used to just beat each other up, but it's used more like a sport, self-defense, and fun."

## SLOHS Sports Fans: Crazy or Dedicated?

By Erin Lewis

At any given sports game, it seems that there is always at least one crazy fan cheering too loud in the stands, and yelling at the referees or coach. Are they dedicated or just crazy? The *Expressions* staff had the opportunity to interview some committed sports fans here at San Luis Obispo High School.

**Expressions:** What's your favorite sport to watch at SLOHS?

**Sophomore Cooper Benson:** Either basketball or football.

**Senior Ben LeMiere:** Diving for sure.

**Expressions:** What are your favorite things to do at the games here at SLOHS?

**Benson:** Starting chants and getting rowdy.

**LeMiere:** Talking smack to the other teams and starting crazy chants.

**Expressions:** What is the craziest experience you have had at a SLOHS sporting event?

**Benson:** Last year at a Mission home basketball game because it was rowdy and really fun.

**LeMiere:** The Mission home basketball game last year. I crowd surfed dressed as a nun.

**Expressions:** What do you think the difference is between a crazy fan and a dedicated fan?

**Benson:** A dedicated fan is someone who is always there and into the game. I think it's good to be a combination of both sometimes.

**LeMiere:** I think you just have to be a crazy fan to be a dedicated fan.

## Is pre-season training optional?

By Brendan Avila

Imagine it's the trimester after your seasonal sport, and you wake up early each morning, tired and sleep-deprived, to go get a lift in before school, for one goal: to get better for your next season.

*Expressions* went out and talked to a few of San Luis Obispo High School's athletes who have experienced the "optional" preseason practices in their sports training schedule, and how it affected their everyday life. We set out to find out what benefits it gives them in their season and how often practices are.

Senior Lorin Tapp, who plays varsity girls basketball and varsity softball, and junior varsity football player Wayne Garcia gave us an overview of what their training entails, and more importantly, why pre-season conditioning is not actually optional. It's important for anyone trying out for sports to know that if you are looking to play a high school sport in the upcoming seasons, it's important to get out and speak with the coaches and find out when pre-season practices are.

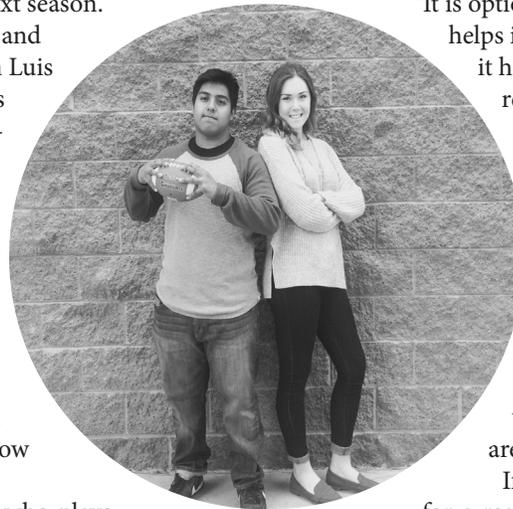
"Pre-season training helps develop small skills, technique, and it's about personal

development," said Tapp. That's why these practices are not really optional, but really are mandatory to attend if you aren't in another season of a SLOHS sports program. As much as these practices might be a drag at times, it's also why most of our sports programs at SLOHS are very successful.

"It is optional, but it really helps in the long run, and it helps you a lot to get ready for the next season. Some of the benefits of pre-season training is finding your weaknesses and working on them. It really depends on the sport you're playing and what your weaker points are," said Garcia.

If one cannot attend for a reason, such as another sport or conflict in your schedule, it's important to know that it does not make or break your position on that team, as long as you have a legitimate reason.

"It does not affect seasonal playtime, as long as you show up to your real mandatory practices in season," said Tapp. Any students who are aspiring to play sports in the winter or spring trimesters, but do not play a fall sport, should get out and go to the pre-season practices to better their ability to play and to personally succeed.



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# Solange's New Album "A Seat at the Table"

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By Luca MacDougall

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**On September 30, Solange Knowles, better known simply as Solange, released her third full length studio album entitled "A Seat at the Table".**

Despite living for the most part in the shadow of her sister, Beyoncé, Solange has made a name for herself in the black and R&B community with her constantly changing and fluid music style.

"A Seat at the Table" quickly garnered praise from music monoliths like Drake, Calvin Harris, and Nicki Minaj, as well as respected reviewers such as Pitchfork and Rolling Stone for expressing provocative themes regarding the societal position of black people, and specifically black women, in America.

In songs like "Don't Touch My Hair", Solange expresses the constant feeling of having her privacy infringed upon daily by things as small as white people touching

her hair without permission. She croons about these small things adding up to amass to an overall feeling of not being allowed to live for herself.

Although this album does hit hard, it also has quite a few uplifting moments. In the song "Cranes in the Sky", Solange adopts an optimistic tone where she sings about her success in being able to make her life better, despite the constant subtle racism she experiences, by realizing and accepting her own beauty, loving her husband, and focusing her energy on working on her music.

Continuing with the happier trend, the song "Mad" creeps up out of nowhere and surprises you with two goofy verses from Lil Wayne. The song discusses the uselessness of holding onto anger especially regarding public perception of fame and the life that accompanies it.

Don't let the impressive track list of 21 songs intimidate you; the album is only actually 51 minutes long and filled with short spoken or sung interludes.

Overall, the album is bound to please anyone who doesn't rely on fast-paced music to stimulate their auditory needs. "A Seat at the Table" is a simple and stripped-down album with a complex and difficult theme and is easy to enjoy.

“ Solange adopts an optimistic tone where she sings about her success in being able to make her life better, despite the constant subtle racism she experiences, by realizing and accepting her own beauty, loving her husband, and focusing her energy on working on her music. ”

# The inside scoop on the ★ SLOHS Improve Troupe ★

By Joella Holmes

San Luis Obispo High School's Improvisation Troupe is the epitome of creativity and humor from our very own students. Improv shows are particularly well known to always bring laughs and a slight amount of chaos. However, they are extremely impressive as every member of improv is never afraid to be outrageously outgoing. Improv shows are typically scheduled at the end of every month and take place at lunch in the theatre.

Auditions for improv always take place at the end of the year so the group can be prepared for the upcoming one. Any student can choose to audition in what basically is a mock improv show for the current improv captains, senior Tyra Popovich and junior Shane Russett.

"Auditions were essentially a improv show for the captains, Shane and Tyra. I really did enjoy auditions because I love playing the improv games and it was pretty neat to

be with the whole team for the first time," said junior Stephen Zagrodny.

Junior Nabeel El-Sayed has been part of improv for two years now, and when asked the best qualities you can gain from being part of it, he said, "I feel like I've gained the



ability to feel confident messing up in front of a lot of people and just being able to roll with it. It just helps you become more comfortable in whatever you want to say really."

Obviously, practicing and predicting every situation isn't what improvisation is all about. However, the group does get together at least once a week, or more during show weeks just to learn how to play certain improv games. "My favorite game is countdown or party quirks because they're games that you have to be very physical and dramatic in," said junior Emma Andersen.

The improv theatre itself is a place where memories are created as well. "It's a really cool feeling to see so many people there to see you come up with random jokes, and the show went great, it was just a gratifying feeling," said El-sayed. According to him, some of his best memories come from performing his very first show despite all the nervous energy and the large crowd.

All in all, if you don't choose to get involved in improv at some point in your high school career, then you should make it a point to go see one of their shows.

## Donald Glover's new show "Atlanta"

By Rae Odom

Donald Glover's new show "Atlanta" premiered September 6 on FX, and has become a popular topic of conversation amongst critics, as well as general viewers at San Luis Obispo High School. It centers around two cousins navigating their way through the rap scene in Atlanta. It has a relatable, "real life" feel, drawing in viewers with its dry and at times off-beat humor. It has an unmistakably original voice which can be attributed to Glover, who wrote, produced, and stars in the show, which excites many of his fans. This is a new artistic outlet for Glover, evident in the creative filming style and unique characters he has created.

"It is extremely artistic. It's much more of a political statement about how not only communities, but how all different races in the United States work together," said junior Andrew Gator. Glover cleverly weaves current racial and political issues into the life of the main character, Earn, played by himself. Earn's experiences often mirror today's issues relating to racial profiling and overall injustice in the black community.

"It gives us a different perspective to these issues than we are used to seeing on television," said Gator.

"It's not about just coming up in the rap industry, it's about dealing with different cultures and people in Atlanta just trying to survive," said junior Nabeel El-Sayed. The show has a raw way of depicting the

struggles of financial instability through the characters' experiences. Glover perfectly depicts the battles that many young adults are going through today, painting it in a painfully honest yet humorous fashion.

The show, while receiving very positive critic reviews, including a one hundred percent on Rotten Tomatoes, is still off-putting to some. If you're just looking for a funny show about rap music, you won't find it here.

"I would recommend the show to a specific audience. It really deals with a lot more than just music. You have to watch it for its unique writing style and direction it has as a whole," said El-Sayed. Tune in to watch the show for yourself every Tuesday at ten p.m.

# Everyone has a Story

By Logan McNichols

*Expressions* is starting a new column featuring the unique stories of San Luis Obispo High School students. To have your personal story highlighted, contact our advisor @ [snaire@slcusd.org](mailto:snaire@slcusd.org).

Isn't it true that one of the most fundamental aspects of going to school is not only learning from our teachers, but learning from each other? High school, in part, is simply a way to meet new people, share stories, and gain insight. We at *Expressions* searched the school for those who had stories that they wanted to share, and for this piece, chose one that we thought would be especially interesting and valuable for our readers.

Senior Garron Knox grew up in Utah and went to school in Salt Lake City. While he was in school, he had to deal with the conflicts of bullying on a daily basis. Not of himself, but of his older brother. "I had to be the stronger kid," said Knox, which was especially difficult because some of his own friends were the perpetrators of the bullying, leaving him in a difficult position.

Knox recalled on occasion where the bullying got especially bad. He was in a basketball game with some of his friends. "My brother asked if he could play basketball with us and one of them threw (the basketball) at his face." Knox was not willing to tolerate the way they were treating his brother, so he left the game, preserving his moral integrity.

"I could've chosen to reject my brother and things could've ended up worse but I chose to be his life support, and in that sense, my brother and I have had a really close bond," said Knox. Eventually, this bullying made Knox and his family realize that there were problems with the school and the community, which persuaded them to move here to San Luis Obispo.

When asked what the main thing he learned from this experience was, Knox simply said to "be there for your family when they need you." It is a simple, yet easily forgotten ethic. Sometimes, we are too caught up in our pursuit of independence and begin to regard family as something we ought to shed out of. However, family relationships don't go away, they evolve.

"If your brother had a bad day at school and he's taking it out on you, you just got to understand. Be there for him so when you're having a bad day he'll be there for you," said Knox. This mutual relationship with family stays with us into adulthood, and it's a sign of our maturity and independence to be able to help our loved ones when they need us.

# SLOHS' DANCE TEAM HAS ALL THAT JAZZ

By Joella Holmes

San Luis Obispo High School's Dance Team, formerly known as Twinkle Action Dance Team (TWAC), is known for performing elaborate dance numbers at our spirit rallies. As of this year, our dance team has undergone a series of changes involving new members joining. The dance team performed once so far this year on September 2, for the Welcome back rally. However, this particular show only consisted of continuous members of the dance team, and we didn't quite get a chance to see the contributions of our new members yet.

Two of this year's newer members of the dance team, juniors Atalie Manning and Hannah Ryan, auditioned this year and seem to be enjoying being part of the dance team. "The people are really

great and that makes the practices very enjoyable, I am also excited to perform in upcoming rallies," said Manning.

This year there is a varsity and junior varsity team just so different levels of dancers can work on specifically what they need to improve. The team practices once a week and will start practicing more frequently whenever there is an upcoming rally.

"At practice we stretch and warm up them either learn dances or polish ones we've already learned. Also, junior varsity spends about 15 minutes learning a technical skill to help improve our dancing," said Ryan.

Based on last year's dances most of them had an elegant feel to them, but this year it sounds as if things might change up a bit. According to Manning, the dance team may have more of a hip hop aspect this year. We can all expect shows at the rallies this year and even basketball game performances.



**ANDREW J. WRIGHT**  
ADVISOR

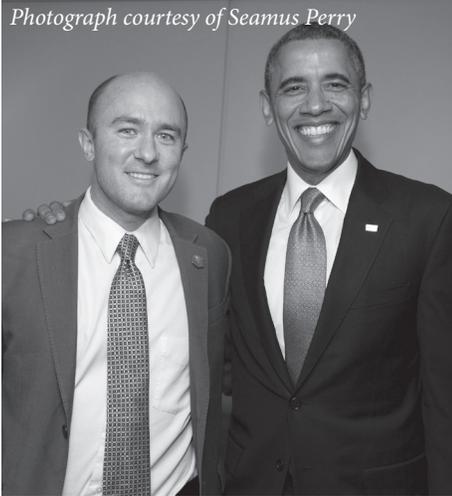
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# ★ Seamus Perry Got Presidential ★

By Karly Bonzi

Photograph courtesy of Seamus Perry



Social Studies teacher Seamus Perry is a first year teacher at San Luis Obispo High School. Before his current job, he worked for the government as Obama's trip manager during his first term. Perry got to travel all around the world with the President and his entourage on Air Force One. His job entailed planning where the President went, having enough cars for everyone to get to their destination, and making sure everyone was accounted for.

"Much of the time was incredibly stressful with lots of powerful people yelling at me and a BlackBerry that buzzed with new emails round-the-clock," said Perry.

Perry's official job title was Senior Trip Manager, Office of Scheduling & Advance. His job was oriented mainly around the

President's travel, whether it was across the street or to the other side of the globe. During the planning of trips, Perry worked with Secret Service, the military, the schedulers and the communications staff to figure out what they wanted the President to do and how to make that work. The easiest way to describe it is just problem solving in a very intense environment.

Perry was responsible for making sure that all parts of the President's travel went smoothly, from the logistics, to the legal and political aspects.

"On some trips, I just worried constantly because there were so many pieces to remember and keep track of, it was incredibly daunting," said Perry.

## The Real Life of an American Ginger

By Erin Lewis

If you see a ginger, the first thing you need to know is yes, we have souls. There is no need to run away because we won't take yours. Redheads are unique. According to the National Institutes of Health, the redhead gene occurs in only two percent of the world's population, and we are an even smaller percentage here at San Luis Obispo High School. However, that does not mean we aren't real people. Gingers face a lot of stereotypes, assumptions, and jokes.

"I just block out the haters with lots of sunscreen," said senior William Mein-

hold. Of course, there is the classic joke, "gingers have no soul," but there are plenty other ones as well. Some people say redheads get angry easier because we are hot headed or we can't drink ginger ale because that would technically be cannibalism. We have been told multiple times while wearing a red shirt, or when we get a little too sunburnt, that it's as red as our hair. The reality is we are humans too, not little leprechauns without feelings.

"We are just very rare, and it's quite striking. People are just jealous because of our luscious locks," said senior Grace Price. Contrary to the popular belief, redheads are not always Irish. We are not redheads

because our moms drank red food coloring. Being called carrot top does not make sense because carrot tops are green. Redheads can go out in the sun, only if we wear lots of sunscreen. We even make our own vitamin D. It is also a known fact that we are more sensitive to cold but we do have a higher pain tolerance. Don't ask to count our freckles or connect the dots because it will take you a long time. Yes, we know our head is on fire, and no, you cannot roast marshmallows on us.

Lastly, no matter what your science teacher has told you, we are not going extinct. However, we are rare, so be careful not to blink or you'll miss us.

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# BEST PICK-UP LINES

Compiled by Giacomo Grasso  
and Zach Wise

It is essential to show a girl you are interested, and not shy or insecure, especially as a high school student looking for love. Flirting with girls can be very complicated, but *Expressions* has given you some of the best pick-up lines.

**Expressions:** What are the best pick up lines you've heard or used?

"You are the eighth wonder of the world."

"My phone is broken, can you fix it? Because it needs your number."

"Are you a light switch? Because you turn me on."

"You better call life alert because I've fallen for you and I can't get up."



"Are you Google? Because you have everything I am searching for."

"Do you have a map? Because I got lost in your eyes."

"I think I've seen you before...in my dreams."

"Did it hurt when you fell from heaven?"

# BEST BREAK-UP LINES

Relationships end. It is inevitable. Whether by argument or infidelity, it is going to come to an end in some way, shape, or form. In high school, break-ups are definitely the most common end to relationships, and we at *Expressions* have compiled a list of several break-up lines from various people. Use at your own risk.

**Expressions:** What are the best breakup lines you've heard or used?

"I'm seeing someone else. It's your sister."

"Roses are red, violets are blue, garbage is dumped, and so are you."

"It's not me, it's you."

\*Broken heart emoji\*

"I no longer want you in my life."

"Asking you out was a mistake."

"I absolutely hate being around you. Sorry, but you've got to go."

"You don't deserve me."



"I didn't realize it until now but you're actually the worst person to be around that I've met."

"Oh, you dance? Bail."

"You? Breakup with me? I'm a ten."

"There's no longer a 'u' in us."

"I'm seeing someone else."

"I love you, but I'm not in love with you."

"I need to find myself."

"It's not you it's me."